

Shining a Light on the *Dark Side* of Leadership and Ethical Failure

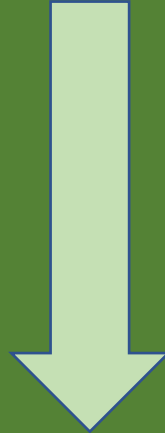


Kevin Kennemer, MA
May 25, 2022

My Story

Today's Focus...

Leadership



Employees

Toxic leadership
is likely a
predictor of
future
destructive
ethical events







Dark Triad

The term Dark Triad refers to three strikingly negative personality traits:

- Narcissism
- Psychopathy
- Machiavellianism

Research shows that individuals who score high in these traits are ***more likely to commit crimes, cause social distress, and create problems in the workplace.***

Paulhus and Williams (2002)

Canadian Psychologists

Dark Triad vs. Light Triad



Three core dark traits of leadership



Narcissism

- High degrees of self-love
- Tend to be self-absorbed
- Entitled
- Arrogant

Psychopathy

- Deficient emotional responses
- Lack of empathy
- Poor behavioral controls
- Overly confident and proud

Machiavellianism

- Closely tied to high intelligence
- Desire to gain personal power
- Cunning
- Manipulative
- Hungry for influence



Narcissistic Personalities

- Arrogant
- Self-absorbed
- Believe they are special
- Feel entitled to praise
- Hostile
- **Charismatic**
- High degree of self love
- **Often nominated as leaders by groups or are perceived as having leadership qualities**
- People follow them
- **Good at employment interviews**
- Eventually exposed
- Rejected because of arrogance
- **Believe others are inferior**
- Insensitive



Psychothopy (Hubris)

- Excessive pride
- Overly confident of their knowledge, skills and abilities
- Perceive themselves as positive
- Don't believe 360 reviews
- Very defensive of critical feedback
- Question competence of evaluator
- Irrational decision-making
- Can lead to financial losses for the firm



Machiavellianism

- Desire to gain personal power
- Cunning
- Manipulative
- **Gain political power whatever means possible**
- Forcefully persuade followers
- **Company mission is to serve them**
- Enjoy control
- Skilled at impression management techniques
- Maximize opportunities for their own personal power
- **Abusive supervision to achieve goals**



