

## Toxic Managers

### Chapters 5-12

#### Chapter 5

- Companies often do not pay enough attention to ethical issues when hiring, promoting, training, culture building, and measuring and rewarding behavior
- Antisocial managers have remarkable talent for convincing others of their abilities, stealing credit from others, and being hired or promoted into positions they do not have the skills to perform.
- Antisocial managers fail to internalize basic moral values concerning honesty and respect for the rights of others. Several things can get in the way.
  - First, feeling that they are so special that the rules do not apply to them, antisocial individuals may never internalize their parents' rules for appropriate moral behavior
  - Their parents or peers may not have valued honesty, so they never did
  - they felt the world treated them unfairly, so they did not need to follow its rules and could take whatever they wanted, since they deserved it as compensation for having been wronged.
  - antisocial individuals are born with different predispositions to form true attachments to others and to empathize with others
- Manipulation is a game and a challenge to antisocial managers as well as a way to increase their power
- Get away from them. If not, you will soon be confronted with a situation in which you are under pressure to do something unethical
- You need to maintain your distance. If you cannot, you should leave the group or expose them.
- If you find an antisocial subordinate, it is best to help him or her find another job in another industry
- . There are three key elements:
  - be aware of the warning signs
  - pay attention to them
  - Diligently look into situations that present warning signs.
- Behavioral Event Interviewing is a good way to begin the screening process. Ask applicants to talk about a time when things went well and a time when things did not go well. As they answer these questions, pay attention to what they thought the key factors for success and failure were.
- You can also ask applicants to describe situations in which they demonstrated various values that are crucial to the job you are considering them for
- Look for signs of impulsivity, recklessness, and deceitful behavior. Pay attention to whether they value or devalue others, if they value or devalue honesty, whether they show concern and respect for others or if they focus on their own needs and desire for glory, and if they are able to feel remorse and guilt.

- If you find one in your work group, get rid of him if he is your subordinate, leave if he is your superior, and avoid him if he is your peer.

## Chapter Six

- Why people behave in unethical ways
  - Part of the issue is the power of group pressure. People are very affected by their culture. People take their cues about what is right and wrong from those around them as well as from what they learned over the course of their lives
  - This is just the way things are done. Their parents did it, their parents' friends did it, and they assumed everyone does it.
  - A third group of people are those who generally obey all the rules but can be pulled into unethical behavior bit by bit if under enough pressure
- For all three groups, the more they bend the rules, the easier it becomes
  - One factor is preoccupation with the bottom line
  - A culture that exclusively values power and financial success, and pays no attention to decency and ethical behavior, encourages ruthless behavior
- Top leadership by word and deed needs to send a message that unethical behavior will be neither condoned nor tolerated.
- To protect yourself from the consequences of not cooperating with an unethical manager (from perhaps being fired), try to get her orders in writing so you can show that you failed to do what your boss asked because it violated ethical standards.
- Opportunistic, unethical managers can generally learn to live by the rules.
- Antisocial managers will neither be limited in their violation of the rules nor subject to turning over a new leaf.
- To decrease unethical behavior:
  - Be a role model for what you want others to do (be ethical).
  - Preach the importance of ethics.
  - Tell stories that support taking an ethical stance and not succumbing to temptations.
  - Create a measurement/reward system that supports ethical behavior.
  - Hire and promote only those people whom you believe to have high ethical standards.
- The first step is valuing your integrity. The second is realizing that disaster can strike if you break the rules. Many close their eyes to the danger and believe they could never be caught. Third, it is important to avoid slippery slopes, group pressure, and "going along" with the crowd

## Chapter Seven

- Aggressive behavior is behavior that unjustifiably harms another.
- Aggression is driven both by frustrations that are inherent in working in organizations and by competition to advance one's personal and work agenda.

- Some people divide aggression into two types: hot and cold.
  - **Hot aggression** includes those who are upset when they hurt you.
    - is the irritable person who lashes out in frustration or revenge
    - involves people who have no desire to hurt you but are frazzled and accidentally run over you
  - **Cold aggression** refers to those who are calm and calculating.
    - bullying and ruthless behavior. Ruthlessness (instrumental aggression) entails a willingness to treat others unfairly in order to have one's way.
    - Calmly telling destructive stories about someone to discredit him and get him out of the way is **instrumental aggression**.
    - **Predatory aggressive** people enjoy the act of hurting people.
    - *Passive-aggressive behavior* involves passive resistance to demands that interfere with others' goals. Passive-aggressive people sabotage rather than directly attack what they do not like
      - Procrastination and negativity are classic passive-aggressive behaviors.
- **Ruthless managers** take what they need when they need it, without concern for fairness, ethics, decency, or you.
  - Have narcissistic personality structures: arrogant, devaluing of others, limited empathy for others, a limited conscience, and willingness to exploit others.
  - Often scapegoat
  - Steal credit for others' work
  - Pressure you to work extra long hours
- It is generally wise to avoid getting in the way of someone with a reputation for ruthless aggression until you have enough power and outside support to stand up to him.
  - If you do not pose a threat to his wishes, he will have no reason to attack you.
  - If you support him, he will want to help you..
- Check in frequently with superiors to get support for your actions and to heavily document what you do and why.
- Ruthless managers are unlikely to attack those they see as powerful.

