

## 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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### BOSS TAKES CREDIT FOR EMPLOYEE'S WORK

*I've been here three years. My boss is always coming up with special projects for me, things she's supposed to do that aren't part of my job, but they're more interesting... She never tells me who I'm doing the work for, so when I have questions, I have to go through her... Yesterday I handed off a really creative and detailed chart to her that I made up with... [data] I researched for [our client]. I asked her how she wanted me to title the project and she said, 'Don't worry about that. I'll take care of it. Just e-mail me the file. I'm going to add some other information and make a few changes before I send it out.'*

*I was in her office later and I could see on her computer screen that she was working on my chart. I saw that she changed my name to hers but nothing was added. I don't mind doing the work, I'm getting paid, but I don't like the idea that she's putting her name on my work and that I don't get any credit for it in my evaluations. I haven't gotten a raise yet, either. What can I do?*

Dear Used Employee,

This is a tricky situation because your boss can always claim to be helping you develop new skills in preparation for a higher-level position. But we know that isn't the case because, if these projects were really developmental, you'd be allowed to talk with the client, your name would remain on your work, and you would be getting excellent evaluations, high-percentage raises and/or big bonuses for these extra projects. In effect, you're doing your boss's job for a lesser salary.

I wonder how you have time to do these projects—who's doing your work while you're doing your boss's? Are you still meeting the goals for your position? This is your starting point in addressing this issue. Make sure you have a job description outlining the duties commensurate with your salary level, as well as specific goals that include measurements for the work you are required to perform. Then, every time you're given a new project that is not part of your job description, negotiate with your boss.

Request accommodations that will allow you to complete each new project and still meet your existing goals. Then ask what the compensation will be for doing the higher-level work—it doesn't have to be money; for example, you could ask for a letter of commendation to be included in your personnel file outlining the work you've done, or for some other formal recognition or reward, but there must be something. A job is an exchange of applied skills for compensation commensurate with the level of those skills.

Keep a written record of your negotiations as well as details about the projects you complete. Create similar records about other projects you've completed during the past three years. Then tell your boss you want to advance in the organization and ask for quarterly reviews so you can be sure you are doing what is necessary to increase your value to the organization and be ready for a promotion. Put all requests and responses in writing and send them to your boss in memos stating you want to be sure you understood correctly.

This approach will test whether your boss is using your labor for her personal gain or to genuinely meet the goals of the organization. If she refuses to work with you to help you advance to a higher-level position, ask her to arrange a meeting with her boss for you to discuss your career goals. It is unlikely that she will but if she does, tell her boss about the work you've been doing, explain that you'd like to advance to a position that allows you to spend more of your time doing that work and ask how to formally prepare for advancement. If, on the other hand, your boss offers you no opportunity to advance, get ready to move on.

The record of accomplishments you've kept will help you in your search for a higher-level position elsewhere. Update your resume to include those accomplishments.

Best of luck to you.