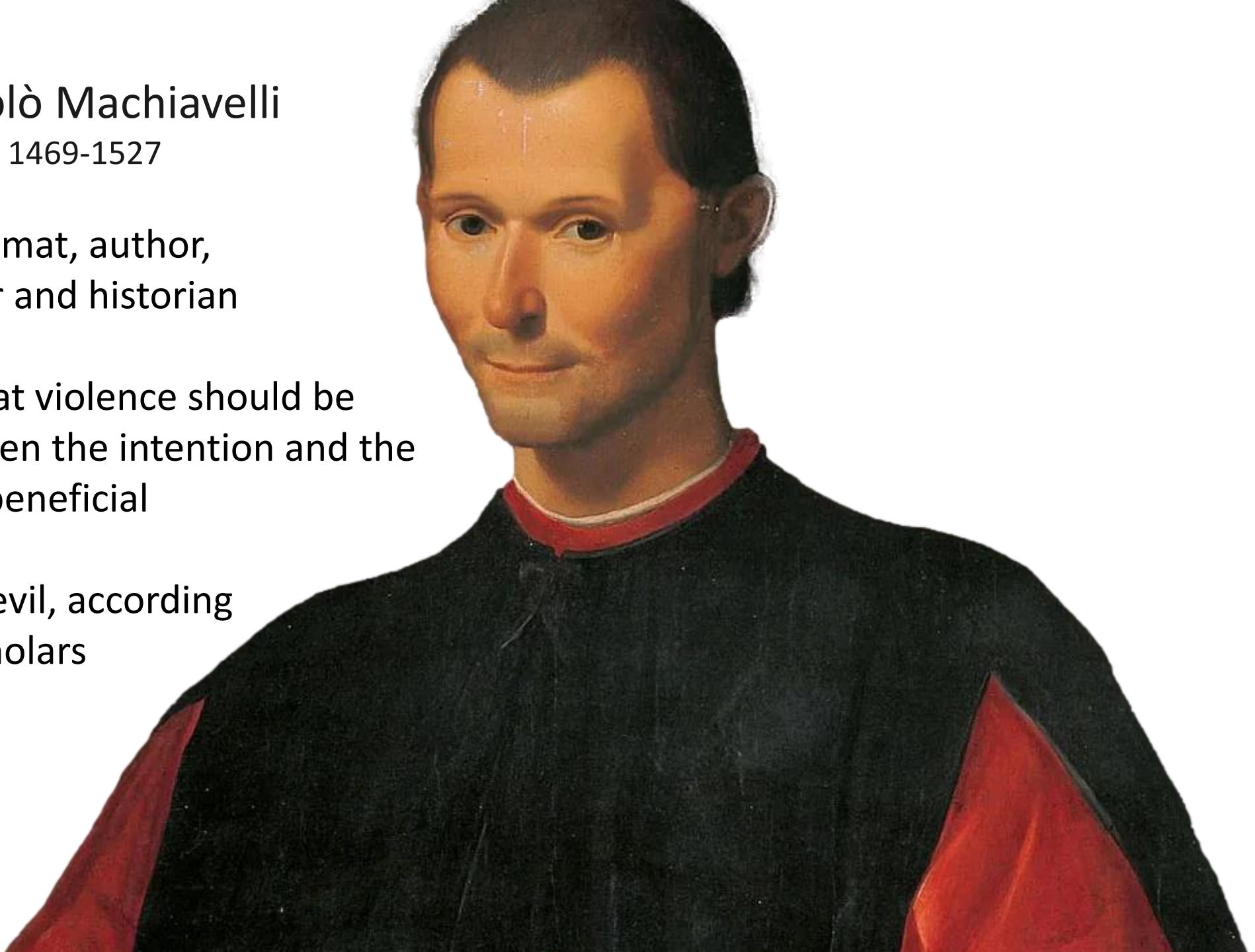
Niccolò Machiavelli

1469-1527

Italian diplomat, author,
philosopher and historian

Believed that violence should be
excused when the intention and the
result was beneficial

Teacher of evil, according
to some scholars





Humanism

- Valuing dignity and worth of individuals

Kantianism

- Belief that all people are rational beings

Faith in Humanity

- Believing in the fundamental goodness of people



Every leader has a degree of darkness.

Be self-aware!

Leaders have a better chance of staying out of trouble if they acknowledge their dark traits.



In looking for people to hire, look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence and energy. If they don't have the first, the other two will kill you.

Warren Buffett



**Be careful the company
you keep, especially the
organization you choose**



Be
PROACTIVE

Identify

Do not place in positions of authority
Manage them out of your organization

A dramatic landscape featuring a two-lane asphalt road with a white dashed center line receding into the distance. On the left side of the road, a massive, dark, swirling tornado rises from the ground, its base obscured by dust and debris. A bright lightning bolt strikes the ground near the road on the right side. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds. The overall mood is one of intense pressure and crisis.

“We are not tested
during a calm, peaceful,
sunny day, but during a
ferocious storm that
rattles your heart’s very
foundation.”

Make your decision today!

The Game of Death: France's shocking TV experiment



The Game of Death Results

- Tested people's obedience to authority figures – pushy host and loud audience
- 80% of contestants go all the way by administering 20 shocks of up to a maximum of 460 volts
- Only 16 of the 80 (20%) contestants refused the verbal prodding from the host – and audience – to continue the shocks

Questions to Ask

- How is this related to ethics?
- Do you think people in France are much different than Americans?

Canary in the coal mine



Don't save the canary.
Fix the coal mine.

