



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Responsible Leadership: Reality at Odds with Expectations

de Hoogh, A.H.B.

Publication date

2024

Document Version

Final published version

License

CC BY

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

de Hoogh, A. H. B. (2024). *Responsible Leadership: Reality at Odds with Expectations*.

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Responsible Leadership: Reality at Odds with Expectations

Inaugural Address, Prof. dr. A.H.B. de Hoogh on February 2nd, 2024

Professor of Responsible Leadership

Amsterdam Business School

Faculty of Economics & Business

University of Amsterdam

Plantage Muidergracht 12

1018 TV Amsterdam

The Netherlands

a.h.b.dehoogh@uva.nl

Abstract

The demand for responsible leadership is growing in society, yet many leaders exhibit irresponsible behavior. In my inaugural address, I delve into critical factors that constitute the gap between our expectations of leaders and the reality when it comes to responsible leadership. I explain that power not only attracts potential abusers but also amplifies their negative tendencies. Compounding the issue is our preference for leaders who crave power and admiration, commonly known as narcissists, especially in challenging times. As power magnifies existing tendencies, this combination can foster irresponsible and unethical leadership. Furthermore, this tendency is contagious and can lead to toxic work environments. However, there are various ways to address this issue. I share insights from our recent research to combat unethical behavior and promote responsible leadership. Awareness, transparent leadership selection criteria, and a culture of ethical compliance are essential. The ability of leaders to navigate between empowerment and control is also crucial for this shift. Together, these insights are key to helping ensure that responsible leadership becomes a reality, not merely an expectation.

Responsible Leadership: Reality at Odds with Expectations

Mister Rector Magnificus, Mister Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Mister Dean of the Amsterdam Business School, dear family, friends and colleagues, dear distinguished guests. A warm welcome to you all. I'm honored by your presence and eager to share my ideas and research in this inaugural lecture.

Leaders face high expectations from society. They are called to ensure not only organizational goal achievement, but also the well-being of people and the planet. Movements like #MeToo and Black Lives Matter push leaders to establish inclusive and fair workplaces. Customers turn to leaders for the creation of ethically sustainable products, while employees seek leaders to instill meaning in the workplace. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs; 2015) expect leaders to reduce inequality, end poverty, protect the environment, and promote justice and peace. Increasingly, leaders are expected to be responsible, which means doing the right thing in a way that is good for the environment and society, all while considering the needs and priorities of various groups of people (Doh & Quigley, 2014; Waldman, & Balven, 2014).

However, there's a gap between what's expected – or what many claim to desire – and what's actually happening. We see a lack of commitment from our leaders to inclusivity, environmental responsibility, and community. Elected leaders often prioritize personal interests, losing sight of the broader picture. The principle of 'own country citizens first' is a common sentiment. Corporate leaders do no better, getting called out for greedy and inhumane moves. Media buzzes with stories of irresponsible actions by those in power—harassment, intimidation, and bullying make headlines too often. Statistics show many of us have dealt with a bad boss in our careers (cf. FNV, 2023; Lundmark et al., 2021). Chances

are, there might be an unethical leader or workplace meanie in your organization. Clearly, reality contradicts expectations, leaving much work ahead.

In this inaugural lecture, I delve into critical factors contributing to the gap between our expectations of leaders and reality. I explore how power tends to attract the power-hungry rather than the responsible. Making things worse, we often prioritize the wrong traits in leaders, favoring narcissists, especially in challenging times. Power magnifies existing tendencies, accentuating innate negative traits. Though not always apparent initially, this leads to a proliferation of harmful behaviors, which are contagious, creating toxic work environments. Yet, I firmly believe that we possess the antidote to darkness. I'll share insights from our latest research to combat harmful leader behavior, promoting responsible leadership and turning it hopefully from an expectation into a reality.

Expectations: Responsible Leadership

First, let me introduce the concept of responsible leadership and what it entails. Responsible leadership is a concept recently introduced to address the challenges faced by leaders in the 21st century. Responsible leaders prioritize and harmonize the 3 P's: people, planet, and prosperity (e.g., Maak & Pless 2006; Waldman & Siegel 2008). For years, our main attention has been on making money and profit. This has driven economic growth and financial success. However, society is increasingly realizing that for true sustainability, leaders need to strike a balance between the needs of the planet, the well-being of people, and continued prosperity.

Responsible leadership entails prioritizing ethical and sustainable practices while taking into account the interests of diverse stakeholders (Doh & Quigley, 2014). First, it involves prioritizing sustainability through 'green' leadership, safeguarding our planet by conscientiously managing its resources and minimizing pollution. Second, ethical practices

are prioritized by caring for people, emphasizing kindness, fairness, and respect, and making decisions that are honest, just, and considerate of everyone's well-being. Lastly, responsible leadership involves effectively balancing the needs of various stakeholders, managing organizational tasks, addressing employee needs, and considering societal concerns concurrently over time, all while striving for prosperity (cf. Miska & Mendenhall, 2018; Voegtlin et al., 2012).

Leaders who embody responsible traits such as fairness, honesty, and integrity are universally seen as effective (Den Hartog & De Hoogh, 2024). However, people have different ideas about what is 'good' and responsible, adding considerable complexity to the matter (Waldman & Galvin, 2008). Some consider balancing stakeholder interests as unrealistic, as it demands leaders to juggle competing needs, limited resources, and ethical considerations for profit. Yet, many believe responsible leadership is crucial in today's socially conscious world for sustainable, ethical, and long-term success.

Although research on responsible leadership is in its early stages, studies on related aspects, such as ethical and sustainable leader behaviors, consistently show various benefits. In our research, followers of ethical leaders exhibit increased helpfulness, initiative, optimism, and commitment (Den Hartog & De Hoogh 2009; Kalshoven et al., 2013a; 2013b; Vullingsh et al., 2020). They also experience lower levels of burnout and show less antisocial behavior (Belschak et al., 2018; De Hoogh & Den Hartog 2008). Furthermore, our findings show that leaders' commitment to sustainability is related to follower trust and perceived leader effectiveness (Kalshoven et al., 2011).

Selecting Responsible leaders

Selecting responsible leaders thus seems crucial. However, traditional personality questionnaires designed to evaluate responsible traits are vulnerable to deception (McFarland

& Ryan, 2000). Consider the following three personality items (cf. JPI-R; Jackson, 1994): 'I cheat on my taxes, I keep any extra change if a cashier makes a mistake, and I take things that are not mine.' I am sure that most of you wouldn't do such things, and you would honestly respond to these questions with 'never.' However, studies reveal that, on average, prisoners also rate themselves as reliable and honest on such personality questions (Eriksson et al., 2017). Thus, such methods for evaluating responsible traits are susceptible to faking.

Fortunately, our language use reveals insights into our character. Research shows that in conversations, we unconsciously convey our personality (Winter, 1992a). Through a coding system, one can measure the degree to which individuals assume responsibility based on their language choices. Phrases like “I felt it as my responsibility” or “One should try and do the right thing” are coded and together with other word combinations indicate someone's social responsibility (Winter, 1992b).

A few years ago, using this coding method, our research revealed a robust connection between leaders' ethical behavior and their coded sense of responsibility (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Through in-depth interviews with over 70 CEOs and feedback from almost 250 direct reports, we observed that leaders with high social responsibility scores were perceived as ethically sound by their direct reports and as less exploitative. While the results are remarkable, it's essential to recognize the dedication required for such detailed coding—I vividly recall my Ph.D. student and postdoc days immersed in this work.

Luckily, modern data techniques eliminate the need for manual word coding. Now, advanced software effortlessly scores word combinations within specific categories, boosting the user-friendliness of this coding. This significant improvement opens up fantastic possibilities for assessing responsibility, minimizing potential deception.

This is exactly what we now work on in a research project with Shuai Yuan, Deanne Den Hartog, Frank Belschak, and Katrin Riisla. We aim to identify crucial linguistic elements in written and spoken language, enabling us to distinguish between different mindsets of people. These include those concentrated on a single bottom line, characterized by a narrow focus on profit and neglect of other values, and those emphasizing a triple bottom line—People, Planet, Profit—marked by a commitment to responsibility. I strongly believe that this research holds immense promise for the future, enabling us to pinpoint potential responsible leaders and steer clear of those inclined towards irresponsibility.

Reality: Power attracts the Power-hungry

However, individuals with a strong sense of responsibility may not always be the most inclined to assume leadership roles. In fact, leadership offers a multitude of benefits, and it's often those driven by power and questionable motives who are drawn to these advantages, rather than the traditionally perceived 'goody two-shoes' types (Guillén et al., 2023).

Leadership is attractive because it is closely linked to improved happiness and social status. Leadership grants access to resources, friends, respect, praise, admiration, and even better health (Keltner et al., 2003). Throughout history, leaders have been more successful in having offspring because they were better at attracting potential mates and had better resources to take care of their children (Ellis, 1995; Sadalla et al., 1987). Consequently, individuals, particularly those driven by a desire for power and ambition, are motivated to actively pursue positions of authority.

Moreover, there is a specific group of individuals driven by power and drawn to its advantages—those who score high on the dark triad, a psychological combination of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy (Guillén et al., 2023; Paulhus & Williams,

2002). Narcissistic traits center around self-absorption, Machiavellian traits revolve around manipulation, and psychopathic traits involve a lack of conscience. Studies indicate that these dark triad traits predict unethical behaviors (e.g., Jones & Paulhus, 2017; Mutschmann et al., 2021). Those with high dark triad traits aim for wealth, social recognition, and personal advancement (Guillén et al., 2023). Hence, leadership positions may inherently attract the wrong individuals.

Reality: We tend to pick the wrong leaders: Narcissists

What further complicates the matter is our tendency to prioritize the wrong factors when selecting a leader. We tend to choose leaders by how confident and charming they appear (Judge et al., 2002). The more people show authority, self-assuredness and flair, the more we perceive them to have leadership qualities. The preference for choosing dominant individuals can be attributed to evolutionary instincts and social dynamics. Historically, leadership was tied to physical strength and dominance, as leaders provided protection and resources to the group. Dominant behavior signifies confidence, assertiveness, and order maintenance—traits traditionally linked to leadership (Petersen & Laustsen, 2020). Rule-breaking, such as defying norms, can boost perceived power (Van Kleef et al., 2023). Consequently, when selecting a leader, our attention often shifts from responsible traits to qualities associated with alpha males: dominance, confidence, assertiveness, and independence.

Yes, alpha males. Women face increased scrutiny for dominant behaviors due to conflicting stereotypes (Eagly et al., 1992; Kim et al., 2020). Societal expectations impose warmth and nurturance on women, creating challenges for female leaders (Bowen et al., 2000). Striking a balance is difficult; exhibiting warmth is seen as weak, while asserting dominance risks being labeled as overly assertive and unfeminine (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Female leaders often conceal dominant traits due to negative judgments against gender norms, while for men, these qualities are often perceived as highly leader-like.

However, there's a twist—those with dominant and self-confident traits might not make the best leaders, as they often lean toward narcissism, putting self-interest above their team. Our conventional idea of a leader, someone extroverted and verbally strong, aligns with the behaviors of narcissists (Judge et al., 2002). Narcissism, characterized by self-preoccupation and a need for superiority, can make individuals seem self-centered but also outwardly extroverted, dominant, assertive, talkative, and clever—qualities often expected in leaders (Back et al., 2010). We are therefore inclined to pick narcissists as leaders. These types also tend to thrust themselves into the spotlight, and before you know it, they're leading the group.

This pattern has been observed by many researchers. We also noticed it in many of our experiments, where my colleague and former Ph.D. student, Barbara Nevicka, took the lead (Nevicka et al., 2011a; 2011b; 2013). The higher the score on narcissism, the more likely that person is preferred as a leader within the group. We also observed this in the field. In a large retail chain, where many of us do our daily grocery shopping, we showed that managers high on narcissism were promoted earlier despite having less organizational experience (Nevicka et al., 2018b). When selecting leaders, there's often a preference for individuals with high narcissism scores, leading to faster promotions for those with strong narcissistic traits.

Reality: We lean towards narcissists, especially in tough times

We also observe this phenomenon in real-life scenarios, with world leaders and CEOs exhibiting narcissistic traits. Think Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin among global leaders, and a spectrum of figures, from historical dictators like Napoleon and Stalin to business

tycoons like Steve Jobs and Larry Ellison, and political figures such as Nicolas Sarkozy and Silvio Berlusconi. They all share traits of grandiosity, arrogance, and a pronounced self-absorption. An unofficial biography of Larry Ellison (Wilson, 1997) aptly captures this with the title, "The Difference Between God and Larry Ellison: God doesn't think he is Larry Ellison." We've all heard about Berlusconi's 'bunga bunga' parties; he seemed to think that the law didn't apply to him. And have you heard about the workers in the White House during Trump's presidency? To keep him engaged in reading important documents, they included his name in many paragraphs (Griffin, 2017). They noticed that he found the material much more interesting and started to read when it was about him.

These examples clearly illustrate our tendency to pick narcissists as our leader, a preference that intensifies during uncertain times. Our experimental studies show that high narcissists more often rise to leadership positions than their low narcissistic counterparts, particularly in crisis situations (Nevicka et al., 2013). The unsettling truth is that, in high-pressure scenarios, there's a pervasive comfort in having a leader who appears to possess all the answers.

Reality: Power amplifies leaders' innate tendencies

Adding to the complexity is that having power removes inhibitions and amplifies our innate qualities. As our power and influence increase, our tendency to prioritize pleasing others and restrain our darker tendencies diminishes. It makes whoever we were before just louder (DeCelles et al., 2012; Williams 2014). Studies consistently show that people in power might become more selfish, care less about others, and exhibit disruptive behaviors like rudeness, infidelity, and unfair resource use (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Anderson & Brion, 2014; Dubois et al., 2015; Galinsky et al., 2003; Keltner et al., 2003). The draw of power for

dark trait leaders, coupled with our preference for narcissists, heightens the risk of irresponsibility. Once in power, narcissists' self-absorbed behavior tends to worsen.

Perceptions at odds with reality

Interestingly, when evaluating narcissists' leadership, it is common to disregard their self-absorbed behavior and mistakenly perceive them as highly effective. Yet, upon closer examination through objective performance measurements, a different reality emerges. In an experimental study in which Barbara Nevicka took the lead (Nevicka et al., 2011b), groups of three were tasked with selecting a job candidate. One person was randomly designated as the leader, responsible for the final decision. While all participants were allowed to contribute advice, the experiment strategically withheld information from certain individuals. Results showed that groups with the most narcissistic leaders tended to make poorer decisions. Surprisingly, members of these groups thought their leaders were actually more effective. Despite being viewed as effective leaders by group members, narcissistic leaders hinder the exchange of crucial, unique information. Narcissists, being self-absorbed, often neglect to listen to others. However, in today's world, success relies on teamwork and knowledge sharing, recognizing that no one person can possess all the knowledge. Impeding the exchange of knowledge is, therefore, detrimental to collective success.

