

Bad Leadership: Vital Behaviors, Characteristics and Nomenclature

Wallace A. Burns, Samantha Bietsch, Kandis Boyd-Wyatt and Larry D. Parker Jr.

Business Faculty

American Public University

Charles Town, West Virginia, USA

wallace.burns@mycampus.apus.edu, samantha.bietsch@mycampus.apus.edu, kandis.boyd-wyatt@mycampus.apus.edu, larry.parker@mycampus.apus.edu

Abstract

This research provided a review of the literature to identify and target the most important bad leadership definitions, behaviors, traits and misconceptions. Data gathered from this discovery process was analyzed to identify, via Pareto analysis of nearly four hundred (400) papers, the “vital few” and “useful many” groupings of bad leadership behaviors. Once grouped, the data was used to compile a list of bad leadership characteristics. These characteristics included definitions, behaviors, traits, and commonality between behaviors and traits. In addition to the characteristics, a nomenclature for “bad leadership behavior” was created, containing the most relevant twenty-five (25) bad leadership behaviors.

Keywords

Bad leadership; Destructive leadership; Toxic leadership; Abusive supervision; Bullying; Leadership traits; Pareto analysis

1. Introduction

The objective of this paper was to review the literature and assemble a consolidated list of characteristics, traits, behaviors, and misconceptions having to do with bad leadership behavior, all in support of the creation of a list of characteristics and create a nomenclature for “bad leadership behavior.” The sections to follow, therefore, include defining bad leadership for use here; a list of characteristics, comprised of subsections including a special note on two dominant bad leadership behaviors, abusive and bullying, followed by misconceptions, traits, behaviors, and commonality between traits and behaviors. Last, a nomenclature of selected bad leadership behaviors was compiled amplifying each behavior.

When that initial discovery task was done, data gathered was evaluated to assess viability; that is, to find out which items were important and which were less so (i.e., a form of noise or waste of resources).

After the analysis was completed, the most important items to focus this paper on were determined. This was done by passing the available gathered data through a Pareto analysis with the mindset of identifying which behaviors were the “vital few”, and which were the “useful many”, a standard Pareto analysis construct. Below is a chart illustrating the Pareto analysis performed here (Figure 1):

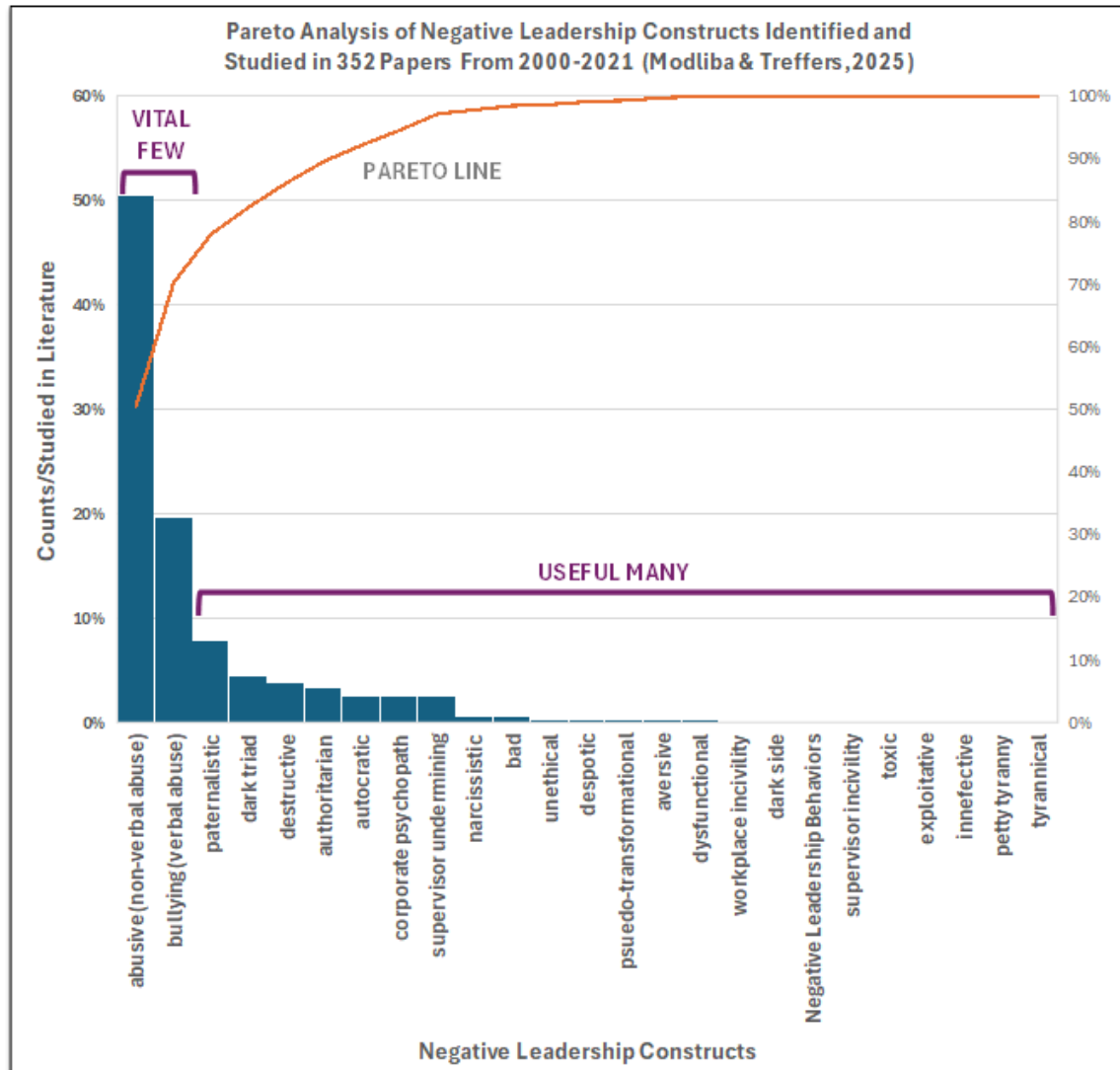


Figure 1. Pareto Analysis of Destructive Leadership Constructs of Modliba & Treffers (2025) Results

Once the useful many were identified, a ranking of importance within this was performed. Last, a “bad leadership” nomenclature was built to organize the terms in context with each other. See Appendix A for more detail on the Pareto analysis performed here.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this paper include (i) to review the literature and assemble a consolidated list of characteristics, traits, behaviors, and misconceptions having to do with bad leadership behavior. It aims (ii) to support the creation of a list of characteristics and create a nomenclature for “bad leadership behavior.” Additionally, the paper seeks (iii) to define bad leadership for use in this study and (iv) to provide a list of characteristics, including subsections on abusive and bullying behaviors. The objectives also involve (v) examining misconceptions, traits, behaviors, and the commonality between traits and behaviors. Furthermore, the paper intends (vi) to compile a nomenclature of selected bad leadership behaviors, amplifying each behavior. The data gathered will be evaluated (vii) to assess viability, identifying which items were important and which were not. Lastly, the study applies (viii) Pareto analysis to determine which behaviors were the “vital few” and which were the “useful many.”

