

Topic: When a Review Goes Bad

A job review can be stressful and nerve-racking, but even worse if you receive a bad review about your job performance. Two of our experts offer advice on how to recover from a bad review and what you can do to improve your work ethic.

According to **Mangieri, director of employee relations and training at Western New England College in Springfield, Mass.**, while receiving a bad review, make sure you understand what the manager expects. “Listen carefully and paraphrase what you think your manager wants you to do. This is good way to make sure that you understand what your manager means rather than guessing at it. It also shows that you are trying to improve.”

Karen Evans, director of the career development center at Albright College in Reading, Pa., says immediately after a bad review, think about your personal strengths. “You’re not going to be able to rebuild credibility unless you’re feeling confident. Write out at least three or four positive attributes. It will help reframe your thoughts.”

Evans suggests coming up with a plan to improve your work performance based on your boss’s comments. Present the plan, along with a timeline, to your boss; this will help regain credibility.

“Sometimes your relationship with co-workers is a better indication of how you are doing than your relationship with your boss,” says Mangieri. “If you have not been doing your share of the work, communication will drop off. In more strained relationships, a colleague may confront you directly and the tone of that confrontation can be private, public, quiet or otherwise. Everyone has their limit as to how much they want to pick up the slack. When it gets to the point where your most even-tempered colleague blows off steam, you know you’re in trouble.”

Mangieri advises keeping documentation on situations and examples of unfair treatment if you feel that your manager and/or colleagues are improperly mistreating you.

“Another indicator is sarcasm from peers or jokes about you,” says Evans. “There is always truth to jokes.”

If you feel that leaving your job is the best option, Mangieri says doing something constructive will help you feel some sense of control over your destiny. “Work on your resume, evaluate your skill set. I also suggest the employee take advantage of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if your organization has one. The situation, real or perceived, can be stressful. Plus, there may be personal issues of which the manager is not aware.”

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Dick Jones Communications helps Western New England College and Albright College with their national public affairs work.