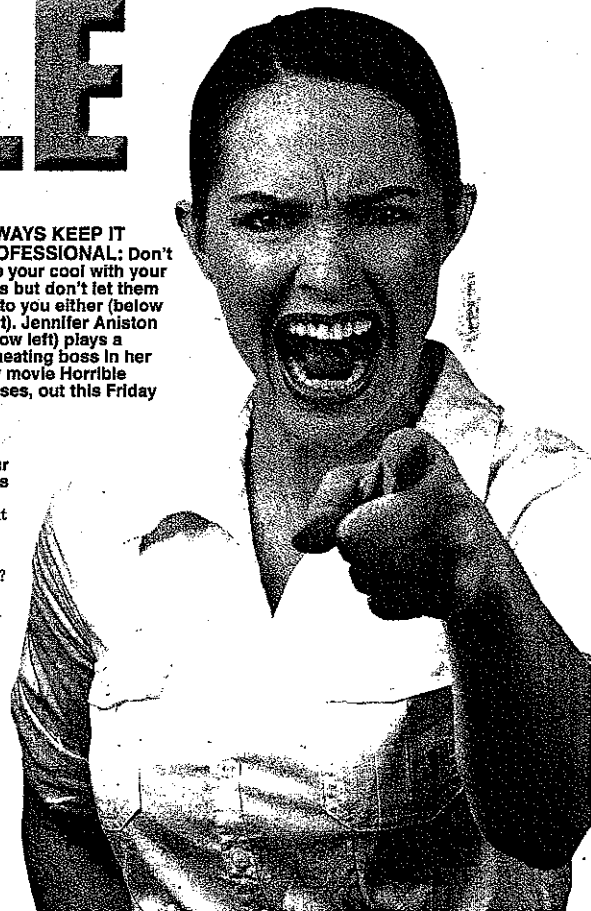


Take this advice on how best to handle an ineffective manager

# DEALING WITH HORRIBLE BOSSES

**ALWAYS KEEP IT PROFESSIONAL:** Don't lose your cool with your boss but don't let them get to you either (below right). Jennifer Aniston (below left) plays a maneating boss in her new movie *Horrible Bosses*, out this Friday



By Julia Purcell

**H**OLLYWOOD comedy *Horrible Bosses* is hitting our cinemas this week, with three unhappy employees plotting to murder their bad managers.

Whilst the despicable bosses in the film make for some great entertainment, in real life just how do you deal with an actual horrible boss?

Dealing with a less than effective manager is challenging, so what do you do when you love your job, but hate your boss?

Whether yours is a psycho (Kevin Spacey), maneater (Jennifer Aniston) or tool (Colin Farrell), Sigmar Recruitment's Julia Purcell advises on just how to deal with that horrible boss...

**◎ TAKE A LOOK IN THE MIRROR**

Firstly examine your actions and behaviour. We all have a tendency to disagree with a person we don't like simply because we don't like them, so could this be contributing to tensions between you? If so, clean up your act, make nice, and do your best to ignore distractions and concentrate only on the work. Then see if things change.

**◎ FOCUS ON YOUR BOSS'S NEEDS**

Your boss may not realise that he/she is a bad manager. Just as in situational leadership, the definition of 'bad' depends on the employee's needs, the manager's skills and the circumstances.

Therefore whilst you may think that your boss is constantly looking over your shoulder and micromanaging, they may not realise their direction is insulting to staff members.

Just as a hands-off manager may not realise that their failure to provide any direction or feedback may make them a bad boss to some.

Employees respond to both differently — some prefer one type to the other or perhaps somewhere in between!

So if your boss is a micromanager, work on building the trust in your relationship by not missing deadlines. Listen carefully to what they ask of you and follow instructions to the letter.

Communicate with them frequently over tasks and priorities as this will reassure them that you've got things under control. Hopefully by gaining their trust, they will relax and give you more freedom in your work.

Similarly, if your boss is more hands off, don't be afraid to ask for more direction. This manager probably thinks they are empowering their staff by not providing direction but if you prefer more direction, ask for it.

**◎ SHOW YOUR WORTH**

Prove yourself to your employer. Document your achievements and call them to your supervisor's attention. Keep him or her updated on the status of your important projects and initiatives and offer up new ideas and solutions.

**◎ PLAY THE GAME**

Your first reaction to a horrible boss is to fight back. Sending a letter to HR criticising your boss is not the answer. Fight that temptation, hard though it might be. Repaying 'evil for evil' accomplishes nothing and only makes the situation worse.

Don't let your boss get to you. If you maintain your professionalism, it will make a positive impression on those who are watching or those who hear about it — including possibly your boss's boss. If you retaliate you may get in more trouble and harm your position.

**◎ REPORT THEM**

Talking to your boss's boss or HR is a last resort — try to resolve the matter yourself first. If you go this route, document your boss's actions and provide evidence such as e-mails, voicemail messages and witnesses. It can be helpful to band with other employees with similar problems, so that you won't become branded as 'difficult'.

**◎ DON'T BURN BRIDGES**

If you do part ways with your boss, you might be tempted to 'let rip', given that you have nothing left to lose. Fight that temptation and try to be gracious. Badmouthing your boss publicly may come back and bite you when you apply for positions in other companies, as you may need a reference at some point in the future.

See [www.sigmar.ie](http://www.sigmar.ie) for more. *Horrible Bosses* opens on Friday.



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