



RESEARCH STUDIES

workplacebullying.org

**The WBI Website
2013 Instant Poll-C
Barriers to Bullied Targets
Leaving Their Jobs**

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BARRIERS TO BULLIED TARGETS LEAVING THEIR JOBS

WBI 2013-C Instant Poll

One of the criticisms leveled against individuals targeted for workplace bullying is that they should “just” quit. That simplistic advice is cruel and short-sighted. Quitting is not a simple decision. Consider for a moment the single parent target. What will replace the lost income?

We at WBI who have talked to thousands of targets over the years by phone and in-person know there are other barriers to leaving a toxic work environment, regardless of how damaging that job and employer are to the target’s health. It is never easy to leave, to escape to safety.

This survey asks target-respondents to evaluate which two barriers listed convinced them to not leave.

WBI Instant Polls are online single-question surveys that rely upon self-selected samples of individuals bullied at work (typically 98% of any sample). No demographic data are collected. Our non-scientific Instant Polls accurately depict the perceptions of workers targeted for bullying at work as contrasted with the views of all adult Americans in our scientific national surveys.

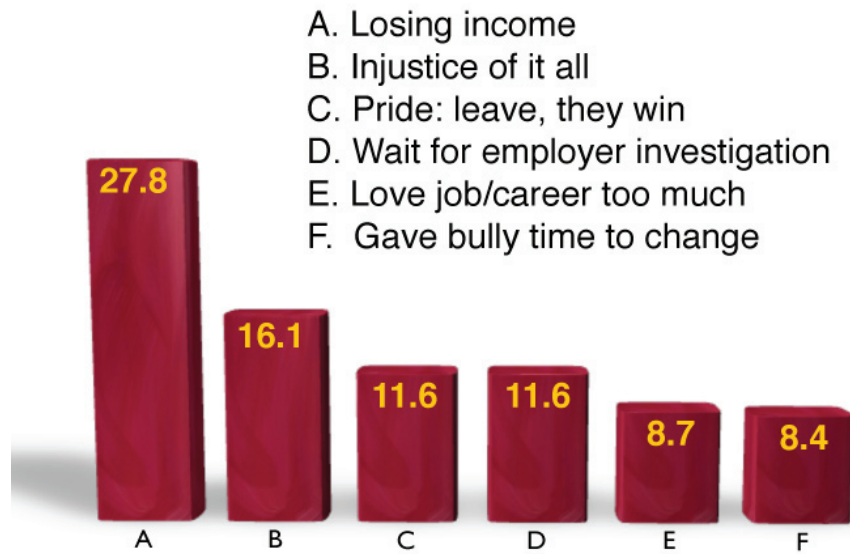
We asked 713 target-respondents to answer the following question.

*As a bullied target, what made (or makes) it hard to leave your bullying experience?
Check up to 2 factors.*

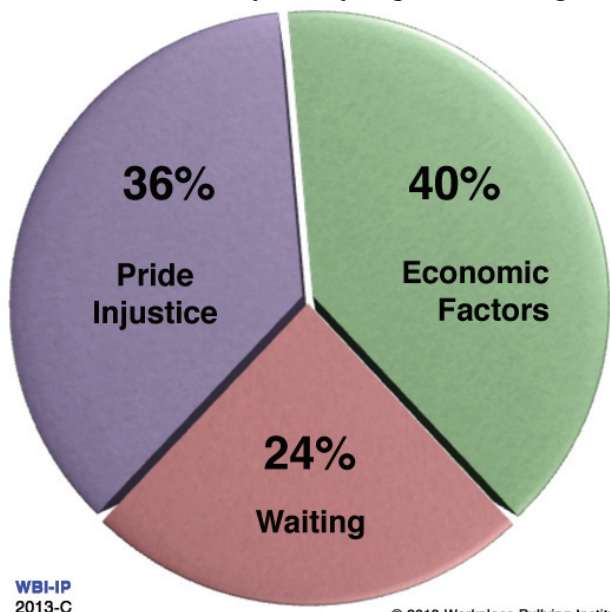
Percentages of each response (based on a total of 1,297 choices made) were:

- .116 *Personal pride -- leaving is losing -- they win*
- .160 *Injustice of it all -- I did nothing wrong -- why should I quit?*
- .087 *I love(d) my job/career too much to leave*
- .084 *I gave the bully time, hoping for change*
- .116 *I waited for employer to investigate & resolve*
- .037 *I took time for me to prove the bully lied about me & my work*
- .278 *Effect of losing my income on household*
- .048 *No comparable jobs in the market -- did not apply*
- .066 *I applied for other jobs, got no offers*
- .007 *Kept secret from family, leaving would be misunderstood*

The top ranked barrier was the threat of lost income. In the U.S. losing a job also entails losing affordable employer-provided health insurance (if it was actually provided).



Three categories of factors were created by summing over single factor items. The first category -- Integrity & Justice -- included the items "Personal pride," "Injustice of it all," and "I loved my job." The second category -- Allowing Time to Pass -- included the items "I gave the bully time to change," "I waited for an investigation," and "I took time to disprove the lies." The third category -- Economic Factors -- included the items "Effect of losing income," "No jobs, did not apply," and "I applied, got no offers." The solo item "Kept secret" was eliminated resulting in a sample of 1,287 choices of explanatory factors. The chart below depicts the percentages assigned to each of the three categories. Economic Factors (39.5% was chosen slightly more frequently than Integrity & Justice (36.6%) with Allowing Time to Pass the least frequent, but still chosen by nearly a quarter of respondents (23.9%).



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