Objectives

• Broaden your range of options for working with your supervisor, and know how to skillfully apply them.
• Develop an action plan for improving your relationship with your supervisor.
• Learn strategies for dealing with typical boss issues.

Norms

• Confidentiality
• Listening
• Self-care
Agenda

1. Introduction and Warm Up

2. Improving Your Relationship with Your Boss
   - Research
   - Action Planning
   - Action
   - Evaluation

3. Special Cases
Key Principles

- Your boss is always going to be your #1 customer.
- Your boss has more power and status than you.
- Confident, pro-active, assertive employees are more valuable to bosses than the reverse.
- You cannot change someone else; you can only experiment by changing your own behavior.
- You are responsible for protecting your physical and emotional health.
- Help is available.

How much communication is enough?

\[
\text{MAX } \times 10 = \text{ MIN}
\]

Take the maximum amount you think you need to communicate about the issue.

Multiply by 10.

That’s the minimum.
Warm Up

- Imagine a new employee asked you for one tip about how to work with your boss. What would you say?

Agenda

1. Introduction and Warm Up

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   - Action
   - Evaluation

3. Special Cases
Improving your Relationship with Your Boss

Phase 1: Research

- Getting to know your boss
- Getting to know your self.

Schindler, Partap, and Maher in the Swoap lab.
Phase 1: Research

- **Getting to know your boss**
- **Getting to know your self.**

Boss Research Questionnaire

- You know more than you think about your boss.
- Fill out the Boss Questionnaire
1. What are your boss’s goals and objectives?

2. What pressures is your boss experiencing?

3. What are your boss’s strengths?

4. What are your boss’s weaknesses?

5. What are your boss’s blind spots?

6. What is your boss’s preferred channel of communication (in person, email, etc.)?
### 7. Level of Involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Out to Lunch</th>
<th>Just Right</th>
<th>Micromanages Everything</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 8. Introversion/Extroversion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Introverted</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
<th>Very Extroverted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 9. Workload

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does he/she do all day?</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
<th>Overwhelmed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 10. Attitude Towards Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Avoids At All Costs</th>
<th>Balanced</th>
<th>Everything is a fight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 11. Level of Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Chaos</th>
<th>Just Right</th>
<th>Obsessed with Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

### 12. Accessibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Never Available</th>
<th>Door is Always Open</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
13. Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expects Me to Read His/Her Mind</th>
<th>Always Gives Me the Information I need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>DiSC Type</th>
<th>Characterized By</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drive</td>
<td>The drive to control, to achieve results. Fast paced and outspoken, questioning and skeptical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>The drive to influence, to be expressive, to be heard. Fast paced and outspoken, accepting and warm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steadiness</td>
<td>The drive to be stable and consistent. Accepting and warm, cautious and reflective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
<td>The drive to be right, sure and safe. Cautious and reflective, questioning and skeptical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Listening as Research

- **Increasing Empathy and Trust**
  lynda.com, Communication Fundamentals, John Ullment
  - Get the person
  - Get their situation
  - Get their path to progress

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Listening as Research

- **Minimal Encouragements**
  - Non verbal cues that you are listening
  - Verbal cues that you are listening “Oh?”, “Mm hmm”, “Right.” etc.
- **Paraphrasing**
- **Emotional Labeling**
  - I get the sense that you are feeling X. Am I right about that?
- **Mirroring (or Reflecting)**
  - Echoing words or phrases
- **Open-ended questions**
- **Pauses**
Listening As Research

• When your boss is giving you feedback, you’re getting information about **them**:
  – Their priorities
  – Their values
  – Their emotional state
  – Their attitude towards conflict

Listening as Research

• I hear you saying X. Am I getting that?
• Is there more you want to say about that?
• I hear your frustration/disappointment. I can tell this is really important to you, and I want to turn it around.
• What specifically would you like me to do differently in the future?
Phase 1: Research

• Getting to know your boss
• Getting to know yourself.

Getting to Know Yourself

• Your thoughts and feelings about your boss give you information about you, not your boss:
  – Strong emotions
  – Judgments
  – Imaginary conversations
The Identity Conversation

• This conversation happens inside you:
  – Am I competent?
  – Am I a good or worthy person?
  – Am I acceptable or likable?

• Other people may trigger this conversation inside us, but it is between us and us.

Change Your Questions, Change Your Life
Listening Exercise

- Pair Up
- Remember Norms: Confidentiality and Self-Care
- Take turns describing your relationship with your boss
- Listener: Practice listening skills. Avoid giving advice.
- Speaker: Be aware that you are describing the world of your own perceptions. Are you on the learner or the judger path?

