



The Toxic Boss

Objectives

- 1) To explore the concept of Leadership
- 2) To identify the difference between Power and Leadership
- 3) To identify the attitudes of a good leader

Participants

15 to 30

Time

90 minutes

Resources

- Worksheet "The Toxic Boss syndrome"
- Handout "Power and Leadership"
- Flip-charts (one per group)
- Markers

Flow

1. Introduction - 10 min

The facilitator explains the following:

"We all know them. The supervisor who constantly berates their people. The team leader who creates division within the group instead of harmony. The manager who condescends to talk to the individuals in their group, but never listens to their input. These are toxic bosses.

They sap the energy of the individuals in their groups. They are belittling, petty and loud. They consider themselves better than everyone else and they don't care who knows it. All they care about is "getting the job done". Or maybe it's "straightening this place out". In their drive to achieve their goal they ignore or overlook the other people in the organization. And in the end it hurts them too.

It is important to you, as a manager or executive, to be able to recognize these toxic bosses."

2. Group work - 30 min

The facilitator distributes to the participants the "Toxic Boss Syndrome" worksheet and invites them to form groups of 6 to 8 people.

- In each group each participant has to make the portrait of a "toxic boss"; describe his/her behaviour and the problems he/she creates (10 min).
- Then the participants share their portraits of toxic bosses and list their common characteristics (20 min) on a flip chart.
- They prepare a little role-play showing how the toxic boss behaves with his/her followers or employees.

3. Sharing in plenary - 30 min

Each group presents its role play and the flip-chart sheet summarizing the characteristics of a toxic-boss (5 min each)

4. Analysis - 20 min

The facilitator summarises the input of each group and use a flip chart to list the characteristics of a Toxic Boss. He invites, then, the participants to list the characteristics of a good leader in the next column (see below).

Toxic Boss	Good Leader

Then he distributes and comments the handout "Power and Leadership" and concludes by the definition of leadership:

"Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent."

Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills. Although your position as a manager, supervisor, lead, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this power does not make you a leader...it simply makes you the boss. Leadership differs in that it makes the followers want to achieve high goals, rather than simply bossing people around."