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.

[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 personal issues | 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. |
| **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. |
| **max\_tenure\_ceodb** |  | For this CEO, how many times did s/he serve as CEO. |
| **fyear\_gone** | int | An attempt to determine the fiscal year of the CEO’s effective departure date. Occasionally, looking at departures on Execucomp does not agree with the leftofc date that we have. They apparently try to balance between the CEO serving one month in the fiscal year against documenting who was CEO on the date of record. I would stick to the Execucomp’s fiscal year, departure indication for consistency with prior work. |
| **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. |
| **still\_there** | str9 | A date that indicates the last time we checked to see if the CEO was in office. If no date, then it looks like the CEO is still in office but we are in the process of checking. |
| **notes** | strL | Long-form description and justification for the coding scheme assignment. |
| **sources** | strL | URL(s) of relevant sources from internet or library sources. |

**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

**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.

**Revision Log**

[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)