

Figure C10.4 Case 10—The Art of Managing Up

Managing up is a term drawn from the business literature¹; however, it is a concept that can inform teachers' leadership moves on teams that include both teacher colleagues and supervisors, such as instructional facilitators, coaches, or administrators, as in the case at Paint Creek Elementary School. Managing up is not about manipulating or "kissing up" to your boss, as some believe. Instead, it involves strategies that support your boss's goals, your own goals, and the goals of the project. Managing up involves being more deliberate in advancing the goals of your team and organization. The following are some examples of managing-up strategies:

- **Ensure frequent two-way communication** (verbal or written, whichever is the way that the supervisor most prefers to receive information; avoid surprises)
- **Deliver the results your supervisor needs, and exceed these whenever possible** (use your supervisor's time wisely; don't take up time or resources with trivial matters; demonstrate your expertise; do your homework—cite research, experience, data to support your ideas)
- **Anticipate problems; provide solutions** (share potential problems on a timely basis before crises develop; provide creative ideas and possible options for how to proceed; let your supervisor know what you can do for him or her; stay current)
- **Be dependable, honest, and trustworthy** (honor commitments, schedules, constraints; be forthright in your communications)
- **Think of your relationship with your supervisor as a partnership** (understand your supervisor's perspective, goals, aspirations, work style, and pressures; identify how your interests and objectives align; position ideas from your supervisor's perspective; check for agreement on critical points)
- **Understand and take responsibility for your own management style** (recognize and manage your strengths, weaknesses, goals, blind spots, pet peeves, and personal needs; monitor your own responses to being managed by others)
- **Use and acknowledge your boss's strengths** (go to your supervisor for his or her expertise; use his or her skills to advance the team's work)
- **Compensate for your boss's weaknesses** (provide support and resources in these areas)
- **Avoid your boss's pet peeves** (these may include being late for meetings, coming unprepared, interrupting, or other behaviors)
- **Request feedback/advice, and learn to accept and act on it** (don't wait for feedback when it may be too late to act; seek it out, own up to your flaws, decide how you can change in response; drive your own growth and development; let your manager know what you need to be successful)

¹Strategies are drawn from two business sources: Carlone, K., & Hill, L. A. (2008). *Managing Up: Expert Solutions to Everyday Challenges*. Boston: Harvard Business Press; Turk, W. (2007, March-April). The Art of Managing Up. *Defense AT&L*, pp. 21–23. Retrieved from <http://www.uthscsa.edu/gme/documents/TheArtofManagingUp.pdf>

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