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Bad bosses can cause heart attacks

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0811/081126-bosses.html>

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THE ARTICLE

Having a bad boss could be bad for your heart. This is the conclusion of a Swedish study on management styles and health. The researchers concluded that poor managers can increase their employee's risk of developing heart disease. The Stockholm University study analyzed data on the health of 3,000 male workers. They compared the data with the results from questionnaires about senior managers. The questions asked workers if they thought their boss was considerate, communicated well and offered positive feedback. Other questions looked at how much work bosses gave to workers and how well they outlined their goals. The research team found that workers who respected their bosses were healthier and had fewer heart problems.

The report is published in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. It suggests that companies should re-train bosses to improve worker health. A healthier workforce will improve the overall health of the company. Investing in providing leadership skills to senior managers could be a good long-term investment. The researchers said a more supportive and understanding boss would reduce the chances of workers developing high blood pressure and stress-related illnesses. Magnus Larsson, an engineer for a large IT company, agreed with the report's findings. He believes his heart attack last year was because of his boss: "The guy was a monster. Working for him was a daily nightmare for eight years," Larsson said.

WARM-UPS

1. BOSSES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about bosses. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

bad bosses / your heart / management styles / managers / goals / positive feedback / reports / worker health / leadership skills / being understanding / daily nightmares

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. STRESS: Do you think the workplace is a stressful place? Complete the table below with your partner(s). Share what you wrote with other students.

Stress	Most stressful thing	How to reduce this stress
Boss		
Colleagues		
Customers / Clients		
Overtime		
Deadlines		
Job security		

4. LEADERSHIP: Students A **strongly** believe that good leaders are born and not made – you cannot be taught to be a leader; Students B **strongly** believe that anyone can become a good leader. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. I'M THE BOSS: Rate these skills about your leadership (10 = outstanding, 1 = very poor). Talk about your ratings with other students. Who is the best leader in the class?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| _____ Making decisions | _____ Project management |
| _____ Giving your staff work to do | _____ Motivating staff |
| _____ Disciplining workers | _____ Meeting deadlines |

6. MANAGER: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'manager'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. A bad boss can increase your risk of having a heart attack. | T / F |
| b. Managers who don't have a lot of money develop heart disease. | T / F |
| c. Interviewers questioned 3,000 men and women for their research. | T / F |
| d. Workers who respected their bosses had a few heart problems. | T / F |
| e. A report says that training managers would make staff healthier. | T / F |
| f. The report says training bosses is a good investment in the long run. | T / F |
| g. The report says bosses are good at understanding blood pressure. | T / F |
| h. An IT worker had a bad time every day and worked for a monster. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. bad | a. chance |
| 2. poor | b. thoughtful |
| 3. risk | c. conclusions |
| 4. considerate | d. advance |
| 5. outlined | e. ogre |
| 6. improve | f. no good |
| 7. investment | g. cut |
| 8. reduce | h. summarized |
| 9. findings | i. bad |
| 10. monster | j. outlay |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Having a bad boss | a. of 3,000 male workers |
| 2. increase their employee's risk of | b. related illnesses |
| 3. data on the health | c. improve worker health |
| 4. communicated well and offered | d. term investment |
| 5. who respected their bosses were | e. developing heart disease |
| 6. companies should re-train bosses to | f. understanding boss |
| 7. a good long- | g. could be bad for your heart |
| 8. a more supportive and | h. nightmare |
| 9. high blood pressure and stress- | i. positive feedback |
| 10. Working for him was a daily | j. healthier |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Having a bad boss could be bad for your heart. This is the _____ of a Swedish study on management styles and health. The researchers concluded that poor managers can _____ their employee's risk of developing heart disease. The Stockholm University study analyzed _____ on the health of 3,000 male workers. They compared the data with the results from questionnaires about _____ managers. The questions asked workers if they thought their boss was _____, communicated well and offered positive feedback. Other questions _____ at how much work bosses gave to workers and how well they outlined their _____. The research team found that workers who respected their bosses were healthier and had _____ heart problems.

