



## Cosmopolitan

July, 2016

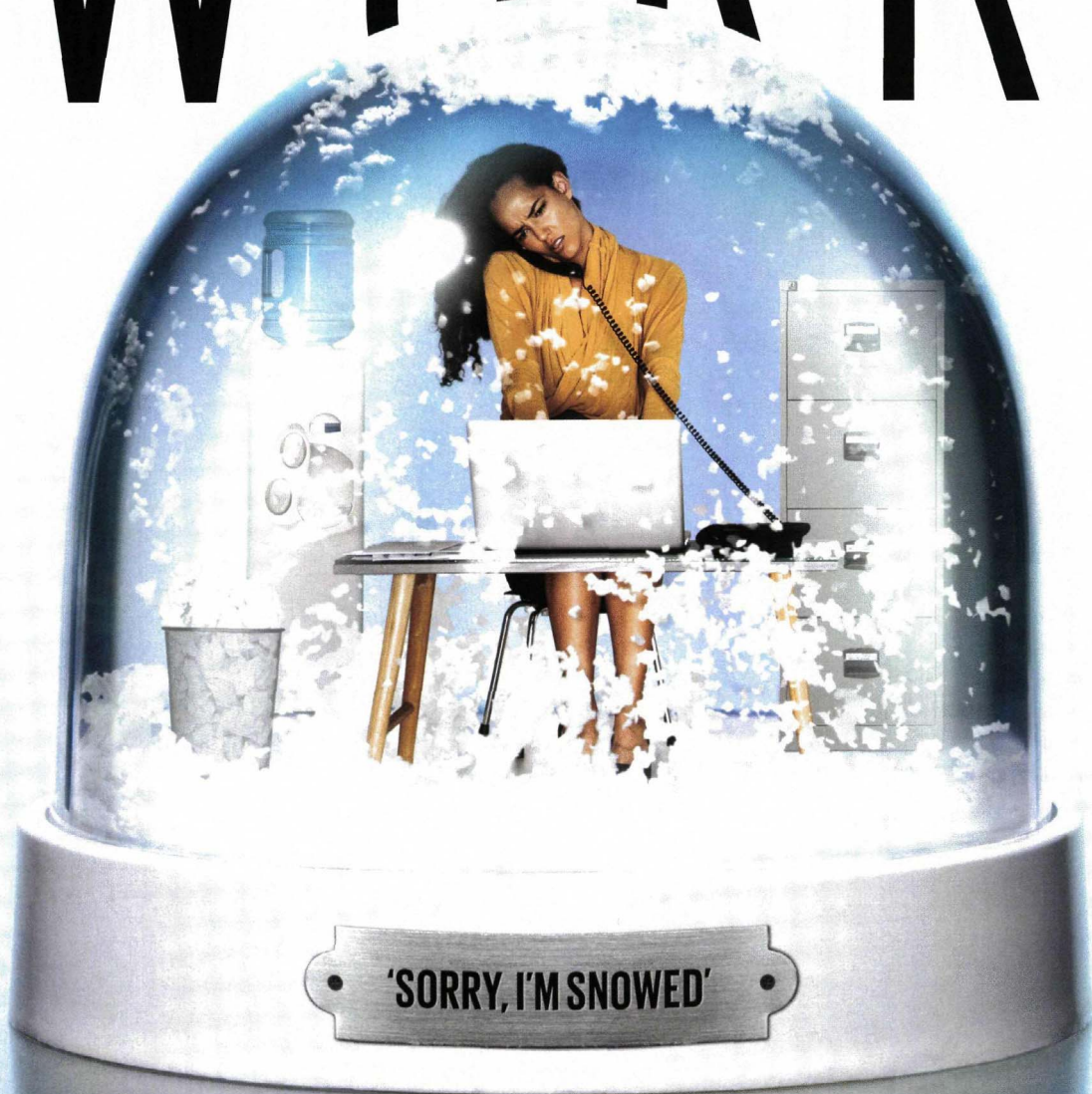
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# WORK



There's no glory in being the office martyr.  
So why are we competing to be the busiest?

