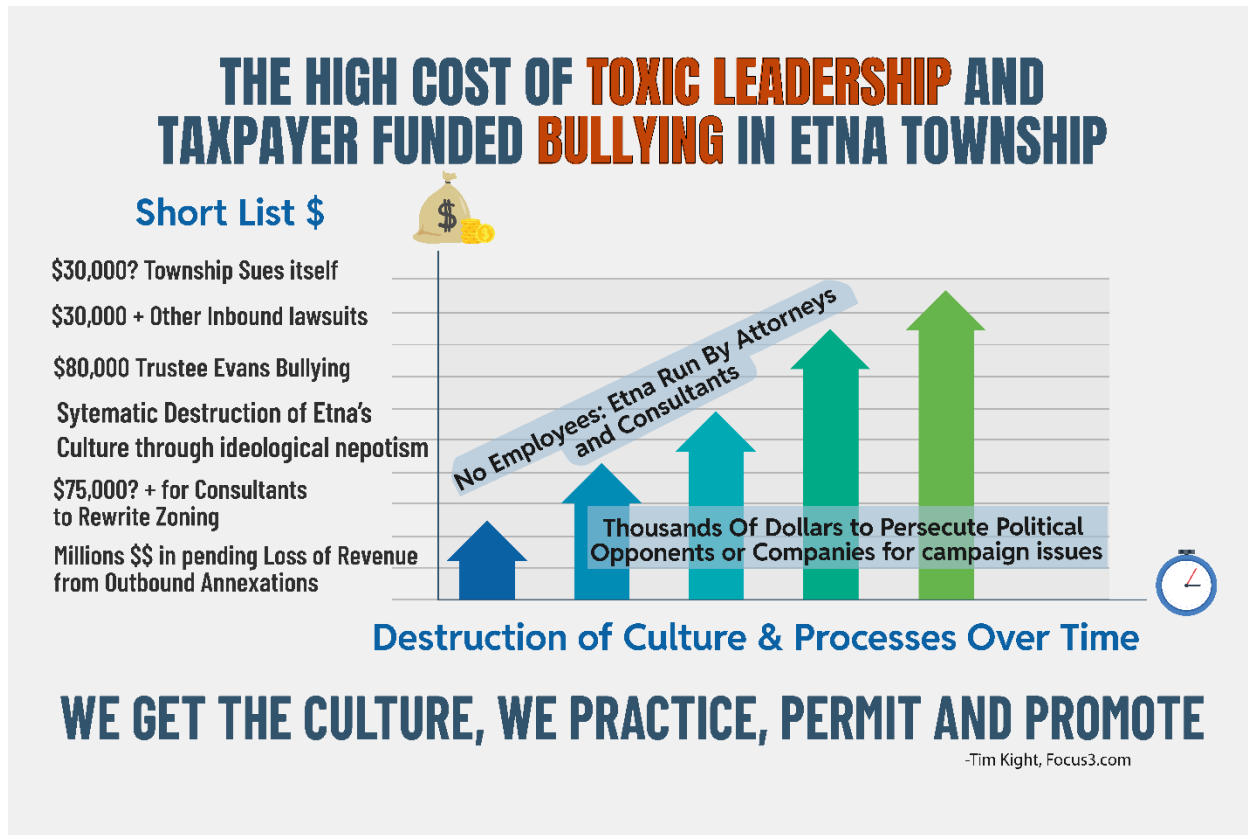


Ten Traits of Toxic Leaders



If public commentary, satire, and mockery are radiation for the Cancer of Toxic Leadership. Then, voting or the legal system is surgery. -Jon Hanson, April 18, 2024.

