

# What's an appropriate holiday gift for a boss?

**Question:** "The holidays are approaching, and I need help thinking of a nice and reasonably priced holiday gift from my male boss (CEO). Any suggestions?" — *Sandy S.*

**See Comments below**

**disgruntled state employee November 14, 2008 at 11:06 am**

I like that, never gift up! I often have received absolutely nothing and no thanks at the holiday or secretary's day. It is nice to know you are appreciated. I usually would give candy, cookies or something like that, under \$15.

It hurts when you know they make a ton more money than I do and I get zippo! I have over 25 people that I support in my office and I feel that most of them would give a few dollars if just one would take up a collection and do a card.

**Lisa November 3, 2008 at 5:05 pm**

Here's how etiquette expert Emily Post answers the question, "Should you give your boss a gift?"

"Generally, no. It could easily be perceived as trying to win favor. However, a pooled gift from you and other employees that isn't too expensive or personal is fine."

Plus, I've been lucky — my bosses realize that the people who work for them make significantly less money than they do - they have always indicated that they would rather not receive gifts from their employees, and that people should not feel obligated to buy them presents.

**Celeste October 28, 2008 at 3:04 pm**

I am curious about Tami's response regarding 'never gift up'. What is the logic behind that?

**Norma October 23, 2008 at 10:02 am**

Homemade items are always nice. But if you keep it simple a gift certificate at the local coffee shop, such as starbucks is always nice too.

**Jo B October 17, 2008 at 1:10 pm**

I found that my boss was interested in the Civil War, so I've given him unusual books I've found (Civil War

battlefield maps, photos, encyclopedia of terms used then) and small artifacts I purchased in book and antique shops when traveling throughout the year. In the past, I've put together a basket with wine glasses, nice bottle of wine, cheese and crackers, It's a Wonderful Life DVD, scented pine cones and afghan for a quiet night before the fireplace gift pac. Also, one year I ordered personalized Christmas stockings for each member of my boss's family which was really appreciated. There are lots of creative ideas out there. Good luck, and have fun!

**Sarah October 17, 2008 at 1:08 pm**

I can always find something really nice at Red Envelope. <http://www.redenvelope.com>

**Tami October 17, 2008 at 1:03 pm**

I use to always buy a gift or make something for my boss but then someone at a high level gave me some advice and I finally took it. Never gift up. Therefore, if they are my boss, I don't buy them a gift or make them anything. It has been working well and saving my wallet at the same time.

**Mark October 12, 2008 at 12:48 pm**

I would try to give something he is interested in. For example, if he is a sports nut, give him a gift reflective of his favorite team(s). We have someone in the office who is a huge sports fan, so he has received a framed poster of his favorite baseball stadium, a desktop ceramic baseball park, things such as that.

**Kathy October 10, 2008 at 5:25 pm**

Depending on the budget, we have given our boss things like: his favorite candy, wine, giftcards to his favorite restaurant, etc. We have also given a digital photo frame and put together a family movie basket with candy, microwave popcorn, DVD's and giftcards for theatre tickets. Good luck with whatever you come up with.

Kathy in California

**Jennifer October 10, 2008 at 4:47 pm**

The first year with a new boss, who was Italian, I bought him a well researched bottle of Italian wine and chunk of the best parmigiano cheese I could find, he loved it. One year a cashmere scarf, one year a leather travel wallet (which was a huge hit because it kept him organized...I would load it before a trip and retrieve as he came back so he was always organized), so creativity is the key. I look for things that they would not have thought to buy for themselves that they will sit back and say, "Wow, she really thought this through". A well researched passion/hobby can give you all kinds of great ideas. No trinkets and nothing that needs to be dusted!

**Hard Working EA October 10, 2008 at 4:45 pm**

One year I put together an office emergency kit for my male boss. I picked up several items such as a mini sewing kit, Motrin, stain remover wipes, Tic Tacs, cough drops, airplane size of his favorite liquor (only if you have a joking relationship with your boss!), etc. I put it all in a tin marked Office Emergency Kit. All of the items have come in handy for him. He gets so many bottles of wine and other knick knacks from others it was nice to be able to give him something useful.

**Diana October 10, 2008 at 4:39 pm**

Try Things Remembered located in most malls. They have a good selection of appropriate taste & price range.

**Mary Ann October 10, 2008 at 4:28 pm**

I usually buy or bake something that his whole family can enjoy. Last year I gave my male boss a basket filled with homemade assorted Christmas cookies. To personalize it, I wrote the names of his 3 boys, including his wife and his names on stocking shaped sugar cookies. The whole family loved and enjoyed the cookies.

**Patty October 10, 2008 at 3:45 pm**

I have had several bosses in my almost 40 years as an admin professional. Some of the gifts I have purchased are business card case with their initials engraved on it, scarves, gloves, chocolates, etc. There are a number of items you can get, just look around at some of the things your boss keeps in his/her office. A couple of years ago, I found a beautiful cashmere scarf for my male boss, and he loved it and wore it every day of the winter. I made sure that it matched his coat; I also purchased one for a female boss several years ago with the same response. Both items were under \$20 at Sears.

**mary October 10, 2008 at 2:46 pm**

A wonderful idea that my supervisor did for people in our office were gifts in our names to Heifer International. Or maybe to some organization or group that they think highly of. This seemed more practical than the gift that ends up collecting dust.