Corporate Psychopaths

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Statistics on Bullying-Psychopathy

- Child and adolescents: approx 34% bullied
- Adults: 37% of the workplace has been bullied
- 57% of targets are female - more females becoming bullies.
- 72% of bullying comes from bosses most of this from psychopaths (normal bullies 1 per month psychopaths; 3 per week and more severe).
- 1% of the general population are psychopaths. There are 3.5 times more psychopath executives & senior executives than the general population in corporations.
Statistics (cont.)

• 45% of targets report stress related health problems
  – Panic attacks
  – Clinical depression
  – Post traumatic stress
  – 2 to 9 more times likely to commit suicide than those not bullied

• 40% of targets never tell anyone

• Bullied people become depressed and more targeted by other bullies later in life especially by the psychopathic perpetrators

• 3% of targets file lawsuits

faculty.css.edu/DSWENSON/WEB/...IT.../Leadership_psychopathy.pptx
Two Criminal Case Examples

- John Wayne Gacy was a contractor, Junior Chamber of Commerce “Man of the Year,” Pogo the Clown, and raped and murdered 32 young boys

- Kenneth Bianchi was one of the “Hillside Stranglers,” who raped, tortured, and murdered 12 women, & fooled experts into believing he had multiple personality disorder

Hare (1996)
Failed and Flawed Leadership and Ethics Violations: The White Collar Psychopath

Whether called “white-collar psychopath, successful psychopath”, or “corporate bully / psychopath,” these all describe a person who narcissistically conducts business with deceit, manipulation, charm, and predatory behavior while being unremorseful and un-empathic of the impact on others or ethical standards.
Psychopathy Checklist-Revised: Factors, Facets & Items (Hare, R.D. 1991)

Facet 1: Interpersonal
- Glibness/superficial charm
- Grandiose sense of self-worth
- Pathological lying
- Cunning/manipulative

Facet 2: Affective
- Lack of remorse or guilt
- Emotionally shallow
- Callous/lack of empathy
- Failure to accept responsibility for own actions

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychopathy_Checklist
**Facet 3: Lifestyle**
- Need for stimulation/proneness to boredom
- Parasitic lifestyle
- Lack of realistic, long-term goals
- **Impulsivity**
- Irresponsibility

**Facet 4: Antisocial**
- Poor behavioral controls
- Early behavioral problems
- **Juvenile delinquency**
- Revocation of conditional release
- **Criminal** versatility

**Other Items**
- Many short-term marital relationships
- Promiscuous sexual behaviour
Unlike the criminal or antisocial psychopath, the white-collar psychopath usually does not engage in violence or direct criminal behavior. Instead, they operate through glibness, manipulation, deceit, and with a lack of remorse or guilt.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychopathy
THE COST OF FLAWED LEADERSHIP


• Shareholders lose $Billions in Investments

-BANKRUPTSY-

Millions in Compensation Costs
# Psychopathic features and their positive corporate labels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychopathic Dimensions</th>
<th>Corporate Label</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No conscience</td>
<td>Gets the hard jobs done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberrant self promoter</td>
<td>Makes an excellent first impression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No fear</td>
<td>Shows courage and steadfastness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lies and schemes</td>
<td>Strategically-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrill-seeking</td>
<td>Risk-taker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No guilt or remorse</td>
<td>Can live with tough decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandiose self image</td>
<td>Confident, knows self worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold-hearted</td>
<td>Objective, analytical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glib, superficial charm</td>
<td>Networks well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severs ties with those no longer useful</td>
<td>Move up hierarchy without loyalties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exaggerated promises</td>
<td>Visionary</td>
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What is considered as indications of pathology in some settings... …is recognized and rewarded as skilled, competitive, and “action-oriented” in other settings

FIVE SIGNS THAT YOU MAY BE WORKING WITH A CORPORATE PSYCHOPATH

1. He/she wants your ideas but claims them as their own. You often feel manipulated, used or conned.

2. He/she is deluded and obviously disconnected from the reality of the office.

3. He/she cannot show compassion, empathy, remorse or guilt, but will sometimes try to fake them.

4. He/she displays poor behaviour control and, in particular, excessive impulsiveness.

5. He/she is reluctant to take responsibility for their actions and errors and exhibits haughty self-righteousness.
Stages of progression of the corporate psychopath through the organization

Organizational Entry

Psychopaths tend to be very adept at the entry and interview stage. They are confident, charming, have no qualms lying and say whatever it takes to get the job.

Assessment

The assessment stage is the honeymoon period where the psychopath will establish an influence network normally based on one to one interaction with individuals – what is described as the ‘Psychopathic Bond’. The Psychopathic Bond is based on lies and manipulation and the ability of the psychopaths to analyze the victim’s expectations and desires. At this stage, the psychopath will identify ‘pawns’, ‘patrons’ (bosses and those with power) and the ‘police’ (HR and accounting departments). One thing to note – psychopaths don’t like group meetings where it is more difficult to manipulate people.