1. Toxic Leaders (TL) have an *oversized opinion of their value* to the company or organization (James, 2014). They often have *illusions of royalty* because of their title or imagined importance—this illusion of royalty clouds their judgment (Hanson, 2024).
2. Routinely put their *personal or political agenda ahead of the good of the organization and* their subordinates or constituents. They demand accountability yet cannot be held accountable. They run from debate with reasoned inquisitors. TLs often become emotionally dysregulated when challenged on their illogical statements or fuzzy math.
3. *They are desperate to obtain/maintain control* (Milosevic et al., 2020). They suck up (to their superiors) and ‘punch down for everyone else (Hanson, 2024). In Harvard Business Review, Manfred F.R. Kets de Vries writes of the Toxic Leaders need for consistent confrontation, “The passive-aggressive sees arguments as an invitation to **cast themselves as victims**, making you

the bad guy, and they are very experienced at it.” (Kets de Vries, 2014). **Toxic leaders suffer from poor self-image; they strive to maintain control to conceal their lack of competence and ability (Milosevic et al., 2020).**

4. ***Ideological-Nepotism*** Toxic Leaders fear having someone on their team with opposing views. They will only seriously consider like-minded people. They quickly remove, when possible, anyone they feel is more competent than they are. Once the Toxic Leader assumes control, they will have difficulty hiring and retaining workers. Indeed, old-fashioned cronyism is at work, but more troubling is what Hanson (2024) terms *ideological nepotism*. They want people not related by blood but by ideology and temperament. **The only candidates considered must bow to the toxic leader and ultimately share the leader's ideology.** This sets the cultural spiral of death for the organization, replacing trust with fear and stalling innovation and cooperation.
5. ***Retaliation and Gaslighting***. The Toxic Leader (TL) never forgets a slight or someone laughing at them. Retaliation can be immediate or delayed. Dictators fear mocking and satire (Kurtz, 2010). You are a potential target if not part of the toxic leader's ideological hive mind.
6. ***Lives in the past, fears the future. The average Toxic Leader "hates both what they are and what they cannot be"*** (Hanson, 2024).” They will tear down whole companies or organizations to remake them in their image (Milosevic, 2020). To the TL, their survival is more important than the good of their stakeholders.
7. ***Toxic Triangle*** The perfect storm created by 1. A destructive leader, 2. Susceptible Followers (those willing to accept the TL's statements without checking facts, often finding it easier). 3. Conducive Environment (Padilla, 2007; Templeton, 2014) The TL and TE followers often align over a common enemy, envy others, or hate a curated group or class of people (Hanson, 2024).
8. ***Strategic Bullying and the Toxic Team:*** “The hallmark characteristic of toxic leaders: they all feel inadequate” (Whicker, 1996, pp. 166-172). Bullies generally feel the need to tear down others because of their inadequacies. As the late Jim Rohn was fond of saying, “There are two

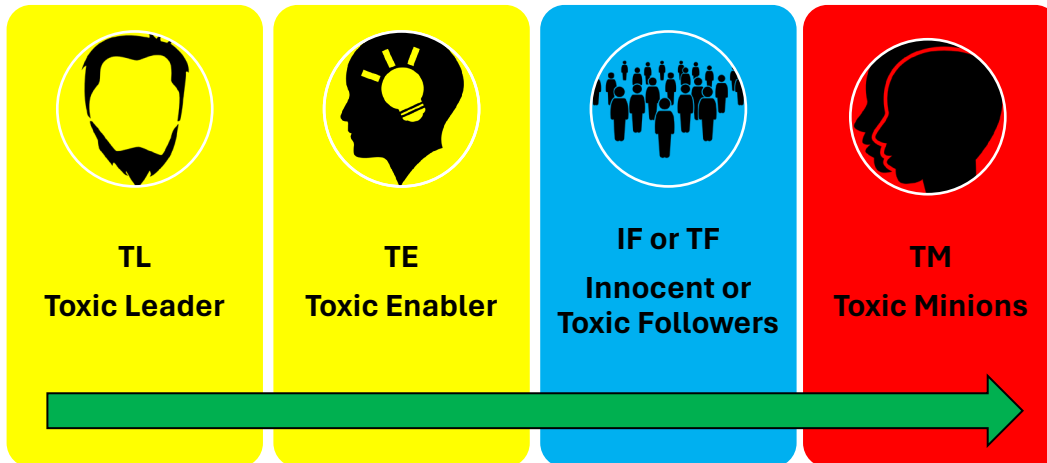
ways to have the tallest building in town: build it or tear everyone else's down.” It is a sure sign of weakness always to blame others. Noelle Neumann (Neumann, 1974), who introduced the spiral of silence in communication studies, found that politicians and CEOs often manipulate public opinion by silencing opposing views and amplifying their favored views. Neumann's work has been updated to account for Facebook and other social media (Hakobyan, 2020). TLs are proficient with propaganda or truthiness, not telling the whole truth. The toxic leader often supposes the story's first version will be seen as the truth and rushes to get out his version of the “truth.”