The report is _____ in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. It suggests that companies should re-train bosses to _____ worker health. A healthier workforce will improve the overall health of the company. Investing in _____ leadership skills to senior managers could be a good long-term investment. The researchers said a more supportive and understanding boss would reduce the _____ of workers developing high blood _____ and stress-related illnesses. Magnus Larsson, an engineer for a large IT company, _____ with the report's findings. He believes his heart _____ last year was because of his boss: "The guy was a monster. Working for him was a daily _____ for eight years," Larsson said.

senior
goals
conclusion
fewer
data
looked
increase
considerate

pressure
providing
attack
published
nightmare
chances
agreed
improve

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the spaces.

Having a bad boss could be bad for your heart. This is _____ a Swedish study on management styles and health. The researchers concluded that poor managers _____ employee's risk of developing heart disease. The Stockholm University study analyzed data on the health of 3,000 male workers. They compared _____ results from questionnaires about senior managers. The questions asked workers _____ their boss was considerate, communicated well and offered positive feedback. Other questions looked at how much work bosses gave to workers and how well they _____. The research team found that workers who respected their bosses were healthier _____ heart problems.

The report _____ the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. It suggests that companies _____ to improve worker health. A healthier workforce will improve the overall health of the company. Investing in providing leadership skills to senior managers could _____ -term investment. The researchers said a more supportive and understanding boss would _____ of workers developing high blood pressure and stress-related illnesses. Magnus Larsson, an engineer for a large IT company, _____ report's findings. He believes his heart attack last year was because of his boss: "The guy was a monster. Working for him was a _____ for eight years," Larsson said.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'heart' and 'disease'.

heart	disease
--------------	----------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• conclusion• poor• 3,000• positive• outlined• fewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• published• overall• long-term• blood• agreed• daily
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STUDENT BOSS SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about bosses in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

BOSS DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'boss'?
- c) Do you think you would be a good boss?
- d) What makes a good boss a good boss?
- e) Are you surprised that bosses can give their staff heart problems?
- f) Why is it important to be considerate and give positive feedback?
- g) What other things in the workplace are bad for your heart?
- h) Have you had good or bad bosses?
- i) Can anyone be a good boss?
- j) Would you like to be a boss (why)?

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BOSS DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Would you like to read the report mentioned in the article?
- c) What would managers learn in their training to be a good boss?
- d) What should companies do to look after the health of their staff?
- e) Do you know of any companies that treat their staff really well?
- f) Do you think workers should be able to vote on whether their boss continues to be their boss?
- g) Do you think companies should spend a lot of time and money on training managers?
- h) Do you think workers should be able to sue companies if bosses give them heart problems?
- i) What would you do if your boss was a monster who made your working life a daily nightmare?
- j) What questions would you like to ask the study's lead researcher?

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LANGUAGE

Having a bad boss could be bad for your heart. This is the (1) ____ of a Swedish study on management styles and health. The researchers concluded that poor managers can (2) ____ their employee's risk of developing heart disease. The Stockholm University study analyzed data on the health of 3,000 male workers. They (3) ____ the data with the results from questionnaires about senior managers. The questions asked workers if they (4) ____ their boss was considerate, communicated well and offered positive feedback. Other questions looked (5) ____ how much work bosses gave to workers and how well they (6) ____ their goals. The research team found that workers who respected their bosses were healthier and had fewer heart problems.

