

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



209 If You Work for a Flawed Boss

Raise your hand if you have ever worked for a flawed boss. If you're already at work and your boss is there with you, listening right now, shake your head and say, "No, not you, boss...not you." I'm Jerry Roberts, let's see what a Navy Seal says about flawed bosses and how to handle them, today, on The Extra Point.

Former U.S. Navy Seal Jocko Willink knows what it's like to have a bad boss. He says he's had his share. In his book, "The Dichotomy of Leadership," he admitted that he was also a micromanager himself on the battlefield. So he's seen all sides of this issue, up close and in highly stressful situations, and he provides a unique perspective.

Willink offers important advice: get past the thoughts of changing your boss and focusing on his or her shortcomings. He says we need to work at becoming on our boss's ally. Willink is blunt, "Great boss or horrible boss, my goal is to have a great relationship with them." This is not the normal attitude most workers have when they have a tough time with their boss.

Willink references three types of difficult managers and how to work with each of them.

1. If your boss is a micromanager. They are controlling your every thought and action. Bosses who do this likely have a trust issue, and Willink decided to give that boss all the information that was asked for and more. So he provided detailed reports and worked hard to show his boss that he could handle the jobs thrown at him.

After a while Willink's boss told him that all the detailed reports weren't necessary. "Hey, you don't need to give me all this information. I trust you. Do what you have to do."

2. If your boss is an egomaniac. Defensive bosses who won't take ownership for their

decisions might be insecure. Willink believes the best way to deal with all that ego is to massage it. No, not to give praise that hasn't been earned, but to let the person know you have respect for them. Further, that because you have this respect for them, you want to work hard to help make them look good.

3. If your boss is too laid back. This is when your manager doesn't provide enough guidance or help. It's the opposite of our friend the micromanager. Willink recommends that we think of our manager's hands-off leadership style as a great opportunity to chart our own path. He says, if his boss doesn't want to tell him what it is they want him to do, he's going to figure it out for himself, come up with his own plan and move forward.

If you find yourself in this situation, Willink lines up with a position I've discussed in this program. Don't give your boss any unwelcome surprises. Keep him/her in the loop as you plan your work and work your plan. Give them a chance to provide feedback, to step up, as should have been done from the start.

Willink has a great point. Never mind the complaints. Flawed, severely flawed, or whatever the situation, set out to establish and build a strong relationship with your boss. Make the best of an imperfect situation and you may find things turn out a whole lot better than you expected.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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