

Step up to the plate with an ineffective manager

Question: "My boss has a hard time keeping his feelings to himself. For example, he frequently tells us that he'll probably be fired because management doesn't like him. He also says that senior management has doubts about the value of our department. Because of his paranoid comments, the staff is starting to feel resentful toward the company, and morale is declining rapidly. Personally, I'm very happy with both the company and my job, but my manager's pessimistic attitude still drags me down. What can I do?" *Bummed Out*

Answer: Your group may have a manager, but they certainly don't have a leader. Leaders go to great lengths to maintain morale, especially during trying times. Your gloomy boss, on the other hand, seems determined to spread misery. From a practical standpoint, the most important question is whether your manager's uncertain future extends to the rest of you. To get a reality check, ask a reliable and trusted executive for an off-the-record opinion.

For example: "My boss feels that upper management has an unfavorable view of our department. Is there any truth to that?" Listen carefully to the answer and try to read between the lines.

If your group's reputation has been tarnished, take steps to clarify expectations and improve management perceptions. But if all seems well, focus on raising your co-workers' spirits by sharing success stories and discouraging depressing conversations.

Either way, you will help to fill the leadership vacuum left by your ineffectual manager. Fortunately, based on his own prediction, he will probably be gone soon.

Are you a motivational manager? If you're not sure, check out these tips: [Six Secrets of Motivational Managers](#).