Narcissists' negative traits become more apparent up close. In another study in which Barbara Nevicka took the lead (Nevicka et al., 2018b), we investigated a Dutch retail chain consisting of 175 stores. Managers took a test to measure their narcissism levels. Both store employees and the manager's personal assistant, who had close interactions with the manager, evaluated their boss. Workers who spent less time and had more physical distance from their narcissistic manager were more likely to see the manager as effective, and they reported higher job satisfaction. On the other hand, the personal assistant with more direct contact

found the manipulative, mean, and aggressive traits to be more salient. The difference in perception when observing narcissistic behavior from a distance versus up close might clarify why narcissistic politicians and TV personalities are often perceived as charismatic. Keeping a distance can highlight their positive qualities while hiding some of their negative traits from the public eye.

Does this also apply to narcissistic female leaders? No, our research consistently highlights negative perceptions of female narcissistic leaders. In a study together with Deanne Den Hartog and Barbara Nevicka, exploring the link between leader narcissism and perceived effectiveness, we observed a detrimental association between narcissism and leader effectiveness ratings for female leaders, with no similar effect found for male leaders (De Hoogh et al., 2015). Moreover, in a study in which Emma van Gerven took the lead, the impulsive nature of narcissists was rated as more salient for female leaders, negatively impacting follower performance (Van Gerven et al., 2022). With Deanne Den Hartog, Frank Belschak, and Emma van Gerven, we explored the attribution of a bottom-line mentality (BLM). It's a single-minded focus on the bottom line, neglecting other values. Our findings show that leader narcissism increases perceptions of a bottom-line-mentality among female leaders. This leads to frustration for prosocial employees, inhibiting their helpful behaviors (Den Hartog et al., 2024). Interestingly, on average, men tend to be more narcissistic than women, and this gender difference benefits male leaders. Narcissistic traits in female leaders draw harsher judgment compared to men, with the negative impact in men potentially hidden despite contrary objective evidence.

Reality: Proliferation of Harmful Behaviors

While, for a time, the negative impact of narcissistic leaders may go unnoticed, they are likely to contribute to the spread of harmful behaviors within organizations. Narcissists

are more prone to be involved in lawsuits, ethical breaches, and foul play (e.g., De Hoogh et al., 2024; Den Hartog et al., 2020; Nevicka et al., 2018a), and they may influence those around them with their brash, unethical, and arrogant behavior.

In our research, my colleagues and I (Den Hartog et al., 2018) showed that narcissistic leaders tend to perceive individuals who engage in self-promotion as more important. Across three studies, we observed that narcissistic leaders not only appreciate but also positively evaluate employees who actively promote themselves. Moreover, our findings revealed a positive correlation between the leader's level of narcissism and the extent to which employees engage in self-promotion. Over time, this dynamic may instill a culture where employees learn that boasting and self-promotion can be advantageous when working under such leaders. Hence, narcissistic leaders may foster a culture of boastfulness and hubris.

Moreover, narcissism is linked to abusive supervision and bullying. Our research shows that employees report more frequently about their narcissistic managers: "he mocks me," "he insults me," "he makes jokes about me while I'm present." Narcissists appear to be adept at identifying vulnerable targets. Those who have the lowest self-esteem among employees tend to become the primary targets of narcissistic abusive supervision (Nevicka et al., 2018a).

To worsen things, research indicates that bullying can spread contagiously—subordinates might mirror their superior's behavior. When managers display abuse, it ripples down to supervisors and further down to employees two levels below (Mawritz et al., 2012). Thus, negative behaviors at the top, whether exhibited by narcissists, Machiavellians, or other power-hungry individuals, can have detrimental effects, fostering a toxic work environment.

Reality: Shades of Harmful Behavior

In our recent study, we delved into these various harmful leadership actions, categorizing such leadership into four distinct types, each varying in intensity and focus (Almeida et al., 2022). The most familiar type is *Intimidation*, marked by anger outbursts and mockery. Supervisors engaging in *intimidation* criticize, insult, and belittle subordinates, often displaying uncontrolled emotional outbursts. We've all heard about the famous talk show presenter screaming at workers (Bormans et al., 2022) or the Minister of Education experiencing fits of anger (e.g., Rutten, 2023).

Another intense manifestation of harmful leadership is *Excessive Pressure for Results*, where leaders relentlessly drive employees to meet goals. These pushy leaders make insistent demands with boldness and aggression. Unfortunately, the notion that exerting excessive pressure on employees can enhance performance is widespread (Tepper, 2016). However, demanding and pushy leaders rarely get the best out of people. Together with Deanne Den Hartog and other colleagues, we studied over 4000 employees and 1300 supervisors at a large bank to assess the profitability of pressuring employees. The results showed that teams subjected to pressure from their supervisors achieved higher profits in the short term, but after six months, the costs escalated. With increased pressure, employees reported more frequent sick leave due to stress-related complaints. In the end, this leadership behavior proves to be both costly and harmful (De Hoogh et al., 2024).

Other types of abuse may not be so obvious. In fact, workplace abuse is often more subtle and indirect (Keashley, 1998). *Lack of Care* for example, involves the disregard of concerns and unresponsiveness to employees (Almeida et al., 2022). Supervisors displaying a lack of care may employ social exclusion tactics, like omitting employees' names from invitation lists for workplace social events and overlooking their inclusion in company outings or special meetings. We all heard about our former Speaker of the House of

Representatives, who faced accusations of ignoring and excluding workers, and of negative verbal communication (e.g., Logtenberg & Aharouay, 2023).

