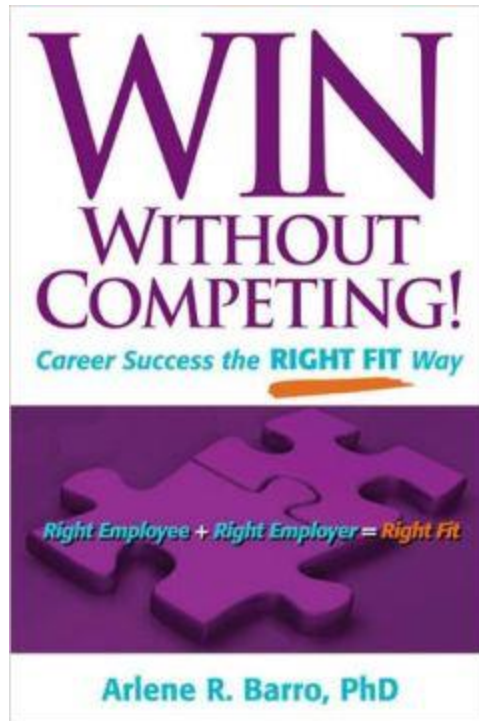


# Conquering Stress! With Dr. Arlene — Bad Bosses Cause Stress



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**By Dr. Arlene Barro**

Bad bosses are losing their power. Why? Employees have less loyalty to their employers. They are busy job hopping. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that more than 3.2 million people quit their jobs in May 2017. This is the highest number of job quitters in one month since early 2001. The massive job exodus is a leading indicator of a healthy job market, according to the Bureau.

## **Gallup Investigates**

In January 2018, Gallup released a poll in which they identified two groups that have the highest job turnover: highly talented and the low talented. Moreover, both groups are disengaged. The second group has performance issues and are unhappy. Gallup did not explain the criteria that they used to categorize each group. How do we know that low performance is not the result of high work stress and even job burnout? If so, there could be talented employees in this group.

Gallup uncovered that if employers improve engagement that they can slow down the employee turnover. Moreover, they found that the most-talented employees require more attention. They believe that the

cardinal sin of management is not engaging employees daily which included face-to-face contact and digital communication with managers. I disagree with Gallup's finding that the talented employees want more engagement. Is Gallup confusing engagement with something else? I believe that the talented want their work recognized. From my professional experience and doctoral research results, I learned that talented people want independence to create. Constant engagement with management could cause talented people high stress. I know. Many of my clients are in this situation, and that is why they seek my advice.

### **Job Burnout**

The Mayo Clinic defines job burnout as a specific type of stress which includes: physical, emotional or mental exhaustion combined with doubts about your competence and value of your work. The consequences of job burnout include: excessive stress, fatigue, insomnia, depression, anxiety, heart disease, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes in women, stroke and obesity. Symptoms of depression and anxiety are also symptoms of thyroid disorders. Are bad bosses causing thyroid disorders?

Ohio State conducted research on horrible bosses. They found that having a difficult boss like Miranda Priestly, played by Meryl Streep, in the *Devil Wears Prada* can cause inflammation in the body. We know that inflammation is the precursor of a wide array of health problems.

### **Stress Management**

Currently, employees have many job options. The stigma of unemployment has faded. Work stress is still strong. Employees continue to have work-related illnesses and diseases.

Changing jobs frequently could increase stress. Getting acquainted with the "unknown" takes time. I recommend learning about the culture as quickly as possible. Connect with your boss from the beginning. That requires a frank discussion, preferably in week one. Be friendly with colleagues but not too friendly. At work, never say anything negative about anyone including your employer.

Often employees are not aware that work stress is the cause of their health challenges. Pay attention to how you feel when you: get ready to go to work, arrive at the facility and greet co-workers. Be aware of how you feel, when you speak with your boss. If you "listen" to your body's response you will quickly learn whether work stress is overwhelming you. Manage stress before it manages you.

**Questions about this column or ongoing Conquering Stress Seminars? Email [drbarro@barroglobal.com](mailto:drbarro@barroglobal.com).**

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