

THE BIG BAD BOSS AND YOU

You'd probably be checked on every few minutes, and rarely ever find recognition of your performance even though you might be working yourself to death. And there are those kinds who take an instant disliking to you the minute you walk into office and decide that it is their given task to cut you down to size. Some of these are pretty crafty too. I had once found one, who was so cool minded that he was perfectly aware that if he kept on provoking me, I would get angry, and if I get angry, then I will make mistakes, and then he could catch those mistakes and have a field day. And that is exactly what happened.

The moment I would attend my desk this guy would come up and ask what I had been doing when. And keep at that until my patience ran out and I would tell him that if he wanted accounting by the minute then rather than a monthly paycheck, I should be billing by the minute. You see, that was what he wanted. Such people feed off emotional reactions of other workers and delight in making others uncomfortable.

The neat result was I missed out some grammatical mistakes in proofreading, and he caught on to those mistakes to prove that I was worthless. The lesson I learnt was that while he had made me angry, he himself was expecting me to make mistakes, and took time off to go through all my work in detail on the day he succeeded in getting a reaction from me. In my long years, I have faced liars, racists, ignorant louts and what not as bosses, but very few like that coldblooded devil. People and bosses like these are usually middle-level managers and top level managers or owners of businesses rarely behave in a manner that would upset an employee.

However, one thing I learnt in the professional world is that most bosses are practical and helpful people and the Big Bad Boss out to prove his power is actually a man suffering from inferiority complex. Usually he is not the last say in your employment and will always have superiors to whom they act like the most obedient and respectful servants.

The best way to tackle a bad boss is to be on war footing. Try to be punctual both in attendance and work. A little bit of false praise can keep you in the good books of the ogre. Bad bosses are notorious for lapping up subtle false praise for they invariably need appreciation.

Analyze the techniques of torture used by your boss. Usually bad bosses have limited imagination, and if you apply your mind to it you will find that they usually repeat the same set of techniques to torture everyone. Inventiveness is rare in a bad boss. If you can list down the techniques, analyze them and create and rehearse suitable responses that make the big boss happy, you might find yourself struck off his list of torture targets.

It is also handy to keep a journal of events and incidents so that if worst comes to worst you can take the matter up with the HR or the courts. It is good to find a superior of sufficient authority who can act as your mentor. Remember bad bosses are scared people. If they see you regularly interacting with people of greater authority you might suddenly find them to have become charming and chummy.

Whatever happens, do not lose either your dignity or your health. If necessary, and if you really fail to tackle the juggernaut with a pea-sized brain you can try to report him either to superiors or to the HR as a last resort. Usually nothing much happens is my personal experience, though that does not need to be your own.

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