

Your quick guide to:

UNDERSTANDING YOUR BOSS

One of the best things about being a PA is the challenge of building relationships with each new boss you support. But it's never easy – with each new boss comes new work styles, quirks, habits and expectations. This guide looks at how you can get on to your boss' wavelength quickly and easily.

Start by getting a one-on-one meeting booked in.

At this meeting:

- Find out your boss' priorities and goals
- Get a sense of their personality (although this will become clearer over time)
- Clarify what is expected in your role – the boundaries of what you'll do on their behalf
- Work out what commitments and resources you'll need to be successful in your job

This should give you a good base to build from.

Work out their 'work style'

We all work differently; in other words, we all have our own 'work style'.

If you can understand how your boss works, you'll be better at your job – it's as simple as that.

You can learn how your boss works through a combination of monitoring their personality and their specific habits. So, you should be asking yourself not only whether they're introverted or extroverted, but also whether they like to get in early or stay late.

If you can build a comprehensive picture of their habits and personality, you'll become proactive in your role. And ultimately, if you're a proactive PA, you'll have a long and successful career.

Follow us on:



Turn on the charm

To build a true understanding of someone, you need them to be open and transparent. And to open them up, you need them to like you.

This sounds obvious, but it can easily be forgotten. So, before you do anything else, focus on being positive, enthusiastic and welcoming – make your boss feel like they can tell you anything.

Once you see the real person, you'll be able to work out how you can make a real difference in their working life.

Make sure they understand you

To get to know who your boss really is, they also need to understand what you do.

So, make sure you have a clear job description in place, and that you clarify what 'ad hoc duties' might mean with them. Then tell them about your experience and personality – and be honest. If there are differences, work them out now.

Focus on the finer details

As you get to know your boss more and more, start to focus on their quirks and preferences.

PAs often tell us that it's the little things that count when building a great relationship with your boss. So, look out for minute details. Keep an eye on their mood at certain points of the day and see if there's a pattern. Also look at what typically triggers stress.

The more detailed your understanding of your boss' daily behaviours, the better you'll be at shaping their diary and commitments.

Be loyal

Understanding, like many things, depends on trust – you need your boss to trust you in order for them to reveal themselves.

So, avoid talking about your boss to other employees. If there's a problem, chat one-on-one and keep whatever is said between the two of you.

Follow us on:



Show an interest in their interests

The only way you'll build a lasting and meaningful relationship with your boss is by moving beyond work.

People are often different in work to how they are at home. By showing an interest in their life outside of work, you might find the real person. And if you know this version of your boss as well as the work version, you'll have a deep understanding of what makes them tick.

If you're a PA looking for high-end roles supporting influential business leaders, get in touch.

Visit our website:



Download our app:



Read our other guides:



Follow us on:

