**August 31, 2021**

This is a database of qualitatively coded reasons for a CEO’s dismissal. Every attempt has been made to ensure accuracy and thoroughness but this is a living database that will be updated with new information and departures as well as improved over time. If you have observations about a particular turnover, contact this document’s owner to suggest improvements on the database. Revision suggestions will be cataloged and included in [future revisions](#2pho1y2zctbp).

**Collection Effort Overview**

Data collection was done primarily by undergraduate students in a computer lab together. During the data collection effort, two doctoral students were present to answer questions and monitored students' work in real time using Google Docs. If a student was miscoding events or not coding with enough detail, the doctoral students coached the student how to improve. The data coders generally averaged 8 hours a week across two data coding sessions. The final 1,200 turnover events were outsourced to a data collection company and the final work product from that outsourcing effort was double checked by one of the undergraduate students. A final 180 observations that were coded as 8. Events prior to 2000 and some mergers post-2000 were also coded by an outsourcing firm. All items returned from the outsourcing firm were double checked for clarity and completeness. Subsequent editions of this database reflect efforts by the author team to keep the database updated and current to Execucomp as well as reflect changes suggested by the community.

[Publication](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/smj.3278) - Gentry, R. J., Harrison, J. S., Quigley, T. J., & Boivie, S. (2021). A database of CEO turnover and dismissal in S&P 1500 firms, 2000–2018. *Strategic Management Journal*, *42*(5), 968-991.

[If you would like to suggest a change/addition to one of the data items, submit those suggestions here](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeH_EL74yP5SSwVs1XAes0Een6o-RDjVzwqY2tdAJvbj3QH_A/viewform)

**Use Guidelines**

CEO turnover can be coded directly off execucomp by just seeing where there is a new CEO from one year to the next. That set can then be matched to this file to determine whether the turnover is a) actually a turnover rather than a coding error and b) the reason for that departure. Use of the dataset is free and open to use to the [Open Data Commons Attribution License](https://opendatacommons.org/licenses/by/1.0/). We ask that authors who use the data a) cite the article that published the set and b) reference the specific version number that their paper employed. A log of revisions is below.

**CEO Departure Reasons and Definitions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Code** | **Title** | **Brief Description** |
| 1 | Involuntary - CEO death | The CEO died while in office and did not have an opportunity to resign before health failed. |
| 2 | Involuntary - CEO illness | Required announcement that the CEO was leaving for health concerns rather than removed during a health crisis. |
| 3 | Involuntary – CEO dismissed for job performance | The CEO stepped down for reasons related to job performance. This included situations where the CEO was immediately terminated as well as when the CEO was given some transition period, but the media coverage was negative. Often the media cited financial performance or some other failing of CEO job performance (e.g., leadership deficiencies, innovation weaknesses, etc.). |
| 4 | Involuntary - CEO dismissed for legal violations or concerns | The CEO was terminated for behavioral or policy-related problems. The CEO's departure was almost always immediate, and the announcement cited an instance where the CEO violated company HR policy, expense account cheating, etc. |
| 5 | Voluntary - CEO retired | Voluntary retirement based on how the turnover was reported in the media. Here the departure did not sound forced, and the CEO often had a voice or comment in the succession announcement. Media coverage of voluntary turnover was more valedictory than critical. Firms use different mandatory retirement ages, so we could not use 65 or older and facing mandatory retirement as a cut off. We examined coverage around the event and subsequent coverage of the CEO’s career when it sounded unclear. |
| 6 | Voluntary - new opportunity (new career driven succession) | The CEO left to pursue a new venture or to work at another company. This frequently occurred in startup firms and for founders. |
| 7 | Other | Interim CEOs, CEO departure following a merger or acquisition, company ceased to exist, company changed key identifiers so it is not an actual turnover, and CEO may or may not have taken over the new company. |
| 8 | Missing | Despite attempts to collect information, there was not sufficient data to assign a code to the turnover event. These will remain the subject of further investigation and expansion. |
| 9 | Execucomp error | If a researcher were to create a dataset of all potential turnovers using execucomp (co\_per\_rol != l.co\_per\_rol), several instances will appear of what looks like a turnover when there was no actual event. This code captures those. |

**Data Dictionary**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable name** | **Type** | **Brief description** |
| **dismissal\_dataset\_id** | int | The primary key. This will change from one version to the next. gvkey-year is also a unique identifier. |
| **coname** | str30 | The Compustat Company Name. |
| **gvkey** | numerical long | The Compustat Company identifier. |
| **cik** | %10.0f | The company’s Central Index Key |
| **fyear** | numerical long | The fiscal year in which the event occured. |
| **co\_per\_rol** | numerical long | The executive/company identifier from Execucomp. |
| **exec\_fullname** | str50 | The executive full name as listed in Execucomp. |
| **departure\_code** | byte | The departure reason coded from criteria above. |
| **ceo\_dismissal** | byte | A dummy code for involuntary, non-health related turnover (Codes 3 & 4). |
| **interim\_coceo** | str7 | A descriptor of whether the CEO was listed as co-CEO or as an interim CEO (sometimes interim positions last a couple years). |
| **tenure\_no\_ceodb** | byte | For CEOs who return, this value should capture whether this is the first or second time in office. |
| **leftofc** | Int (formatted %td) | Left office of CEO, modified occasionally from execucomp but same interpretation. The date of effective departure from the office of CEO. For companies that were acquired and thus dropped from Execucomp, *leftofc* is an attempt to capture the merger’s effective date. |
| **notes** | strL | Long-form description and justification for the coding scheme assignment. |
| **sources** | strL | URL(s) of relevant sources from internet or library sources. |
| **eight\_ks** | strL | URL(s) of 8k filing from the Securities and Exchange Commission from 270 days before through 270 days after the CEO’s leftofc date which might relate to the turnover. Included here are any 8k filing 5.02 (departure of directors or principal executives) or simply item 5 if it is an older filing. These were collected without examining their content. |

**Unique Identifier Combinations**

**gvkey, year, co\_per\_rol -** We capture several CEOs whose tenure does not appear in Execucomp. Simply match gvkey, year, co\_per\_rol to execucomp and drop non-matching CEOs who do not appear in Execucomp. *There is frequently more than one CEO for a firm reflected in this departure database by year.*

**co\_per\_rol, tenure\_no\_ceodb** - The unique CEO/Firm identifier is unique to each CEO and the tenure\_no captures whether or not this is his or her first, second (etc) spell in office.

*Note:* There are some interim CEOs who are not listed in Execucomp, so they have no co\_per\_rol. Delete any co\_per\_rol < 0 before matching.

**Revision Log**

V08312021

* Further error checking and revision
* Extensive additions of interim CEOs and departure dates between listed Execucomp CEOs. Data should reflect a specific CEO’s tenure much more accurately.
* Updated CEO dismissal information upto Execucomp dated May 1, 2021, which typically runs through 2019 fiscal year.
* Removed the max\_tenure\_ceodb, still\_there and fyear\_left columns. The information in these columns was discernible from other information or was causing confusion.
* Adjusted leftofc to reflect the effective date of a merger/acquisition rather than the date that the CEO might have left the (now private) company
* Thanks to Rob Campbell (University of Nebraska, Lincoln), Nicolas Rudolf ([Université de Lausanne](http://www.unil.ch/)), Eric Lee (Penn State), and special thanks to Hauke Meyer and colleagues (Georg-August-University Goettingen) for suggested edits and corrections. Error remain the responsibility of the first author.

[V03182021](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Bs6RzBtPC4nZ7eEFth35S2OkinJk_gZR&authuser=rgentry%40bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Continued error checking and additions of interim CEOs where identified
* Added a column of 8k filings that might relate to the dismissal
* Thank you Donald Schepker (University of South Carolina) and Inn Hee Gee (Texas A&M) for suggesting edits.

[V02032021](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1pynu2rIdO5wdt-14BZel6aj18HW2hTBw&authuser=rgentry%40bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Updated some missing pre-2000 events
* Merged firms now most often show as 7 and corrected mischaracterizations
* Updates for identified recent events into 2021 although not complete after 2018 fyear in execucomp

[V01222021](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1wvtfz5PtJSVMeYvIdqjgrFP4w-WitX6n&authuser=rgentry%40bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Expanded to include prior 2000 events and other error correction
* Some turnovers prior to 2000 still missing
* Co-CEO and interim CEO changed to be text (rather than 1/0) format

[V06092020](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1g0k8frzzOiBj-523gsyIy5wZ6aeidvKY&authuser=rgentry%40bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Organized naming system and introduced primary key
* Further manual checking

[V05292020](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1fZYHPu4Qb9_HaYU_4w7kMHS-zYFlAKla)

* Fixed duplicate entries and further error correction

[V05152020](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1e8uV2AhvN9NtQ0PELhTAWPKOCs9Be6I-&authuser=rgentry@bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Co-CEO coding corrected
* Removed/cleaned up within-year duplicates for gvkey/year

[V05132020](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1e73ggqG_eTD8mOW9pywLe3bazTCb1icm&authuser=rgentry@bus.olemiss.edu&usp=drive_fs)

* Updating departure dates and hunting mismatches

[V05112020](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dB6CjLk2cL1doFTxU5FEsmncerf4CJLZ/view?usp=sharing)

* 2000 through 2018 departures
* Updated documentation to follow best practice [suggested by Matt Marx](https://7485828c-96a0-4ef7-9e65-7e2017fe0ce5.filesusr.com/ugd/30296c_c1b558c27fd64b12ab5c404c4862cbe5.pdf)