The report is published in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. It suggests that companies should re-train bosses (7) ____ improve worker health. A healthier workforce will improve the (8) ____ health of the company. Investing in providing leadership skills to senior managers could be a good long-(9) ____ investment. The researchers said a more supportive and understanding boss would reduce the chances of workers developing high blood (10) ____ and stress-related illnesses. Magnus Larsson, an engineer for a large IT company, agreed with the report's findings. He (11) ____ his heart attack last year was because of his boss: "The guy was a monster. Working for him was a daily (12) ____ for eight years," Larsson said.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) concludes | (b) conclusive | (c) conclude | (d) conclusion |
| 2. | (a) increasing | (b) increased | (c) increase | (d) increases |
| 3. | (a) comparative | (b) compared | (c) comparison | (d) compares |
| 4. | (a) thought | (b) thinking | (c) thoughts | (d) thoughtful |
| 5. | (a) in | (b) on | (c) at | (d) of |
| 6. | (a) in line | (b) lineout | (c) outlining | (d) outlined |
| 7. | (a) for | (b) to | (c) from | (d) with |
| 8. | (a) overall | (b) overalls | (c) over all | (d) all over |
| 9. | (a) semesters | (b) term | (c) semester | (d) terms |
| 10. | (a) pressuring | (b) pressured | (c) pressure | (d) pressing |
| 11. | (a) believes | (b) belief | (c) believer | (d) believing |
| 12. | (a) nightly | (b) nighttime | (c) nights | (d) nightmare |

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about leadership and how to be a good boss. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. LEADERSHIP: Make a poster outlining why you are a good leader. Describe your most important leadership skills. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. PRESSURE: Write a magazine article about a worker who developed very high blood pressure because of his/her boss. Include imaginary interviews with the worker and the boss.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to a bad boss. Ask him/her three questions about his/her leadership style. Give him/her your three ideas on what to do to be a better manager. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

6. DIARY / JOURNAL: Write a diary entry about the different decisions you had to make in one day. Focus on those that affected other people. Were any of these made as a leader? Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T b. F c. F d. F e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. bad | a. no good |
| 2. poor | b. bad |
| 3. risk | c. chance |
| 4. considerate | d. thoughtful |
| 5. outlined | e. summarized |
| 6. improve | f. advance |
| 7. investment | g. outlay |
| 8. reduce | h. cut |
| 9. findings | i. conclusions |
| 10. monster | j. ogre |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Having a bad boss | a. could be bad for your heart |
| 2. increase their employee's risk of | b. developing heart disease |
| 3. data on the health | c. of 3,000 male workers |
| 4. communicated well and offered | d. positive feedback |
| 5. who respected their bosses were | e. healthier |
| 6. companies should re-train bosses to | f. improve worker health |
| 7. a good long- | g. term investment |
| 8. a more supportive and | h. understanding boss |
| 9. high blood pressure and stress- | i. related illnesses |
| 10. Working for him was a daily | j. nightmare |

GAP FILL:

Bad bosses can cause heart attacks

Having a bad boss could be bad for your heart. This is the **conclusion** of a Swedish study on management styles and health. The researchers concluded that poor managers can **increase** their employee's risk of developing heart disease. The Stockholm University study analyzed **data** on the health of 3,000 male workers. They compared the data with the results from questionnaires about **senior** managers. The questions asked workers if they thought their boss was **considerate**, communicated well and offered positive feedback. Other questions **looked** at how much work bosses gave to workers and how well they outlined their **goals**. The research team found that workers who respected their bosses were healthier and had **fewer** heart problems.

The report is **published** in the journal *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. It suggests that companies should re-train bosses to **improve** worker health. A healthier workforce will improve the overall health of the company. Investing in **providing** leadership skills to senior managers could be a good long-term investment. The researchers said a more supportive and understanding boss would reduce the **chances** of workers developing high blood **pressure** and stress-related illnesses. Magnus Larsson, an engineer for a large IT company, **agreed** with the report's findings. He believes his heart **attack** last year was because of his boss: "The guy was a monster. Working for him was a daily **nightmare** for eight years," Larsson said.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d 2 - c 3 - b 4 - a 5 - c 6 - d 7 - b 8 - a 9 - b 10 - c 11 - a 12 - d