

Manager doesn't appreciate my value

If you don't feel valued at work it's easy for your morale and performance to dip, leading to a downward spiral. Fortunately, there are a number of steps you can take before accepting the situation as-is or throwing in the towel.



What could be going on?

- Your boss isn't aware of the value you add.
- You aren't meeting your boss's expectations because you don't understand them, misinterpreted them, disagree with them, or your boss doesn't know what they want.
- You're struggling to meet your boss's expectations because you don't have the right skills, the job or company culture is not the right fit, or your boss has abnormally high expectations.
- Your boss doesn't like you or something related to you, which is influencing their opinion of your work.
- Your boss *does* appreciate your value — but doesn't communicate it well.

Ways to handle it:

1. Ask your boss for feedback.

It's critical to know where you stand and how you can improve, but unfortunately, most managers don't give enough feedback. You often have to ask for it:

"I would help me improve if you could share some feedback on yesterday's website redesign proposal. Can I schedule a time with you to discuss it?"

Directly ask about both the stronger and weaker aspects of the work:

“Could you tell me what you liked about the redesign? Why? Could you also share any areas that could have been stronger? What would you like to see included or omitted next time? Why?”

Keep asking why until you fully understand your boss’s expectations and thought process. If your boss isn’t forthcoming, try to draw them out by waiting patiently for a response or asking for more details.

Afterward, show your boss you appreciate receiving feedback. This will encourage them to give you more in the future:

“Feedback like that is really useful — thank you!” or
“That sort of feedback is exactly what I’m looking for.”

For more, see [My manager doesn’t give me feedback.](#)

2. Ask others for feedback.

This will not only give you a second opinion on whether your boss’s lack of appreciation is justified, but also boost your morale if your boss simply doesn’t show appreciation.

Reach out to colleagues and other people who know your work and can give meaningful feedback. It may take some time to get their buy-in, but it’ll be worth it: You’ll be able to celebrate your successes, make course corrections, and enhance your own professional development with confidence.

Feedback from others does not replace what your boss tells you. But it can add to it to create a more complete picture.

For more, see [How to ask for feedback.](#)

3. Seek a formal evaluation.

This is one of the best ways to understand how well you are really doing. Find out if your company's HR department offers 360-degree feedback, which includes feedback from colleagues, peers, supervisors, and your own evaluation. Other sources of formal feedback like customer satisfaction surveys or a performance review can also give you an idea of what you're doing right, where you need work, and how closely your boss's lack of appreciation aligns with reality.

4. Find out what your boss values and adapt to those expectations.

Observe your boss at work, see whom and what your boss praises, and, most importantly, ask about your boss's priorities with questions like:

- “What are your goals?” “What's most important to you?”
- “What kind of input do you value?”

Listen closely to your boss's answers for clues about how to frame your work in a way that your boss understands and that clearly communicates the value your boss wants to see. For example, a boss obsessed with the daily sales numbers is unlikely to appreciate your great design work for breaking creative ground.

Poor: “As you can see, this website design uses a number of visual elements that not only make the site look great, but should get the company creative recognition because no other design department has created anything this stylish.”

Better: “The new design makes it much easier to find our checkout page, upsell customers on higher-priced packages, and push undecided customers to buy. That should increase conversions significantly and boost online sales.”

For more, see [Spend 15 minutes thinking about what matters to your manager — and how you can help.](#)

5. Give your boss weekly status updates.

Don't assume your boss knows everything you do. Send weekly updates that show what you've accomplished, what fires you're putting out, and what else you're working on. This makes clear to you boss everything you're contributing. And it gives your manager an opportunity to provide feedback on your work and priorities, which can help you learn how to meet and exceed their expectations.

For more, see [Revisit how you update your manager](#).

6. Encourage your boss to give more praise and recognition.

When your boss does recognize you or your work, reinforce the behavior. Giving reinforcing feedback is one of the best ways to increase a specific behavior.

You can also try to encourage your boss to give recognition more readily by suggesting a meeting or event where it's easy for them to express recognition for a recent win. For example, emphasize that you'd just like your boss to say a quick "Thank you" to your project team or drop by an event that you and the team are holding. A simple display of appreciation from a boss who doesn't often show it can significantly improve morale for you and others.

For more, see [How to give reinforcing feedback](#).

7. Accept the situation — or look for a new manager.

If there's an unbridgeable gap between how much your boss recognizes you and what you need to hear, try to become more comfortable with the situation by finding that validation and feedback elsewhere. If that still isn't enough, and you've tried everything you can think of to improve the situation, you may want to make a change. Reach out to your HR department or other managers to see if there's a better fit within the organization working with a different team or manager. If not, it might be time to look for a position elsewhere.

Your boss can usually tell (and so can everyone else) when you're unhappy at your job, even if you think you're hiding it well. Don't let your performance suffer accordingly.