

## The Best Bosses Say These 9 Things

Employee engagement is always greatly heightened by excellent communication. That's why the most tremendous bosses use these 9 statements on a regular, and in some cases, daily basis. Start using these phrases regularly and watch your success as a manager take flight:

### 1. "Thank you."

As discovered when we did the key driver statistical research for my *New York Times Best Seller*, recognition is the number one driver of employee engagement. Furthermore, Millennials crave feedback and recognition. Make sure your recognition efforts are both consistent and meaningful. Your team members will really appreciate it.

### 2. "Regarding your career development, where do you want to be in six months and how can I help you get there?"

By asking this, the benefit is threefold. First, you are showing your direct reports that you care about their career development at the company. Second, you are telling them you want to help them advance. Lastly, you are leveraging the second most impactful driver of engagement from the aforementioned key driver analysis, that being career development.

### 3. "Here's what I'd like us to accomplish . . ."

One of the most valuable traits of exceptional bosses is clearly communicating their expectations. What distinguishes the best bosses from average or sub-par managers is the ability to communicate how employees' daily work fits into the organization's strategic mission and higher purpose. Mapping out a clear course for your team, and most importantly, explaining how the daily work is meaningful, will increase their pride and productivity.

### 4. "I want to utilize your strengths and what you do best . . ."

People want a job that utilizes their best skills and abilities. Luckily, many jobs have some variety in the type of work, or flexibility in how the work is done. For example, if one employee is great at working in Excel and another writes excellent reports, it could be possible to assign more work that matches these employees' skillsets. Recalibrating job content starts by understanding strengths, which is why the best bosses ask what their team members do best. Sometimes these conversations lead to re-casting employees into a different department, but it can help keep top talent within an organization.

### 5. "I want you to know that I have total confidence in you."

There is nothing more frustrating than a manager who does not believe in their team members' abilities. No one wants to be micro-managed. By making the statement above, you are not only instilling confidence in your team members, but also giving them the freedom to succeed on their

own, which furthers their pride and sense of accomplishment. Remember, you can always let your team know that they can come to you for help if they need it.

**6. “What more can I do to support you in your job?”**

The best bosses regularly offer support to their employees, and employees really appreciate it. You might even make the question more specific by asking, “What three things could I do differently in order to support you in your job?”

**7. “I’d like your opinion on something.”**

Exceptional bosses regularly ask for feedback from all team members, either individually, collectively, or through confidential employee surveys. More importantly, best bosses act on the feedback, making meaningful workplace changes as a result.

**8. “What are your passions and interests outside of work?”**

The best bosses take the time to get to know their employees on a personal level. Whether it is taking the time to ask what they like to do outside of work, how many children they have, or whether they have any fun vacations planned, the very fact that you are asking is showing that you view them as more than just an employee.

**9. What can we do better going forward?**

Let’s face it. Everything is not going to go as planned. People make mistakes, and when they do, fantastic bosses treat them as learning opportunities. See my blog called *Mea Culpa: The Importance Of Learning From Failure*. Failure is a teacher, and as such, an integral part of success. One of my favorite leadership quotes in this regard is from the All-time Great basketball superstar, Michael Jordan: *“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. 26 times I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”*

**So where do you go from here?**

Regularly revisit these best boss phrases. Better yet, distribute them to your entire management team, encouraging them to review the list of phrases at least once a month. Then watch your organization reap the rewards that will result.