

6 fast track hacks to impress a new manager

First impressions count for so much, and the good news is that if you can impress your new manager right from the start, there's no reason for them ever to change their view that you're a model member of their team. So whether you've joined a new team, or the new manager has joined yours, here are half a dozen ways to get off on the best possible footing with them.

Be nice

It sounds obvious – indeed it should be obvious, but not everyone does it. Of course you want to be warm and friendly to your manager, especially if it's they who have joined your team. However you also want to be seen as easy for everyone else to get along with too – colleagues, customers, suppliers. Make sure your boss sees no undercurrents or tensions, not because you're keeping them hidden but because there aren't any. And be seen to be discreet, trustworthy, and never one to gossip. See, it's not quite as straightforward as just a friendly smile and a good handshake.

Clock their working style

It's a fair bet that your new boss will appreciate you doing things the same way

they do. So consciously monitor how they do things and aim to do the same yourself. For example, do they like quick snappy emails? Do they back things up in writing? Do they keep meetings brief? Do they dress extra smart, or fairly casual? Do they prefer regular updates – verbally or in writing or by email? Do they natter over coffee from time to time, or stay focused on the job all day? Do they prefer to communicate face to face or via messages? The sooner you can blend into their way of running things, the easier it will be for you and the more they'll appreciate having you on their team.

Be open to change

A new manager will always make some changes, however smoothly things are running. They'll have their own style. And some will make significant changes, rightly or wrongly – either to the department, or to the way you've worked at your last job. But hey, they're the boss so it's their prerogative. What they need from you is to be open and willing to accept it. What they don't need is team members who say 'That won't work' or 'I've always done it like this'. So be positive and accepting of their way of doing things. You'll impress them with your open-mindedness, and readiness to make their job easier for them. And if you really hate their idea? Find a way to say, 'That could work, and we could also...' or 'especially if we...'. In other words modify their proposal by couching it in positive terms.

Don't talk about your last manager

The problem here is that you can't win. If you're positive about them, you make your new boss feel you resent the change. If you're negative, they'll suspect you'd speak the same way about them. So don't pass comment at all. Of course you can make reference to them when necessary, but don't make any judgements, open or implied. Once you and your new manager have settled into a strong relationship this should stop being an issue. They *might* be comfortable about it from the start, but you don't know that yet. Wait until you're sure. And even then, don't diss your previous boss/employer. It's never a good look.

Suggest small changes

Your new boss thinks they want innovative people on their team. And they probably do. So it's a good idea to show them you can be creative about solving problems and coming up with ideas. However if you suggest radical changes too soon, it's likely to make them uncomfortable – they might take it as an implied criticism of the current approach, or see it as undermining their

authority, or trying to show them up. So start with small ideas and, once you have the boss's trust, then is the time to propose your big innovations.

Start with a really smart idea

Bearing in mind that you don't want to scare the new boss with drastic suggestions early on, you do still want to look like an intelligent thinker. So make sure the first idea you voice is one which will impress them thoroughly. It doesn't have to be revolutionary – just smart. The point here is that when you first encounter a new manager, this is not the time to throw out lots of suggestions in the hope something sticks. Right now you need to keep shtum until you have that one really bright idea you know will make them look at you as someone to turn to when innovative thinking or creative problem solving are needed. Once they've formed that view of you, it will take a lot to shift it.

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