



What is Managing Up?

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"Managing up" is all about establishing good relationships with the leaders above you, so you can further your goals and the goals of your group. People deal best with those they like, or at least respect. Overall, you will need to become visible to these people, understand their goals and needs, and be able to express your needs in terms that align with your manager's agenda and vision.

"Managing up" also means making it easy for your manager to manage you. This is accomplished by keeping lines of communication open and by making it easy for your manager to trust you and your word. Be specific in your requests. Give your manager(s) regular reminders. Be aware of your manager's agendas (all of them) and his/her vision for the future. You may have to ferret out your manager's hidden agendas, but the knowledge you gain will be invaluable in garnering your manager's support for your initiatives and projects.

Finally, don't bring your manager problems without bringing a range of possible solutions. You will have more influence with your manager if you bring her/him well conceived options from which to choose. Otherwise, your manager may begin to see you as a complainer and a whiner. Your manager will begin to avoid you whenever possible; s/he may even ignore some of your requests or assessments at a critical juncture because you are seen as the person who always cries, 'Wolf!'

Bottom line: Keep your interactions simple, direct, and regular (even when you don't want to); know your manager's agendas and vision and act accordingly; be a problem solver, not a whiner; and make it easy for your manager to trust and respect you. (Is that all?!?)

About the Author: Yvonne T. Ryan, The Techie Leadership Coach and founder of Leader's Edge CA, provides practical coaching and education to technical professionals seeking to improve their leadership skills and advance their career through innovative programs like "Techies on the Rise™." Her particular focus is on middle management and team leadership." Visit her Web site at: www.leadersedgeca.com.

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