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Too proud to lead: how hubris can destroy effective leadership and what to do about it

Book

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[A] Chapter 2 – Sources of Hubris

Hubris comprises of a cluster of symptoms triggered by power[10]. To that end, power is similar to a trauma, a psychiatric illness or a suffering of chronic pain; its very existence can cause pathological personality change that can radically and adversely impact the life of a person.

The World Health Organization implies that personality changes arising from these triggers are almost always permanent. Hubristic leaders will always want more, and they will always overreach. The syndrome only ends when Nemesis has restored equilibrium – or when hubris has been eradicated.

[B] The sources of hubris

In 2009, Ben led a study looking at Hubristic personality change in 411 leaders from 160 organizations across seven years. His team analyzed all leaders' beliefs, education, actions, experience and recognition, using as many as eight yardsticks to develop a better understanding of their actions even three years after leaving their work.

Leaders were selected for the study, based on having similar KPIs, responsibilities and abilities (to manage costs, revenues and stakeholders). The study itself, encompassed both real-time observations of leaders at work, as well as access to

the company's management systems, that housed valuable organizational and people data. All data was provided in a non-identifiable way. Researchers were able to analyse key data reference points, including; staffing levels, workloads, commentary from induction and exit interviews and lastly relevant background data, such as staff's CVs. As well as considering organizational and people data, the researchers also reviewed financial and performance data and governance reports. Visits were made 4-6 times annually to each organization. In the aforementioned visits the 411 leaders t were interviewed to shed light on their actions as well as the underlying rationale for initiating them in the first place to enhance organizational performance. In addition, researchers interviewed those who joined hands with all leaders, to gain clarity concerning the measures taken, the underlying rationale for the same, as well as their end result

Examining the change in personality over time, we realized that four 'sources of hubris' lead individuals to believe that they are infallible and result in excessive pride and, ultimately, their downfall

[B] How hubris develops

Step 1: String of successes

It is often only after the leader's reign has ended that organizations can identify hubris and assess its fallout. Glance at the CV of any CEO, and you will note a good track record. Shake hands with them and you will find confidence and a knack for

taking calculated risks. But follow the trail left behind them and you may find examples of hubris hot on their tail.

Unfortunately for recruiters and boards, there may be no sign of hubris when a leader is hired. In fact, it's the opposite: hubris may only be acquired as a person grows in their role. Successful people tend to ascend the ranks. And the higher they climb, the fewer peers they have around them – which means fewer and fewer people monitor their thinking, decisions, strategies and actions.

It is usually at this point that subordinates become aware their new leader is developing hubris. But the leader is too powerful, and subordinates are reluctant to speak up for fear of retribution.

Consider the tale of *The Emperor's New Clothes* where in the tailor makes a promise to make suits of invisible clothes for the ones who are incompetent or unsuitable for leading positions.[11] But, in fact, the tailors make no clothes at all and send the emperor into the streets stark naked. At the end of this story, we are given to believe that this is a deliberate strategy on part of the tailor. However, nobody dares to say that the emperor is naked out of fear that they will be branded stupid or handed out a retributive punishment. Christian Andersen's tailors exploit the hubris of not just a hubristic emperor, but an entire empire.[11]

Christian Andersen'sWe can read this story and say, “I would have said he wasn’t wearing clothes!” but would we? The pressure to be part of the group, to not stand out, to read the ‘right’ books and use buzz words or follow certain thought leaders is powerful. Many leaders such as Phil Knight, founder and CEO of Nike, say that standing out, being an oddball or outlier, makes climbing the corporate ladder a tough task. Unless you are a narcissist, a natural sociopath or a psychopath, you are likely going to react to what people around you say [22].

Like an empire, a paternalistic culture i.e. an organization that is run top-down, exists in most Western businesses. As evidenced in Christian Andersen’s story, superiors in these companies are not likely to be questioned or challenged [11].

Royal Marines Capitan James Knight MC told us how this works on the battlefield. “Whenever we have been deployed on any operational tour, there is, as you would expect, a lot of pressure. It goes without saying that in times of conflict there is the inevitable pressure that comes with fighting an enemy determined to kill you. There are, however, other pressures that perhaps, are not as obvious, but nonetheless as important. When you are deployed on operations you are often away from home for long periods of time, sometimes up to six months. This is a long time to be away from your family. Add to this, the pressures that seem less obvious at first; for example, when we were deployed in Iraq, daily temperatures could reach 60 degrees centigrade.