2. Literature Review

This study is review of literature, with over 400 scholarly references analyzed. It is a qualitative review of the most critical behaviors, traits and misconceptions associated with destructive leadership.

Defining bad leadership because of its characteristics (style, roles, skills), place (in the workplace, on the ball field), and context (in business, in healthcare), is prone to parochialism, making a uniform definition problematic. Moreover, good leadership contains a wealth of substantive and thoughtful definitions. To get an idea of this positive leadership quotes, for bad leadership meaning take the converse of these “positive” definitions:

1. Steven R. Covey (2015) wrote “Leadership is communicating to another person their worth and potential so clearly they are inspired to see it in themselves.”
2. The U.S. Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP 6-22) defines leadership as “...the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization (Polden, 2019). But Gallagher (2019) noted “Too often the Army seeks to solve dynamic issues, or “wicked problems,” through management processes while underutilizing leadership. The Army is prone to this in part because it does not distinguish between leadership and management in doctrine or practice. Over the past sixty years, there has been an ongoing debate in Military Review as to the relationship between command, leadership and management. However, in the past few years little has been written that acknowledges the muddled overlap of the terms.”
3. As cited in Forbes (2012):
 1. Peter F. Drucker, a legendary definer of business management, was quoted as saying “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”
 2. U.S. Navy RADM Grace Hopper said, “You manage things; you lead people.”
 3. Warren Bennis offers that “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

The author, previously in A descriptive literature review of harmful leadership styles: Definitions, commonalities, measurements, negative impacts, and ways to improve these harmful leadership styles (2017), related bad leadership to destructive leadership.

To understand the difference between constructive and destructive leadership, see Pelletier’s dichotomy between the good and bad below:

Constructive leadership combines a focus on both mission accomplishment and team welfare. One without the other could lead to a weakening of the synergy needed to excel as a team consistently. Constructive leaders couple human traits such as honesty, respect, sincerity, justice, and honor with organizational/team strengths such as confidence, direction, achievement and striving for the greater good. Team members respect and place their trust in constructive leaders, in direct contrast to what occurs when led by a destructive leader (Norman, Avolio, & Luthans, 2010).

Kathie Pelletier (2010) defined destructive leadership as the “systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor, or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization’s goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates” (p. 375). Destructive leadership, she stated, ... can involve acts of physical force (e.g., shoving, throwing things, slamming fist on a desk, sexual harassment that includes inappropriate physical contact), and passive acts such as failing to protect a subordinate’s welfare, or failing to provide a subordinate with important information or feedback. (p. 375)

Based on a review of the literature, Pelletier’s above definition of destructive leadership seems the most concise and meaningful definition, in two parts, to wit:

1. Bad Leadership = Destructive Leadership
2. Destructive Leadership is the systematic and repeated behavior by a leader, supervisor, or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging

the organization's goals, tasks, resources, effectiveness and/or motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates.

Modliba & Treffers (2025) reviewed 352 papers and identified 25 different negative leadership behaviors with large overlaps in their conceptualization and operationalization. From those reviews they found common attributes as being unethical. More from Para. 1:

Our analysis of conceptualizations reveals common attributes that constitute the behavioural intensity and the behavioural valence of negative leadership behaviour. Behavioural intensity attributes constitute negative leadership behaviour as active, reoccurring and intentional behaviour that targets subordinates' psychological states. Behavioural valence attributes constitute negative leadership behaviour as being unethical, lack of empathy, leader self-worthiness and self-orientation, verbal hostility, use of power asymmetry and harming and belittling of others. The vast majority of operationalizations for negative leadership behaviour reflect the perceptions of subordinates or colleagues, whereas only a few operationalizations reflect supervisors' self-assessments. Our findings further reveal that the antecedents of negative leadership behaviour focus mainly on supervisors, whereas the consequences of negative leadership behaviour focus mainly on subordinates.

The published results data identified two overwhelming destructive leadership behaviors: abusive and bullying. A Pareto analysis of the results from these 350+ papers found that the abusive and bullying behaviors were predominant by their presence within the papers reviewed.

When all five-year periods from 2000 through 2021 were analyzed, abusive behavior occurred 50% of the time over all incidents covered by the literature, and bullying occurred 20% of the time. This 70/30 Pareto split shows that all other destructive leadership types are outliers to the abusive and bullying types. Appendix A provides a detailed review of the results of the Modliba & Treffers study.

3. Methods

Bad leadership is a catch-all label of a leadership type that is weak, poor, toxic, or negative, and almost always destructive or ungainful. Bad leadership impedes team or organizational success and well-being. Bad leadership exhibits lack of vision, poor communication, a lack of empathy or understanding, poor decision-making, an inability to inspire or motivate, or a lack of accountability. Bad leadership creates a toxic environment, self-interest over team needs, and a failure to support team growth.

This research surveyed the literature and performed Pareto analysis to determine the "Vital Few" and the "Useful Many", and capsulized misconceptions, behaviors, consequences, commonalities between destructive leadership behavior and style, among several other characteristics of bad behavior.

4. Results

The results of this paper include identification via a review of over 400 papers the most critical behaviors, traits, and misconceptions associated with destructive leadership. Developed a nomenclature of the 25 most relevant bad leadership behaviors. This nomenclature serves as a reference framework for identifying and discussing destructive leadership practices. And, nomenclature, with behavioral analysis, provide tools for diagnosing and improving leadership practices across sectors. Abusive behavior (50% of cases) and bullying (20%) were the most frequently cited forms of bad leadership, accounting for 70% of all destructive leadership incidents examined by the literature. Bottom line, this research highlighted the importance of recognizing and addressing abusive and bullying behaviors, which dominate the landscape of destructive leadership. Misconceptions identified in the literature in building this nomenclature included the conflation of management with leadership, and failing to distinguish between command, leadership, and management, especially in military contexts.

Follows are the bad leadership typology results of the research:

Misconceptions

Destructive leadership characteristics include misconceptions. Discussing these misconceptions before a review of the characteristics will help set the context for the characteristics to follow.

Walker & Kutsyuruba (2016) described how “leaders may subtly fall into rationalization, self-justification, foolishness, and callous indifference through maleficent internal narratives. How is it that leaders who have found the favor of others in the service of a great cause (i.e., the education of children and youth) find themselves sucked into clearly wrong or unthinkably bad actions? In the article they quoted recently deceased Pope Francis’s narratives to be wary of as leaders:

1. Feeling immortal, immune or indispensable.
2. Working too hard.
3. Becoming mentally hardened.
4. Planning too much.
5. Working without coordination, like an orchestra that produces noise.
6. Having “spiritual Alzheimer’s.
7. Being rivals or boastful.
8. Suffering from “existential schizophrenia.”
9. Committing the “terrorism of gossip.”
10. Glorifying one’s bosses.
11. Being indifferent to others.
12. Having a “funereal face.”
13. Wanting more.
14. Forming “closed circles” that seek to be stronger than the whole.

