

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

MARILYN HAIGHT

Available at Amazon.com
Worded Write Publishing
Republished February 2008
ISBN 978-0-9800390-1-6
Paperback
250 pages, 6x9
\$15.00

Marilyn Haight
20403 N. Lake Pleasant Rd.
Suite 117-150
Peoria, AZ 85382
(623) 825-3845
E-mail: info@bigbadboss.com
Web: <http://www.bigbadboss.com>

SURPRISE! YOU'RE FIRED!

My (now former) boss...is known to be "volatile"...I thought I could handle her. She was demoted to a newly created position, and one of her underlings [became her boss]. While I understand that this may have been humiliating for her, it was no license to start taking it out on me, "kicking the dog", if you will. She became very abusive and sarcastic, unleashing vitriolic tirades in front of my cohorts. None of this had any basis; it was just a release for her frustration.

I finally went to her new boss...to let him know that she was abusive and that I needed a transfer or I would leave the company. I spoke with [an HR Representative] regarding this potential change, and she and I discussed IN DETAIL some of the potential scenarios that could be arranged... We agreed to re-convene within a couple of weeks, but the [HR Rep] postponed this meeting at least three times. I thought with [my boss's boss] on my side, this was a slam dunk and it was just a matter of executing the change.

I left for a long-planned vacation, anticipating that the [HR Rep] and I would pick up where we left off when I returned. When I returned, I was canned on my first day back. My boss cited a "lack of focus," and [said] she wanted "more of a project manager" (neither of which had ever been discussed with me before!), and gave me my walking papers on the spot. When I received a copy of my personnel file, I saw that her memo to HR was dated just one business day before my return. In addition, a very discretely stored file outlining several incidents had been DELETED from my e-mail, so that in effect, my paper trail had been eliminated.

They offered me a [meager] severance package...I went straight to an attorney, and unfortunately, learned that this type of retaliation isn't ILLEGAL per se, because I wasn't discriminated against as a member of a protected class.

I did fire off a very pointed letter to HR detailing the chronology of events, just to make sure that HR actually KNEW that I had gone to management seeking resolution and protection from a situation that literally was making me physically ill.

The attorney is going to request additional severance...The contention is that this should also be viewed as a de facto voluntary separation because I had already stated my intention to leave the com-

pany if not transferred, AND I put on hold any external job search AT THE REQUEST of the [my boss's new boss] and the [HR Rep], pending finding something for me internally. This was done in good faith, and I ended up screwed - back from vacation with no income, AND having to explain in interviews why I was no longer employed.

[I would like an] acknowledgement by the company that this was all handled extremely badly and, best case, a better severance package and knowledge that my former boss was disciplined in some way for her behavior.

Dear Surprised,

Once you put your situation into an attorney's hands, it is best to let the attorney do the work you've hired her or him to do. Hopefully, your attorney specializes in employment law.

It is highly unlikely that you will get an acknowledgement from HR. No one at that company will say anything to you now that could put the organization in an unfavorable position. Besides, since your attorney has contacted your former employer on your behalf, your case has probably been handed off to the company's legal representatives and all involved employees will most likely have been informed not to communicate with you.

If there is any communication at all with your former employer, it is appropriate that it be through your attorney. Sending a letter to HR detailing your experience gave your former employer a chance to plan an argument against you. That could make it more difficult for your attorney to obtain a more favorable settlement for you—not impossible, just more difficult.

You mention that your e-mail files were deleted. This is an important lesson for the future. Make sure any records you keep in defense of yourself are stored in a safe, secure place away from your employer's premises. Electronic files on the computer you use in your workplace are the property of the employer.

Try to be satisfied knowing that your former boss has already been disciplined with a demotion. It is highly unlikely that she will be disciplined and even more unlikely that you will be informed about it. The company is obligated to defend your boss because she acted on its behalf.

I hope you find a good job with a good boss soon; be hopeful—they are out there.