

# Bosses & Subordinates

## Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

*It is information of the second sort that will be our primary concern, since our most basic task is to evaluate the reasons and evidence that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.*

## Reading

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). How does this work with someone who has all the power—like my boss? In *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most* (2nd ed., pp. 258–261). Penguin Books.

Stone, D., Patton, B., & Heen, S. (2010). If I'm the boss/parent, why can't I just tell my subordinates/children what to do? In *Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most* (2nd ed., pp. 264–267). Penguin Books.

## Questions

1. What suggestions do Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, and Sheila Heen give for trying to influence the behavior of those who hold power over you?
2. What considerations do Stone et al. give for dealing with a potentially abusive boss? Do they expect you to stay in such a relationship?
3. On the other hand, how do Stone et al. recommend that you try to influence the behavior of those over whom you hold power?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.