The Tools of Leadership

Toxic Leadership

MA Leadership

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200
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Today we will…

Reflect on what we've noticed about leadership & skills



Toxic Leadership: What is it? Why focus on it?



What is the impact of toxic leadership?



Individuals?
Organisations?
Communities?

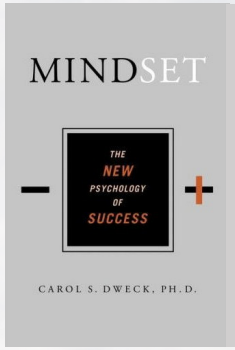
Reminder of our module aims:

To explain the significance and nature of leadership and its role within organisations

Undertake a ***critical exploration*** of leadership tools and techniques used by successful leaders and ***explore*** different situational forces and variables in the leadership situation

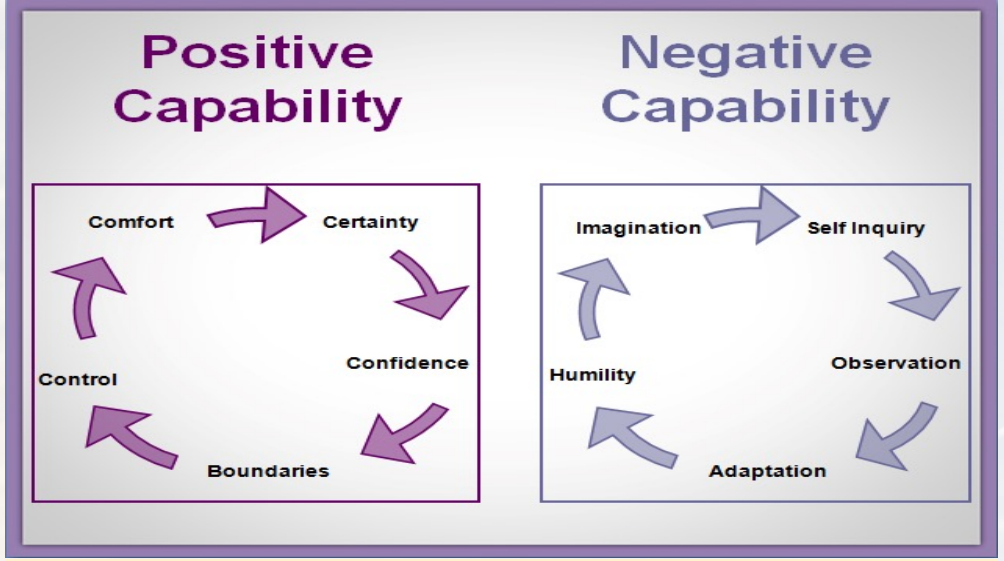


Consider the concept of leadership ***occurring as a practice*** rather than residing in the traits or behaviours of particular individuals

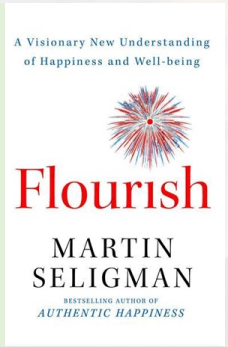


Set learning goals toward mastery
Believe learning, talent and ability can all be developed
Effort and persistence
Embrace challenge and new ideas

I never stopped trying to be qualified to do the job'
Darwin E Smith, CEO, Kimberly-Clark Corporation 1971-1991



Know your key strengths and use them daily
Know how you learn best & get more from learning
Ask questions



"Re-craft your life, work, love, play and friendships around your top strengths"
Dr Martin Seligman, founder of Positive Psychology

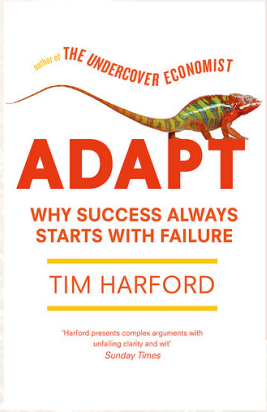
Knowing more, understanding less
Be open to new ideas that challenge current thinking
Personal sense of inquiry
Reflecting on your performance

"What got you here won't get you there'
Marshall Goldsmith, leadership thinker, author, coach



Give your full attention to learning
Recognise the emotions you feel & the impact they have
Allow yourself time to reflect & find value
Value the difference of others

You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf'
Jack Kornfield, Buddhist Teacher & Psychologist



Design an experiment to test new ideas
Make the test small scale and failure survivable
Keep what works
Share your learning with others

'Adapt: Why success always starts with failure'
Tim Harford, economist & author

From last week…

…what are your reflections:

Where have you noticed leadership around you? In the world?