If every social occasion descends into a work-related whinge, heed this: research has revealed the average worker overestimates their working hours by up to 10 per cent. The professional mutation of the "humble brag" is not only a conversation-ender, but can also increase your stress levels. So enough already with the competitive late-working chat. Change the subject! **COSMO**

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# HOW TO MANAGE YOUR MANAGER

IT'S NOT ABOUT SUCKING  
UP PER SE... WE'RE JUST  
SAYING IT DOESN'T HURT  
TO MAKE YOURSELF MORE  
INDISPENSABLE







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**IF YOU'VE EVER  
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INTERVIEW AND  
TALKED ABOUT  
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YOU'RE APPLYING  
FOR WOULD BE  
GREAT FOR YOUR  
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WRONG WAY.**

"I'm looking for someone who is talking about what they are going to give to the organisation – not what it is going to do for them," explains Sheryl Sandberg, the COO of Facebook and author of *Lean In*. "When you look for a job, it's not about you, it's about them... How are you going to help them succeed?"

What Sandberg is talking about is managing up. Or in other words, managing your manager. By understanding what makes your boss tick, you can help them succeed and also make yourself look way better in the process. No, it's not just another term for sucking up. It's about learning to create a relationship that benefits you and your boss, makes for a great working environment and gets you noticed, rewarded and even promoted along the way. It's a win/win situation.

Four out of five workers believe that selling yourself is the key to business success, according to a US study – yet

62 per cent of us spend less than an hour a day doing this at work. So, how can you sell yourself to your manager effectively, again and again?

Firstly you need to work out what your boss wants and how they work, explains Simone Milasas, a business coach. "You need to listen and watch how they act and how they talk," she says. "Is your boss extremely punctual? Do they have a to-do list and like to tick everything off at the end of the day? Perhaps they tend to work on many projects at once? You could even ask your boss outright: 'What do you require of me today/this week/over the next six months?'"

Once you've analysed what makes your manager tick, you

need to adapt how you work in order to give them exactly what they need.

"If you normally complete a project before showing the results, but you have noticed that your manager likes to know what you're doing and when, then give them regular updates," suggests Milasas. "It doesn't have to be a formal daily report, but check in with them and tell them: 'Today I'm working on this project – it's moving really well.'"

"If you've noticed your boss responds well to being asked questions and getting involved in whatever you're working on, start including them in what you're doing. Ask: 'I've got a tricky situation; what would you do?' It's not necessarily about changing the

work you do, but changing how you produce it to align with their work technique."

**CLAIRE\*, 33,**

**A SUSTAINABILITY**

**MANAGER AT**

**A MULTINATIONAL**

**COMPANY, DID**

**JUST THIS.**

After she noticed her manager tended to praise staff for any work that led to cost savings and operational efficiencies, she devised a new strategy to support the company's corporate responsibility and sustainability journey. ➡➡

work



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**IF YOU'RE THE BOSS....**

...it's important to recognise and give credit to employees who are giving you what you want. "Always acknowledge staff when they have done something great, so they feel valued and appreciated," says Milasas. It's also important to listen to what your team has to say. "A great boss is willing to receive the awareness and expertise that every person on their team has, and use that to their and the company's advantage. A good manager should allow staff to contribute as much as they possibly can."

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"I tailored the strategy to impress my boss," she says. "I know she is interested in cost saving so I particularly focused on that one element. Demonstrating my capacity to put this in place and lead it makes our business a leader in its field too – which makes both me and my boss look good." The strategy paid off. "She is now supporting me with whatever I need while I'm on maternity leave. I hope that eventually it will lead to a promotion and payrise."

### AS CLAIRE HAS DISCOVERED, IN A WORLD WHERE WE CAN NO LONGER RELY ON

#### A JOB FOR LIFE.

managing up can help you to keep control of your career. "Today your life *is* your career so you have to look at what you would like to create as your future," says Milasas.

"If you're doing something you love *and* you're great at it – which you can help prove by managing up – then you can expand both your capacities and the chances you'll keep your job. Managing up is a great way to help navigate a successful career path."

