2017 Workplace Bullying Institute
U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey

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workplacebullying.org

Perpetrator Rank & Number

Major funding from

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION
OF PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES

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2017 WBI U.S. WORKPLACE BULLYING SURVEY

PERPETRATOR RANK & NUMBERS

61% of bullies are bosses; in 63% of incidents the perpetrator operates alone

Mobbing was the term adopted by Heinz Leymann to describe health-harming abusive conduct at work. Mobbing implies that there are multiple perpetrators, a “gang.” Mobbing preceded the term workplace bullying historically. However, WBI has consistently defined bullying as committed by one or more persons. Bullying nearly always escalates to engage more than one person who joins the instigator to torment the target.

For this question, the response categories allowed respondents familiar with bullying either directly or indirectly as witnesses [N = 374 with no experience respondents and “not sure” respondents deleted] to comment on both number of perpetrators and the organizational rank(s) of the bullies.

**Wording of the Question:** Who was (were) the principal perpetrator(s)?

Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo higher rank perpetrator</td>
<td>37.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo same-ranked perpetrator</td>
<td>21.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo lower rank (subordinate) perpetrator</td>
<td>4.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple higher rank perpetrators</td>
<td>19.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple same-ranked perpetrators</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower rank (subordinate) perpetrators</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple higher and lower rank perpetrators</td>
<td>7.22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 6, we can say the following:

- 63% of cases involved single perpetrators
- 37% of cases involved multiple perpetrators
- 61% of perpetrators had a higher rank than their targets
- 33% of perpetrators were peers with the same rank as their targets
- 6% of perpetrators were subordinates who bullied targets with higher rank

In 7% of cases, the bullying was generated by a combination of perpetrators operating at different levels of the organization – bosses, peers, and subordinates.
Figure 5.
ABOUT MAPE – MAJOR SPONSOR OF THE SURVEY

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Members are probation officers, analysts, scientists, foresters, psychologists, zoologists and so much more. MAPE members work in all segments of state government to provide Minnesotans with the vital services they need. MAPE is proud to contribute to the high quality of life in Minnesota!

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ABOUT WBI

The Workplace Bullying Institute is the first and still the only U.S. organization dedicated to the eradication of workplace bullying that combines help for individuals, research, books, public education, training for professionals-union-employers, legislative advocacy, and consulting solutions for organizations. The founders, Dr. Ruth and Dr. Gary Namie, began their work in Benicia California in mid-1997. WBI is once again located in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The 2017 WBI U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey is the fourth national scientific survey done by WBI. Additional WBI studies can be found at the WBI website.

workplacebullying.org

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