What tools and skills have you noticed?

What works? Work doesn’t? Why?

Why might they be doing what they are doing?

What would you advise them to do to be more effective?



What is Toxic Leadership?



…what are your feelings and thoughts? Discuss…

What is Toxic Leadership?



Destructive to individuals, teams, organisations

Selfish all about the leader

Hubris

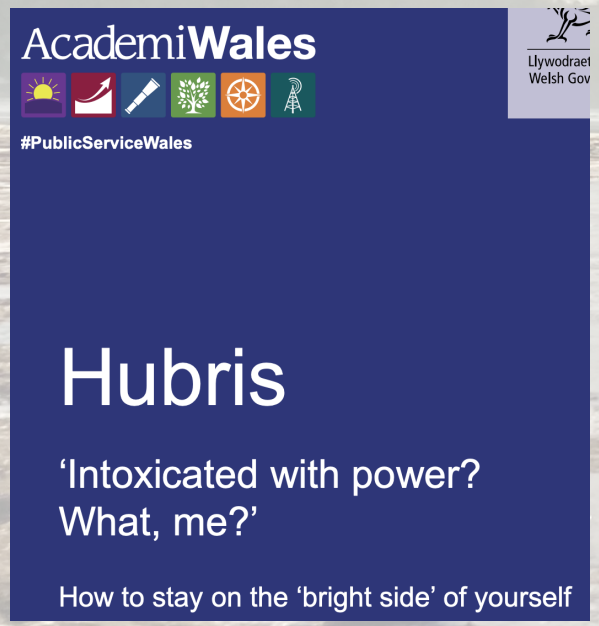
Abusive

Limits Potential

What is Hubris?



Hubristic behaviour is a syndrome, constituting a cluster of features, evoked by a **specific trigger (power).** Hubris is seen as an **acquired condition** and therefore different from most disorders of the personality which are traditionally seen as persistent throughout adulthood. The key concept is that hubris is a **disorder of the possession of power**, particularly **power which has been associated with overwhelming success**, held for a **period of years** and with **minimal constraint on the leader**.



S: special (believes he or she is special and unique)
P: preoccupied with fantasies (of unlimited success, power, brilliance, beauty, or ideal love)
E: entitlement
C: conceited (grandiose sense of self importance)
I: interpersonal exploitation
A: arrogant (haughty)
L: lacks empathy

What are the effects of toxic leadership?



…what are your feelings and thoughts? Discuss…

What are the effects of toxic leadership?

…what are your reflections:

