Bad Bosses Ruin Lives

The Building Blocks for Being a Great Boss

Survey Results

BAD BOSSES RUIN LIVES

GREAT BOSSES ENRICH LIVES

DebCo HR

Introduction

We are pleased to share with you the results from two surveys conducted in October 2023 as research for our book *Bad Bosses Ruin Lives: The Building Blocks for Being a Great Boss*. The purpose of the surveys was to gain an understanding of which of the 10 types of bad bosses covered in the book are the most prevalent in the workplace. One survey focused on **bosses you've had**, and the other focused on **you as a boss**.

Types of Bad Bosses

Here are high level definitions for each of the 10 types of bad bosses:

Avoider

Doesn't show up for their people, ghosting them, and not giving them the time, attention, and feedback they need to do their job and feel valued.

Ignorer

Doesn't listen to what their people say, ignoring input, ideas, and perspectives, and thus missing out on what they have to say, making them feel undervalued.

Hoarder

Withholds and keeps information to themself, or shares it in ways that don't fully meet the needs of their people.

Unappreciater

Doesn't show their people recognition, gratitude, or appreciation, making them feel unvalued, invisible, and unappreciated for their actions and contributions.

Pretender

Withholds the truth and any discomfort it could cause others in an attempt to please and be nice to them, giving answers they feel are wanted, and failing to give them the honesty they need and deserve.

Blocker

Prevents or gets in the way of their people's development and career progression, blocking them from achieving their goals, mastering new skills, or contributing to the company's success.

Firefighter

Deals with situations in a reactive and urgent manner, moving people from fire to fire with no apparent strategy, impacting their ability to plan, learn, grow, and achieve more meaningful and long-term achievements.

Micromanager

Is overly involved in their people's work, constantly controlling and prescribing what and how work is done.

Blamer

Assigns responsibility to someone(s) for a fault or wrong, casting blame and refusing to take any accountability themselves.
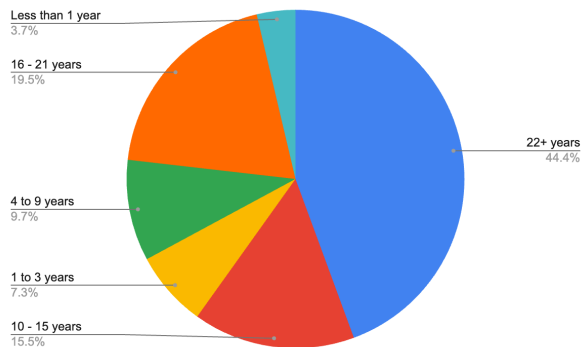
Coercer

Uses power in order to bully, control, and coerce processes and outcomes, expecting strict compliance and offering their people a low degree of autonomy.
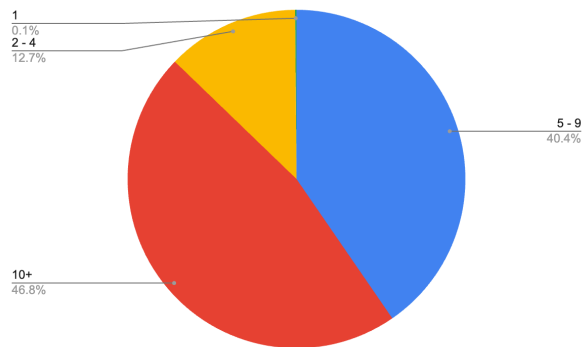
Survey Participants

There were 703 people who participated in the first survey regarding bad bosses that people **have had**. There were 112 people who participated in the second survey regarding bad bosses that people **have been**. Participants were from around the world for both surveys.

The first survey, the one focusing on bad bosses people have had, also asked for additional information on participants. Details of them is as follows:

Number of years participants have been in the workplace:

Less than 1 year
3.7%

16 - 21 years
19.5%

4 to 9 years
9.7%

1 to 3 years
7.3%

10 - 15 years
15.5%

22+ years
44.4%

Number of bosses participants have had in their career:

1
0.1%

2 - 4
12.7%

5 - 9
40.4%

10+
46.8%

Survey Findings

- **The majority of people have had a bad boss** – **99.6% of participants said that they've had a bad boss at some point in time**, so almost every person who completed the survey.