## Chapter Eight

- **Bullying manager's** his agenda is to dominate and intimidate you because of the stimulation he gets from exercising power over people.
  - At his core are narcissistic personality traits: arrogance, devaluation of others, little capacity for empathy, and a conscience with more holes than Swiss cheese.
- Their weapons:
  - They will humiliate you in front of others
  - berate you in private
  - submit you to a constant stream of insulting emails.
  - They can gratuitously subject you to unreasonable work demands and conditions
  - deny your abilities and accomplishments
  - blame you for things that are not your fault.
  - They can threaten to damage your career by making false statements about you or placing damaging notes in your file.
  - They can even loom over you or block you from leaving your desk or your room and leave you fearing that they may be violent.

- Bullies can decimate your self-esteem. After a sustained period of bullying, people cease to believe in themselves, their abilities, and even their right to be treated reasonably
- Many victims suffer from anxiety or depression.
- **Bullying often requires the silent acceptance of coworkers.**
- Dealing with a supervisor: tell them their bad behavior is not necessary to get your attention.
- You need to decrease their desire to engage in bullying, decrease their interest in selecting you as the victim of choice when they do bully, and strengthen yourself against potential attacks
  - **Don't let them see that they've upset you.**
- Having a powerful person on your side can also help you to maintain some of your self-esteem and sanity in the face of attacks by your boss. It is also helpful to keep records so that you can present a blow-by-blow account of the bully's behavior.
- You should also ask the bully to communicate by email or in writing instead of verbally. This gives you an opportunity to pass it on to your superior for clarification.

### Chapter Nine

- **Narcissistic rage:** When their self-esteem is injured by criticism or failure, the narcissistic individual becomes enraged, and all judgment melts away.
- **Identification with the aggressor** explains how victims grow up to be perpetrators of violence.
- **How to deal with threats of violence:**
  - Call an expert for an assessment of risk.
  - Gather data about the person's prior history.
  - Avoid provoking the person.
  - Listen to the perpetrator's complaints.
  - Offer to help as you can help.
  - Remind them to find a non-violent solution.
  - Keep the target out of harm's way.

### Chapter Ten

- Sexual harassment happens to 50% of women and 10-20% of men.
- Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act forbids discrimination on the basis of gender.
- Studies have shown that most women who are sexually harassed do not report it
- 70 percent of lasting relationships begin in the workplace
  - You cannot forbid workplace romances.
  - The best solution is generally to permit dating but to provide ample education on sexual harassment and an effective means by which people can seek redress within the company.
  - A person's immediate superior should not be the person to whom you report sexual harassment problems, since this may well be the person who is behaving inappropriately
  - Bar people from dating people that report to them.
- Types of sexually harassing behavior:
  - Offensive comments or jokes based on gender
  - Persistent, unwanted sexual advances

- Sexual bribery or coercion
  - Unwanted touching.
- Factors that lead to the behavior:
  - Cluelessness
    - Different national culture
    - Dinosaur syndrome---grew up in a different era when their behavior was acceptable
  - Temporary loss of judgment from acute stress or alcohol
  - Feel entitled as “perks” of their position
  - Misogyny
- The current test for sexual harassment is whether a reasonable woman would consider an action to be sexual harassment.
  - If you dislike the behavior, tell them.
- Clueless
  - Will change behavior once cued in that its’ unacceptable.
  - Be specific about what it is that is bothersome.
- Misogynists and narcissistic managers, who feel that they have all rights to their company’s property and employees, are more difficult to deal with.
  - These managers are unlikely to respect your feelings but may respond to a direct confrontation and statement of consequences.
- How to deal with harassment:
  - Know your company’s policies dealing with sexual harassment.
  - Carrying yourself with confidence
  - Speak with people you can trust about the behavior
  - documented in detail all examples that you can
  - see if others have been harassed and are willing to speak up.
  - confront the harasser in the presence of other people who have been harassed or witnessed the harassment.
  - Go to the person’s boss’ boss.
    - Less personal, more likely to listen to you and take action.
- Why people continue their behavior:
  - Not understanding what behavior you want them to stop doing.
  - Being stressed and forget so they go to old patterns.
  - Don’t think you’re serious.
  - Dislike being told what to do.
  - Not caring about your feelings.
  - Wanting to provoke you.
- Take steps against those who sexually harass others in order to clearly show that the company means business.
- An effective sexual harassment policy includes:
  - overseen by a senior corporate official.
  - It clearly informs people what sexual harassment is and that it will not be tolerated.
  - All new employees are informed of the policy upon hiring, and all employees are periodically reminded of it.
  - It establishes procedures for reporting abuse, including two routes for filing complaints

- (neither of which is through the person's manager).
  - It trains managers to recognize and deal with harassment.
  - Complaints are dealt with confidentially, protecting the rights of both the accused and accuser.
  - Records are kept of the investigation.
  - Accusations are quickly investigated, and violations are dealt with seriously.
  - Accusers are protected unless a complaint can be proved malicious.
- If you want to date your coworker:
  - Be discrete so no one else knows.
  - Go into the relationship slowly and talk about how you'll behave if things turn sour.
  - End your relationship clearly with no mixed signals.
- If you don't want to date someone, tell it to them plain.