As well as Ghandi’s dangers for leadership awareness:

1. Feeling immortal, immune or indispensable
2. Working too hard.
3. Becoming mentally hardened.
4. Planning too much.
5. Working without coordination, like an orchestra that produces noise.
6. Having “spiritual Alzheimer’s.
7. Being rivals or boastful.
8. Suffering from “existential schizophrenia.”
9. Committing the “terrorism of gossip.”
10. Glorifying one’s bosses.
11. Being indifferent to others.
12. Having a “funereal face.”
13. Wanting more
14. Forming “closed circles” that seek to be stronger than the whole.

Last, Lolly Daskal (n.d.), a popular blogger and speaker, offers these myths for situational awareness:

1. The Charismatic Leader is the Most Effective
2. Leaders Must Have all the Answers
3. Micromanagement Ensures Quality Control Micromanagement may provide a false sense of control
4. Leadership is a Solitary Endeavor
5. Work-Life Balance is a Nice-to-Have
6. Change Should be Incremental and Gradual
7. Leadership Development is a One-Time Event

Kaskal targets confronting and debunking these destructive leadership myths to help redefine the way one leads and positions their organization for long-term, sustainable success.

Destructive leadership behavior, according to (Grill (2023); The Role of Leadership Has Become Increasingly Complex and Nuanced, 2025; Schmid, Pircher Verdorfer, & Peus (2018), Alexander, MacLaren, O’Gorman & Taheri (2012), and Zaghmout (2024); Hattab, Wirawan, Salam, Daswati & Niswaty (2022), includes a wide range of harmful actions that create a negative workplace environment, including:

Behaviors

1. Abuse of Power
2. Lack of Empathy and Understanding
 1. Insensitivity to Employee Needs
 2. Failing to recognize and address the emotional needs of team members
3. Lack of Support
 1. Not providing the necessary resources, training, or guidance for employees to succeed
 2. Dismissing Feedback
 3. Ignoring or rejecting constructive criticism
 4. Gaslighting: Denying or minimizing the reality of events or experiences to control or manipulate others
 5. Manipulation: Using deceitful or dishonest methods to influence or control other
 6. Lying and Deception: Conveying false information or making misleading statements
4. Hostile and Aggressive Behaviors
 1. Bullying and Harassment: Using intimidation, threats, or verbal abuse to create a hostile work environment
 2. Shouting and Belittling: Using aggressive verbal language to demean and intimidate team members
 3. Undermining: Consciously working to sabotage or hinder the work of others
5. Lack of Integrity and Accountability
 1. Lack of Transparency: Failing to be open and honest about decisions and actions
 2. Blame-Shifting: Avoiding responsibility for mistakes or failures by placing blame on others
 3. Inconsistency: Showing contradictory behavior or actions that undermine trust
 4. Incoherent Planning: Lack of clear goals, strategies, or direction
 5. Ambiguous Expectations: Unclear or unrealistic expectations of what is needed from employees
 6. Assigning Unnecessary Tasks: Assigning tasks that are not essential or contribute to organizational goals.
 7. Passive-Aggression: Expressing negativity or hostility in a subtle or indirect manner
 8. Avoidance: Withdrawing from leadership responsibilities and avoiding acting
 9. Micromanagement: Excessively controlling or interfering in the work of others

Consequences

6. Reduced employee morale and engagement
7. Increased stress and anxiety
8. Decreased productivity and performance
9. High employee turnover
10. Damage to organizational reputation
11. Loss of trust and respect

Modliba & Treffers (2025) studied 352 scholarly papers to derive the 25 most relevant destructive leadership traits, as shown in Table 1 below. As can be seen, Abusive and Bullying styles comprise 70% in a 70/30 Pareto distribution. (The principle highlights the importance of focusing on the “vital few” causes that have the most significant impact, rather than spreading efforts evenly across all factors).

Table 1. Top 25 Destructive Leadership Styles (Modliba & Treffers (2025))

Negative Leadership Construct ¹	Literature Predominance ²
abusive (non-verbal abuse)	50
bullying (verbal abuse)	20
paternalistic	8
dark triad	4
destructive	4
authoritarian	3
autocratic	3
corporate psychopath	3
supervisor undermining	3
unethical	
narcissistic	1
bad	1
despotic	
pseudo-transformational	
workplace incivility	
aversive	
dark side	
Negative Leadership Behaviors	
supervisor incivility	
toxic	
dysfunctional	
exploitative	
ineffective	
petty tyranny	
tyrannical	

Commonalities between destructive leadership behavior and style

Pelletier (2010) produced seminal research on the commonalities of harmful (destructive) leadership behavior related to Abusive, Bullying and Toxic styles. The findings are stark: There is great overlap behavior and trait as can be shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Commonalities in selected harmful leadership styles (Pelletier, 2010)

	Abusive	Bullying	Toxic
Demeaning/marginalizing, or degrading	X	X	X
Ridiculing/mockng	X	X	X
Social exclusion	X	X	X
Ostracizing/disenfranchising employee			X
Inciting employee to chastise another		X	X
Exhibiting favoritism	X		X
Harassment (including sexual)	X	X	
Emotional volatility	X	X	
Coercion	X		X
Using physical acts of aggression		X	X
Threatening employees' job security		X	X
Forcing people to endure hardships		X	X
Being deceptive/lying	X		X
Blaming others for the leader's mistakes	X	X	X
Taking credit for others' work		X	
Pitting in-group members against out-group members			X
Ignoring comments/ideas			X
Acting disengaged			
Stifling dissent			X
Being rigid			X
Presenting toxic agendas as noble visions			X

As mentioned earlier, defining negative leadership constructs is difficult since most traits or styles tend to be more parochial than not, rendering uniform definitions far from certain. Nomenclature entries are normally inserted between the abstract and introduction. In this case, the author is developing the nomenclature's entries and context of entries, i.e. by dimension and importance, based on a review of nearly 400 scholarly papers published since 2000.

Therefore, the nomenclature here is provided last.

Bad leadership constructs are deemed potentially repeating and systematic. Research shows that behaviors and characteristics of bad leadership tend to link to the negative consequences, creating reciprocal patterns and built-in reinforcements that are unhealthy and counterproductive. (Tiwari & Jha, 2021, as cited in Gandolfi & Stone, 2022). So, for purposes here, all of these should negative leadership constructs should be considered likely repeating and systematic.

The following bad leadership constructs** are grouped by abusive–non-abusive dimensions for enhanced context:

***Note: Each destructive leadership Abusive Behaviors listed below includes its Pareto distribution percentage (i.e., inferred here as its relative importance) from the study of 352 relevant scholarly papers by Modliba & Treffers (2025). See Appendix A for a detailed table of distribution values used in the author's Pareto analysis of the study's results. Unfortunately, after a review of the literature, there are no similar*

study results that could be used to assess the importance of the Non-Abusive behaviors, listed at end of the following section.