Self-centeredness is another form of detrimental leadership behavior, albeit also less intense, wherein leaders prioritize their own interests over the well-being of employees (Almeida et al., 2022). Claiming credit for others' work and favoring team members who contribute more to personal projects are instances of low-intensity, self-centered task-oriented behaviors. These less severe forms of misconduct may go unnoticed because they are less overt, potentially making them more widespread and tolerated than outright abusive supervision and intimidation. Nevertheless, they can still be very harmful to the well-being and performance of employees.

This framework provides a comprehensive map of the diverse ways leaders can harm their employees. To measure these behaviors, we developed a survey instrument. Research shows that these harmful leader behaviors indeed are related to knowledge hiding, deviance, stress and unsafe work climates (Almeida et al., 2022; Mackey et al., 2017). Recognizing these behaviors can aid in formulating more precise (and accurate) organizational policies to combat such behaviors.

How to bring reality in line with expectations?

This brings us to the crucial question: How can we align reality with our expectations? We are not powerless against the dark! Better choices and better leaders are within our reach. Our collective efforts can make a huge difference. Firstly, we must acknowledge the magnetism of power—it attracts the power-hungry. Secondly, we need to recognize our inclination to gravitate towards narcissists and select them as leaders, especially in challenging times. Thirdly, we need to understand that power magnifies existing tendencies,

and this combination can foster irresponsible, harmful leadership. Furthermore, it's contagious, creating unsafe work climates. However, awareness serves as the first antidote.

To avoid being fooled by narcissists posing as great leaders, we need fair and clear rules for selecting leaders. Forget interviews and television debates; they let narcissists show off without proving their real abilities. In these settings, narcissists can deliver catchy one-liners and charming solutions that may have little connection to their genuine ideas and motives. Instead, the decision criteria for leader selection should be clear and objective. This will reduce subjective interpretation of skills. Use tests and assessments to figure out who's a good leader. Given that narcissists often proudly acknowledge their narcissistic tendencies, personality tests can help spot them. Check your internal candidates carefully, watch how your employees are doing, and deal with problems early on.

If you're already stuck with the wrong leaders—how to handle and guide them toward better behavior or, at least, minimize potential harm? Our study, involving more than 500 leaders and employees, reveals a crucial finding: clear rules significantly reduce power abuse. Leaders with higher Machiavellianism scores tend to exhibit more bullying behavior, especially in workplaces with fewer rules, where they are more likely to overstep boundaries. In workplaces where rules on behavior and ethical norms were shared, leaders with a natural inclination to misuse others exhibited lower levels of such behavior (De Hoogh et al., 2021). So shared rule and regulations may reduce abuse from power hungry leaders. Other research also suggests that fostering cooperation and loyalty reduces unethical actions in individuals with narcissistic traits (O'Boyle et al., 2012). So create a workplace vibe with clear rules, positive relationships, and a culture that's all about sticking to company policies and ethical standards.

What more can we do? In today's knowledge-driven world, employees often have specialized expertise. Leaders should actively recognize and leverage their valuable insights. While it's common for leaders to fear that empowering their team may diminish their own power (e.g., Wisse et al., 2019), research tells a different story. Sharing power not only earns respect and loyalty but also significantly boosts team performance (Greer et al., 2023; Neeley & Reiche, 2022).

In fact, recent research conducted by my colleagues Lindy Greer, Nicole Abi-Esber, and me (2024) highlights that the most effective leaders strike a balance between power-sharing and decisiveness. They adeptly alternate between collaboration and making firm decisions dynamically. While employees appreciate having a voice and excelling in their specific areas, they also value strong, decisive leadership. Great leaders discern when to empower their team and when to take charge. It's about reading the room, adapting, and striking the right balance. This approach might just be the key to promoting responsible leadership and creating a workplace that's engaged, respectful, and built on trust.

What more? Evaluate leadership with industry benchmarks to stay on track. Use our survey tool, measuring ethical leader behavior, alongside our harmful behavior map (Almeida et al., 2022; Kalshoven et al., 2011). Also, introduce and follow training programs for ethical practices. Help leaders find the right balance between empowerment and taking charge.

So we can make better choices and cultivate better leaders. Awareness, transparent leadership selection criteria, and a workplace with clear policies are essential. The ability of leaders to empower and make clear decisions is also crucial for this shift. All these endeavors contribute to aligning reality with expectations, and achieving this shared goal is something we can truly accomplish together. With Armin Pircher Verdorfer and colleagues, we've taken the initiative to establish the Amsterdam Center of Responsible Leadership at the Amsterdam

Business School. Our primary focus is not only to build a community but also to actively collaborate, working hand in hand to promote responsible leadership. Through the exchange of ideas, benchmarking, training, and research, we aim to bring about tangible change. The more we work together, the greater our potential for making a real impact. Better choices, better leaders—it's in our hands. So to conclude this lecture, here's my heartfelt takeaway: Let's unite and turn responsible leadership from an expectation into a reality!

