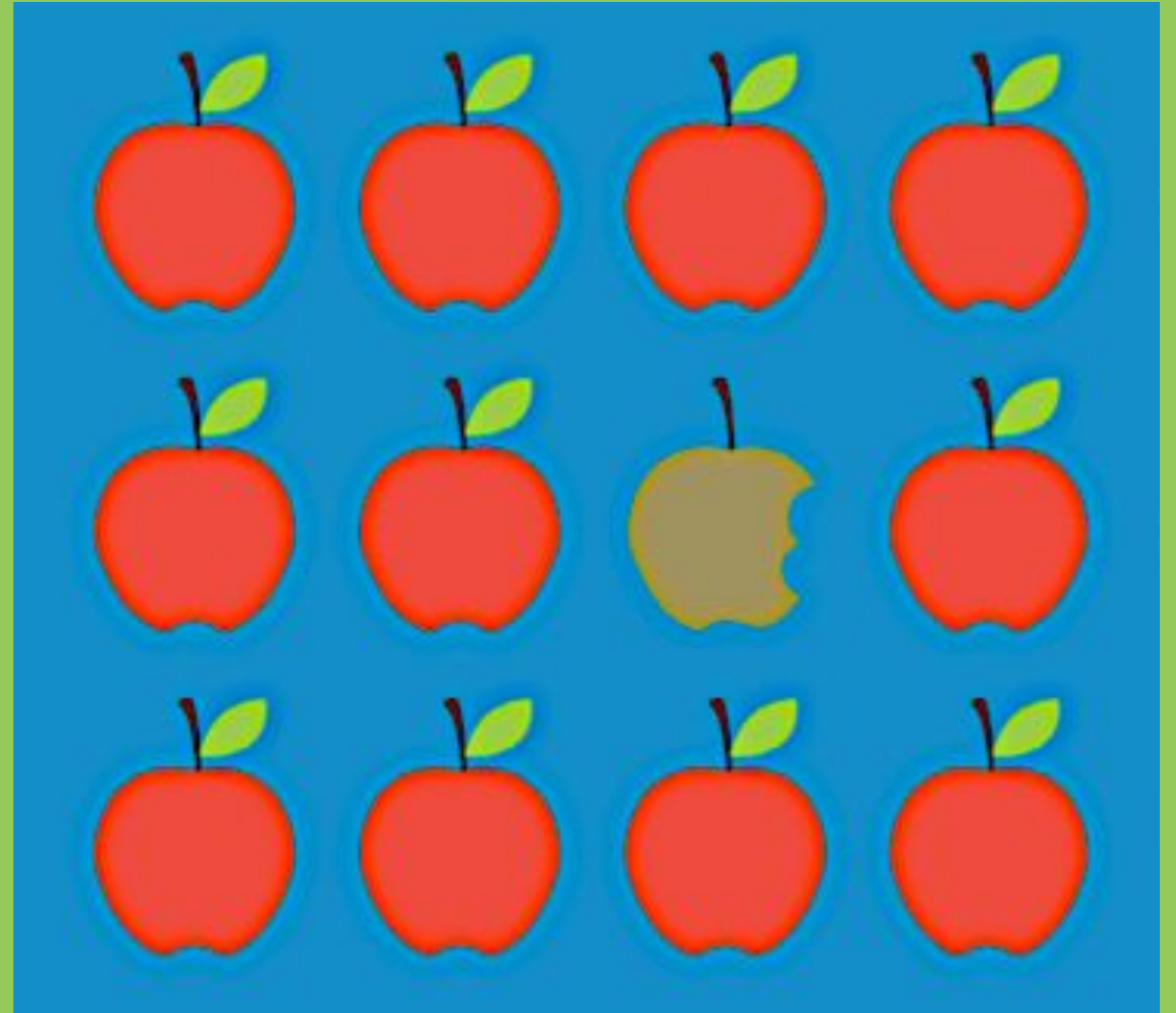


Toxic Leaders

Solutions for
organisational leaders
and employees

Dave Winsborough
Gaynor Parkin





We all know one . . .

