

TIPS for CONFRONTING YOUR BOSS

- **Work on you first, the boss second.** Most people tend to exaggerate their boss's problems and ignore how they may be contributing. Get your emotions in check by looking for how you may be adding to the problem.
- **Hold the right conversation.** Most people think they are giving their boss feedback but fail to get to the real issue that concerns them. For example, if your primary concern is that your boss doesn't respect you, find a way to discuss that issue without skirting around it.
- **Start with safety.** It can be tough to confront your boss, but it is completely possible to do so without rupturing the relationship if you can help your boss feel safe. People feel psychologically safe when they know you care about their interests and respect them.
- **Facts first.** Don't start with your harsh judgments or vague conclusions. For example, "I don't trust you" or "You're a control freak." Instead, start with the facts. Strip out any judgmental or provocative language and be specific. For example, "After you told me you brought me up for a promotion in the HR meeting, two people at that meeting e-mailed me and asked me why I wasn't recommended by you."

ABOUT THE RESEARCH. The study collected responses via an online survey of 564 individuals in September of 2005. Margin of error is approximately 3%.

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According to our study of more than 550 people, the reasons most people assume someone quits his or her job—such as bad work assignments, unacceptable hours, or low pay—are actually the least common concerns. In fact, **more than 50 percent of employees surveyed said a disagreeable boss was their number-one reason to pack up and leave.**

In fact, two out of every three people who are bugged by their boss are in the process of looking for other options. But the problem is not primarily the disagreeable boss; the problem is people's unwillingness to candidly share concerns about their boss-employee relationship.

Only one in five people have even attempted to fully lay out their concerns with the boss. Almost two-thirds will quit without ever really speaking their mind. It turns out that when it matters most, most of us do our worst at communicating our concerns. And the worst is saying nothing.

In contrast, those surveyed who do speak up and who are skilled at holding crucial confrontations with their bosses were more satisfied with their jobs and less likely to take another job. They were also less likely to badmouth the boss to others or to work around the boss's weaknesses.

About VitalSmarts—An innovator in corporate training and organizational performance, VitalSmarts is home to multiple training offerings, including Crucial Conversations, Crucial Confrontations, Influencer, and Change Anything Training. Each course improves key organizational outcomes by focusing on high-leverage skills and strategies. The Company also has four *New York Times* bestselling books: *Change Anything*, *Crucial Conversations*, *Crucial Confrontations*, and *Influencer*. VitalSmarts has been ranked by Inc. magazine as one of the fastest-growing companies in America for six consecutive years and has trained more than 650,000 people worldwide. www.vitalSMARTS.com

KEY RESULTS

More than **50%** say a disagreeable boss is their number-one reason to pack up and leave

66% of people who are bugged by their boss are looking for other options

Almost **66%** will quit without ever speaking their mind