

# Confessions of a Former Station Manager Part IV

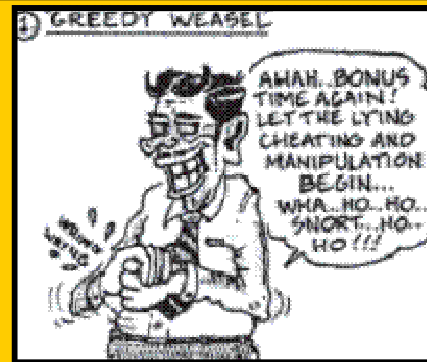
By Guy Norenberg, Branch 2902, Simi Valley, CA

## Five types of Bad Supervisors

### 1. The Greedy Weasel

**Description:** This Supervisor is the kind who wrings his hands at the thought of undeserved bonuses, ill-gained raises and baseless promotions, regardless of what he has to do and who he has to do it to, to get it. He feels he deserves money and sees his counterparts in the private sector making much more than he is. He feels he doesn't need to follow any rules of writ or ethics. He will lie, cheat, steal, and perjure himself to get what he needs. This is the most common sort of bad Supervisor.

**Handling:** Don't deal with this kind of Supervisor. Don't call the OIG first for this kind of Supervisor either, even if he's falsifying or cheating on the numbers. Sure it's a crime, what he's doing, but the OIG works for him. Never forget that. What you do is inform your NALC representatives first. Push your NALC representatives to take actions to get him out of the system. Strong continual pressure will move him out the door. This is the most dangerous kind of Supervisor, because he is without rehabilitation, his core motivations never change.



### 2. The Napoleon

**Description:** This Supervisor was born deficient in some area. It's very possible he/she was that kid in school everybody picked on. If he's short, he's loud. If he's tall, he's folding his arms. If female, she's going to show all the men. If he's male, he's going to date all the women. We all know Supervisors like this. He wants to stand on your head to assert his dominance. Postal concerns are secondary to his authority. Your concerns are insignificant. You KNOW someone like this one too!

**Handling:** This one can be rehabilitated. His problem is that he is compensating and lives in fear that he will be back in school again. The way you break through the eggshell he hides behind is to be kinder to this clown than you would your 4 year old. Talk to him like he was a 4 year old too,

because emotionally, that's where he's operating from. Contact your NALC representative and have meeting, after meeting, after meeting with him until he's talked into submission. Then, he will still be your boss, but happier in the role of what he will see as being a compassionate person. EVERY TIME HE PIPES UP, SURROUND HIM with kind words and reassurances. Use the parent to 4 year old technique until he calms down... not sarcastically, but to ease his childish fears. He will come around.

### 3. The Office Sweetheart

**Description:** Oh, we all have these too. Passive. Overly Polite. They will listen and love and show how much they care; but, for the life of them, they cannot get you a single rubber band when you need a dozen. They are completely ineffective to support your needs. You wonder how such mushy fluffy marshmallows ever got into management? Well, everybody likes them until somebody needs something to really get done, then we realize there is no leader on the floor, but rather more of a Coffee Carrying Counselor. This is no good as we want to do our routes and have a good leader handle all the BS we don't get paid to take care of for him.

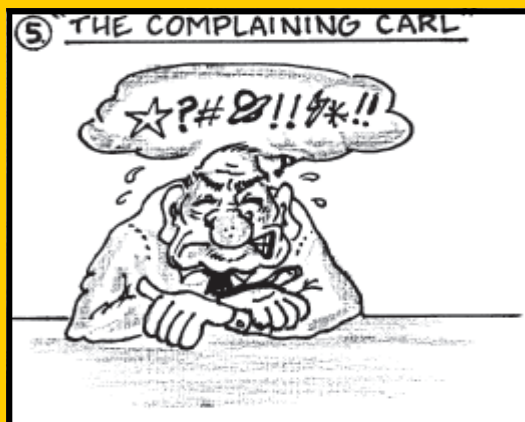
**Handling:** This person may not have the spine of a jellyfish or the guts to be a captain of any team, so what do we do? One cannot be taught courage. One cannot learn toughness. One needs to have it in them to do the job OR be within a carrier team that runs them. Use caution with this one, as his fears (as many as there may be behind the kissing of everybody's fanny he meets)... his fears rule his world. He hates it but is too afraid to be strong for you and stick to it. This person cannot be rehabilitated.



#### 4. The Politician

**Description:** This is my favorite of all bad Supervisor types. I had a Supervisor, who became a Postmaster, who is now up in the higher echelons of Postal Management, who is the consummate politician. I love this guy to death, no matter how many times the schmuck stabbed me in the back. He reads "Machiavelli" like I read "Sun Tsu". (Google the names). Everything that this kind of Supervisor does is so wishy washy that you will NEVER know where he's coming from or what HIS opinion truly is! Signs of this kind of bad Supervisor are that he finishes sentences for you, overly praises those with power over him, and his viewpoints blow with the wind of favor wherever it might go. This kind will do you in and you will never know it. He will disavow any participation in anything wrong and blame all he does on all around him who do not have power.

**Handling:** HANDLE WITH CARE. You may run this kind of Supervisor and be his boss. Manage him through your power bases. YOU MUST PLAY POLITICS WITH THIS ONE. 'Nuff said.



#### 5. The Complaining Carl

**Description:** He whines. He cries. He frowns. He doesn't like it. The cup is always half empty. He is a dark cloud on your horizon even on a sunny day. His wife beats him. Her husband never takes her out for dinner. Instead of "How are you today?" he says, "Hey Chief! Volume sucks don't it?" to start you off with a negative tone. He's a downer because that's how he feels and he wants you down too. He is not a fighter. He is not a positive leader. He's a sulking sloth. Perhaps he got into management because he was a rehab and they wanted to stop his whining about nixies. Maybe he got into management because his boss was a Complaining Carl too and they hit it off? Likely he got into management because he would tell how bad everything is and what he

would do differently, but he doesn't. Either way, this Carl needs some serious help.

**Handling:** HE needs a hand on his shoulder as often as possible. NO NOT LITERALLY. Touching your supervisor might give him or her the wrong impression. Either you'll be up on charges for assault or they may want to date you. Both are not what you're looking for. What I mean, is that instead of grabbing him by his jowls and saying "It's gonna be fine, ya doofus!", you need to look him in the eyes and flood him with positive words about the world, even if you feel differently. Buy this idiot a coffee or place a flower on his desk. The jerk needs it.

In your life's work experience, you may feel these five bad supervisors are not exclusive to the Postal Service. You're right! These five exist in all businesses. So you may wonder, "What is a good supervisor like?" Well, that's up to you. What motivates you? What would you like to see? For me, I'd like to see someone who likes their job, is positive, reliable, and can handle pressure... because I give a lot of pressure.

Those listed as being beyond rehabilitation, should be let go. We don't need any crooks or marshmallows in the Postal Service. I don't want my wallet stolen and don't want to deliver my own dog letters. Supervisors need to be able to do the job. Before we RIF the good ones, we should weed the bad ones out.

What do you think?

Be well!

GUY NOHRENBURG Letter Carrier Simi Valley

Feel free to write me at [tindad@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tindad@sbcglobal.net) or say something intelligent in the blogs for this article. The summer discount should bring volumes up a bit. We will recover from this recession. Priority Mail is the best deal in the shipping business and Intelligent mail will bring volume up even more in November. Advocate the United States Postal Service, because it represents YOU! Remember, we've seen this all before. Buy an "old-timer" a cup of coffee and he'll tell you.