

After a bad performance review, narrow your focus

Q: “I just had a horrible performance review in which I was given thirty days to improve as a supervisor. Now I'm afraid I might be terminated. My boss is a micromanager who keeps trying to take control of my staff and my duties. She gives a lot of negative criticism and never acts like a mentor.

“If she would stop micromanaging, I feel sure that I could demonstrate better leadership skills. How can I get her to change her management style? I love this job and don't want to lose it.” *Anxious*

A: Getting a bad review from a difficult boss may seem unfair, but right now fairness must take a back seat to rescuing your career. Since upper management has undoubtedly signed off on this warning, your job could very well be in jeopardy.

Critiquing your manager's leadership style will only make you seem resistant and defensive. Instead, you must focus on one single goal: changing her opinion of your job performance. Start by making it clear that you have gotten the message, then ask questions to define her expectations.

For example: “After thinking about our conversation, I realized that I could take a stronger leadership role with my team. What do you think I need to do differently? And what evidence will show you that I'm improving?”

Next, schedule regular meetings to discuss your progress. Although such frequent feedback may sound like torture, it's actually to your benefit. Otherwise, you won't know whether you've succeeded in shifting your boss's perceptions.

If you make every effort to meet expectations, odds are that your thirty-day review will be encouraging. But if success proves to be unattainable, you will need to reassess either your skills or your choice of employer.

Have you had a negative performance appraisal? Consider these tips: [How to Respond to a Bad Performance Review](#).

© Marie G. McIntyre, All rights reserved.