## Chapter Eleven

- Why people discriminate:
  - Some are uncomfortable dealing with anyone who is different from them—someone with a different ethnic, cultural, educational, or demographic background.
  - Others have difficulty with one particular group as a result of a stereotype they hold. Rigid belief in stereotypes blinding people to what someone is really like can be driven by a desire to look down on others.
  - Some people reinforce their self-esteem by looking down on others and then comparing themselves to this disparaged group.
  - Similarly, some people want someone to blame for their own failures and weaknesses—a scapegoat.
  - Other people are filled with anger and by having a group to focus their anger on, they can avoid having their anger spill out onto those they work and live without damaging those relationships.
  - Stereotyping, exclusion, and harassment of an out-group also serves to support group solidarity.
  - Other people think negatively about another group, or all other groups, because they were taught that they are superior or that another group is dangerous.
  - Some people take advantage of commonly held prejudices as a means of attacking someone they wish to attack for political reasons.
- **Chauvinism** can occur in many forms. Sometimes, the main symptom is failure to give equal treatment in hiring, promotion, and work assignments to a particular group or to anyone not in your group.
- Sometime the core of chauvinism and harassment consists of caustic comments and teasing.
- Note that someone might have been offended by the comments or jokes
- You may, however, be able to encourage them to contain their behavior by pointing out the destructive impact of their statements on productivity.
- One person speaking to such bosses on one occasion will not be sufficient. You need the strength of numbers and repetition.
- If someone treats peers from certain groups unfairly or makes caustic comments, it is important to speak up.

- If a subordinate treats members of a racial or ethnic group unfairly or makes demeaning statements, it is crucial to step in and let them know, as well as those whom they are treating unfairly, that this will not be tolerated
- Diversity training fails because it is not made clear why people are undergoing the training in the first place.
- A successful diversity training program includes:
  - Motivation for change
  - Education on what needs change and how to accomplish it
  - Skills development
  - Modeling by leaders of the desired behavior
  - Support of the new behavior by leaders' statements
  - Support of change by hiring and promoting those supporting the new culture
  - Performance measurement system taking the desired cultural attitudes and behavior into account
  - Monitoring of change

## Chapter Twelve

- Why people are volatile:
  - Depression
  - being burned out
  - an anxiety disorder
  - post traumatic stress disorder
  - small annoyances feel overwhelming. Each new issue feels like the straw that broke the camel's back
- Volatile managers have a tendency to interpret all actions as being directed at them
  - are often moody and go through cycles of good days and bad days.
  - They may also have times of the day when they are typically in good or bad moods.
  - often feel badly after chopping someone's head off.
- Borderline personality disorder drives the volatility of some people who have angry outbursts.
  - fly into a rage when there is a threat to a crucial relationship. They become frantic when they feel they may be abandoned
- Irritability is that it is highly contagious.
- **The first step** in dealing with volatile managers is correctly assessing that the problem is irritability and not bullying or being frantic.
- **The second issue** is to assess whether the person has a serious personality disorder and is therefore at risk for engaging in violence if his or her Achilles' heel is threatened
- Ways to calm an angry person:
  - Reduce the noise level.
  - Keep calm yourself.
  - Acknowledge that the irate person has been wronged (if true), or, at least, acknowledge their feelings without any judgment.
  - Ask them to explain their situation (so you can tactfully correct errors).
  - Listen to their complaints without counterattacking.
  - Explain your feelings with non-blaming "I" statements.
  - Apologize for causing an inconvenience to them.
- Bending, being flexible and accommodating, is often a better way to handle an angry and

aggressive manager than getting into a power struggle about the appropriateness of his or her behavior

- It often helpful to find a time when he or she is calm to talk about how being yelled at and belittled interferes with your doing an optimal job.
- It is also safer to have several people approach a volatile, aggressive superior than for one person to do it.
- How you react to someone's anger determines how big a problem it becomes.
- Attitude is critical.
  - If you avoid taking the anger of a volatile person personally, and if you expect that there will be some noise and anger pointed in your direction at times, you will be much less stressed than if you assume that people you work with will always treat you respectfully and that their anger is your fault
- HR and upper management can insist that the person receive coaching or counseling to gain better self-control