

THIS IS THE BOOK BOSSES DON'T WANT YOU TO READ!

**WHO'S AFRAID OF THE
BIG, BAD BOSS?**



How to Survive 13 Types of
Dysfunctional, Disrespectful,
Dishonest Little Dictators

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1) Why did you write *Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Boss? 13 Types and How to Survive Them*?

Whenever I'd go into organizations to help managers solve business problems, I'd meet employees who would tell me horror stories about how badly their bosses behaved—not just in the way they treated employees, but also how their bosses misused company resources for their own benefit. These employees would ask me, "*Isn't there something I can read that will help me learn how to deal with this boss?*" Unfortunately, unless their boss was a blatant bully or idiot, there just weren't any books out there that could help these folks. Most of the available books took the position that deep down inside, managers really want to be "good," and that a responsible employee can help her or his manager learn to be a good boss. But the truth is that some bosses *intentionally* behave badly and want to get away with being bad! They can't be "managed" by employees. So I wrote this book to help employees deal with that kind of boss.

2) Who is this book for?

Anyone who has a boss! Employees at all levels and in all industries. Even bosses who report to other bosses. And even if you have a good boss, there's no guarantee that you'll report to that boss for as long as you have your job—bosses move around. It's a good idea to know in advance the types that are out there so you can identify them and plan a survival strategy for when it happens to you—you could end up reporting to a bad boss at any time in your career.

3) What do you mean by a "bad boss"? Do most bad bosses have the same characteristics?

"Bad bosses" intentionally and routinely do things for their own benefit or pleasure, and in so doing, they hurt their company, customers and/or employees.

Most bosses have a bad day every once in a while, but that doesn't make them "bad." For example, if your boss hollers at you one day, but is civil almost all of the time, that's not a bad boss—that's just a boss behaving badly on one day. But if your boss hollers at you every day, or every other day, and smiles at your reaction to being hollered at, then you're being hurt—that's a bad boss. Or, if your boss takes a company pen home by mistake, that's not a bad boss—that's just a boss making a mistake. But if your boss takes company assets frequently, or takes valuable assets and tries to cover it up, your company is being hurt—that's a bad boss.

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4) How can your book help someone who has a bad boss?

People who work in dysfunctional situations sometimes can't believe that bosses actually do the inappropriate things they get away with, even when they see it happening with their own eyes. This book assures employees who report to bad bosses of three things:

1. They're not crazy; it's really happening;
2. It's not their fault; and
3. They *can* take control of their work life!

Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss? 13 Types and How to Survive Them shows employees that they're not alone by sharing real-life stories about other bosses who have done some of the same things they're witnessing; three stories of each of the 13 types are shared. The book helps employees identify their boss's type, and then it tells them how they can "survive" working for that boss without getting hurt or with a minimum of negative consequences. Each chapter includes a self-test to help employees objectively weigh how bad their situation is, and then it gives them specific strategies that they can use immediately.

Best of all, *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss?* doesn't try to convince employees that *they're* responsible for managing their boss—that's the job of their boss's boss, who might also be a bad boss if he or she isn't managing the employees' boss!

5) How did you come up with the stories in this book? Are they all true?

Yes, as unbelievable as they may sound, the stories are all true. I've altered the identities of individuals and organizations to make them unrecognizable, but everything that's described actually did happen.

Most of the stories in *Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss?* are eye-witness accounts of things I personally saw and experienced during a five-year "under-cover" study I conducted. I closed my business, stopped consulting, and got hired as an employee in 11 organizations. I worked in the northeastern and southwestern United States, and in several different industries. While working at the jobs I was hired to do, I observed, first-hand, the uncensored behavior of managers at work in the organizations that employed them. I experienced how they treated me, saw how they treated other employees, and I saw them doing things that cost their organizations time, money and customers, and resulted in the loss of good employees.

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6) Did the bosses you studied know you were watching them?

No, absolutely not! They hired me through their normal hiring process to fill real jobs they needed someone to do. I responded to newspaper ads, online ads, recruiter-listed ads and requests for temporary help. I was just another employee, as far as they were concerned, and no one in their organization knew I was conducting a study.

7) What was it like working undercover as an employee after you had held higher positions than some of your managers and had been the president of your own company?

Shocking! I knew how to be a good employee, and I set out to be the best employee I could be. I always learned about the organizations' goals and purpose and tried to use my skills to advance its cause; after all, they *were* paying me. But I was shocked to encounter managers who wouldn't let me do a good job because it interfered with their personal agenda, whether it was to pretend to be something they weren't or to cover up something incriminating about what they were or were not doing. There were times when I became overwhelmed by the insanity I was seeing—people in responsible positions earning high salaries and working against the organizations that entrusted them with responsibility; people forcing employees to contribute less or forcing them to harm the organization in other ways. On a few occasions, I stayed too long so I could observe a particular outcome, and the stress got the best of me. Once, I became ill and had to see my doctor—and *I* didn't have to be there. It gave me a good sense of what it's like for employees who don't have many employment options.

8) Suppose someone reads your book and says: "Hey, that sounds like me!" Could they be hurt by the things you say in your book?

It's unlikely that anyone will make that association. Most of us go around believing that we're much nicer and much more principled than we really are. It's hard to acknowledge and accept that we behave badly. People who practice the kind of self-examination that would lead them to see themselves in this book are probably not bad bosses—they're not in the book. And I've taken great care to disguise people and organizations in the real-life stories so they're unrecognizable.

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9) Is Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss? a psychology book? Is it a book that's trying to get employees to rebel? How would you describe it?

No, it's not a psychology book; it doesn't get into any discussion of theories or try to explain *why* bosses behave the way they do—knowing the reasons *why* they do what they do wouldn't help employees anyway; employees need to know how to deal with *what* these managers do. This book is not an attempt to create anarchy in the workforce, either. If I had to categorize it, I'd call it an "employee survival guide"—a "how-to, self-help, career-advice" book. It offers practical advice that employees who report to bad bosses can act on immediately—and they don't need any degrees to understand it.

10) What's different about your book in comparison to all the other management and career books out there?

Most books that describe management behavior are the result of studies in which the managers knew they were being observed. When people know they're being watched, they tend to behave differently—better than they would if they weren't being watched—so there isn't a lot of information in management books about what *really* goes on in the workplace. That's the beauty of my project—the managers did not censor themselves, they just behaved normally.

Also, career-advice books tend to blame employees for their bosses' bad behavior. They tell employees to be more assertive or confident, or to practice fancy communication skills, or to use conflict and negotiation skills, or to try using a different personality style. They assume that managers will change if their employees do these things. That's not going to happen with a bad boss. Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss? is realistic: it tells employees what they *can* do, and what *will* and *will not* work with a boss who intentionally behaves badly.

11) How can people get a copy of Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Boss? 13 Types and How to Survive Them?

They can order it online Amazon.com or via their local bookstore.
The ISBN is 978-0-9800390-1-6; 250 pages; \$15.00