Abusive behavior

Abusive (non-verbal abuse) – Pareto Distribution 50%

The author researched abusive leadership in Burns (2017), and wrote concerning abusive leadership:

According to Tepper (2000) and Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, and Ensley (2004) abusive leaders are characterized by their “injurious actions that include public ridicule, angry tantrums, inconsiderate actions (i.e., rudeness), favoritism, non-contingent punishment, and coercion” (p. 374). Hornstein (1996) suggested that toxic leaders are primarily concerned with gaining and maintaining control through methods that create fear and intimidation (p. 374). Ashforth (2006) argued tyrannical leaders are “distrusting, condescending and patronizing, impersonal, arrogant and boastful, and rigid and inflexible. They take credit for the efforts of others, blame subordinates for mistakes, discourage informal interaction among subordinates, and deter initiative and dissent” (p. 374). Mawritz, Mayer, Hoobler, Wayne, and Marinova (2012) found that abusive supervision has effects beyond the supervisor–subordinate dyad, which appears according to numerous research efforts to be a common tell-tale of harmful leadership styles. Tepper (2007) provided antecedents of abusive supervision, including organizational injustice, perceived psychological contract breach, and negative effect (p. 1268). Aryee, Chen, Sun, and Debrah (2007) argued that as a counterproductive behavior, abusive supervision is influenced by the interactive effect of supervisors’ perceptions of interactional injustice and authoritarian leadership style. Further, subordinates’ perceptions of interactional justice rather than procedural justice account for the influence of abusive supervision on affective organizational commitment (p. 200).

Bullying (verbal abuse) – Pareto Distribution 20%

The author researched abusive leadership in Burns (2017), and wrote concerning abusive leadership:

Schmidt (2008) identified that bullying was sufficiently different in scope and meaning from supervisory mistreatment such as abusive supervision (p. 24). Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf, and Cooper (2007) defined bullying at work as harassing, offending, socially excluding someone or negatively affecting someone's work tasks. In order for the label bullying, or mobbing, to be applied to a particular activity, interaction or process, it has to occur repeatedly and regularly (e.g. weekly) and over a period of time (e.g. about six months). Pelletier (2010) offered that bullying is using mental or physical strength against someone who is likely to be in a weaker or subordinate position to the person who is engaging in bullying. Bullying appears primarily to be a condition inferred by a vulnerable target of hostile behavior. Hoel and Cooper (2001) described this construct as one or several individuals over a period of time [who] perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these actions. But not all bullying is necessarily harmful, for example, that which builds teamwork in a controlled boot camp training exercise. Alexander, MacLaren, O’Gorman, and Taheri (2012) found that workplace bullying actually increased group cohesion, describing a long history of quasi-abusive practices that military leaders use in boot camp and Special Forces training as examples of toxic leadership behaviors that can actually build camaraderie and feelings of connectedness among the followers.

Paternalistic – Pareto Distribution 8%

Paternalistic Leadership is perceived as an effective leadership style based on social exchange theory of reciprocity. On the other hand, Paternalistic Leadership has received a lot of criticisms in western context where the leader’s involvement in employees’ personal lives is perceived as a violation of privacy. (Aycan, 2006, as cited in Wai, Pham & Lam (2019))

According to Nicolaidis (2020, para. 2) the paternalistic leadership style is both autocratic and nurturing in the exercise of hierarchical authority, providing parent-like care and guidance, whether in one’s professional or personal life; followers of paternalistic leaders often demonstrate unwavering loyalty to their leaders.

Dark triad – Pareto Distribution 4%

According to McGrew (2023), the Dark Triad is an “amalgamation of personality traits that foster heightened self-entitlement, presents formidable challenges in interpersonal interactions. Individuals who

manifest these traits exhibit a litany of behaviors typified by volatility, arrogance, and overbearing dispositions (The Mind Tools Content Team, n.d.). Comprising three core dimensions—subclinical narcissism, subclinical psychopathy, and Machiavellianism—the dark triad is emblematic of socially malevolent personalities (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Trahair et al., 2020).

Bueno-de la Fuente, Núñez-Rodríguez, Raquel de la Fuente-Anuncibay, & González-Bernal, (2025) conducted a systematic and comprehensive review of the relationship between Dark Triad traits (narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy) and the Big Five personality dimensions in the workplace. The findings suggest that these dark traits not only have a significant impact on work performance, leadership behavior, and interpersonal dynamics, with emotional stability acting as a key moderating factor.

Destructive – Pareto Distribution 4%

Schyns and Schilling (2013), as cited in Reinhold, Stenling, Britt-Inger Keisu, Lundmark, & Tafvelin, (2025), defined destructive leadership as a “process in which, over a longer period of time the activities, experiences and/or relationships of an individual or the member of a group are repeatedly influenced by their supervisor in a way that is perceived as hostile and/or obstructive” (p. 14).

Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad (2007, para. 2) defined destructive leadership as “The systematic and repeated behaviour by a leader, supervisor or manager that violates the legitimate interest of the organization by undermining and/or sabotaging the organization’s goals, tasks, resources, and effectiveness and/or the motivation, well-being or job satisfaction of subordinates.”

Befitting the broad four corners of the destructive leadership domain covered by destructive leadership, Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad (2007, para. 2) included a brief review of the leadership covering others in the field attempting the same task, to wit:

Researchers have proposed a number of concepts that arguably fall within the domain of destructive leadership that is aimed at subordinates. These include “abusive supervisors” (Hornstein, 1996, Tepper, 2000), “health endangering leaders” (Kile, 1990), “petty tyrants” (Ashforth, 1994), “bullies” (Namie & Namie, 2000), “derailed leaders” (Shackleton, 1995), “intolerable bosses” (Lombardo & McCall, 1984), “psychopaths” (Furnham & Taylor, 2004), and “harassing leaders” (Brodsky, 1976). Destructive actions directed against the organization have also been identified (e.g., working towards goals other than those defined by the organization), examples being Lipman-Blumen’s (2005) concept of “toxic leaders” and McCall & Lombardo’s (1983) concept of leader derailment.

Authoritarian – Pareto Distribution 3%

Authoritarian leadership styles are often associated with negative performance, complex leader–follower relationships, and high intentions of followers to leave (Schaubroeck et al. 2017, as cited in Pizzolatto & Venditti (2023)). Nevertheless, according to Shen, Chou, Schaubroeck (2019) “several studies have identified specific conditions under which authoritarian leadership styles can positively affect workgroup performance. For example, positive results can be achieved in workgroups characterized by high levels of traditionality and guided by authoritarian leaders.