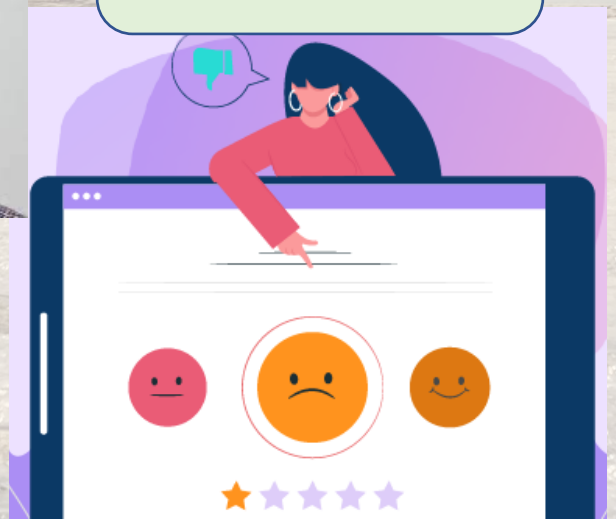
Workplace Bullying



Anti work behaviours



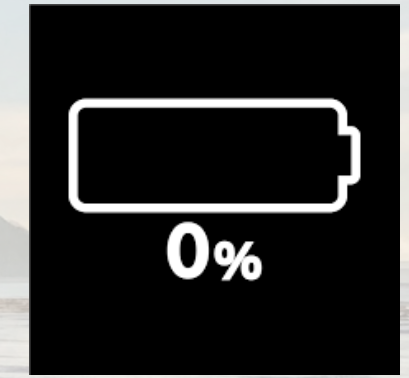
Job dissatisfaction



Psychological distress



Depression Burnout



How to spot toxic leadership…

Individual Leaders

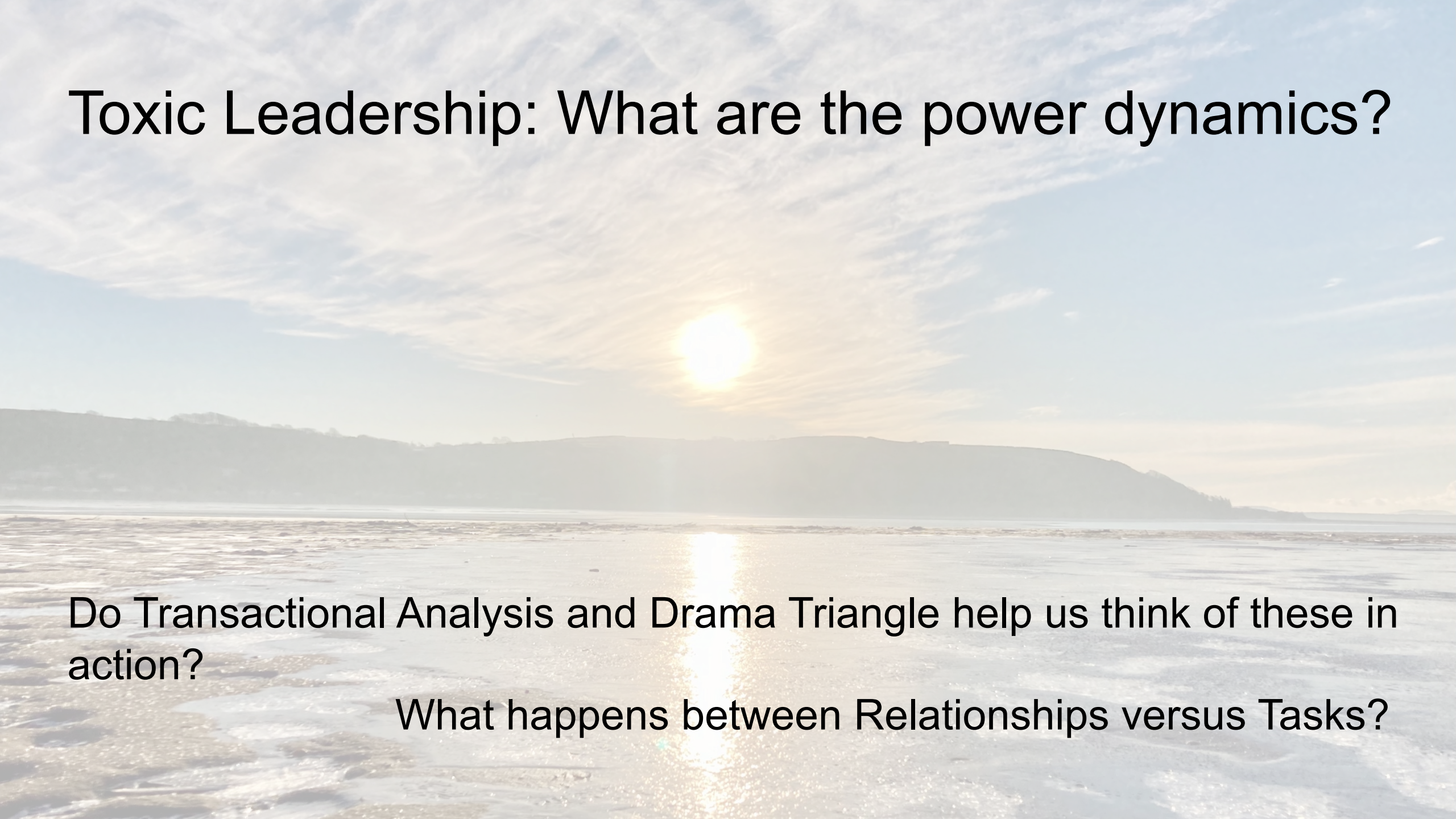
- Frequent lying/ inconsistent expectations
- Doesn't listen (to feedback)
- Arrogance
- Importance of hierarchy
- Discriminates against individuals
- Lacks confidence
- Incompetent at their job
- Self interested



System/organisation Design

- Unrealistic expectations
- Limited listening (especially by senior leaders)
- Rewards for obeying
- Importance of hierarchy
- Does not actively include different perspectives
- "Playing the game" is rewarded
- Incompetence is tolerated

Toxic Leadership: What are the power dynamics?