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that you'll start managing up when you're in a less junior role or you're completely settled into a new job. The time to *manage up* is right now, no matter where you are. "Of course, take the time to observe your new team and manager, but you should be trying to give them what they want and need as soon as possible," says Milasas.

Managing up does not always go to plan, however. If you're working extra hard to help your boss succeed but you're not being acknowledged for all your effort, it can be demotivating and frustrating.

Laura\*, 29, a management consultant, recalls: "Early on in my career I worked for a master delegator – by which I mean I did all the work and he took most of the credit! I once worked until midnight on a presentation he'd asked me to help him with. We had a similar workload ahead of us so I discussed it with him the following day, and asked whether he would pitch in to do some of the grunt work. He not only said 'no', he then wrote in my review that I had a tendency to panic and exaggerate! Meanwhile, he was getting kudos for pleasing a challenging client off the back of my work."

Milasas recommends dealing with situations such as this one by asking some non-confrontational questions of your manager. "If you feel like it's time to flag that you're working hard to help your boss but not receiving any credit or acknowledgement, say to them: 'I'm a little confused. I need some help.' Then ask questions such as: 'Can you explain to me why you did this? How do you see this looking? Where do you see me within the company?'"

"This shows you're asking for information rather than spoiling for a fight. If they give you a straightforward answer, then you can decide whether they simply didn't realise they weren't acting appropriately, or if they are planning to continue taking advantage of your hard work and your skills." In which case, it may be time to manage up somewhere else.

## HOW TO MANAGE UP DIFFERENT TYPES OF BOSS

HUMAN BEHAVIOUR EXPERT DR JOHN DEMARTINI REVEALS HOW TO DEAL WITH A TRICKY MANAGER

#### ► THE IDEALIST:

BELIEVES ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE AND EXPECTS YOU TO THINK THE SAME.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Define which part of their request you believe is realistic, and get it done efficiently and effectively. Then define which part of their request you think is unrealistic and ask them for feedback on how they suggest you complete this task in the allotted time."

#### ► THE PEOPLE LOVER:

LOVES BEING AROUND PEOPLE BUT CAN BE GOSSIPY.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Thank them for their attention, conversation and information, but let them know it might be considerate and respectful to speak directly with the individual they are talking about."

#### ► THE RESULTS-DRIVEN BOSS:

INTERESTED IN WHAT THEY CAN ACHIEVE AND WHAT'S IN IT FOR THEM.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Ask what specific outcomes they hope to achieve and how you can help them do this. Also ask what other projects they'd prefer you to postpone until their main objectives are concluded."

#### ► THE CHARISMA QUEEN:

CHARISMATIC AND INSPIRATIONAL BUT CAN BE WISHY-WASHY WHEN IT COMES TO GETTING THINGS DONE.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "First thank them for their inspiring words and actions, then ask what specific actions you can take to help fulfill their needs. This will give you clear objectives."

#### ► THE METHODICAL MANAGER:

RELIABLE, CAUTIOUS AND CONSCIENTIOUS, WITH STRONG OPINIONS.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Ask for their detailed opinion about what they would like you to work on as a matter of priority. Ensure you're on the same page in order to get the best results and impress them."

#### ► THE BULLISH BOSS:

ALWAYS THINKS THEY ARE RIGHT, NOT GOOD AT LISTENING TO OTHERS.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "If you feel your boss is wrong about something, gather factual, objective data and ask them to clarify their view. Objective facts can help calm down any subjective bias. Hopefully your boss will respect your calm, objective approach."

#### ► THE PEOPLE PLEASER:

YOU NEVER KNOW IF YOU'RE DOING THE RIGHT JOB BECAUSE THEY'RE SO POLITE.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Ask them to provide you with positive and negative feedback so that you can improve on your performance in the future. Feedback assessments that provide both praise and constructive criticism help build more refined skills."

#### THE PANICKER:

BAD PLANNERS, SO EVERYTHING IS URGENT.

**MANAGE THEM BY:** "Figure out which part of their request is feasible and which isn't within the time frame given. Ask for tips on how they suggest you can achieve the task in the time they've allotted." **COSMO**