

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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THREATENED WITH SUSPENSION

"...I got called into my boss's office and the HR manager was there and my boss...asked me to sign a paper saying I called a co-worker a [profane name]. I never did it so I asked her to bring this co-worker into the meeting so I could hear her say it to my face. My boss said no and said I had to sign this [paper] that said I did it...[the paper] said it was a warning and if I did it again I could be suspended. She said that signing [the paper] only meant that I was acknowledging that she had this meeting with me and it did not mean I agreed with what it said, so I signed.

"...My work is excellent...and [my co-worker] does a so-so job. I don't get it. What's going on here?"

Dear Threatened Employee,

You are never required to sign anything you are uncomfortable signing in your workplace. Boss's just note on the record "employee refused to sign" and that's okay; anyone reviewing your personnel file would know there is more to the story.

Having the paper in your file makes it easy for your management to suspend you the next time they decide to make up an unfavorable story about you or take the work of another employee. Now that you've signed it, you can try to have it removed from your file, but this will be difficult to impossible. Here's what to do:

Write a memo to your boss and the HR Manager who attended that signing meeting. Tell them you want that letter removed from your file. Ask them to show you the evidence that supports your co-worker's claim. They'll try to put you off, expecting you to stop pursuing this—don't; keep at it until they conduct a formal investigation to obtain facts.

If you don't get anywhere with this approach, write a complaint charging your co-worker with falsifying company records. Ask that disciplinary action be taken against your co-worker to the same degree that your co-worker's false charge resulted in disciplinary action taken against you. Ask for your complaint to be placed in your personnel file and your co-worker's file. Keep at this until the paper you signed is removed from your file, or until your complain against your co-worker is attached in your file to the paper you signed.

Stay focused on the impact this situation is having on business results—lost time and productivity. Ask for a quick resolution so you can get back to focusing only on your work. Do not sign any other document your boss asks you to sign with regard to these or similar matters. Even though they say you don't necessarily agree with the claims, they appear to be an admission of guilt. Avoid this co-worker as much as possible and make sure you are never alone with her; always have witnesses you trust nearby if you must interact with her.

There's more to this story than you've been told, so it's a good idea to update your resume and begin a job search—just in case.

Best of luck to you.