Manipulation

The manipulation stage is where they start to create conflict among their co-workers – the pawns – often through a campaign of disinformation. When in conflict, people don’t talk to each other – a perfect environment for the psychopath. At the same time, the psychopath will continue to groom the patron, often their direct boss, as a means of protection and defense.

Abandonment & Confrontation

At this stage, the pawns are abandoned when they are no longer considered of use. The psychopath stops talking to people who previously thought they were “friends” with the psychopath.

Ascension

And finally, there is the betrayal of the patron and the promotion into the patron’s job.
Estimated impact of psychopathy on the organization

- 25% of all resignations are due to the effect of a corporate psychopath
- 50% of all people who take stress leave, are related to or caused directly or indirectly by a corporate psychopath
- 25% staff turnover rate is the norm for psychopathic managers
- Each victim of a psychopath is out of pocket $10,000
- The community is out of pocket to the tune of $5000 per victim

http://www.psychopath-research.com/forum/ubbthreads.php/topics/1074/2/Corporate_Psychopaths

Adapted faculty.css.edu/DSWENSON/WEB/...IT.../Leadership_psychopathy.pptx
Reducing Psychopathy and the Corporate Cultures That Enable Them

- **Conduct extensive** background, assessment and interviews for people in leadership positions or aspiring to such.
- **Conduct regular** performance reviews that examine pro-social and antisocial behavior
- **Document abuses** over time to show a pattern of behavior
- **Model pro-social** and ethical behavior from the top down in the organization
- **Annually review the organizational culture** and the behavior that indicates transparent and hidden indicators of what is valued
- **Group Think** is likely with highly cohesive leadership teams; use countermeasures to reduce the risk (e.g., devil’s advocates at meetings, invite external experts to observe and feedback, etc.)
- **Build a strong, diverse, and well-informed Board of Directors/Trusted administrative leaders**
More general recommendations...

• Have more group involvement at the interview stage; psychopaths tend to prefer individual interviews that they can control

• Obtain documentation for claims and have follow-up phone confirmation

• Listen to what people say and diligently follow up on accusations

• Corroborate information from multiple sources
Identifying Psychopathic Interpersonal Manipulative Mechanisms (Burge, 2008)

- Inoculation (Image, Empathy, Charm-Attachment/Bond)
  Smiling Assassin Role.
- Cognitive Dissonance
- Triangulation
- Ambiguity/Confusion
- Role Complementation
- Group think (group conformity, “norms”, deviance sanctions)
- De-affirmation
Corporate Psychopath Bullies - Role Types- (Burge, 2008)

• **The Smiling Assassin** is often charming and caring, even complimentary. However, this type is a narcissistic ego maniac who feels threatened when those close to them achieve rewards and will find some way to eventually burst their bubble.

• **The Lawyer** has well-planned, prosecuting attacks, laden with confusing language that disorientates the victim. They are expert at laying bizarre accusations so the victim cannot explain their position logically.

• **The Ambusher** takes their opponent by surprise, and then goes on the attack. They give the illusion of understanding to catch their prey off-guard.

• **The Detractor** uses group situations, such as meeting and social occasions, to discredit their opponent.

• **The Thug** is an out-and-out bully and will use yelling, threats and exploitation of their opponent's weaknesses to squash resistance.
Corporate Psychopaths & Victim - Role Types
(Burge, 2008)

The Retreater avoids conflict at all costs, then simmers with resentment.

The displacer turns everything back onto others and the organization.

The Martyr is self-righteous and gains the high moral ground through their suffering, no matter how much injury they create.

The Dumping Bag feels completely powerless to defend themselves and is anxious if they are not a target. They will choose to be put down rather than risk anxiety or fantasised retribution.

The Justifier is always apologising, rightly or wrongly, for their behaviour; they feel panicky unless others understand their view and struggle with their right to exist.
Corporate Psychopaths & Rescuer - Role Types
(Burge, 2008)

• **The Avenging Angel** has unhealed wounds from the past and sees injustice everywhere. They see it as their role to avenge unfairness.

• **The Placator** is anxious around disagreement and will try to fix impossible problems, even taking on unfair responsibility, blame and guilt.

• **The Preacher** sees others as naive, lost and in need of guidance. Unfortunately, they are often seen as patronising.

• **The Diplomat** is the healthiest Rescuer. They are skilled in emotional intelligence and leadership. They usually steer the discussion in less reactive, more problem-solving directions. They believe in fairness and "win-win" outcomes if possible, but are prepared to make the hard call against the psychopath.

• **The White Knight** wants to confront persecution and oppression. They offer leadership and support but sometimes inflame conflicts.
How to Deal with the Corporate Psychopath

1. Avoid at all costs - create separation
2. Be careful with whom you confide, within the organization
3. Be tough unwavering and as persistent as possible
4. Keep records in a secure location
5. Have realistic expectations of yourself
6. Seek support and external mentoring
Thank You
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Corporate Psychopathy: Talking the Walk, by Paul Babiak, Ph.D., Craig S. Neumann, Ph.D., and Robert D. Hare, Ph.D., Behavioral Sciences and the Law, Volume 28, issue 2, 2010 (Wiley Online Library).


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