A word of thanks

As I conclude this lecture, expressing gratitude to everyone deserving is a challenge. The true essence, I believe, lies in companionship beyond the journey or destination. I deeply appreciate the support of many individuals over the years.

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the Rector Magnificus, Peter-Paul Verbeek, and the University of Amsterdam Executive Board. Special thanks to the Dean of Amsterdam Business School, Marc Salomon, and the Dean of the Faculty of Business and Economics, Roel Beetsma, for their faith in me. I am also thankful to the appointment advisory committee for their trust, and to everyone who has contributed to making this appointment as Professor of Responsible Leadership possible. I am truly honored.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all colleagues with whom I have collaborated over the years. They have inspired, challenged, and shaped me, making scientific research a great journey. I am particularly grateful to Deanne Den Hartog, who has consistently shown confidence in me and provided numerous opportunities. Deanne, you stand among the best in our field, and it has been a true privilege to learn from your expertise. Most importantly, working with you is so much fun, and I look forward to continuing this journey until we start *hovering in the hallway* 'so to speak'.

I would also like to extend my heartfelt warmth and appreciation to Lindy Greer. Lin, working alongside you is not only incredibly productive but also remarkably inspiring. Your sharp insights, coupled with your never-ending enthusiasm and dedication, consistently amaze me. Beyond our professional collaboration, I value our friendship immensely. Thank you for always being there for me; your support means a great deal.

I also want to extend my gratitude to both my current and, notably, former PhD students for their stimulating input. Special thanks are reserved for Barbara Nevicka, along with Bart, Emma, Hanneke, Ihsan, and Karianne. Collaborating with such inspiring individuals has been truly fantastic. Your diverse ideas, skills, and perspectives have proven invaluable, forming the foundation for many research projects and significantly contributing to the content of this lecture. Thank you!

Also, big thanks to my colleagues Frank Belschak, Corine Boon, and Armin Pircher Verdorfer for their incredible support, wisdom, and humor. I'm excited about many more years of collaboration. Additionally, a big thank you to the amazing colleagues I befriended, both at VU and later at the Work and Organizational Psychology Department at UvA. Moreover, special thanks to all my current colleagues in the Leadership and Management section, consistently making work so much fun.

I'd also like to express my gratitude to my dear friends and a special shoutout goes to my cherished equine buddies. Wat hebben wij veel plezier samen, grote dank daarvoor ook aan Elsbeth en Vincent. A special big thank you to Nel Draijer for her treasure trove of clinical wisdom; she's got a name for everything and is always willing to share, support, and inspire! You should know this means the world to me.

A heartfelt thank you to my family, with special appreciation for my brother and sister. I value our connection and our ability to find humor even in the toughest moments,

turning difficult times into memorable laughs. Here's to sharing more laughter in the years ahead, especially with many more bright moments.

And finally, a heartfelt thank you to my husband and son. Alex, how fortunate we are to have you in our lives! I feel happy just by looking at you. Martijn, you're my anchor, my rock and my hero, I wouldn't be up here without you. You are the magic that turns expectations into a dazzling reality. Thank you!

Ik heb gezegd.

References

- Abi-Esber, N., Greer, L.L., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2024). Team hierarchical elasticity: Benefits for coordination and team performance. *Working paper*.
- Almeida, J.G., Den Hartog, D.N., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Franco, V.R., & Porto, J.B. (2022). Harmful leader behaviors: Toward an increased understanding of how different forms of unethical leader behavior can harm subordinates. *Journal of Business Ethics, 180*(1), 215-244.
- Anderson, C., & Berdahl, J. L. (2002). The experience of power: Examining the effects of power on approach and inhibition tendencies. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(6), 1362.
- Anderson, C., & Brion, S. (2014). Perspectives on power in organizations. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav., 1*(1), 67-97.
- Back, M.D., Schmukle, S.C., & Egloff, B. (2010). Why are narcissists so charming at first sight? Decoding the narcissism-popularity link at zero acquaintance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98*, 132-145.
- Belschak, F.D., Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2018). Angels and demons: The effect of ethical leadership on Machiavellian employees' work behaviors. *Frontiers in Psychology, 9*, 1082.
- Bormans, A. Effting, M., & Feenstra, W. (2022). Afsnauwen, schreeuwen en vernederen: Bij DWDD kon iedere dag je laatste zijn. *Volkskrant*, 8 november 2022.
- Bowen, C.C., Swim, J.K., & Jacobs, R.R. (2000). Evaluating gender biases on actual job performance of real people: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 30*, 2194–2215.