- **The majority of people admit to being a bad boss** – **80% of participants said that they've been a bad boss** at some point in time, so a large percentage of those who completed the survey.

- **A large percentage of people have had each type of bad boss** – **More than half of the participants** said that they've had a boss who exhibits some or all of the traits of each type of bad boss. The results in order of prevalence appear in the table below:

1. Unappreciator - 81%	6. Hoarder - 74%
2. Micromanager - 80%	7. Coercer - 72%
3. Avoider - 80%	8. Blamer - 68%
4. Ignorer - 78%	9. Blocker - 65%
5. Firefighter - 77%	10. Pretender - 51%

- **A smaller percentage of people admit that they've been each type of bad boss** – **Less than half of the participants** said that they exhibit some or all of the 10 bad boss traits. The results in order of prevalence appear in the table below:

1. Pretender - 47%	6. Avoider - 15%
2. Firefighter - 40%	7. Unappreciater - 14%
3. Micromanager - 39%	8. Blamer - 11%
4. Hoarder - 23%	9. Blocker - 8%
5. Ignorer - 19%	10. Coercer - 8%

- **There's a gap between what people are saying about their bosses and what bosses are admitting to** – With the exception of the Pretender boss, for all of the other types of bad bosses, there is a gap between how many people *said they've had* this type of bad boss and those *admitting to being one*. The results appear in the table below:

Type of Bad Boss	People said about their bosses	People said about themselves as a boss
Unappreciater	81%	14%
Micromanager	80%	39%
Avoider	80%	15%
Ignorer	78%	19%
Firefighter	77%	40%
Hoarder	74%	23%
Coercer	72%	8%
Blamer	68%	11%
Blocker	65%	8%
Pretender	51%	47%

- **People admit to having multiple types of bad boss traits** – Survey participants said that they've been more than one type of bad boss. On average, participants admitted to being **three of the 10 types of bad bosses**.