The **Toxic Leader** (TL) generally has at least one supporter with power, the **Toxic Enabler** (TE) a small group of dependable non-questioning **Innocent Followers & Toxic Followers** (TF), and a few Toxic Followers that get promoted to **Toxic Minions** (TM). The Toxic Minions often stay in the background, and while they pay deference to the TL and TE, they perform “helping tasks” for the TL. A TM may assist in blocking presentations in a company or controlling social media sites to eliminate any criticism of the TL. They always seem to be there when a TL is experiencing criticism. Because of the ideological symbiotic relationship between the two, often there needs to be no communication; the TM knows who the “us” and “them” are, and to curry favor with the TL, the directive is to shut “them” down. TMs are the first considered for any board appointments.

Culture =| Examples | Behaviors | Results

Every organization is perfectly dedicated to getting the results it is getting (Tim Kight). The Toxic Team destroys the culture by breaking trust coupled with unpredictability. They do not allow for creativity and slow all the organization's transactions. The Culture is set by the **leader's examples**, which **create the behaviors** that ultimately **create the results** an organization is currently getting.

Since the TL has laid out who is undesirable through their **constant gaslighting** and pursuit of others in the company or organization, the TMs know the targets and the mission. They can operate independently if the ends justify the means (Machiavelli, 1532).



9. **Lacks Logical Consistency** Engages in hypocritical behavior (Milosevic, 2020). While striving for power, “free speech and transparency” are all important. Once the TL assumes control, “free speech and transparency” are inconvenient and fully shut down as possible by the TL, TE, and TM’s. The TF and TE often make *illogical proposals* to increase their control over employees, consultants, and constituents.
10. **The Toxic Leadership Path** Rises to power through an adverse event or a contrived campaign by tearing down, destroying, or stopping some event, person, or initiative. The TL employs a fundamental “change strategy”; most of the time will be spent in the negative or making promises they cannot keep. Without an event, they will tear down the prior management, candidate, team, or coworkers. *The toxic leader runs on hate and fear rather than trust and adopts somewhat Marxist theories because the authoritarian nature, censorship, and control appeal to incompetence. Running a Marxist-style operation relies on seeing life as a hierarchy of power structures rather than a hierarchy of competency.* Marxism is the **religion of the malcontent**. The malcontent is drawn to this religion because it promises him power. Power to take what is not his. Power to exact vengeance on the neighbor who has what he wants. Power to satisfy whatever sadistic desires he feels compelled to carry out (Kelly, 2023, p.6).

