



2014 WBI
U.S. WORKPLACE BULLYING SURVEY

What Stops the Bullying

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WHAT STOPPED THE BULLYING

**61% of bullied targets lose their job with their employer;
74% lose their particular job**

Question: What stopped the abusive mistreatment?

Table 12

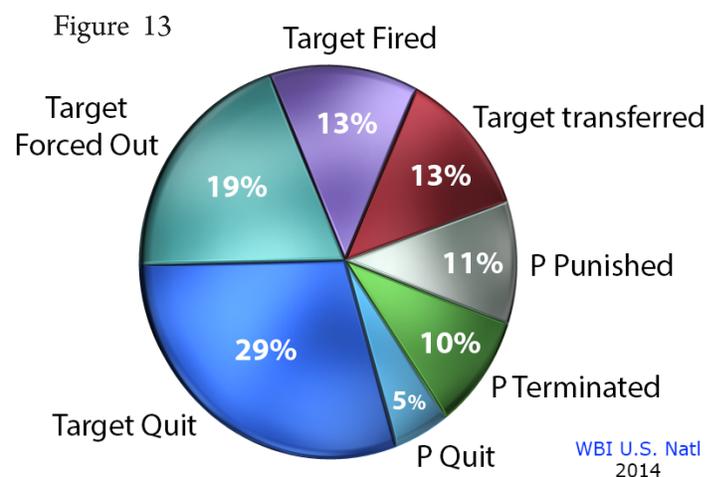
Response Options	Proportion	Percentage
Target voluntarily left the job to escape more mistreatment	.2872	29%
Target forced to quit when work conditions were deliberately made worse	.1923	19%
Employer terminated the target	.1282	13%
<i>Target lost job</i>	<i>.6077</i>	<i>61%</i>
Target transferred to a different job or location with same employer	.1333	13%
Perpetrator was terminated	.0974	10%
Perpetrator voluntarily quit	.0564	5%
<i>Perpetrator lost job</i>	<i>.1538</i>	<i>15%</i>
Perpetrator was punished & kept job	.1077	11%

This Survey question provided the response option: “It has not stopped” that was chosen by 18% of respondents. The percentages in Table 12 are based on a new sample that excluded the 18%. The options were chosen only by those for whom the personal bullying had stopped or the witnessed bullying had stopped.

The sad reality is that even the general public seems to know that it is the target, the victim of the abuse, who is asked to make additional sacrifices to stop the bullying. In 61% of cases, bullying stops only when the target loses her or his job. Remember that individuals do not invite this severe misery into their work lives. Therefore, once a person is targeted for bullying – a choice made by the perpetrator(s) – that person has a 6 out of 10 chance of losing her or his livelihood.

Furthermore, the target is driven to quit. Voluntary quitting is usually based on escalating health problems that families and physicians recognize, then encourage the target to leave the job. But 40% of quitting is based on decisions made after work conditions become untenable, so cruel as to drive a rational person to escape. Constructive discharge is the goal for many perpetrators. Terminations of the skilled and threatening-to-bullies targets are typically based on fabricated lies. Several WBI surveys of bullied targets substantiate this claim.

Accepting a transfer to retain a job, to bullied targets, is often a source of perceived injustice. Their reasoning is “I did nothing to deserve the abuse, why should I be the one to leave the job I love and am best qualified to perform.” To many, transfers are punitive. On the other hand, it prevents economic devastation and might provide a degree of psychological safety.



When we consider only job loss and not transfers or punishment with job retention, targets lose their jobs at a much higher rate than perpetrators (82% vs. 18%). When bullies are men regardless of the targets gender the loss rate is equally high (See The Challenge of Same-Gender Bullying). However, when bullies are women, women targets lose their jobs 89% of the time. Notably women bullies, as perpetrators, suffer the highest job loss rate (30%) of any gender pairing.

Though the ratio of negative consequences for targets relative to perpetrators is 4:1, we interpret the rising percentage of negative outcomes for bullies over the years to indicate progress in public (and employer) awareness of bullying. Slowly, bullying is gaining a negative connotation. Perpetrators are starting to be stigmatized. Of course, given the paucity of employer reactions, there is still much progress to be made.

We do not suggest that progress requires demonization of bullies. Rather, employers need to feel ashamed when they condone bullying rather than condemn it. Eradication of bullying, the systemic destructive force within organizations, is the goal, not dealing with the personalities of offenders.



ZOGBY ANALYTICS SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Workplace Bullying Institute commissioned Zogby Analytics to conduct an online survey of 1,000 adults in the US. All interviews were completed January 27 and 28, 2014. Using trusted interactive partner resources, thousands of adults were invited to participate in this interactive survey. Each invitation is password coded and secure so that one respondent can only access the survey one time.

Using information based on census data, voter registration figures, CIA fact books and exit polls, Zogby uses complex weighting techniques to best represent the demographics of the population being surveyed. Weighted variables may include age, race, gender, region, party, education, and religion.

Based on a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error for 1,000 is +/- 3.2 percentage points. This means that all other things being equal, the identical survey repeated will have results within the margin of error 95 times out of 100. Subsets of the data have a larger margin of error than the whole data set. Additional factors can create error, such as question wording and question order.

One of the conventions used in Zogby surveys is to allow respondents a response option of “Not Sure.” WBI chose to eliminate the “Not Sure” responses from the sample in all questions. Below are the sample characteristics.

Table 18

Sample Characteristics	Frequency	Valid Percent*
Sample size	1,000	100
<i>Region</i>		
East	220	22
South	260	26
Central/Great Lakes	300	30
West	220	22
<i>Age</i>		
18-29	220	22
30-49	360	36
50-64	250	25
65+	170	17
<i>Race</i>		
White	680	68
Hispanic	130	13
African American	120	12
Asian/Pacific	41	4.1
Other/mixed	29	2.9
<i>Religion</i>		
Catholic	260	26
Protestant	530	53
Jewish	30	3
Other/None (religion)	180	18
<i>Respondent Gender</i>		
Male	485	48.5
Female	515	51.5
<i>Employment Status</i>		
Working	532	53.6
Unemployed – Looking for work	63	6.3