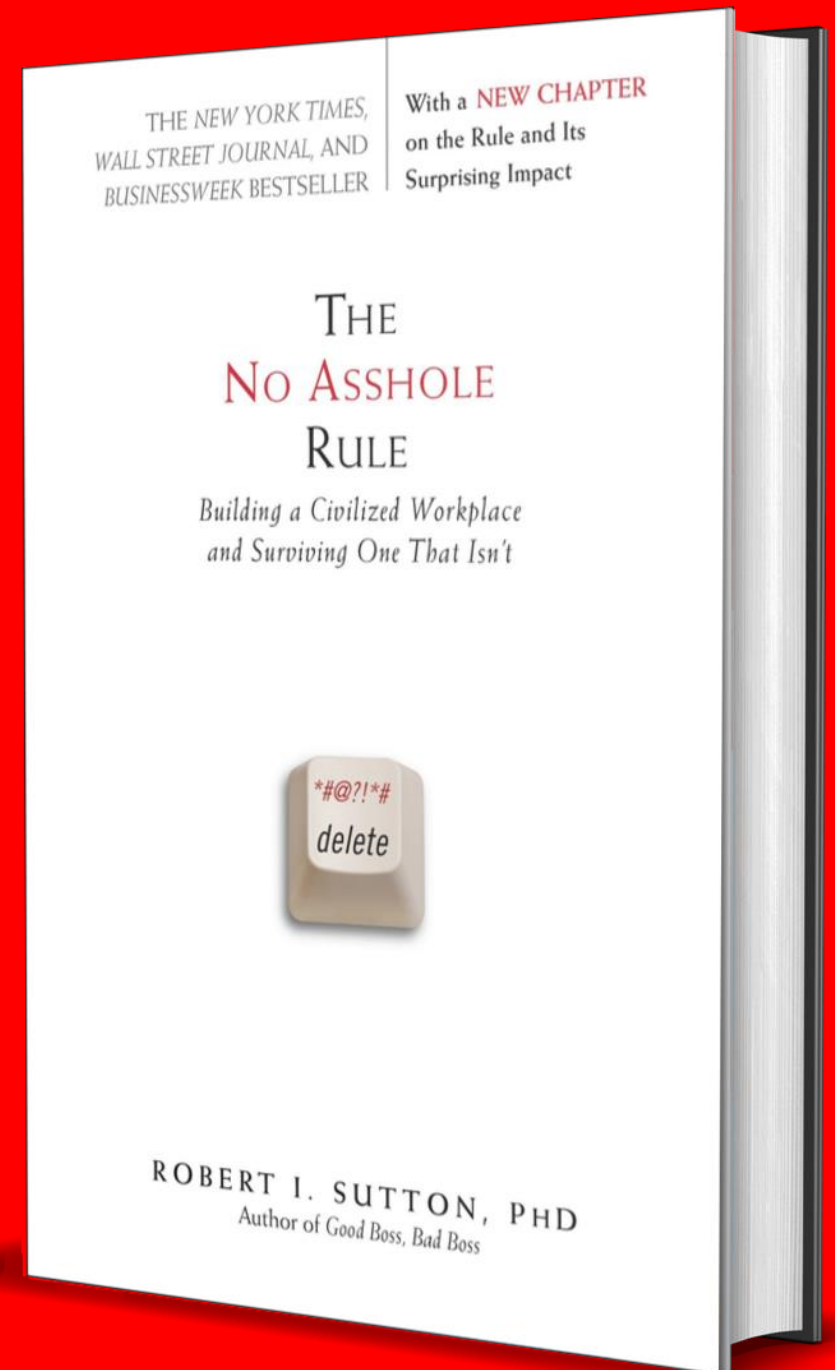
Seth Godin



Smart HR professionals have a
“go to hell fund.”

Assholes are like
bunnies, they multiply.

