

Five ways to deal with a complacent and lazy boss

A sales manager with a bank is fed up with his boss, whose laidback ways have taken a toll on the team's motivation levels.

"He's okay even if we fall short on targets. And if we ask him to come along to meet a client, he simply can't be bothered. It's like he's just biding his time before retirement," laments the sales manager. "He's been with the organisation for a long time and knows his bosses well, so he feels his job is secure."

A lazy boss can be bad news for a team that's ambitious and raring to go. Such a boss can affect the team's morale and engender despondency among the staff. ET tells you how to deal with a boss like this:

- **Carpe Diem**

'One must continue to seize the moment and strive to excel in what one does. Eventually this will always pay off and in that journey you just might have a positive influence on your lazy boss,' says Shalini Pillay, head-people, performance and culture at KPMG in India.

Udit Mittal, managing director of Unison International Consulting, also says such a situation should be taken as an opportunity to showcase one's leadership qualities and the ability to work without supervision. 'There may be a superior role demanding just the skills you portray and, who knows, you might get the much deserved limelight,' says Mittal.

- **Give Such Bosses a Taste of Their Medicine**

Says KPMG's Pillay: 'Sometimes demonstrating the difference between 'just doing a job' and 'striving to achieve outcomes with a zeal/passion' can also be quite effective in getting your boss to appreciate the frustration of being at the receiving end.'

- **If It's Affecting Your Work, Talk to Him**

It is very unlikely that your boss will welcome you telling him about his laziness. But if he is a good boss, he will be considerate and you need to be professional in stating the amount of pressure you and your team are under because of his behaviour. 'Choose a right time to talk to him, so that the two of you are alone,' advises Mittal.

- **If Nothing Else Works, Talk to Your Boss' Boss**

This should be the last resort as it could get you into your boss' bad books.

Says Uday Mittal: 'Talk to his superior with facts and show real concern with regard to work not being completed on time or the revenue getting affected on account of lost sales. After all, if the company is not doing well or is losing business, your boss' boss will take corrective action in this regard.'

In any case, feels Shalini Pillay, the complacency will eventually lead to a course correction. 'It will surface in work outcomes and result in escalations, which will eventually force the change,' she says.

- **Time and Tide Wait for No Man**

The ambitious and aspiring will, and must, move on sooner than later, Pillay feels. Mittal agrees, 'If all the above fails, you need to accept that nothing is going to change. Either you can continue or if you have openings in other departments or under someone you think would be a better boss, make the switch.'