

# What are the politics behind your job title?

**Q:** “Our new Executive Director wants to change my job title from ‘communications director’ to ‘communications manager.’ My pay will remain the same, and I will continue to be responsible for all internal and external communication activities.

“I don’t believe the title of ‘manager’ accurately reflects the complexity of my work. In addition to producing press releases, newsletters and promotional materials, I also have frequent contact with the public. This is a small firm with six employees, and I have been here for ten years.

“When I meet with my boss to discuss this issue, I plan to show him my current job description and explain how my work is instrumental to achieving his vision for the company. Do you have any other suggestions?” *More than a Manager*

**A:** Titles can be a touchy subject. While some executives care very little about them, others have firm opinions about how they should be used. To develop a strategy for influencing your boss, you will need to learn more about his motives for making this change.

If your colleagues are also experiencing a title reduction, your Executive Director may simply feel that the “director” label is too lofty for such a small business. He might also prefer to be the only one who can claim that designation. If that’s the case, changing his mind could be difficult.

But if the title is still being used by others, then you need to know why you’ve been singled out for a downgrade. To shift your boss’s thinking, you will have to convince him that your work is equally complex and critical.

The bottom line is that if you hope to reverse this decision, you need to understand the reasoning behind it. Your first step, therefore, is to simply ask your boss why he feels a manager title is more appropriate for you. Once you hear his answer, you can determine the best way to make your case for maintaining the status quo.

*Getting a new boss means adjusting to a completely different set of expectations. Here are some suggestions for managing that transition: [Surviving a New Manager](#).*

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