Autocratic – Pareto Distribution 3%

Autocratic is similar to authoritative leadership style. According to Chiang et al. (2020, p. 2085), “authoritarian and autocratic leadership styles differ in two main characteristics. First, evidence in the literature does not associate autocratic with destructive leadership styles, while authoritarian leadership is often associated with the ‘dark side’ of leadership. Second, autocratic leaders are task-oriented and therefore are accepted by subordinates. Authoritarian leaders, instead, trigger feelings such as fear of distrust. Moreover, authoritarian and directive leaders differ in the way they give subordinates feedback. In particular, “a directive leader focuses on providing guidance”, while an authoritarian leader “focuses on controlling and making demands of subordinates.” And, from Pizzolitto, et al (2023):

Although autocratic leadership shares its main characteristics with authoritarian leadership, it is less destructive and it is task-oriented; therefore, it tends to be associated with a higher level of acceptance by followers... autocratic leadership, like authoritarian leadership, promotes better performance in contexts

in which hierarchy is well-accepted by followers (de Hoogh, Greer, & den Hartog (2015)). Nevertheless, autocratic leadership can compromise the team's psychological self-confidence, worsening performance.

Corporate psychopath and – Pareto Distribution 3%

University of Canberra Professor of Law, Benedict Sheehy (UnCover, 2021) described Corporate Psychopath behavior this way:

Corporate psychopaths may not be easily identifiable, presenting as cool-headed under pressure due to their lack of empathy and decisiveness. They often show strong leadership skills...they also tend to “manage up but kick down”, lack self-reflective capacity and end up being detrimental to company culture and outcomes. A corporate psychopath is always going to be dangerous to employ because they aren't interested in the business or the workplace – their agenda is themselves. (paras. 6-8)

Supervisor undermining – Pareto Distribution 3%

Supervisory undermining is a widely prevalent form of supervisor-instigated incivility characterized as “behavior intended to hinder, over time, the ability (of a subordinate) to establish and maintain positive interpersonal relationships, work-related success, and favorable reputation” (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002, p. 332). Such behavior may be direct and explicit in nature, such as when a supervisor intentionally says something derogatory about a subordinate, rejects them outright, or belittles their ideas. Alternatively, it may be more implicit, such as withholding of needed information or not defending a subordinate (Duffy et al., 2002)

Narcissistic – Pareto Distribution 1%

See Corporate Psychopath leadership construct above.

Bad – Pareto Distribution 1%

See Destructive leadership construct above.

Unethical – Pareto Distribution <1%

David Robbins quoted Brown & Mitchell (2010), as cited in What is Unethical Leadership, and How can be Defining this Behavior? (2022) on the definition of unethical behavior: “Behaviors conducted, and decisions made by organizational leaders that are illegal, and which also can violate moral standards, and those that impose processes and structures that promote unethical conduct by followers [are unethical]. According to this definition, it is more acceptable to determine the meaning of what the “moral standards” are and what standards ethical leaders are expected to follow.

Despotic – Pareto Distribution <1%

Despotic leadership is akin to destructive, autocratic and narcissistic leadership behaviors. Despotic leadership, according to Khizar, Tareen, Mohelska, Arif, Ha-naysha, & Akhtar (2023):

...is characterized by an autocratic approach, where leaders exercise absolute power and control over others, focused on personal dominance and authoritarian behavior that benefits the self-interest of the leader, and is self-aggrandizing and exploitative of others...Their focus is the focus is to maintain dominance and suppress dissent.

Pseudo-transformational – Pareto Distribution <1%

Barling, Christie, and Turner (2007), as cited in Burns (2021, p.51), developed the concept of a pseudo transformational leader, as follows:

Pseudo-transformational leadership (i.e., the unethical facet of transformational leadership) is manifested by a particular combination of transformational leadership behaviors (i.e., low idealized influence and high inspirational motivation) and is differentiated from both transformational leadership (i.e., strong idealized influence and high inspirational motivation) and laissez-faire (non)-leadership (i.e., low idealized influence and low inspirational motivation). (p. 851). Spangenburg (2012), as also cite in Burns (2021), posited that PTL is counter to authentic transformational leadership, which must be based on moral foundations.

Spangenburg described this disconnection as whitewater rafting in a hurricane. What could go wrong? (p. 51)

Workplace incivility – Pareto Distribution <1%

See Supervisor incivility leadership construct above.

Aversive – Pareto Distribution <1%

Similar to despotic and other destructive leadership behaviors, Marichal (2017, para. 9) described aversive leadership as starting “from a distinctly negative idea about employees. Typical behavior is intimidation and/or punishment. This behavior preys on employee self-confidence and motivation and thus will also only have a very short-term effect.

Dark side (different than Dark Triad) – Pareto Distribution <1%

See destructive, negative and dark triad leadership behaviors described in this section.

Negative Leadership Behaviors – Pareto Distribution <1%

Label that applies to all of the destructive behaviors covered in this section. See both Abusive and Bullying leadership constructs above as they are most important to focus on.

Supervisor incivility – Pareto Distribution <1%

See Supervisor incivility leadership construct above.

Toxic – Pareto Distribution <1%

Prevalent in the modern lexicon, toxic leadership is a blend of destructive, narcissistic, negative and abusive leadership behaviors, and is known for its oppositional environment.

Waters (2021) summarized eight key traits found in a toxic leader:

1. Frequent lying or inconsistent expectations
2. Doesn't listen to feedback
3. Arrogance
4. Places importance on hierarchy
5. Discriminates against employees
6. Lacks confidence
7. Incompetent at their job
8. Self-interested

Dysfunctional – Pareto Distribution <1%

Dysfunctional leadership is unique among these destructive leadership behaviors, as teams with a dysfunctional leader i) often hinder operations (emphasis added) and ii) are unable:

...to fully engage in healthy discussion and debate, hindering effective decision-making and leading to ripple effects beyond the team. Individual leaders avoid certain topics or other leaders entirely, and conflict goes unresolved while stress grows. A member of the team may manifest a particularly domineering leadership style, and their overassertive behavior is not called out or is ignored. Other leaders might be less open, less able to provide constructive counterpoints or ideas, or conversely other leaders respond in kind, and useful, productive debate turns into unproductive heated exchanges. The ability to collaborate in making decisions becomes severely reduced and the business suffers as a result. (“Addressing Dysfunctional Leadership Team Behaviors.”, 2024)

Exploitative – Pareto Distribution <1%

See narcissistic and other self-serving behaviors listed herein.