- DeCelles, K.A., DeRue, D.S., Margolis, J.D., & Ceranic, T.L. (2012). Does power corrupt or enable? When and why power facilitates self-interested behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 97*(3), 681.
- De Hoogh, A.H.B., & Den Hartog, D.N. (2008). Ethical and despotic leadership, relationships with leader's social responsibility, top management team effectiveness and subordinates' optimism: A multi-method study. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*, 297-311.
- De Hoogh A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Almeida, J.G. (2024). The double-edged sword of leader's excessive pressure for performance: Implications for profitability and health related stress leaves. *Working paper*.
- De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Belschak, F.D. (2021). Showing one's true colors: Leader Machiavellianism, rules and instrumental climate, and abusive supervision. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 42*(7), 851-866.
- De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D. N., & Nevicka, B. (2015). Gender differences in the perceived effectiveness of narcissistic leaders. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 64*(3), 473-498.
- De Hoogh A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Plat, J. (2024). Winning at all costs? The role of player narcissism and bottom line mentality in antisocial behavior and received disciplinary sanctions of professional football players. *Working paper*.
- Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2009). Empowerment and leader fairness and integrity: Studying ethical leader behavior from a levels-of-analysis perspective. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 18*, 199-230.

- Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B (2024). Cross-Cultural Leadership: What we know, what we need to know, and where we need to go. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 11, 535–566.
- Den Hartog, D.N., De Hoogh, A.H.B., & Belschak, F.D. (2020). Toot your own horn? Leader narcissism and the effectiveness of employee self-promotion. *Journal of Management*, 46(2), 261-286.
- Den Hartog, D.N., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Belschak, F.D., & Van Gerven, E.J.G. (2024). *Backlash effects: The challenges faced by narcissistic female leaders*. Working paper.
- Doh, J.P., & Quigley, N.R. (2014). Responsible leadership and stakeholder management: Influence pathways and organizational outcomes. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 28(3), 255-274.
- Dubois, D., Rucker, D.D., & Galinsky, A.D. (2015). Social class, power, and selfishness: when and why upper and lower class individuals behave unethically. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 108(3), 436.
- Eagly, A.H., & Karau, S.J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological review*, 109(3), 573.
- Eagly, A.H., Makhijani, M.G., & Klonsky, B.G. (1992). Gender and the evaluation of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 111, 3–22.
- Ellis, L. (1995). Dominance and reproductive success among nonhuman animals: a cross-species comparison. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 16(4), 257-333.
- Eriksson, T.G., Masche-No, J. G., & Dåderman, A.M. (2017). Personality traits of prisoners as compared to general populations: Signs of adjustment to the situation? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 107, 237-245.

- FNV. (2023) *Horen, zien en zwijgen. Omgangsvormen op de werkvloer*. Oktober 2023.
- Galinsky, A.D., Gruenfeld, D.H., & Magee, J.C. (2003). From power to action. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(3), 453.
- Greer, L.L., Gino, F., & Sutton, B. (2023). You need two leadership gears: Know when to take charge and when to get out of the way. *Harvard Business Review*, March-April Issue.
- Griffin, A. (2017). Officials put Trump's name in 'as many memo paragraphs as we can because he keeps reading if he's mentioned' *The Independent*. Wednesday 17 May 2017 14:03 BST.
- Guillén, L., Jacquart, P., & Hogg, M.A. (2023). To lead, or to follow? How self-uncertainty and the dark triad of personality influence leadership motivation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 49(7), 1043-1057.
- Jackson, D.N. (1994). *JPI-R: Jackson Personality Inventory*. Sigma Assessment Systems, Incorporated.
- Jones, D.N., & Paulhus, D.L. (2017). Duplicity among the dark triad: Three faces of deceit. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 113(2), 329.
- Judge, T.A., Bono, J. E., Ilies, R., & Gerhardt, M.W. (2002). Personality and leadership: A qualitative and quantitative review. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(4), 765.
- Kalshoven, K., Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2011). Ethical leadership at work questionnaire (ELW): Development and validation of a multidimensional measure. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(1), 51-69.

- Kalshoven, K., Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2013a). Ethical leadership and follower helping and courtesy: Moral awareness and empathic concern as moderators. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 62, 211-223.
- Kalshoven, K., Den Hartog, D.N., & De Hoogh, A.H.B. (2013b). Ethical leadership and followers' helping and initiative: The role of demonstrated responsibility and job autonomy. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 22, 165-181.
- Keashley, L. (1998). Emotional abuse in the workplace: Conceptual and empirical issues. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, 1, 85-117.
- Keltner, D., Gruenfeld, D.H., & Anderson, C. (2003). Power, approach, and inhibition. *Psychological review*, 110(2), 265.
- Kim, J.Y., Hsu, N., Newman, D.A., Harms, P.D., & Wood, D. (2020). Leadership perceptions, gender, and dominant personality: The role of normality evaluations. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 87, 103984.
- Logtenberg, H., & Aharouay, L. (2023) Onveilige werkomgeving onder Kamervoorzitter Arib, *NRC*, 31 Oct 2023.
- Lundmark, R., Stenling, A., von Thiele Schwarz, U., & Tafvelin, S. (2021). Appetite for destruction: A psychometric examination and prevalence estimation of destructive leadership in sweden. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 668838.
- Maak, T., & Pless, N.M. (2006). Responsible leadership in a stakeholder society—a relational perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 66, 99-115.
- Mackey, J.D., Frieder, R.E., Brees, J.R., & Martinko, M.J. (2017). Abusive supervision: A meta-analysis and empirical review. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1940-1965.