Do Transactional Analysis and Drama Triangle help us think of these in action?

What happens between Relationships versus Tasks?

Choosing my state?

Controlling

Nurturing

Parent





Adult



Transactional Analysis – the Games We Play
Berne (1958)

Child





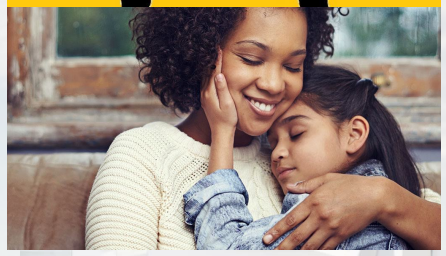
Adapted: Compliant vs Rebellious

Free Child

The consequences?



Controlling Parent



Nurturing Parent



Functional Adult





Adapted Child



Free Child

Positive	Negative
Firmness, control, clarity, accountability	Bossy, overbearing, disabling & disengaging
Caring, loving, kind generous	”Rescuers need victims; disable people doing things for them
Logical, rational, problem-solving, balance conflict	Boring, pedantic, limited use of feelings/values
Polite, courteous, accepting, amenable	Sit quietly, can’t say “no”; **or** aggressive, rebellious (or both)
Friendliness, fun, creative, honest, use emotions	Immature, childish, over emotional

How do we want to do things?



Parent





Adult



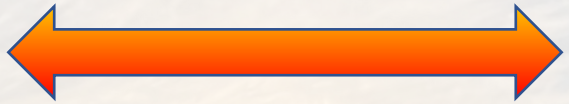


Child



Noticing Drama Triangles…













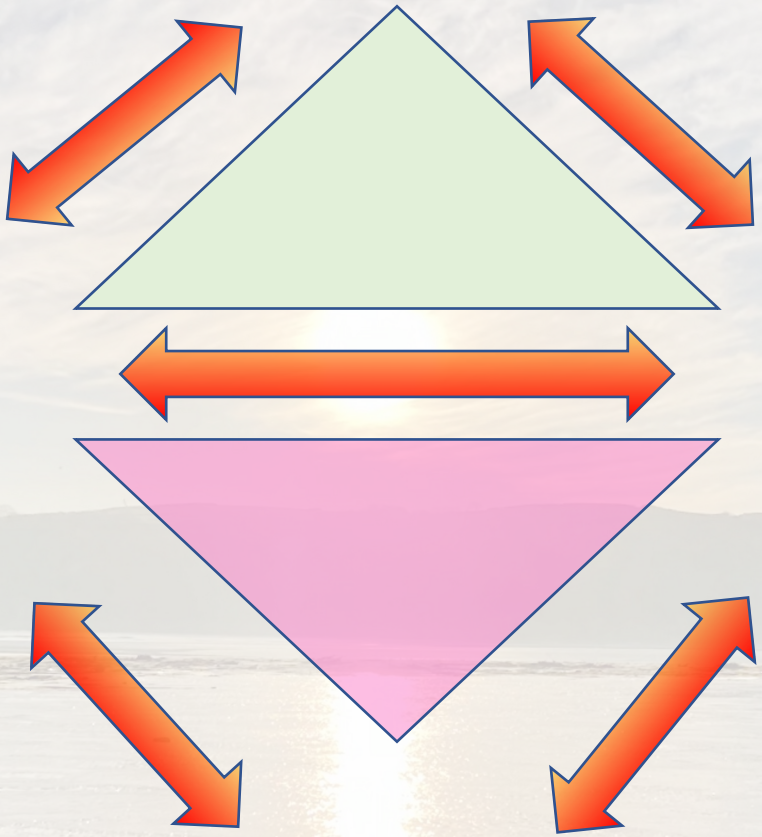
Karpman (1968)

Reframing…
"Fix" or Enable?



