

How to tell whether you've got the class bully as a boss

 By [Juliette Attwell](#)

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In this week's column, we take a look at the difference between your boss doing their job or if you're just being bullied.



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"I would like to know, what is the difference between being bossy and bullying and the boss actually doing their job? My boss is quite a bully but sometimes I just think he needs to be that way in order to do his job" - Amelia M

Hi Amelia

Thanks for your question, it's a great one.

Although the word 'boss' is used to a large degree in companies, the more progressive companies in the world prefer to use the term 'leader'. A good company will have leaders that motivate, respect and get the most out of their subordinates through leading by example, coaching and mentoring. Many studies have been done where this method has been shown to improve productivity and morale within the company.

So to answer your question; there is a huge difference. Bullying and being bossy is outdated, immature and disrespectful in today's organisational cultures. Therefore there is no excuse for your boss to be a bully. He should treat his subordinates with respect, regardless of their rank, pay grade or experience firstly as it is the human thing to do and secondly because he will build a productive and cohesive company by doing this.

"What are the signs that the boss is bullying an employee? I think my colleague is currently the target of our team leader and I'm quite concerned" - Eduard

Hello Eduard

Thank you for your question and concern. It is vital to keep an eye out for any signs that could be debilitating to your colleague.

The signs could vary depending on the severity of the situation. The employee that is being bullied may start being absent from work more often, taking sick days, going to the doctor etc.

A study has shown that 45% of employees targeted by bullies at work suffer from stress related health problems, including anxiety, cardiovascular and post-traumatic stress disorder. A person may feel physically ill the night before the start of a work week and if this is the case he/she should consider whether they are being bullied.

Does your boss often shout openly at you/him in front of other staff members? Are you/is he blatantly excluded from important meetings that you should be a part of? These are all forms of bullying that could lead to a very unpleasant working environment.

Bullying is a very serious problem which can have major psychological effects on a person. It is therefore advisable to seek professional help in terms of counselling or seeking the help of a psychologist. They can also assess the situation and advise whether it is best to seek legal advice or to resign and seek new employment. Each situation is different but it is vital to deal with it and not let it continue for your sake and those of your colleagues.

All the best and please let me know how it goes.

Always love what you do!

Juliette

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