


Is your boss a BULLY? HR expert reveals what to do if you have a mean leader - and why you should NEVER threaten to quit your job

- HR expert Karen Gately has revealed her strategies for dealing with a bad boss
- Ms Gately says there are number of workplace appropriate actions you can take
- She cautions against retaliating with personal attacks or threatening behaviour
- Ms Gately adds it's possible to influence change by acting with integrity

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How your boss treats you at work can significantly impact your wellbeing and your chances of succeeding in your career.

Research shows 50 per cent of Australians will experience bullying during their career - a situation that can have a lasting effect on a person's confidence.

Karen Gately said when your boss is a bully, you have limited choices, you can either find a new job or challenge the behaviour.

'If you stand up to them there is no guarantee your feedback will be well received, but it's the only hope you have of influencing change.'

To help, Ms Gately has revealed her top tips for what you need to do and explains why you should never retaliate with personal attacks or threats.



While it can be tempting to snap at a boss who is behaving badly, this could jeopardise your chances of resolving the matter (stock image)

1. Avoid reacting

Before you think about approaching your employer, if you feel they've been out of line, take a moment to 'think before you speak', advised Ms Gately.

She said always take the time to prepare ahead of any conversation, as this will give you the best chance of responding to any points your boss may bring up and in the calmest way possible.

'Consider how you might deal with push back and keep the conversation a productive one.'

2. Act with conviction

Although it can take courage to take a stand, Ms Gately said it's important to be willing to hold those who abuse their power accountable.

'There is no excuse or justification for bullying regardless of who you are and the role you play.'

Regardless of whether you are speaking on behalf of yourself or another, remember you are asking your boss to take responsibility for their actions, and the damaging impact this has had.



Karen Gately, an Australian HR expert has revealed her best tips for dealing with a difficult boss

3. Influence awareness

The expert explained it is possible that a boss who is acting badly might not have any awareness of how their behaviour is making someone else feel.

'Help your boss to understand why their behaviour matters as much as it does and what you think they can do differently to have better success leading you and your team.'

4. Never retaliate

Ms Gately said you should never retaliate - as this response is neither appropriate or effective.

She said the best thing you can do is to behave in a way that allows you to feel proud and to remain calm while you figure out the steps you need to take.

'Your aim should be to influence your boss's thoughts, feelings and ultimately actions by delivering honest feedback with respect and sensitivity.'

What are some more common workplace bullying behaviours?

- * Abusive, insulting or offensive language or comments
- * Aggressive and intimidating conduct
- * Belittling or humiliating comments
- * Practical jokes or initiation
- * Unjustified criticism or complaints
- * Deliberately excluding someone from work-related activities

Source: SafeworkAustralia.org.au



Research shows 50 per cent of Australians will experience bullying during their career (stock image)

5. Avoid personal attacks and threats

In some cases it might seem like the only option you have available is to threaten your boss with legal action or resignation.

And while either might be appropriate at some point, you'll be unlikely to inspire change if they're used as a way to bring the situation to a head.

'Remain objective and communicate your desire for a positive work environment that will enable the whole team to thrive.'

6. Take an honest approach

No matter how upset you are, don't storm into your boss' office ready to take them on fuelled by anger and resentment.

Instead, if you have an opportunity to meet, think about opening up the discussion in an honest way: focusing on behaviour, rather than their personality.

'Be willing to talk about your motivations for raising the issue and the outcome you want to see,' Ms Gately said.

'Explain why you or other people have felt humiliated, belittled, intimidated or harassed by their behaviour.'

If you recognise yourself as a person who may have bullied others, then seek support from a person whom you trust (either within an organisation or externally).