Ineffective – Pareto Distribution <1%

Ineffective leadership is undergirded by numerous destructive leadership traits but is distinct by its results. Ineffective leadership is particularly despised by employees subjected to their ineptness. Modise (2023) listed eight categories of leader-caused despising:

1. Aggressive and impulsive bosses who are haughty and domineering, lack emotional self-control and treat subordinates with disrespect by instilling fear and issuing threats.
2. Leaders who lack motivation, are disorganized and dull, have poor time-management abilities, and are unprofessional, slothful, careless, and messy.
3. Leaders who are self-centered and authoritarian, who make all choices alone and tightly regulate their staff; they do not value their potential or promote their growth.
4. Leaders who are unfair and/or dishonest, who are partial and/or have character laws.
5. Demobilizing leaders who don't encourage performance development or properly recognize the work and effort of their subordinates.
6. Leaders who lack self-confidence are indecisive, passive, and sycophantic, dislike accepting responsibility for their actions, and/or are easily swayed by others.
7. Errant leaders who fail to properly define the roles of performers or their goals show poor planning and strategic vision skills and leave the team in a state of confusion.
8. Anti-team leaders that fail to promote harmony, assistance, and camaraderie. (p. 3006)

Petty tyranny – Pareto Distribution <1%

Ashforth (1994, para. 1) described petty tyranny leader/leadership as:

A petty tyrant is defined as one who lords his or her power over others. Preliminary empirical work suggests that tyrannical behaviors include arbitrariness and self-aggrandizement, belittling others, lack of consideration, a forcing style of conflict resolution, discouraging initiative, and noncontingent punishment. A model of the antecedents of tyrannical management and the effects of tyranny on subordinates is presented. Petty tyranny is argued to be the product of interactions between individual predispositions (beliefs about the organization, subordinates, and self, and preferences for action) and situational facilitators (institutionalized values and norms, power, and stressors).

Tyrannical – Pareto Distribution <1%

See despotic, destructive, autocratic, petty tyranny, and narcissistic leadership behaviors above.

Note: Unfortunately, after a review of the literature, there are no characteristics similar to the Modliba & Treffers (2025) study results that were to be used to assess the importance of the Abusive behaviors listed above. The following bad leadership are provided to represent the research compiled for both context and completeness, but with no Pareto score:

Attack on followers' self esteem

Leaders who engage in micromanaging, envy, or manipulative behaviors can erode followers' confidence and sense of self-worth, potentially leading to reduced performance and burnout. If a leader, for example, finds that a follower is superior in one or more aspects of power, leaders can react negatively to the follower. The most common affective reaction to upward or unfavorable social comparisons in such situations is envy (Leheta, et al, 2017)

Social exclusion

Social exclusion in leadership refers to situations where individuals are intentionally or unintentionally excluded from opportunities, resources, or social interaction within a group or organization. This can manifest in various ways, such as being left out of meetings, team lunches, or promotions, or by being subjected to bullying, mobbing, or cyberbullying. Leaders have a crucial role in preventing and addressing social exclusion, as it can negatively impact team cohesion, individual well-being, and organizational performance.

Divisiveness

According to Duke Corporate Education and Woodman (2023), when leaders prioritize division over unity, create artificial barriers, and fail to encourage dialogue and collaboration, negative results can happen, such as leading to a lack of trust, reduced team cohesion, and hinder organizational effectiveness. Here are a few signs of divisive leadership:

1. Signs of Divisive Leadership:
2. Polarization

3. Marginalization
4. Lack of Dialogue
5. Ignoring Differences
6. Focus on Self-Interest
7. Reduced Trust
8. Decreased Morale
9. Conflict and Division
10. Stunted Creativity and Innovation
11. Weakened Performance

Woodman (2003), among others, offer these remedies to build inclusive leadership:

12. Mind the Gaps
13. Encourage Dialogue
14. Be Open-Minded
15. Find Common Ground
16. Show Care and Consideration
17. Promote Belonging
18. Reject Fear
19. Do Right
20. Embrace Ambivalence

Promoting inequity

The literature provides minimal input on leadership and inequity. There is much more involving inequality. An example of inequity is when resources, opportunities, or treatment are unfairly distributed, especially based on factors like race, gender, or socioeconomic status. For example, a school might provide more funding and resources to a popular sports team compared to other less popular teams, creating an inequitable distribution of resources. Frank (2023) had a thoughtful statement on the issue of inequity: Inequity is inequality in respect to needs. For example, if you give two 6'0" people a 6-foot ladder, they both reach 12 feet tall. But if you give that same 6-foot ladder to a 4'0" person, they aren't reaching as high.

Threat to followers' security

This leadership style is closely related to destructive and several other leader-centered leadership constructs. Vanourek (2024) offered, with respect to this leadership entry, a cruel confluence of competing self-interests: destructive leaders, susceptible followers, and conducive environments.

Laissez-faire

Breevaart and Zacher (2019, p. 384) described four tenets of laissez-faire leader/leadership as follows:

1. Leaders should inspire, support, and intellectually challenge their followers on a weekly basis because these transformational leadership behaviors enhance followers' trust in the leader.
2. Leaders should refrain from a passive approach towards their followers, especially in weeks when they do not show transformational leadership because this approach reduces followers' trust in the leader.
3. Leaders use different leadership behaviors within the same week, and the effects of these behaviors are rather short-lived (i.e., within that week rather than across weeks).
4. Followers' trust in the leader positively predicts followers' perceptions of leader effectiveness (p. 385).

Marichal (2021, para. 10) had this interesting take: "Laissez-faire leadership implies that the manager excels primarily in absence and is not concerned with his or her people. This style has also been studied empirically and has no positive effect. Yet the danger of laissez-faire is real in many contexts: great pressure on managers, unclear authority and diffuse power relations easily create an atmosphere of "everyone pulls their plan."

5. Conclusions

This research provided a list of the most statistically important characteristics of bad leadership behaviors compiled from over 400 peer-reviewed papers. It also provides a concise body of knowledge of the most important characteristics (definitions, behaviors, traits, and commonalities) between behaviors and traits, as well as a nomenclature of the most relevant bad leadership behaviors. The results of this paper include identification via a review of over 400 papers the most critical behaviors, traits, and misconceptions associated with destructive leadership. The research delineated a nomenclature of the 25 most relevant bad leadership behaviors. This nomenclature serves as a reference framework for identifying and discussing destructive leadership practices. Nomenclature, along with behavioral analysis, provide tools for diagnosing and improving leadership practices across sectors. Abusive behavior (50% of cases) and bullying (20%) were the most frequently cited forms of bad leadership, accounting for 70% of all destructive leadership incidents examined by the literature. Bottom line, this research highlighted the importance of recognizing and addressing abusive and bullying behaviors, which dominate the landscape of destructive leadership. Misconceptions identified in the literature in building this nomenclature included the conflation of management with leadership, and failing to distinguish between command, leadership, and management, especially in military contexts.

6. Future Research Opportunities

A study by Grill (2023, para. 2.2) shows that “subtle actively destructive behaviors seem to be of particular importance and hence merit further attention in future research and practice. Subtle destructive leadership behaviors may also be more common in workplaces than flagrantly abusive leadership behaviors and thus pose a larger problem in organizations.” After a review of the literature by the author, there appears that study of non-abusive behaviors and their importance exist as contained within the study published by Modliba & Treffers (2025), used here to assess the importance of abusive behaviors detailed herein. Given the findings here, that abusive and bullying destructive leadership constructs comprise the majority of bad leadership behavior types, there remains a relative dearth of research involving these “vital few” bad leadership behavior types, and therefore a wide opportunity for gainful, targeted research on abusive and bullying bad leadership behavior types.

