

10 Things Bosses Never Tell Employees



Even if you're an exceptional boss – and here's how to tell if you're an exceptional boss—there's a lot you don't know about your employees.

There's also a lot employees don't know about *you*.

Here are a few things bosses wish they could say to their employees... but never do.

1. "I really do care whether you like me."

I want you to like me. When I come off like a hard-ass who doesn't care about your opinions, it's mostly because I'm insecure or uncertain of my authority.

If I'm the owner, my business is an extension of myself. If I'm your boss, the company is at least partly an extension of myself. So I want you to like your job.

And I definitely want you to like *me*— whether it seems like it or not.

2. "I don't think I know everything."

A few people stepped in, without being asked, and made a huge difference in my professional life. I will always be grateful to them.

So I don't offer you advice because I think I'm all knowing or all-powerful. I see something special in you, and I'm repaying the debt I owe to the people who helped me.

3. "I like when you're having fun."

You don't have to lower your voice and pretend to be working really hard when I walk by. I know it's possible to perform at a high level and have a little fun at the same time. Before I started acting all serious, I used to work that way, too.

When you enjoy what you do it makes me feel a little better about our company and about myself.

I get to feel like I'm part of something more than just a business.

4. "I really would like to pay you more."

I would love to be the employer of choice in our area. But I can't, mostly due to financial constraints. And if I own the business, the financial risk I'm taking

deserves a reasonable return. (If I go out of business tomorrow, you lose your job. That's terrible, I know. But I lose my business, my investment, my credit, my house... I might lose *everything*.)

Someday, if you become a boss – or especially if you start your own business – I promise you'll understand.

5. "I hope you work here forever."

Job-hopping may be a fact of business life, but as a boss it's a fact of business life I hate. I don't see you as a disposable part. When you leave, it hurts. A part of me feels like I've failed.

I want to run the kind of business people hope to retire from.

6. "We sell what we *can* sell."

I know you despise filling certain types of orders or doing certain types of work. It's aggravating, it makes you fall behind, it makes it tough to hit your targets and goals... it's a pain. You wish we would sell other work.

Unfortunately (from your point of view at least) sometimes the jobs that takes the most time are actually the most profitable for our company. And even if they aren't that profitable, sometimes the least desirable work (from your point of view) is the only work we can sell.

And sometimes we take terrible jobs because it's the only way to keep the lights on.

7. "I would love to turn you loose."

I know you can't stand to be micromanaged. And that's good, because I hate to micromanage. But freedom is earned, not given. Show me you can fly on your own and I'll gladly focus on something or someone else.

In fact, if you feel I'm micromanaging you, tell me. Say, "I can tell you don't quite trust me to handle this well. I understand, so I'm going to *prove* to you that you can trust me."

Pull that off and not only will I get off your back... I'll respect you even more.

8. "I *do* notice when others don't pull their weight."

I'm not blind. But I won't discipline anyone in front of you. Every employee, no matter how poorly they perform, has the right to confidentiality and privacy.

And sometimes I won't discipline those people at all, because occasionally more is going on than you know. You wouldn't realize that, though, because oftentimes...

9. "There are some things I just can't tell you."

Even though I would love to, and even though you and I have become friends. Still, I can't. Especially if it regards other employees.

10. "I worry – about *everything*."

I worry about sales. I worry about costs. I worry about facilities and employees and vendors and customers and... you name it, I worry about it.

So occasionally I'm snappy. Occasionally I'm distracted. Occasionally I'm tense and

irritable and short-tempered. It's not your fault. I'm just worried.

More than anything, I'm worried about whether I can fulfill the trust you place in me as your boss.

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