



RESEARCH STUDIES

workplacebullying.org

**The WBI Website
2011 Instant Poll-I
Types of Bullies**

Gary Namie, PhD - Research Director

Do not cite findings without crediting WBI

© 2011 Workplace Bullying Institute, All rights reserved

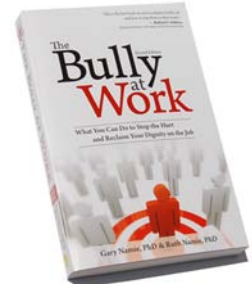
Types of Bullies

WBI 2011-I Instant Poll

WBI Instant Polls are online single-question surveys that rely upon self-selected samples of individuals bullied at work (typically 98% of any sample comprised of currently and formerly bullied individuals). No demographic data are collected, but IP respondent samples are typically 80% or higher female. 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.

September 2011 WBI Instant Poll, $n = 942$

The question asked: "The Drs. Namie describe different bully types and how to deal with them in their book "The Bully at Work." Which type best describes your bully?"



Two-Headed Snake - Pretends to be nice while sabotaging you. Breaches confidentiality, steals credit for work, and puts on a rational "face" for others
36%

Constant Critic - Extremely negative behind closed doors, nitpicking and excessively criticizing work. Later lies about everything.
29%



Gatekeeper - Deliberately cuts you off from resources. Leaves you out of the communication loop, makes up new rules arbitrarily, and gives you insufficient time to complete projects.
26%

Screaming Mimi - Publicly yells, screams and curses. Emotionally out of control and threatening.
9%



As explained in the book, these aren't actually bully types. Rather, they are categories of tactics employed by bullies.

It is noteworthy that the stereotype of a bully – the screaming fool – is actually the rarest form.

Another important point to remember is that a skilled bully will employ all tactics, tailoring the choice of dehumanizing methods to the person accosted. The best of them can shift gears and vacillate among all four categories quickly. In the short space of an hour, a hidden camera might reveal that in a closed-door meeting, the bully attempts to redefine the personality of a target (Constant Critic), leave that room to scream at someone in the copy room for stacks of paper supplies out of perfect alignment (Screaming Mimi), next to meet with a supervisor for whom he denies training that all other supervisors have already received (Gatekeeper), and to wrap up the hour encounter his boss in the restroom where he squashes a pre-approved transfer of a long-term target from his unit to that of his boss because he lies that she is a disloyal worker waiting for the chance to sabotage the company (Snake). All of this destruction is part of the bullies campaign to destroy the careers of those who had the misfortune to fall under that bully's thumb.

Gary Namie, PhD
IP-2011-1

© 2011 Workplace Bullying Institute