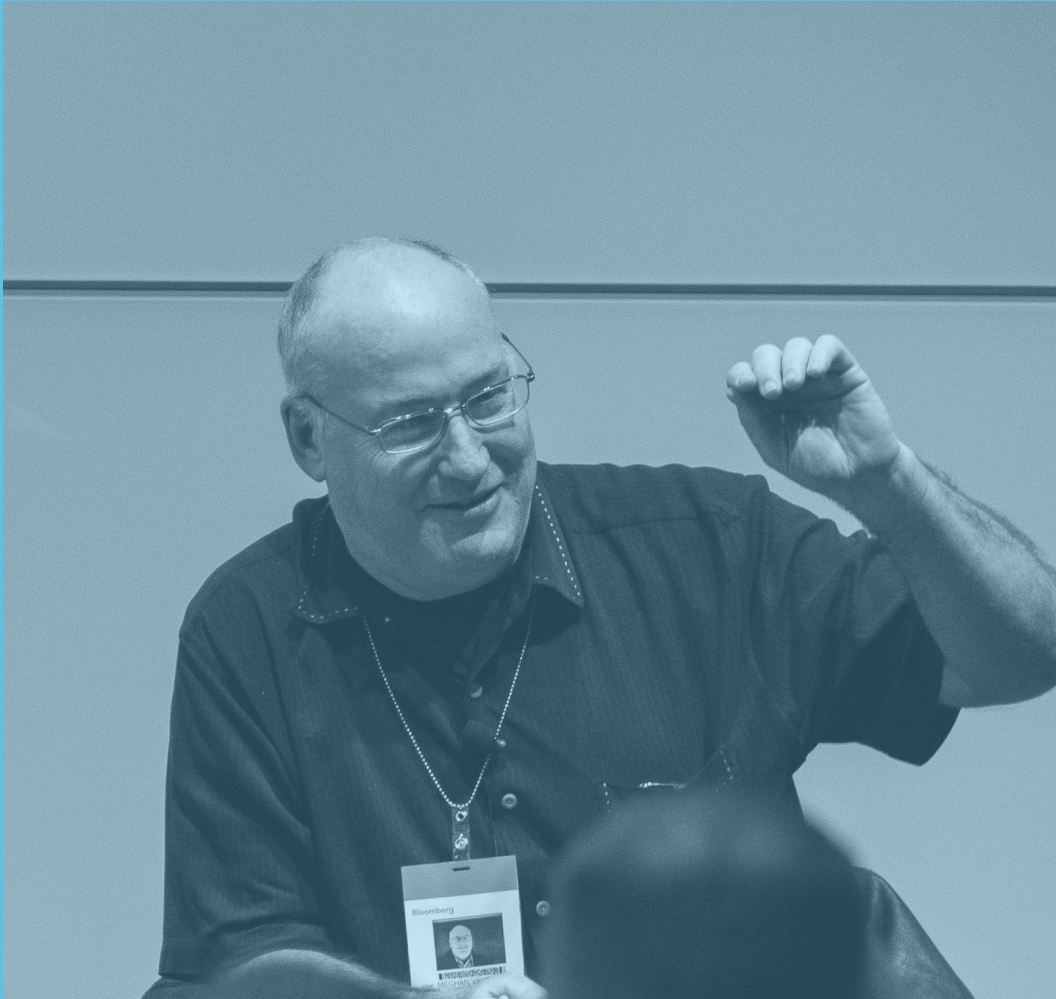


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<https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/one-in-10-workers-feels-discriminated-against-harassed-or-bullied-at-work>



The Prof Sutton test:

1. After dealing with them do people feel oppressed, humiliated or otherwise worse about themselves?
2. Does the person target people who are less powerful than them?



WINSBOROUGH

Winsborough 360° data:

6000 managers

27,000 raters

1,283,520 data points

Behavioural characteristics of toxic leaders

1. They are **self-interested** rather than concerned with other people's development and wellbeing.
2. They **lack integrity**; break commitments, and bend or break rules to suit themselves.
3. They are often **politically savvy** and skilled in managing upwards.
4. They are poor at **managing their emotions**.

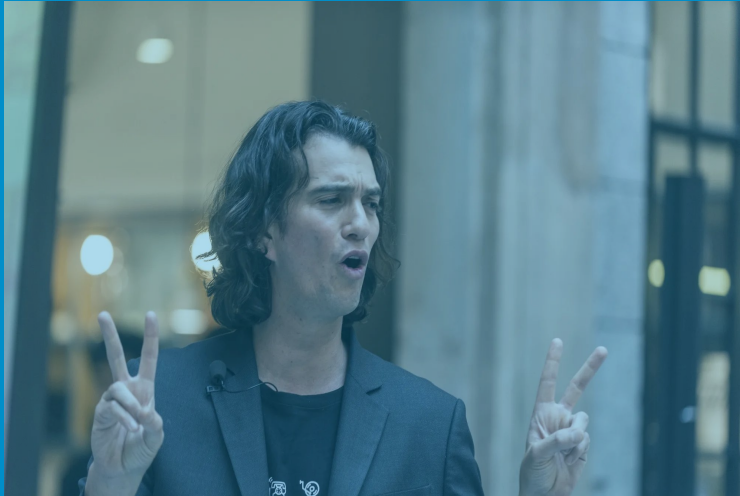
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3 Precursors of Toxicity

Personality



- Insensitivity
- Narcissism
- Need for power
- Lack of self-awareness

Followership



- The 'Emperor's new clothes'
- Follower deference to power, position & prestige

Culture



- Weak institutions (Policies, HR, Board)
- Homogeneity
- Induction
- Norms



3

**Preventing Toxic
Leadership Through
Positive Culture.**



1. Good management & processes

Words are cheap

Everyone talks values – but where do they actually show up?
Concrete, transparent leader expectations backed with targeted performance feedback (anonymous 360°, employee voice)
Reliable and robust institutions (HR, legal) who will intervene at the first sign of toxicity

Train your leaders!



2. Hire for character

Raise your standards

Hire against the core criteria of good leadership (competence *and* humility *and* integrity)

Psychologically appraise leaders for dark side tendencies

Train your leaders before promotion – overload and low skill can lead to toxic stress

3. Diversity & safety

Being sexist is harder when your boss is female

Don't let managers hire in their own image

Masculinity (bro-culture) and competition are breeding grounds for toxicity

Psychological safety was the #1 predictor of high performing teams at Google.



WINSBOROUGH