

Toxic Managers

Chapters 1-4

- Why managers are toxic:
 - Clueless about their effect on others
 - Don't care if they hurt others
 - Enjoy hurting others
 - Overwhelmed with stress
- Toxic behaviors are caused by:
 - Toxic personality traits—enduring patterns of perceiving, interpreting, and relating to the world and oneself.
 - How one has learned to understand the world and their place in it.
 - Personality disorders
- By knowing the different types of toxic managers you will know
 - When to invest resources to try and change them
 - Who to move to a new position
 - Who to get rid of
- **Personal competence** is the ability to know your own feelings, strengths, and weakness and the ability to deal with your feelings in appropriate ways that won't harm your performance.
- **Emotional intelligence**
 - **Personal Competence**
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-management
 - **Social competence**
 - Social awareness
 - Relationship management
- **Narcissistic personality traits**
 - Self-preoccupation
 - Devaluation of others
 - Limited empathy
- The key to changing problematic behavior is to know what factors drive it and then design an intervention to change it.
- People tend to accept problematic behavior rather than change it.
- **Destructive Narcissism**
 - Preoccupied with themselves
 - Grandiosity
 - Sense of entitlement
 - No values
 - Sensitive to slights making them have a desire for revenge
 - Frees them from moral constraints and concern for others
 - Allows them to treat others as objects rather than people

- Become submissive in the presence of a superior
- Trust only a few and then demand strict loyalty
- When stressed, they step on other people even more.
- **Types of narcissistic managers**
 - **Grandiose:** seek to be admired and live out their fantasies of being special
 - Lack of empathy and no conscience
 - Confident so often promoted quickly
 - Are high-stake risk takers
 - Get rid of talented people out of fear of being gotten rid of themselves
 - How to deal with them:
 - Avoid situations that lead to problems
 - Obtain written directions and document your work
 - Don't show the boss he's wrong
 - Don't challenge them
 - Support their self-esteem
 - Try to get transferred to another position ASAP
 - Get them coaching so they can try to empathize with others
 - Need a "buffer" person who can tolerate them but who also knows how to handle suggestions to be passed on to the grandiose manager
 - Rate themselves too highly and won't discuss weaknesses
 - **Learned:** behave poorly towards others out of cluelessness, not vicious nor uncaring
 - Have a conscience
 - How to deal with them:
 - Confrontation sometimes works
 - Criticism must come from above or from a peer
 - **Control freaks:** arrogant and devalue others. Want to wield power over others than being admired
 - Watch every step you take, tell you how to take it, and expect absolute obedience
 - Micromanage everything
 - Are very black-and-white
 - They *will* destroy you if possible if they feel threatened
 - Want to eliminate you from having any autonomy of action
 - How to cope:
 - Don't push back unless you have a safe out
 - **Paranoid:** preoccupied with fears that others want to hurt them
 - Have unreasonable suspicions that others are out to get them
 - Won't confide in others
 - Bear grudges
 - Do not ask for help

- **Paranoid delusion:** the extreme example of being paranoid about conspiracies out to get you
- They externalize all blame for their problems and failures on others
- **Defense mechanisms:**
 - *Projection:* they project their own secret doubts on others
 - *Sublimation:* vows to never treat others as they've been treated
 - *Suppression:* willingly try to block out negative experiences
 - *Repression:* involuntarily block out negative experiences
 - *Displaced:* direct negative emotions at innocent people
- Usually don't rise within an organization but can start their own business successfully (to some extent)
- How paranoid managers hurt the workplace:
 - Their first priority is on themselves and protecting themselves instead of focusing on the job
 - They lower others' productivity since they're weirded/freaked out
 - Hamper communication by being unwilling to share so others don't want to share with them either
- How to deal with them:
 - Do not appear aggressive to them
 - Avoid becoming a target
 - Be transparent in your work
 - Ultimately, transfer ASAP
- Can be the most dangerous people who lash out when they feel threatened or feel they've been treated unjustly
 - Consult outside help in evaluating the threat level
- **Unethical opportunists:** weak conscience and willing to break the rules
- **Ruthless:** no respect for others and feel entitled to exploit others
- **Antisocial:** aggressive, enjoy violating the rights of others
- **Grandiose Peers:**
 - Watch your back
 - Do not tell them your weakness and vulnerabilities
 - Avoid arguments
 - Don't share ideas with them, report them to your boss
- **Grandiose Subordinates:**
 - They will stab you in the back
 - Give positive feedback first then criticism
- **360-degree feedback:**
 - Ask a manager's superiors, peers, look into his reports to find signs of narcissism
 - Be anonymous, confidential
 - Don't give this feedback to the person unless you can guarantee that it's anonymous and many people have reported it

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