



Unfair Criticism, Lost Loyalty and Rumors

Dealing with Unwarranted Criticism

You've just been chewed out by your boss about something that is inaccurate, unfair, and absolutely not your fault. You feel your blood pressure rise. You don't know whether to tell him what you really think of him or punch him in the nose (which is probably the same thing).

You resist, knowing that, at this point in your life, it's imperative to remain employed, but the feelings persist. You're mad! What can you do?

First, you can take a deep breath and remind yourself that your reaction is healthy. And the fact that you did not punch this guy is also healthy. No one likes to be criticized, especially if it is unwarranted. In the future, try these four steps.

One, ask questions. Even if you believe the criticism is unfair, delay reacting defensively. State that you're confused and that you'd like to understand it better. Then ask questions about specifics. "Exactly what I have done that is making you angry?"

Second, actively listen. This involves listening with more than your ears. It also involves paraphrasing. "Let me make sure I understand. You felt angry when I told one of the members our plans for

How to Lower Your Blood Pressure

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2. Listen with more than your ears.
3. Agree with some part of the criticism.
4. Accept your critic's right to feel any way he wants.

renovating the course? Is that it?"

Third, agree with some part of the criticism. You might offer, "I can understand how that made you angry." Notice that this is not agreeing with the criticism merely shows some degree of empathy. It is very disarming.

Fourth, accept his right to feel any way he wants; even if he is wrong... and do not take it personally.

If you follow these steps, you will find that your blood pressure remains low and the criticizer is left believing that you have heard and understood him.

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Loyalty Between Employers, Workers at an All-Time Low

Loyalty: faithful adherence to a person, government, cause, duty, etc.—
Webster's New World Dictionary Third Edition.

Gone are the days when employee/employer relationships are built on long-term trust and loyalty. There are occasional exceptions, like the following story I read several years ago. A

textile factory in Massachusetts was gutted by fire a month prior to Christmas.

Several hundred employees were suddenly put out of work, or so they thought. The employees feared that the owner (a single owner, not a corporation) would choose not to rebuild the company, but just close the doors and collect the insurance settlement.

Twenty-four hours following the fire, owner Aaron Feuerstein surprised employees by announcing that he planned to rebuild the plant immediately, with portions to be completed and operational in 90 days or less. Not only did Mr. Feuerstein begin immediate reconstruction of the plant, but he continued paying all 1,400 employees their full wages for the next 30 days and provided 90 days of insurance coverage.

He said it was his responsibility to both his employees and the community because they had been responsible for his success. This gentleman showed a tremendous amount of loyalty to his employees, above and beyond what many current-day entrepreneurs and corporations consider reasonable.

Except in rare cases like this, loyalty between employees and employers is at an all-time low. Employees no longer are rewarded with job security for many years of faithful service. Salary increases and benefits that coincide with long-term employment are often looked upon nega-

Editor's Note: I came across a couple of articles recently that seem to reach out and grab me, because I hear the topics everywhere I go. Our jobs can be quite stressful at times, and learning how to deal with that stress can save your life or avoid serious illness. Read on and find out you're not alone out there and maybe you can find something in these articles to help your situation.

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Tenure and experience seem to mean little these days because there are many up-and-coming turf professionals willing to work countless hours for less pay.