- **There is no difference based on years in the workplace** – In breaking out the data by the number of years people have been in the workplace, we found no significant difference in the types of bad bosses they've experienced. This data validates the points we make in our book, e.g. that not enough change has happened in improving bad boss behaviors.
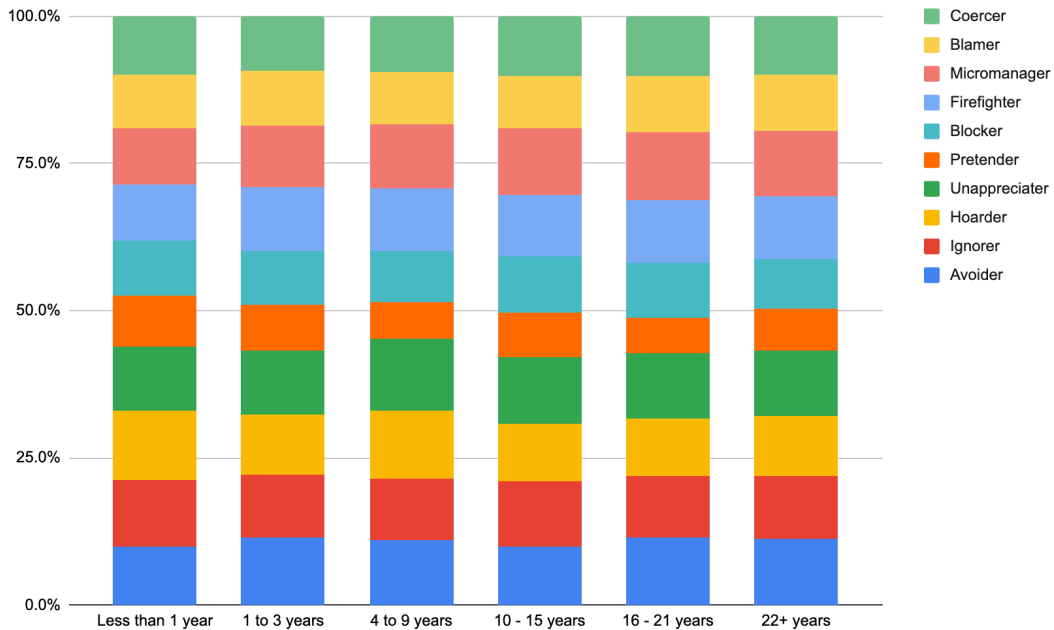
- **There is no difference based on the number of bosses you've had** – In breaking out the data by the number of bosses that participants have had, we found no significant difference in the types of bad bosses they've experienced. This shows that whether you've had two or 10 bosses, they can still have an impact on you and your life.
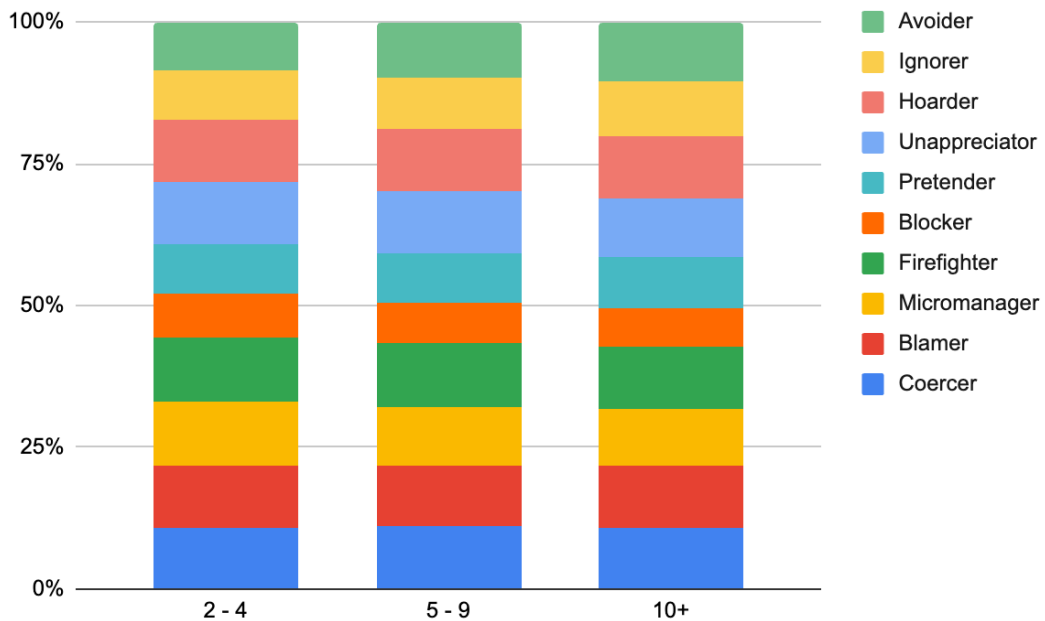
Note: No data is shown for the one person who has only had one bad boss as it was statistically valid.

For More Information

We hope you've found this data interesting and helpful. Here are two ways you can learn more on this important topic:

- **Grab a copy of our book** – If you'd like to learn more about the 10 types of bad bosses as well as the Great Boss Building Block Model™, please check out our book titled **Bad Bosses Ruin Lives: The Building Blocks for Being a Great Boss**.

- **Take the free and confidential Boss Trait Assessment** – If you're a boss (leader, manager, etc.,) and want to better identify and/or understand the traits you have as a boss (good, bad, and great!), we've created a free and confidential online assessment tool. You will be presented with a series of questions that relate to how you act and behave as a boss. Once answered, you'll receive a free personalized assessment of how you scored against the 10 types of bad bosses covered in the book, and areas you can work on to improve using the Great Boss Building Block Model™.

  You can find the tool at: **https://www.badbossesruinlives.com/assessment**