ABRASIVE LEADER DIAGNOSTIC™

Results & Recommendations

January 18, 2023 at 12:44:37 PM
Introduction

Abrasive leaders rub their coworkers the wrong way. Their words and actions create interpersonal friction that grates on coworkers, eroding employee motivation and organizational productivity. Abrasive behaviors range on a continuum from mildly wounding to severely disruptive.

What defines abrasive behavior?

- Any interpersonal behavior that causes emotional distress in coworkers sufficient to disrupt organizational functioning.
- Behavior characterized by interpersonal interactions that are perceived to be disrespectful.
- Another term for abrasive behavior is unacceptable conduct.

The consequences of abrasive behavior runs on a continuum from barely impacting team performance all the way to organizational failure on the far end of the spectrum. Most people that have taken the step of diagnosis are experiencing some sort of disruption in their organization and either directly or indirectly have learned about behavior that is negatively impacting the organization.

The objective of this diagnostic is to deliver a confidential report to you identifying whether or not the leader you assessed has an abrasive style. Additionally, recommendations are made for your specific circumstances. You, the organization, and the leader are never identified in any way in this report.

Whether you are an HR Director, the leader's manager, the leader, or a co-worker, this report is designed to give you a single diagnostic result along with a list of the answers you provided. The questionnaire you responded to calculated the results based on widely accepted identifiers of an abrasive style.

The following results should not be used as the sole source of data for further action. Detailed and documented information, based on direct or reported observations of the individual's interpersonal interactions, should also be included as part of your final determination.

For support in further diagnosis we suggest you ask for assistance from a trusted/experienced source within your organization, the Boss Whispering Institute, or a member of the Boss Whispering Institute. The complete list of the characteristics of an abrasive leader, and the symptoms organizations experience, can be found at the end of this report.

Additional Recommended Reading:
"Winners Who Become Losers: Abrasive Leaders" - David Wright & Laura Crawshaw. A chapter from No Winner Ever Got There Without a Coach. For employers and managers who are anxious about how to phrase intervention and want to learn why and how to intervene. Easy-to-read interview format and can be especially valuable for resistant upper managers HR may be trying to motivate.

This diagnostic instrument is a co-creation of Resologics and The Boss Whispering Institute.
**Abrasive Leader Diagnostic™ (potential results)**

**NO**
The leader you assessed does not have an abrasive leadership style.

**MAYBE**
Your responses indicate that the leader has engaged in abrasive behavior, but it has not yet become an ongoing pattern of leadership.

**YES**
The leader you assessed has an abrasive leadership style. Intervention is recommended.

**YOUR RESULTS**
January 18, 2023 at 12:44:37 PM

**YES**
Your responses indicate an abrasive leadership style.
RESULTS:

Your responses (shown below) indicate an abrasive leadership style.

This result should not be used as the sole source of data for further action. Detailed and documented information, based on direct or reported observations of the individual's interpersonal interactions, should also be included as part of your final determination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Diagnostic Question</th>
<th>Your Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of the following most closely describes your relationship with the leader?</td>
<td>I am assessing myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you engaged in any of the following behaviors? If so, which ones?</td>
<td>Shouting, Publicly criticizing others, Abruptly walking out of meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to control your temper?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to improve your communication skills?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to learn to get along with others?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to not get so &quot;worked up&quot;?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to “lighten up” on others?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever been asked to be more patient with others?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you been passed over for a promotion and can’t get anyone in administration to give specifics on why?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you been passed over for a promotion because of your people management skills?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have complaints been brought against you for harassment, hostile treatment, or discrimination?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you received low scores for team building, participative management, or other so-called “soft skills” on a 360° management skills assessment?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you often find yourself impatient with coworkers?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do employees attempt to transfer out of your department or avoid transferring into it?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Have your coworkers given you a derogatory nickname e.g. “Pit Bull”, “Wildebeest”, “Tyrannosaurus”, etc.?  

<table>
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<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have your coworkers given you a derogatory nickname e.g. “Pit Bull”, “Wildebeest”, “Tyrannosaurus”, etc.?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you find yourself in intense confrontations with management, peers, employees, or Human Resources?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there people that refuse to work with you, or that you refuse to work with?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Remember:

- Abrasive behavior is any interpersonal behavior that causes emotional distress in coworkers sufficient to disrupt organizational functioning.
- Abrasive behavior is characterized by interpersonal interactions that are perceived to be disrespectful.
- Another term for abrasive behavior is unacceptable conduct.
- Abrasive behavior can range on a continuum from mildly irritating to severely disruptive.