- Mawritz, M.B., Mayer, D.M., Hoobler, J.M., Wayne, S.J., & Marinova, S.V. (2012). A trickle-down model of abusive supervision. *Personnel Psychology*, 65(2), 325-357.
- McFarland, L.A., & Ryan, A.M. (2000). Variance in faking across noncognitive measures. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85(5), 812.
- McGrath, R.E., Mitchell, M., Kim, B.H., & Hough, L. (2010). Evidence for response bias as a source of error variance in applied assessment. *Psychological bulletin*, 136(3), 450-470.
- Miska, C., & Mendenhall, M.E. (2018). Responsible leadership: A mapping of extant research and future directions. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 148, 117-134.
- Mutschmann, M., Hasso, T., & Pelster, M. (2021). Dark triad managerial personality and financial reporting manipulation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-26.
- Neeley, T., & Reiche, B.S. (2022). How global leaders gain power through downward deference and reduction of social distance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 65(1), 11-34.
- Nevicka, B., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Belschak, F.D. (2018a). Narcissistic leaders and their victims: Followers low on self-esteem and low on core self-evaluations suffer most. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 422.
- Nevicka, B., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Van Vianen, A.E.M., Beersma, B., & McIlwain, D. (2011a). All I need is a stage to shine: Narcissist's leader emergence and performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 910-925.
- Nevicka, B., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Van Vianen, A.E., & Ten Velden, F.S. (2013). Uncertainty enhances the preference for narcissistic leaders. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43, 370-380.

- Nevicka, B., Ten Velden, F.S., De Hoogh, A.H.B., & Van Vianen, A.E.M. (2011b). Reality at odds with perceptions: Narcissistic leaders and group performance. *Psychological Science*, 22, 1259-1264.
- Nevicka, B., Van Vianen, A.E., De Hoogh, A. H., & Voorn, B. (2018b). Narcissistic leaders: An asset or a liability? Leader visibility, follower responses, and group-level absenteeism. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(7), 703.
- O'Boyle, E.H., Jr., Forsyth, D.R., Banks, G.C., & McDaniel, M.A. (2012). A meta-analysis of the Dark Triad and work behavior: A social exchange perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(3), 557–579.
- Paulhus, D.L., & Williams, K.M. (2002). The dark triad of personality: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 36, 556-563.
- Petersen, M.B., & Laustsen, L. (2020). Dominant leaders and the political psychology of followership. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 33, 136-141.
- Rutten, R. (2023). De woedeaanvallen van minister Wiersma zijn geen incident maar een patroon. *NRC*, 19 mei 2023.
- Sadalla, E.K., Kenrick, D.T., & Vershure, B. (1987). Dominance and heterosexual attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(4), 730.
- Tepper, B.J. (2016). Preface. In *Understanding the High Performance Workplace: The Line Between Motivation and Abuse*, ed. N.M. Ashkanasy, R.J. Bennett, M.J. Martinko, pp. xvi–xviii. New York: Routledge.
- United Nations (UN) 2015. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN General Assembly, Document A/RES/70/1, 25 September 2015, UN: New York.

- Van Gerven, E.J., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Belschak, F.D. (2022). Gender differences in the perceived behavior of narcissistic leaders. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, 809193.
- Van Kleef, G.A., Wanders, F., Van Vianen, A.E., Dunham, R.L., Du, X., & Homan, A.C. (2023). Rebels with a cause? How norm violations shape dominance, prestige, and influence granting. *Plos one, 18*(11), e0294019.
- Voegtlin, C., Patzer, M., & Scherer, A.G. (2012). Responsible leadership in global business: A new approach to leadership and its multi-level outcomes. *Journal of Business Ethics, 105*, 1-16.
- Vullings, J.T., De Hoogh, A.H.B., Den Hartog, D.N., & Boon, C. (2020). Ethical and passive leadership and their joint relationships with burnout via role clarity and role overload. *Journal of Business Ethics, 165*(4), 719-733.
- Waldman, D. A., & Balven, R.M. (2014). Responsible leadership: Theoretical issues and research directions. *Academy of Management Perspectives, 28*(3), 224-234.
- Waldman, D.A., & Galvin, B.M. (2008). Alternative perspectives of responsible leadership. *Organizational Dynamics, 37*(4), 327-341.
- Waldman, D.A., & Siegel, D. (2008). Defining the socially responsible leader. *The Leadership Quarterly, 19*(1), 117-131.
- Williams, M.J. (2014). Serving the self from the seat of power: Goals and threats predict leaders' self-interested behavior. *Journal of Management, 40*(5), 1365-1395.
- Wilson, M. (1997). *Difference between God and Larry Ellison: God Doesn't Think He's Larry Ellison*. William Morrow & Co., Inc..

Winter, D.G. (1992a). Responsibility. In C.P. Smith (Ed.), *Motivation and personality: Handbook of Thematic Content Analysis* Cambridge: University Press.

Winter, D.G. (1992b). Scoring system for responsibility. In C.P. Smith (Ed.), *Motivation and personality: Handbook of Thematic Content Analysis* (pp. 506–511). Cambridge: University Press.

Wisse, B., Rus, D., Keller, A.C., & Sleebos, E. (2019). “Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it”: The combined effects of leader fear of losing power and competitive climate on leader self-serving behavior. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 28(6), 742-755.