My Co-Workers Resent My Promotion: How Do I Effectively Manage?

**Question:** “My boss is promoting me to supervisor, but several co-workers are unhappy about it. Ever since he told them, a few people have been very nasty to me. None of these co-workers showed any interest in the position, yet they now find fault with everything I do. I feel like I’m under a microscope. I don’t go to work every day to make friends. My goal is to do a good job and earn a living. After I’m promoted, should I talk to these people about their behavior or should I act like it never happened? How do I squash this jealousy and nip this behavior in the bud?” — *New Supervisor*

**Marie’s Answer:** Being elevated above your peers is seldom easy, but these back-stabbing co-workers sound particularly tough. So you need both a transition plan and some self-examination.

* Ask your manager to “reintroduce” you to the group as a supervisor when the promotion becomes official, explaining your responsibilities and the reasons for your selection. After acknowledging that this change will be an adjustment, he should stress that he expects everyone to be helpful and supportive.

* Rehashing the past would be counterproductive, since you want to start this new job on a positive note. But if the juvenile behavior resurfaces, immediately talk with your manager about how to handle it.

* Stop and take a long, hard look in the mirror. For some reason, these co-workers don’t want to work for you, so you should ask yourself why. Don’t just dismiss their reaction as jealousy.

* Recognize the importance of relationships, even if you don’t “go to work to make friends.” Otherwise, you’ll have a rough time as a manager. Management is not about friendship, but it is about inspiring and motivating your employees.

No one is fully prepared for the challenges of their first supervisory role. But your learning curve will be much easier if your new staff is pulling for you, not against you.