References

- Alexander, M., MacLaren, A., O’Gorman, K., and Taheri, B., “He just didn’t seem to understand the banter”: Bullying or simply establishing social cohesion?, *Tourism Management*, vol. 33, no. 5, pp. 1245–1255, 2012.
- Alessandra, A., The dangers of bad leadership: Impacts on the workplace & how to overcome it, LiquidSMARTS. Available: <https://liquidsmarts.com/the-dangers-of-bad-leadership-impacts-on-the-workplace-how-to-overcome-it/#:~:text=Accountability%20is%20a%20crucial%20aspect%20of%20effective,trust%20and%20credibility%20and%20can%20hamper%20productivity>. Accessed: Oct. 31, 2025.
- Aryee, S., Chen, Z. X., Sun, L.-Y., and Debrah, Y. A., Antecedents and outcomes of abusive supervision: Test of a trickle-down model, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 1, pp. 191–201, 2007.
- Ashforth, B., Petty tyranny in organizations, *Human Relations*, vol. 47, no. 7, pp. 755–778, 1994.
- Aycan, Z., “Paternalism: towards conceptual refinement and operationalization”, in K. S. Yang, K. K. Hwang, and U. Kim, Eds., *Scientific Advances in Indigenous Psychologies: Empirical, Philosophical, and Cultural Contributions*, London: Sage, pp. 445–466, 2006.
- Barling, J., Christie, A., and Turner, N., Pseudo-transformational leadership: Towards the development and test of a model, *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 81, no. 4, pp. 851–861, 2008. doi:10.1007/s10551-007-9552-8
- Breevaart, K., and Zacher, H., Main and interactive effects of weekly transformational and laissez-faire leadership on followers’ trust in the leader and leader effectiveness, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 92, no. 2, pp. 384–409, 2019.
- Brodsky, C. M., *The harassed worker*, DC Heath & Co., 1976.
- Brown, M. E., and Mitchell, M. S., Ethical and unethical leadership: Exploring new avenues for future research, *Business Ethics Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 583–616, 2010. doi:10.5840/beq201020439

- Bueno-de la Fuente, C., Núñez-Rodríguez, S., de la Fuente-Anuncibay, R., and González-Bernal, J., Relationship between leadership, personality, and the dark triad in workplace: A systematic review, *Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 15, no. 3, p. 297, 2025. doi:10.3390/bs15030297
- Burns, W. A. Jr., A descriptive literature review of harmful leadership styles: Definitions, commonalities, measurements, negative impacts, and ways to improve these harmful leadership styles, *Creighton Journal of Interdisciplinary Leadership*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 33–52, 2017.
- Burns, W. A. Jr., A typology of destructive leadership: Pseudotransformational, laissez-faire, and unethical causal factors and predictors, in *Destructive Leadership and Management Hypocrisy: Advances in Theory and Practice*, Emerald Publishing Limited, pp. 49–66, 2021.
- Chiang, J. T. J., Chen, X. P., Liu, H., Akutsu, S., and Wang, Z., We have emotions but can't show them! Authoritarian leadership, emotion suppression climate, and team performance, *Human Relations*, vol. 74, pp. 1082–1111, 2020. doi:10.1177/0018726720908649
- Covey, S. R., *Primary greatness: The 12 levers of success*, Simon and Schuster, 2015.
- De Hoogh, A. H. B., Greer, L. L., and den Hartog, D. N., Diabolical dictators or capable commanders? An investigation of the differential effects of autocratic leadership on team performance, *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 26, pp. 687–701, 2015. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.01.001
- Duffy, M. K., Ganster, D. C., and Pagon, M., Social undermining in the workplace, *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 331–351, 2002. doi:10.5465/3069350
- Einarsen, S., Aasland, M. S., & Skogstad, A., Destructive leadership behaviour: A definition and conceptual model. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 18, 207-216. 2007.
- Frank, S., Inequity vs Inequality, *Simplestudies.org*. Available: <https://www.simplestudies.org/blog/inequity-vs-inequality>. Accessed: Oct. 31, 2025.
- Furnham, A., and Taylor, J., *The dark side of behaviour at work*, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2004.
- Gallagher, C. R., Muddling leadership and management in the United States army, *APOJ*, vol. 108, pp. 16–32, 2016.
- Gandolfi, F., and Stone, S., Toxic leadership: Behaviors, characteristics, and consequences, *Journal of Management Research*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 19–27, 2022.
- Grill, M., Influence of destructive leadership behaviors on the meaning of work and work productivity, *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 14, p. 1295027, 2023. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1295027
- Hafiz, M. U. Khizar, Khan, A., Mohelska, H., Arif, F., Hanaysha, J. R., and Akhtar, U., Bad bosses and despotism at workplace: A systematic review of the despotic leadership literature, *Heliyon*, vol. 9, p. e19535, 2023. doi:10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19535
- Hattab, S., Wirawan, H., Salam, R., Daswati, D., and Niswaty, R., The effect of toxic leadership on turnover intention and counterproductive work behaviour in Indonesia public organisations, *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 317–333, 2022. doi:10.1108/ijpsm-06-2021-0142
- Hoel, H., Cooper, C. L., and Faragher, B., The experience of bullying in Great Britain: The impact of organizational status, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 443–465, 2001.
- Hornstein, H. A., *Brutal bosses and their prey*, Riverhead Books, 1996.
- Hornstein, H., Empowerment to facilitate change, *OD Practitioner*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 4–9, 2006.
- Khizar, H. M. U., Khan, A., Mohelska, H., Arif, F., Hanaysha, J. R., and Akhtar, U., Bad bosses and despotism at workplace: A systematic review of the despotic leadership literature, *Heliyon*, vol. 9, p. e19535, 2023. doi:10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e19535
- Kile, S. M., *Helsefarleg leierskap (Health endangering leadership)*, Universitetet i Bergen, Bergen, Norway, 1990.
- Leheta, D., et al., The view over one's shoulder: The causes and consequences of leader's envy of followers, *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 451–468, 2017. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2016.12.002
- Lipman-Blumen, J., *The allure of toxic leaders: Why we follow destructive bosses and corrupt politicians—and how we can survive them*, Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Lombardo, M. M., and McCall, M. W., *Coping with an intolerable boss*, Center for Creative Leadership, 1984.
- Marichal, K., What is the most effective leadership..., Antwerp Management School. Available: <https://www.antwerpmanagementschool.be/en/blog/what-is-the-most-effective-leadership-style>. Accessed: Oct. 31, 2025.
- Mawritz, M. B., Mayer, D. M., Hoobler, J. M., Wayne, S. J., and Marinova, S. V., A trickle-down model of abusive supervision, *Personnel Psychology*, vol. 65, pp. 325–357, 2012.

