

Don't let yourself become a victim of your boss's weaknesses."

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DON'T GET INTO THE HABIT OF BROADCASTING YOUR BOSS'S sins. Don't let yourself become a victim of your boss's weaknesses. And stop looking for evidence (in clandestine watercooler sessions with your colleagues) to justify your feelings about your terrible boss: how he's the source of your career block—a traditionalist who flat-out resists change. If you fall into these habits, you'll become afflicted with the "metastasizing cancers" of the workplace: complaining, criticizing, comparing, and competing. Instead, learn to manage your boss by focusing on your own circle of influence.

That circle includes all the things over which you have control. The first step: Make sure that your job is in order. If it's not, you have no credibility. Credibility is something you earn gradually by being one of the best performers. Also, don't bad-mouth your boss: Be loyal to people in their absence. Then watch how others begin having more faith and confidence in you, because they know that you won't be talking about them behind their backs. And finally, understand the place from which your boss—or for that matter, any of your colleagues—is coming from. Nothing is more validating and affirming than feeling understood. And the moment a person begins feeling understood, that person becomes far more open to influence and change.

Learn and practice the art of personal leadership, and see how it inspires those around you—including your boss.

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