Creator







Coach



Challenger





Emerald (2009)

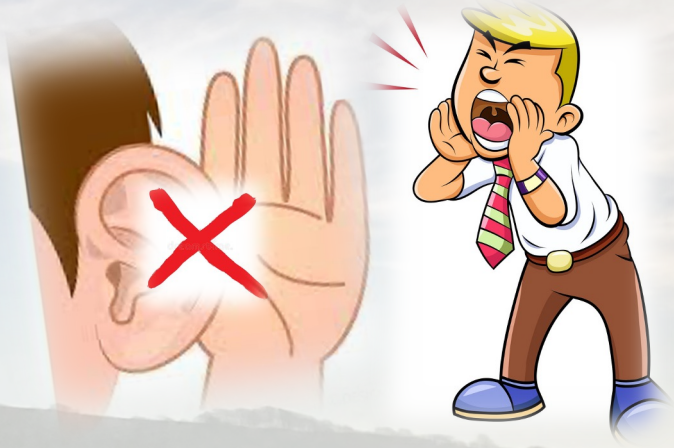
Toxic Leadership: who/where is it most likely…



Toxic Leadership Quiz:

If this is the answer…	…what is the question?
20-25%	?
30 x higher than the average person	?
Populism, post truth & polarisation	?
Develop empathy skills & practices	?

What are some of the core toxic leadership traits?













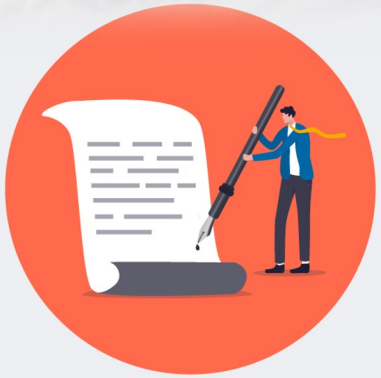
How to deal with Toxic Leadership…



Attempt to help instead of judge



Keep control of your reactions



Document everything



Set professional boundaries



Approach your manager with a candid conversation



Clarify



Focus on your job and forget the ego



How to deal with Toxic Leadership…

1. Attempt to help instead of judge
If you can't avoid the toxic behaviour, at least you don't have to focus on it and give it all your attention.

2. Keep control of your reactions
Remember that this behaviour isn't about you. Stay in control of your emotions and don't give them the attention they want.

3. Document everything
Always ask for a written confirmation via email before you complete a task that you don't agree with.

4. Set professional boundaries
You have no obligation to befriend your leader or answer personal questions. By doing this, you'll protect yourself and your personal life from toxic behaviour.

5. Approach your manager with a candid conversation
The goal of a candid conversation is not to accuse but rather to air out how you feel and how your performance is being affected. Approach it with "I" statements and explain how this doesn't just impact you, but the company as well.

6. Clarify instructions
Don't make assumptions about what you believe your toxic leader wants. This may lead to misunderstandings. Ask for clarifications (in written form) whenever you have even the smallest of doubts.

7. Focus on your job and forget the ego
Remember not to take things personally. A toxic leader's behaviour is not a reflection of you and your performance. You won't be able to prove that you're right and your toxic leader is wrong, so don't try to do so.

Reflecting on toxic leadership…

In your group, share your reflections in turn. What are you feeling? What are you thinking?

Some tips:

- Consider leadership you might all recognise
- Consider the context of this leadership
- Reflect on the skills that have been used: how effective were these? What worked? What could/should have been better?

What is your biggest learning about leadership from today?

Video Links

Evil Boss

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vFTMjYJTnY

Why do so many incompetent men become leaders?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeAEFEXvcBg&t=311s

Blame

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZWf2_2L2v8

The Tools of Leadership Assignment:

Attributes and Impacts of Leaders

Choose an organisation within any industry/sector, and critically analyse the impact that poor leadership has had upon the organisation and its environment.
It would be useful to review a range of organisations to generate different perspectives, for example: BHS, Toys R Us, Blockbuster, Manchester United, Northern Rock and FIFA etc.

Discuss the significance of leadership and critically evaluate how different leadership styles and emotional intelligence can be applied by leaders within organisations to different people and contexts. Use appropriate models/theories to support your discussion.

Discuss the enduring dysfunctional qualities of character which mark the toxic leader, with consideration of the impact and effect that toxic leaders can have upon the performance and culture of an organisation.

Critically review and appraise the role and feasibility of leadership development programmes, with reference to the benefits and limitations of such programmes.

Reference should be made to the importance of leaders understanding their own strengths and limitations as a leader.

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