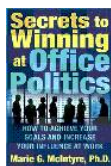


- [Working in Teams](#)
- [Group Decision-Making](#)
- [Networking at Work](#)
- [Remote Relationships](#)
- [How to Complain](#)
- [Job Search skills](#)
 - [Five Steps to a Job](#)
 - [Job Search Pitfalls](#)
 - [Creating a Resume](#)
 - [Networking Strategies](#)
 - [Interviewing Skills](#)
 - [Job-Seeking Tips](#)
 - [Losing Your Job](#)
 - [Job Search Blues](#)
 - [Hiring Tips for Managers](#)
- [Ask For Advice](#)
- [Career Coaching](#)
- [Business Services](#)
- [Test & Surveys](#)

Secrets to Winning at Office Politics



"Very informative & insightful!"
 "I wish I had read this book years ago."
 "Has changed my work life for the better."

Stay Connected or Receive Email Updates
[Read more on Amazon](#)



Interested in Personal Coaching?



Discuss your career concerns in a 30- or 60-minute confidential phone coaching session with Dr. Marie

McIntyre. For more information, see our [Managing Your Boss Career Services](#) page.

Five Types of Difficult Bosses

All material on youofficecoach.com is copyrighted to Marie G. McIntyre. All rights reserved.

May be reproduced for non-commercial use with copyright and attribution to www.youofficecoach.com
 Commercial use requires permission: email mmcintyre@youofficecoach.com.

Some difficult bosses are completely toxic, while others just have very annoying habits. And sometimes an employee and a boss are just a bad mix. If you're not happy with your manager, you need to determine whether the problem lies with you, your boss, or the combination of your two personalities.

The key is to look for patterns. Do you have more problems with your boss than your colleagues do? If so, maybe this manager is just a bad match for your work style. But if you've often had trouble with managers, you may have some authority issues. However, if everyone finds this person challenging, then you probably have a difficult boss.

Five difficult bosses are described below: the **Micromanager**, **Procrastinator**, **Idiot**, **Dictator**, & **Abuser**. Each may appear in a mild form or a more toxic version. The milder the problem, the more likely the suggested strategies are to work.

The Micromanager

◆ **Best case:** The micromanager is in a new position and having trouble letting go of the job he just left. As managers get more comfortable in a new role, their focus usually shifts from their previous work to current

responsibilities.

◆ **Worst case:** Scenario 1: The micromanager is a highly anxious person (even if she doesn't appear so on the surface) who fears giving up control and therefore wants to be involved in every detail of your work. Scenario 2: The manager is not happy with your performance and feels the need to closely manage you, but not others.

◆ **Possible strategies:** The micromanager is afraid of losing control, so you need to make him comfortable with your decisions and actions. Provide your manager with information before you are asked, especially about issues that you know are important to him. Try to anticipate and discuss possible concerns about projects or activities. Reach agreement about which decisions you can make independently and which should involve your manager.

◆ **What you should never do:** Never withhold information from a micromanager. She will just become suspicious about your intentions and monitor you even more closely.

The Procrastinator

◆ **Best case:** The self-aware procrastinator is simply not very organized and recognizes it. These managers are usually open to conversations about how to get things done more quickly.

◆ **Worst case:** The procrastinator is terrified of making the wrong decision. As a result, no decision will be made until half the people on earth have been consulted or voluminous amounts of information have been analyzed.

◆ **Possible strategies:** Since you know decisions will take a long time, factor that into the timeline for any project. If your boss likes a lot of input, consult his favorite sources (human or informational) in advance and summarize the results before asking for a decision. With major projects or critical decisions, don't ask for complete approval up front. Get your boss's okay on the initial action steps, then go back for subsequent approvals as needed.

◆ **What you should never do:** Never wait until the last minute for an important decision, then pressure your boss to decide immediately. You may think that this will force your manager to act quickly, but it won't.

The Idiot

◆ **Best case:** The idiot is in a new field or industry, needs to learn more about an unfamiliar environment, and is open to information, ideas, and suggestions.

◆ **Worst case:** The idiot doesn't know that she is an idiot. She makes hasty decisions without the necessary knowledge or information.

◆ **Possible strategies:** If your manager is approachable, offer information in a helpful way. Do not be condescending. And be sure to show respect for the knowledge or experience that your manager does have. When decisions need to be made, suggest several good options for consideration. In a non-judgmental way, point out how ill-advised choices might adversely affect important work results.

◆ **What you should never do:** Don't ever try to demonstrate your superior knowledge. Doing so could be hazardous to your career.

The Dictator

◆ **Best case:** The dictator communicates in a direct, authoritative style, but is actually open to input.

◆ **Worst case:** The dictator genuinely believes that he has all the answers and expects everything to be done his way.

◆ **Possible strategies:** Acknowledge the value of your manager's ideas and approaches. Don't present your own opinions in a confrontational manner. Instead, ask your manager if she is open to hearing a suggestion or

considering some different options. When employees take a very direct approach, these managers often view it as the beginning of an argument, so try using questions to keep your manager from getting defensive. Start your sentences with "do you think we might" or "could we consider" instead of "we should" or "we have to".

◆ **What you should never do:** Never tell dictatorial managers that they "can't" do something. That makes them very angry.

The Abuser

◆ **Best case:** The abuser occasionally gets upset and yells, but then calms down, talks rationally, and may even apologize.

◆ **Worst case:** The abuser is a toxic person who enjoys verbally abusing others. Or even worse, the mistreatment rises to the level of physical threat or sexual harassment.

◆ **Possible strategies:** With mild abusers, avoid the natural "fight or flight" reaction and remain in a calm, rational mode. People feel stupid being angry by themselves, so the manager will usually calm down and may be willing to engage in a discussion. For truly abusive bosses, however, there is no good strategy. If the stress becomes too great, polish up your resume and look for a saner place to work.

◆ **What you should never do:** Never stay in a job where you are verbally abused, physically touched in any harmful way, or sexually harassed. No paycheck is worth that kind of treatment.

Related Topics

- [How to Manage Up](#)
- [Boss Personalities](#)
- [Getting a New Boss](#)
- [Difficult Bosses](#)
- [Working with Executives](#)
- [Performance Reviews](#)
- [Getting a Raise](#)
- [Asking for Feedback](#)
- [How to Complain](#)

Coaching Clinic

Search our website for helpful information on the following topics . . .

- [Lessons in Leadership](#)
- [Managing Your Boss](#)
- [Coworker Relationships](#)
- [Career Success Strategies](#)