Improving your Relationship with Your Boss

- Research
- Evaluation
- Action Planning
- Action
Action Planning

• Change involves risk
• Adopt an experimental attitude
• Reward yourself before and after trying a new behavior
• Process your emotions

Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• Make a request
• Offer feedback
• Set a boundary
Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• Make a request
• Offer feedback
• Set a boundary

Use Positive Feedback

• When your boss does or says something right, explicitly appreciate them for it as soon as possible.
• Use the appreciation formula:
Use Positive Feedback

• Example:
  – “Thanks a lot for sending us the agenda before the meeting. Because I had it in advance, I was able to do some research to prepare. As a result I think our meeting was very effective and we were able to make some good decisions together.”

Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• Make a request
• Offer feedback
• Set a boundary
Create a Learning Conversation

– Goal:
  • To share your perspective and learn about the other person’s perspective
  • Map the contribution system
  • Share the facts as you know them
  • Share the feelings you have, without blame or apology
  • [Link](http://seemeaning.ca/sites/default/files/A%20Learning%20Conversation.jpg)
  • Save solutions until you’ve thoroughly explored both sides

Create a Learning Conversation

• Example:
  – “I’d like to talk to you about X. I’d like to share my perspective and I’d be interested in hearing your perspective. Would you be open to setting aside some time for that?”
Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• **Make a request**
• Offer feedback
• Set a boundary

Making a Request

• Understand from the beginning the answer may be “no”. Are there alternatives that would work just as well? What will you do if you can’t reach agreement?
• Lay out relevant facts that support your request.
• Make the request explicitly: Show the connection between your request and your boss’s goals.
Making a Request

• Example:
  – “In the last 6 months my job duties have expanded considerably and I’ve made some really valuable contributions like x and y. I’d like you to consider giving me a raise. This acknowledgement of my extra responsibilities would remove a distraction for me and make me even more enthusiastic for our work together.”

Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• Make a request
• **Offer feedback**
• Set a boundary
Offering Feedback

• Create an invitation:
  “May I give you some feedback?”

• Use the Feedback Formula:

Offering Feedback

• Example:
  – “I’ve noticed that you’ve canceled 3 out of our last 4 regularly scheduled meetings. As a result I haven’t been able to get your input on some key projects. I’m concerned that as a result we are falling behind. I’d like it if you could find a way to keep those appointments so that I can make more progress on the projects you’ve assigned me.”
Action Menu

• Use positive feedback
• Create a Learning Conversation
• Make a request
• Offer feedback
• Set a boundary

Setting a Boundary

• Demonstrate you understand the boss’s point of view.
• Spell out the context (your values, college policies, your job description, etc.)
• Describe the boundary
• Adopt a problem solving orientation
Setting a Boundary

• Example:
  – “I understand that assigning me personal errands like picking up your dry cleaning helps you to focus on work tasks that are more important to you. However, it’s important that my work for you be focused on work for the college as described in my job description, and I don’t feel comfortable using my own car for errands like this. Are there other ways that I could help you so that you have more time to do your important work?”

WOOP It Up

Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan

• Wish – What you hope will come from this session.
• Outcome – the best outcome you can imagine for your meetings
• Obstacle – what might get in the way?
• Plan – make a plan to make it happen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Wish</strong> – Your reason for coming to today’s session</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Outcome</strong> – the best outcome you can imagine for your relationship with your boss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Obstacle</strong> – what might get in the way?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Plan</strong> – make a plan to make it happen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Improving your Relationship with Your Boss

Research
Evaluation
Action
Action Planning

Implementation

“In theory there’s no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is.”
-Yogi Beara
Improving your Relationship with Your Boss

Evaluation

• After every big step, take some time to reflect:
  – By writing in your journal
  – Talking with someone you trust:
    • Friend
    • Colleague
    • Family member
After Action Review

- What were your goals? Did you accomplish them?
- What emotions came up?
- What are you most proud of?
- What would you do differently?
- What did you learn?

Agenda

1. Introduction and Warm Up
2. Improving Your Relationship with Your Boss
   • Research
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   • Action
   • Evaluation
3. Special Cases
Special Cases

- **Unavailable Manager**
- **Manager You’ll Never Like**
- **Self-important Manager**
- **Less competent manager**
- **Mean or inappropriate manager**

Help is at Hand

- **Human Resources** x2681
- **EAP, LifeScope where there’s more to life**
  http://www.lifescopeEAP.com
  *Username: williams college
  Password: guest*
- **Harassment and Discrimination Advisors:**
  http://diversity.williams.edu/discrimination-harassment/sexual-harassment-discrimination-advisors/
- **Campus Safety and Security** x4444
• Program evaluation link will be sent by email.
• You’ll get a link to a course page with all the materials.