The Cancer of Toxic Leadership			Figure 3
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Getting the job: The hiring or campaign to get hired. Most TLs have high IQs but generally are low in EQ or emotional intelligence.	As the job reality sets in on the damage done getting the job. Finds out operations are different than politicking or job begging. The TL's incompetence begins to show.	Toxic Leader now transforms into a Victim . They need to soothe the cognitive dissonance of their failures. They see conspiracies everywhere against them.	Unable to sufficiently mask their incompetency, they slowly self-destruct , unable to hire competent people and unable to make a decision without attorneys or consultants.
Attack or tear down the existing culture . Braggs about their moral position and how things will change.	Continues Massive Virtue Signaling Instinctively continues attacks on the opposition they already beat. Continues to criticize other departments they have no connection with.	More Bullying and now blames the victims for their failures. Employs the Spiral of Silence for any view or opinion not favorable to them. Investigates or sues those that disagree with the TLs vision.	Defensive and hurt , the TL reminds us they could be doing something else. “Some version of you do not deserve me!”
Promote hate if necessary. Think Fox News-CNN et al. It is easier to hate than think . People like prechewed ideas.	The TL adopts an Illusion of Royalty . They spend more time on press releases than plans of cooperation. People leave . There is a mass exodus of competent employees unwilling to bow and kiss the rings of the TLs.	The slogans and repetitive statements wear thin . The TL repeats the gaslighting of former employees and opposition, thinking that tearing them down builds them up.	Open warfare and isolation. Most TLs at this point employ a scorched earth strategy . The TL’s associates often get caught up in the undoing of the TL.
In Stage 1, Free Speech is essential to TLs. They promote “ free speech ” and pontificate with weasel words like transparency.	In Stage 2, free speech is inconvenient for TLs. They build roadblocks to information, even if it is public. They try to shut down free speech.	They become increasingly emotional and incoherent , and their statements have no logical consistency.	After significant cultural, human capital, and financial damage to their company or organization, they are removed or resign .

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Results revealed that out of five dimensions of toxic leadership, only abusive supervision and narcissism had a significant negative impact on safety performance. Similarly, **organizational commitment appeared as an essential stress moderator** and has successfully dampened the negative impact of abusive supervision and narcissism on safety performance.
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- Note:** Anything marked (Hanson, 2024) are theories I am currently developing. -Jon Hanson

Meeting 5-21-2024 Etna Twp jon@freeetna.com (3 e's)

We cannot talk ourselves out of a position we behaved ourselves into. (Covey, 2014)

Constant humor is fueled by the Arrogance and Ignorance in Etna by two guys with nothing to be arrogant about. However, the destruction of the culture is no laughing matter.

Etna Township has bigger problems than just Trustee Evans. Specifically, that problem is **Toxic Leadership** of Evans **enabled** by "President" Burkholder and the cost is more than just the few things you see on the opening page.

This board has broken trust with the citizens of Etna, suppliers, and potential developers. Our Toxic Enabler will be finding out how hard it is to run an organization without "TRUST."

The five dimensions of Toxic Leadership are displayed at each meeting.

1. Self-Promotion
2. Abusive Supervision
3. Unpredictability (1:30 to 2 am nasty grams or "incoherent press releases) from TTEE Evans
4. Narcissism (the number one complaint I hear about TTEE Evans, but he is so much more)
5. Authoritarian leadership (nearly Marxist)

According to the existing research, some of this can be moderated by Organizational commitment (Saleem, 2021), but we do not have that either. Instead, we have the constructive termination and blaming of the victims of all the employees (except Freddie, who is part-time temporary) through the actions of Trustee Evans.

Mr. Evans (through his Dan Smith persona) told me on Facebook that I will see how NDAs work when my wife gets fired. Of course, there is no such **agreement she signed**. You can see all the agreements, investigative reports, resolutions, etc.; they are public.

Certainly, Trustee Evans deserves more press and attention after all, he spent \$80,000 of your taxpayer money to get upgraded from misogynist (he-man women hater) to misanthrope (he hates everyone) in the report. The \$80,000 does not count whatever legal cost rolled up.

However, tonight, let us talk TPA or a part of an **ODOT grant** TTEE Evans wants to "return" to someone who never had it. **If it is part of Ohio grant money, should it return to the State of Ohio?** On August 1, 2023, TTEE Evans said, "The developer is only expecting \$50,000 of the \$100,000" (Etna Twp minutes 8-1-23). So now, why the panicked rush to misdirect this so-called \$100,000 by TTEE Evans? If the money cannot be applied per the guidelines, then Ohio DPS grant compliance could help clarify this board's actions. **Help is available. We are asking the wrong questions. Go to the logical end and work back to where we are.**

<https://ocjs.ohio.gov/grants-funding-monitoring/grants-monitoring-fiscal-compliance/welcome>