Robert Sutton, PhD

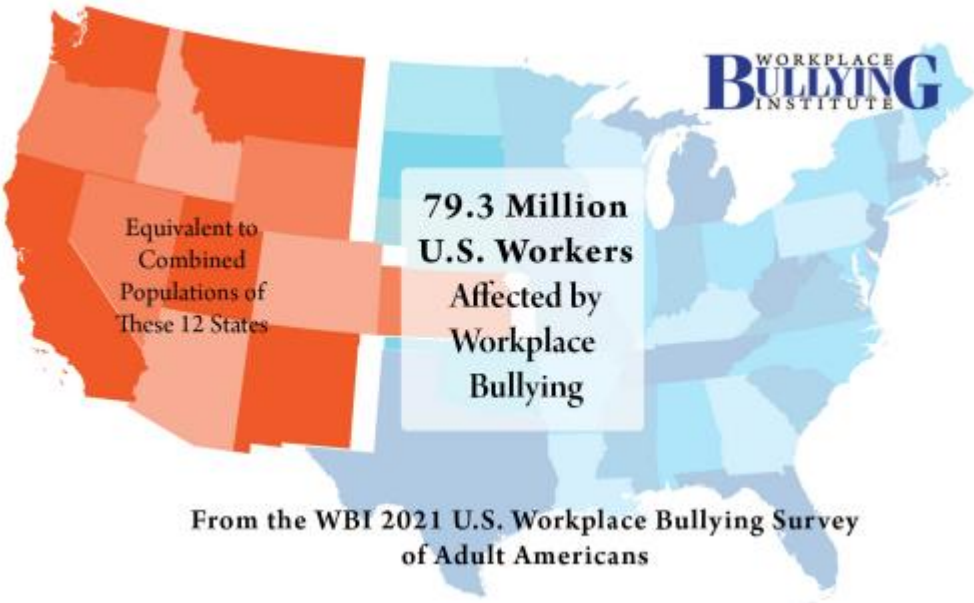
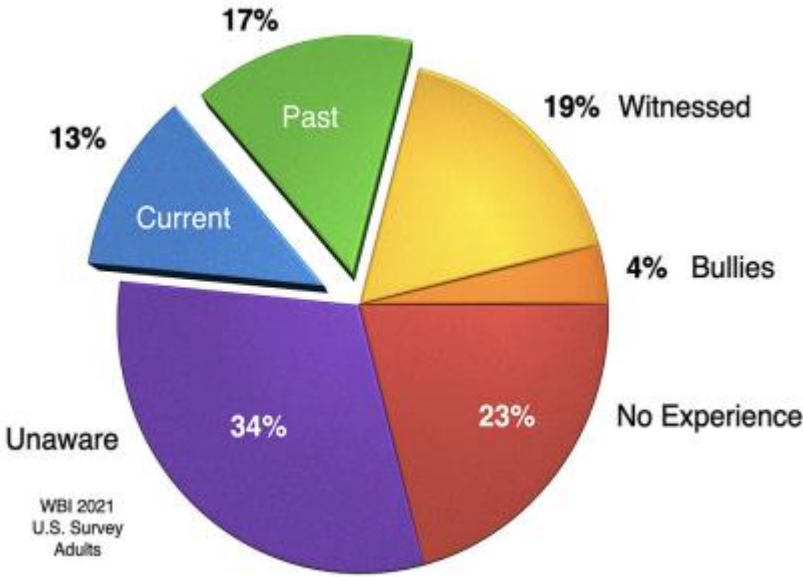


“Research shows that successful ethics programs are rooted in organizational culture rather than mandated by law.”

The Enron Ethics Breakdown

The Conference Board, 2002

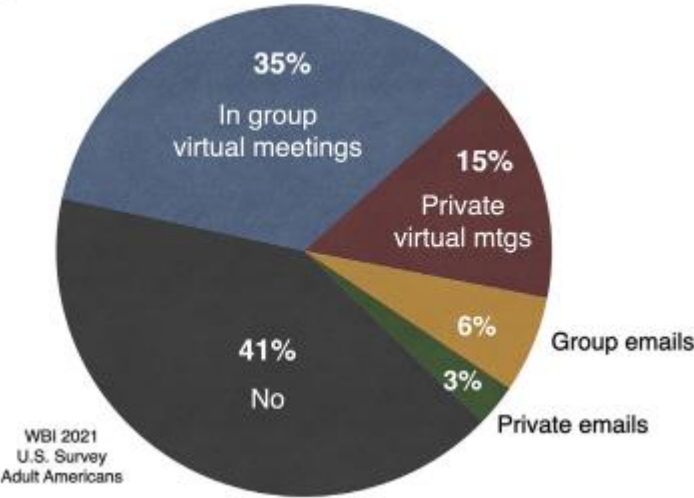
2021 U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey



From the WBI 2021 U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey of Adult Americans



WBI 2021 U.S. Survey - Adults



How to Cope

1. Engage in self-care
2. Accept your limitations
3. Engage in self-compassion
4. Rely on trusted colleagues
5. Engage in a mastery mindset
6. Focus on Machiavellian's actions
7. Focus on work-based conversations
8. Do not try to outplay them

Gary Namie, PhD
The Workplace Bullying Institute





head hand heart

The obscure we eventually see,
the completely obvious takes longer.

Edward R. Murrow
American Broadcaster

10 Qualities of a Great Leader



#1 Honesty



#2 Ability to Delegate



#3 Communication







#5 Confidence

#6 Commitment



#7 Positive Attitude



#8 Creativity



#9 Intuition



#10 Ability to Inspire

lets go anywhere

Thank you!