Individuals may display abrasive behavior on a single occasion because of unusual stress. Even so, a single instance may cause interpersonal wounds and disrupt organizational functioning.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Things to consider when thinking about this diagnosis and the situation you find yourself in are complex. Many of the folks who find themselves being perceived as abrasive are extremely accomplished and at the top of their field, yet they are held back from advancement, held back by an under performing team, or in some cases are about to loose their jobs and can't quite figure out why. You may be weighing the advantages and disadvantages of using an abrasive style with co-workers. It can be confusing to be in this situation.

Most leaders who score as having an abrasive style never get curious about the perceptions people have about them. Nor would they consider taking the time to assess themselves through a diagnostic like this. Nice work in taking that step. So, what is the next step?

If your diagnosis is in a range that has you concerned or at least curious, there are solid, proven, effective steps to understand the negative perceptions of your behavior, uncover the root causes of those perceptions, and develop strategies to eliminate them for good. We suggest you connect with someone inside or outside the organization, that you trust. When you have found that person, some of the questions you may want to discuss together include:

- Why are you thinking about the potential that you have an abrasive style?
- Are there advantages to being perceived as abrasive? What are they?
- Are there disadvantages of being perceived as abrasive by people you work with? What are they?
- Is it possible that your management style is perceived by others as abrasive, and you don't see it that way?
- Are there ways that you can get accurate information about what your co-workers think about your leadership style?
- Do the results of this diagnostic, or any other information you have, warrant seeking additional support on your part? What? By when?

**Early intervention is most effective,** especially when leaders are early in their careers, new to the organization, or under unusual stress.
If you would like to talk further about your observations, please feel free to make contact.

I stand ready to help. Contact me to arrange a confidential consultation at no cost:

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Addendum 1
Characteristics and Symptoms of Abrasive Leadership
(credit to and please see The Boss Whispering Institute for more information)

Typical symptoms of abrasive leadership:

- Complaints regarding the individual's interactions with coworkers, customers, contractors, patients, students, etc.
- Attempts by employees to transfer out of the leader's department or avoid being transferred in
- Covert cautions: "Watch out for him- don't get in his way", or "Don't get on her bad side - you'll pay if you do."
- Attrition of valued employees
- Decreased morale and motivation
- Potential or actual harassment litigation
- Excessive managerial time devoted to addressing employee distress
- Loss of leadership credibility: failure to intervene is interpreted by employees as weakness, or worse, tacitly condoning the behavior(s)

Examples of abrasive behavior:

- Shouting
- Swearing at others
- Name-calling
- Gossiping
- Intimidation: glaring, snorting, etc.
- Intentionally ignoring or excluding others
- Publicly criticizing others
- Maligning another's character/reputation
- Failing to maintain confidentiality
- Condescension / Claims intellectual superiority
- Over-control/micromanagement
- Withholding of Information
- Chronic lateness
- Failing to keep agreements
- Sarcasm: hostile humor
- Inappropriate sexual comments or behaviors
- Making threats
- Abruptly walking out of meetings
- Throwing objects
- Hitting objects
- Hitting people

Additional criteria for determining if behavior is abrasive/unacceptable:

- Would you want your partner, sibling, or child to be subjected to this behavior?
- Are the negative perceptions about this individual's behavior disrupting organizational functioning?
- Is it in the abrasive individual's best interest to be perceived this way?
- Is it in the organization's best interest to ignore these perceptions?
Questions Leaders can self-diagnose abrasive behavior from:

- Do employees attempt to transfer out of your department or avoid transferring into it?
- Have your coworkers given you a nickname? Does it refer to a dangerous animal, e.g. “Pit Bull”, “Wildebeest”, “Tyrannosaurus”, etc.?
- Have you ever been asked to:
  - improve your communication skills?
  - control your temper?
  - learn to get along with others? “not get so worked up”? “cool it” or “lighten up”?
  - be more patient with others?
  - not push others so hard?
  - Have you been passed over for a promotion? and can’t get anyone in administration to give specifics on why? because of your people management skills?
- Do you find yourself in intense confrontations with management, peers, employees, or Human Resources?
- Have complaints been brought against you for inappropriate conduct, such as harassment, hostile treatment, or discrimination?
- Do you have enemies at work?
- Are there people that refuse to work with you, or that you refuse to work with?
- Do people work hard to phrase sentences very carefully so as not to offend you?
- Do you often find yourself impatient with coworkers?
- Have you received low scores for team building, participative management, or other so-called “soft skills” on a 360° management skills assessment?

Do you engage in any of the following behaviors at work?

- Publicly criticizing others
- Hostile joking/teasing
- Shouting
- Swearing at others
- Temper outbursts
- Abruptly walking out of meetings
- Slamming doors, throwing objects
- Intentionally ignoring others
- Name calling
- Nonverbal criticism (rolling eyeballs, snickering, etc.)
- Failing to keep agreements