

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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INTRODUCTION

Wallace, the Director of Financial Operations at a large company, didn't like finance. He liked to teach management classes and give advice. Eventually, his position was "downsized." His experience and MBA in Finance didn't qualify him for the profession he wanted to work in yet he rewrote his resume and marketed himself as an Organization Development specialist.

Sidney, a Vice President at another large company, didn't know what skills the "Director of Organization Development" position required when he interviewed Wallace. He liked Wallace, so he hired him to design and carry out a cultural transition.

Wallace didn't know how to design a cultural transition or how to write the business plan for his new department, so he hired Sally, a legitimate Organization Development specialist. Sally spent many hours teaching Wallace how to design a cultural transition. She wrote the business plan and coached Wallace in how to present it to Sidney. Wallace made Sally delete important functions from the business plan because he didn't understand them and didn't think he could explain them to Sidney. He prohibited Sally from talking to Sidney in his absence.

Intimidated by Sally's knowledge and competence, Wallace built a case for terminating her when he thought he had learned enough. He labeled her as a difficult and uncooperative employee. Sally lasted for four months.

What would you do in Sally's situation?

There are some bosses you can never please. You can try to "manage" your boss by changing your behavior, adopting a different personality style, using fancy communication or negotiation techniques, practicing conflict management skills, walking on egg shells or walking on water, but none of these strategies will work with a boss who doesn't want to get along with you. None of these strategies will work with a boss who wants to dominate you or who wants to get away with something inappropriate. This bad behavior is deliberate; you can't change it, but you don't have to join it or sacrifice your values in order to survive it.

Bad bosses get away with their misbehavior by operating just under the radar screen—they are not so blatant that they are breaking a law or attracting the attention of company officers, but they are not so subtle that their behavior could be called civil or ethical. Bad bosses accept positions they're not qualified for; they

hurt the people who report to them in economic, emotional, psychological and sometimes physical ways; and they take assets or privileges they are not entitled to. These bosses are usually pretty smart people—they must be smart to get away with being so bad—so it's not easy to deal with them in a straightforward way.

This book tells you what to do if you report to a bad boss. First, realize that it is not you or your perception that is at fault. Even if you are the only person who experiences your boss in this way, you are not the problem! But once you report to a bad boss, whether the result of accepting a new position or being reassigned, you have only three options:

- Transfer
- Resign
- Stay

How do you decide which option is best for you? How do you determine the best way to execute your decision? How can you avoid accepting a job with a bad boss in the first place? *Who's Afraid of the Bad Boss? 13 Types and How to Survive Them* helps you answer these questions.

The true stories in each chapter can help you evaluate your own situation. (The identities of individuals and organizations have been altered to allow them to remain anonymous.) This book also helps you to:

- Identify these 13 bad-boss types:

The Wannabe	The Suppressor
The Pretender	The Confounder
The Dumbfounder	The Propagator
The Player	The Bully
The Manipulator	The Cult Maker
The Pilferer	The Saboteur
The Combination-Type	

- Examine your relationship with your manager objectively
- Assess your opportunities for acknowledgement, reward, advancement and continued employment in your organization
- Choose an appropriate strategy for dealing with a bad boss
- Prepare to leave when that is your best option
- Maintain your economic and emotional well-being

This book does not explain the reasons *why* bad bosses behave the way they do; insecurity, jealousy and greed may play a part, but that is for psychologists and psychiatrists to explain. Knowing the reasons cannot help you, anyway: you cannot change another person; you can only change yourself—and if you've ever tried to break a habit, you know how challenging that can be. So prepare to do some work on *yourself* to survive a bad boss.