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## Good boss, bad boss: 2 in 10 say manager hurt career



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A good boss can help your career. A bad boss? Not so much.

**By Allison Linn, TODAY**

A good boss can make your career, but a bad boss can make your life miserable – and a new survey finds that plenty of Americans have learned that lesson the hard way.

The survey of about 2,000 adults, conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the careers website Glassdoor, found that two-thirds of people said their boss had had some kind of impact on their career.

For about half of those people, the impact had been positive and their bosses had helped their careers. For about 20 percent, it had been negative and their bosses had hurt their careers. The remainder said the impact had been neither positive nor negative.

Experts say the results make sense, since other research has shown that being happy with a boss directly influences job [satisfaction](#) [↗](#).

“Immediate bosses have a tremendous impact on both people’s job satisfaction and their careers, for good or bad,” said E. Allan Lind, a professor of leadership at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business.

Your relationship with your boss also is often a good predictor of how well you do at your job.

“People may join an organization because of pay or benefits or a charismatic leader,” said David Grossman, chief executive of the communications and leadership consultancy The Grossman Group. “How long they stay, how productive they are, how content they are, is all about their boss.”

Unfortunately, not all bosses are good at managing people, just as not all workers are good at managing their relationship with their boss.

The most common gripes among those who reported a boss had hurt their career were that their boss had slowed or held back pay raises, promotions and exposure to top management.

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Lind, the Duke professor, said one of the strongest predictors of leadership talent is whether bosses [share](#) [↗](#) credit for success.

“Some people, when they’re relatively insecure, think, ‘I have to grab all the credit for myself.’ They don’t understand that when your people perform well, you’ll perform well,” Lind said.

That can lead to another big boss mistake: Micromanaging.

Among the people who reported that their boss had helped their career, almost half said their boss had supported collaborative teamwork. That was an even more popular response than things like supporting work/life balance or helping the employee get a promotion.

Lind said it can be really difficult for bosses to delegate tasks to others. Many bosses also have a hard time making sure they are giving serious consideration to other people's opinions and ideas.

"The challenge for a boss is to not dominate the conversation. That kills the purpose of the team," Lind said.

Of course, a boss/employee relationship cuts two ways, and there are plenty of things employees can do to make a bad boss relationship better.

One tactic is to think about what is keeping your boss up at night and how you can solve that problem, Lind said.

Grossman said that rather than blaming the boss, workers should spend their energy trying to turn things around. If you want a raise or promotion, tell your boss - but frame it in a way that will help your boss, too.

"Do it in a way that they can see how they will benefit from what (you're) talking about," Grossman said.

Of course, some boss relationships just can't be salvaged. In the last few years, many employees have been asked to do more work with fewer people, and not every boss has done a good job keeping their remaining workers happy.

Many of the people in the survey who said their manager had hurt their career complained that their boss had reduced or eliminated support for maintaining work/life balance.

Even in a tight job market, Grossman said that may be why only 20 percent of the people surveyed said their boss had hurt their career.

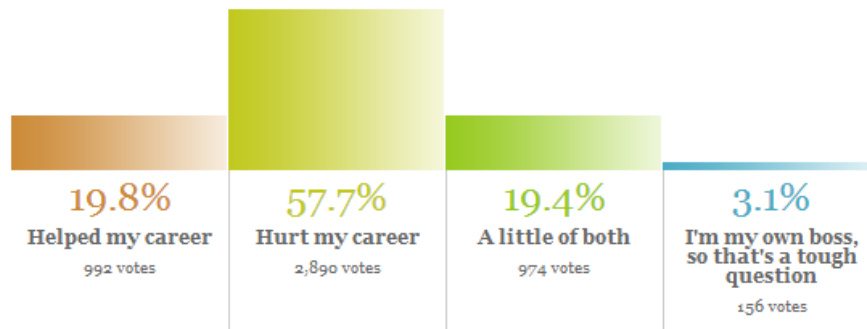
“When you work for a bad boss, you don’t work for them very long,” Grossman said.

Do you think your current boss has helped or hurt your career?

✓ Helped my career

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