

## Solopreneurs, What Kind of Boss are You?

### Self-Employment Means Always Having a Great Boss, Right?!

Joan decided to become self-employed to get away from a series of managers that wanted high productivity from her but had little concern for her personally.

At first being self-employed was great. What freedom! No one telling Joan what to do. But after only a few months something began to change. Suddenly she was working more hours than ever. She started her day at 7am and regularly left her computer on long into the evening and on weekends "just in case" an important email came through. She knew she needed to market her business, but mostly beat herself up for all the things she wasn't doing. At the end of each week, she felt exhausted, frustrated and angry that her business wasn't growing the way she had hoped. Even worse, she had no idea why she was feeling this way since she was pursuing her life-long dream.

Joan had unwittingly become the worst boss she'd ever had!

### Self-Bossing is Harder Than it Looks

Since you know yourself so well, you'd think it would be easy to manage yourself. But it can be very difficult to be both boss and employee. It's tough to have perspective when you are "it". Most of us end up pushing ourselves too hard and burning out, or not enough and getting nowhere.

***Curious to see how you are doing as a boss? Answer the following questions to find out:***

### Are You in Compliance with Labor Laws?

If you were an hourly employee, you would legally need to be given a lunch break and two shorter "coffee breaks". How often do you intentionally stop working entirely for a "mental health break" or eat lunch for a full hour away from your desk?

If you work overtime, you should be getting extra pay or be given "comp" time. How well are you keeping track of these and compensating yourself?

### How are Your Working Conditions?

Is your work area ergonomically correct? Do you have the equipment and tools you need to be successful, or are you always struggling to make due with what you have? Do you give yourself time and money for additional training and personal growth? Do you have access to support professionals if challenges at work come up?

### Are You Articulating Your Expectations for Yourself and Your Business?

One of the main reasons employees feel frustrated with their managers is that there are unspoken expectations instead of clearly defined ones. Since you are managing yourself, you are probably not setting concrete expectations for your work. Instead, we simply talk to ourselves in our heads. Have you ever actually listened to your own self-talk? What does it sound like?

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## **How Do You Motivate Yourself?**

What techniques do you use to motivate yourself at work? Are you setting clear expectations and offering yourself the support and tools to accomplish your objectives, or do you get yourself to complete work through criticism and self-recrimination?

What about performance reviews? Do you regularly check in with yourself to appreciate what you've accomplished, thank yourself for a job well done and re-evaluate whether what you are working on still fits the company's goals?

## **The Answer: Treat Yourself Like a Real Employee**

If your employee was someone other than you, you'd probably manage them very differently than you manage yourself, wouldn't you? The answer, then, is to treat yourself as you would others.

Even though you are a Solopreneur, the most effective way to run a business is to operate like a corporation with guiding principles, company goals and clearly articulated expectations. Appoint yourself CEO and operate as if you are an employee within the corporation (remember, CEOs are employees too).

Try it for a month or two. I think this new perspective will be much easier and enjoyable for you and your employee!