- McCall, M. W., and Lombardo, M. W., Off the track: Why and how successful executives get derailed, No. 21, Center for Creative Leadership, 1983.
- McGrew, A. B. N., Dark triad traits and female leadership, PhD Dissertation, ProQuest, 2023. Available: <http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fdark-triad-traits-female-leadership%2Fdocview%2F3050198175%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D8289>
- Modise, J. M., Ineffective leaders are unable to carry out leadership actions successfully and exhibit incompatible leadership traits, *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, vol. 8, no. 8, pp. 2333–2350, 2023.
- Modliba, R., and Treffers, T., The good, the bad and the evil: A unified conceptualization of negative leadership behaviour, *International Journal of Management Reviews*, vol. 27, pp. 104–125, 2025. doi:10.1111/ijmr.12384
- Namie, G., and Namie, R., The bully at work: What you can do to stop the hurt and reclaim your dignity on the job, no title, 2000.
- Nicolaides, K., Aspects of leadership and their effects on the growth and vitality of North American churches, *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 98–110, 2020. Available: <http://ezproxy.apus.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Faspects-leadership-their-effects-on-growth%2Fdocview%2F2812106514%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D8289>
- Norman, S. M., Avolio, B. J., and Luthans, F., The impact of positivity and transparency on trust in leaders and their perceived effectiveness, *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 350–364, 2010.
- Normore, A. H., and Brooks, J. S., The dark side of leadership: Identifying and overcoming unethical practice in organizations, Emerald Publishing Limited, 2016.
- Paulhus, D. L., and Williams, K. M., The dark triad of personality: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, *Journal of Research in Personality*, vol. 36, no. 6, pp. 556–563, 2002. doi:10.1016/S0092-6566
- Pelletier, K. L., Leader toxicity: An empirical investigation of toxic behavior and rhetoric, *Leadership*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 373–389, 2010.
- Pizzolitto, E., Verna, I., and Venditti, M., Authoritarian leadership styles and performance: A systematic literature review and research agenda, *Management Review Quarterly*, vol. 73, no. 2, pp. 841–871, 2023. doi:10.1007/s11301-022-00263-y
- Polden, D. J., Army leadership and the profession, *ADP*, vol. 6, no. 22, pp. i, 2019.
- Reinhold, M., Stenling, A., Keisu, B.-I., Lundmark, R., and Tafvelin, S., Does gender matter? The impact of gender and gender match on the relation between destructive leadership and follower outcomes, *BMC Psychology*, vol. 13, pp. 1–12, 2025. doi:10.1186/s40359-025-02566-7
- Schaubroeck, J. M., Shen, Y., and Chong, S., A dual stage moderated mediation model linking authoritarian leadership to follower outcomes, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 102, pp. 203–214, 2017. doi:10.1037/apl0000165
- Schmid, E. A., Pircher Verdorfer, A., and Peus, C. V., Different shades—different effects? Consequences of different types of destructive leadership, *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 9, pp. 27–42, 2018.
- Schyns, B., and Schilling, J., How bad are the effects of bad leaders? A meta-analysis of destructive leadership and its outcomes, *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 138–158, 2013. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.09.001
- Shackleton, V., Leaders who derail, *Business Leadership*, pp. 89–100, 1995.
- Shen, Y., Chou, W. J., and Schaubroeck, J. M., The roles of relational identification and workgroup cultural values in linking authoritarian leadership to employee performance, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 28, pp. 498–509, 2019.
- Shore, L. M., and Chung, B. G., *Human Resource Management Review*, 2022. doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2022.100902
- Spangenburg, J. M., The effect of a pseudo transformational leader: Whitewater rafting in a hurricane, *International Journal of Management & Information Systems*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 325, 2012.
- Ståle, E., Aasland, M. S., and Skogstad, A., Destructive leadership behaviour: A definition and conceptual model, *Leadership Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 207–216, 2007. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.03.002
- Tepper, B. J., Abusive supervision in work organizations: Review, synthesis, and research agenda, *Journal of Management*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 261–516, 2007.

- Tepper, B. J., Consequences of abusive supervision, *Academy of Management Journal*, vol. 43, no. 2, pp. 178–190, 2000.
- Tepper, B. J., Duffy, M. K., Hoobler, J., and Ensley, M. D., Moderators of the relationships between coworkers' organizational citizenship behavior and fellow employees' attitudes, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, vol. 89, no. 3, pp. 455–465, 2004.
- The Mind Tools Content Team, Understanding the dark triad, MindTools. Available: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/understanding-darktriad.htm>. Accessed: Nov. 14, 2021.
- Tiwari, M., and Jha, R., Narcissism, toxic work culture and abusive supervision: A double-edged sword escalating organizational deviance, *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, vol. 30, no. 1, pp. 99–114, 2022.
- Trahair, C., Baran, L., Flakus, M., Kowalski, C. M., and Rogoza, R., The structure of the Dark Triad traits: A network analysis, *Personality and Individual Differences*, vol. 167, Article 110265, 2020. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2020.110265
- UnCover, The ins and outs of a corporate psychopath, UnCover. Available: <https://www.canberra.edu.au/uncover/news-archive/2021/march/the-ins-and-outs-of-a-corporate-psychopath>. Accessed: Mar. 30, 2021.
- Wai, K. L., Pham, L. N. T., and Lam, D. N., Remapping the construct of paternalistic leadership, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, vol. 40, no. 7, pp. 764–776, 2019. doi:10.1108/LODJ-01-2019-0028
- Walker, K. D., and Kutsyruba, B., The seven deadly narratives of leadership, in *The Dark Side of Leadership: Identifying and Overcoming Unethical Practice in Organizations*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, Leeds, pp. 207–233, 2016. doi:10.1108/S1479-366020160000026012
- Waters, S., The 8 toxic leadership traits (and how to spot them), BetterUp. Available: www.betterup.com/blog/8-toxic-leadership-traits-to-avoid-plus-how-to-spot-them. Accessed: June 2, 2021.
- Woodman, P., Leading through division, Duke Corporate Education. Available: <https://www.dukece.com/insights/leading-through-division>. Accessed: Sept. 4, 2023.
- Zaghmout, B., Unmasking toxic leadership: Identifying, addressing, and preventing destructive leadership behaviours in modern organizations, *Open Journal of Leadership*, vol. 13, no. 3, pp. 244–265, 2024. doi:10.4236/ojl.2024.133015

Biographies

Burns, W. is Professor of Business and Lead of the Transportation and Logistics Management Program at the Wallace E. Boston School of Business, American Public University System, with Ed.D. from Creighton University, M.S. from University of Southern Mississippi, M.S. from Houston Christian University, and B.B.A. from the University of Mississippi.

Bietsch, S. is Professor of Business at the Wallace E. Boston School of Business, American Public University System, with D.B.A. from Argosy University and MBA from American InterContinental University.

Boyd-Wyatt, K. is Professor of Business at the Wallace E. Boston School of Business, American Public University System, with D.P.A. from Nova Southeastern University, M.S. from Iowa State University, and B.S. from Iowa State University.

Parker, L. is Department Chair of the Transportation and Logistics Management (TLMT), Supply Chain Management (SCMG), Reverse Logistics Management (RLMT), Government Contracting and Acquisition (DEFM) Programs, and Associate Professor of Business at the Wallace E. Boston School of Business, American Public University System, with Ph.D. from Capella University and M.B.A. from Liberty University.