

7 Ways to Go From a Boss to a Leader

by Gina Folk / Entrepreneur

Many people view the terms “boss” and “leader” as interchangeable — but they are vastly different. To determine which one you are, I encourage you to honestly answer this question: Do you: a) see your team members as an aggravating necessity that you have to put up with in order to accomplish day-to-day activities and achieve goals? Or, do you: b) truly enjoy working with people on your team to meet your goals and deliverables?

If you chose a), you’re probably more of a boss; if you chose b), you’re probably more of a leader.

Based on my work with teams over the past 25 years — and, of course, common sense — I can confidently say that the teams which produce the most effective and long-lasting results are the ones directed by leaders, not bosses. So, how do you move from “boss” to “leader”? Here are seven key ways:

1. Love people.

No one can lead a team well unless he or she truly enjoys working with people. People are not minions; they are individuals with unique personalities, traits and talents. As a leader, you must enjoy helping people and watching them succeed.

2. Guide, don’t control, your team.

Bosses feel the need to control every action; they’re micromanagers. Leaders know that their team will accomplish great things if they receive direction and support rather than control, so they establish frameworks and structure, then empower their teams to get the work done, providing support along the way.

3. Be adaptable.

Bosses tend to be very rigid in the way they want things done, but leaders understand that they must adapt their personal style to their team members’ needs. They understand and value each team member’s individuality, establish expectations clearly and adapt their leadership approach as necessary.

4. Delegate.

Bosses may feel they are delegators, but because they don’t trust anyone else to do the job as well as they can, they never fully delegate anything. Leaders truly delegate. They assign tasks, and then let go (though they still follow up periodically to ensure their team members are on track to achieve the desired results).

5. Give credit, accept blame.

Bosses love to take credit for their teams’ successful results — and they’re the first to throw them under the bus when those goals are not achieved as desired. Leaders, in contrast, know their success comes from their teams’ efforts, so they keep their egos in check: They showcase their teams’ efforts when they succeed, and they accept personal responsibility when they fail.

6. Practice risk acceptance.

Bosses avoid risks at all costs because they are fearful that going out on a limb might produce a perceived failure — they like to play it safe. But leaders know that the greatest successes come from taking risks. Leaders enable and encourage their teams to try new things, and they see every so-called mistake or failure as an opportunity to make improvements.

7. Motivate.

Bosses motivate through fear. Leaders, in contrast, motivate by figuring out what sparks their individual team members to perform at their highest potential, and by expecting greatness from their teams even when those individuals don't see greatness in themselves. Leaders also cheer and celebrate successes, small and large, because they know they are their teams' biggest fans.

Going from “boss” to “leader” is a challenging personal development experience — but it's extremely rewarding, too! If you act like a leader, your team members will produce long-lasting effective results, and their performance will be consistently outstanding. They will be more engaged at work, and more fulfilled in their personal lives, too. In that way, developing from boss to leader is an act of kindness and service to your fellow human beings — and to yourself, as well. Become a leader, and you'll find that your life will be less stressful, and exponentially more fulfilling.

Source; <http://time.com/3856170/boss-leader-transition/>