

# 7 Signs You Are a Jerk at Work

Are you taking being the boss to the extreme?

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Most of my team is relatively new to the working world. They are perfectly cordial to me in the office. They tell me they like their jobs. We all went out for happy hour on Friday and had a delightful time. But, when I'm not around, do they refer to me as a "jerk?" Or worse? And what's the difference between being a tough leader and being a boss-hole?

Bruce Tulgan, author of *Not Everyone Gets a Trophy* and *Managing Generation X* has a new book out, called *It's OK to Manage Your Boss*. Although as an entrepreneur I am now my own boss, I found it to be a must read for anyone who manages people. Of course, I'm also going to pass it around the office and make sure each team member reads it, but if you're currently managing people, you should pay close attention to Tulgan's chapter on "Seven Subtle Types of Jerk Boss Behavior." They include:

- Letting problems slide and then coming down hard when things get out of control
- Imposing obsessive-compulsive preferences on employees
- Treating employees like "beck and call assistants"
- Pretending things are up to an employee when they really aren't
- Making big decisions without knowledge of what's really going on
- Flip-flopping between soft-pedaling authority and being an authoritarian
- Being intimidating, mean, and abusive

Hmmm...I'm not always a jerk, but I must admit: I have been jerky. I realized as I was reading it that no one ever really taught me how to be a great supervisor and leader. In fact, I have worked for my share of true jerks over the years. I realized as I was perusing the book that I have picked up a lot of bad habits from bosses I've had in the past. But, it's never too late to "break the chain" and resolve to be a better leader.

What Tulgan points out, however, that every employee can do (or not do) certain things to help his or her boss be better each day. Just as he has seven "jerk" definitions, he has seven steps that each employee needs to follow to make sure he/she is properly breaking his boss of unproductive and even counterproductive behaviors.

So, whether you're the jerk or the jerkee, Tulgan's new book is a great source of inspiration and sage advice. Reading it will help ensure that the next happy hour truly is a happy one!

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