It doesn’t stop there; the fact that you are operating out of an armoured vehicle, which is not known for either it’s aircon or leg room doesn’t help. And then on top of

that add the little pressures, like only being able to choose the food that is on offer to you. Sounds like a small problem, and it was, but when its added together with things like only having a phone card that allowed you 10 minutes a week of chat to family and friends back home. Only 10 computer terminals with internet for a base with 1500 people on it, communal showers, dirty toilets, dust everywhere and daily rocket attacks from the enemy. It's not an environment that provides much respite. We worked long days and nights, often our rotation meant we would be on patrol and come straight back to man sentry towers or take on the quick reaction force duties (this meant being given 5 minutes notice to move for 24hrs, and more often than not we were regularly crashed out). Now you get a sense for how the pressure can build up, it's the sum of all the little things that really got to us. If you booked a 30-minute slot to use the internet and the base got attacked during that time, well you lost your slot!! And you had to spend the next 30 minutes lying on the floor waiting for the EOD team to clear the area for any mortar rounds that had not exploded. So how did we deal with it? We found escapes where we could. The gym as a sanctuary for some, for others reading, chess etc. but we all always kept and felt a high degree of responsibility. It often meant that we were all busy, sometimes at different times and we all had things we needed to focus on. As a group we felt a sense of responsibility and belonging and no one person was key to the success. This was grounding and kept us grounded. What I found, and I believe to be the most important factor in staying grounded and humble, is the effort you are prepared to go to in order to really get to know those around you. Once you really get to know the people you are working with you can respond to them in a tailored fashion developing empathy and rapport with individuals. When we were in Iraq and we went for a 6am run, although I believed it was for the good of the platoon, I knew there were guys in the platoon

that enjoyed doing it, yet there were just as many who hated me for making them do this. While I recognize that you cannot please everyone all the time, I knew how to find a balance across the whole of the platoon. It didn't just come from me, I could have asked any member of the platoon to give you a quick synopsis on another member, they would be able to tell you their likes, dislikes, where they were from back home, if they had a girlfriend, their quirky habits. This knowledge and sense of belonging allowed us to develop a sense of empathy and rapport with each other the likes of which I have rarely seen since. It was through this knowledge of each other that we were able to stay grounded and humble as there was a strong feeling of mutual respect."

Societal success has traditionally been defined in financial terms, as an increase in productivity, personal wealth or income. But the definition of success is unique to each of us: there are other ways to define success.

Think about your own definitions and goals. How do you define success? Maybe you feel success is linked to a particular lifestyle, or knowing the fact that your impact on society will be positive Maybe you feel most successful when others defer to you, seek you out for your help or opinions, or when you are considered the top expert in your field. Success is defined in your own way. Thus, the word 'achievement distinguishes between and success in that it separates the process of achieving success from the end outcome.

In an article for the Forbes, Audrey Murrell wrote about the research that documented the exorbitant costs of workplace incivility with regard to adversely impacting the organization's performance and slowly poisoning its culture.[100] When tainted by hubris, even successful leaders breathe life into toxic environments and workplaces. By the same token, haughty leaders have a penchant for ruining even the best of workplace environments. [102]

However, the reverse is also known to hold true. Leaders who prefer humility end up creating a completely different type of ecosystem in their workplace. Among other things, such an environment is rooted in respect, positive outcomes as well as tolerances which go on to emerge as mutually beneficial for both the individual and the firm. Leaders who serve as good role models find a way of radiating positivity; therefore, they create an upward spiral which improves pro-social employee behaviors as opposed to triggering a downward spiral.

Against this backdrop, why is it that these leaders seem to be in short supply? Some part of it describes the manner in which our brains are wired. In wake of evolution, humans have developed a negativity bias wherein we tend to remember and focus on negative information more enthusiastically as compared to positive information.

Positive behavior is also capable of capturing our attention, which is why it stands out tall when it comes to workplace norms. Actions by ethical leaders are known to be the most powerful in neutral or negative settings, which then go on to shape what employees focus on. Therefore, leaders can have a significant impact based on whether their behaviors reinforce negative cues on in terms of what others should emulate and equally importantly, value.[33] For this reason, the fight between hubris

and humility is choice that every leader needs to make in every kind of situation because unless that choice is exercised properly, leaders will continue to struggle with hubris and its accompanying negative rmifications.[34]

To that end, take out a moment to think about your goals and definitions. What, in your opinion, should be the yardstick used in order to define success to begin with? Perhaps it linked to a distinct lifestyle, seeing and getting inspired by the success of those who you are close to or those who are close to, or merely by realizing the fact that your presence is having a positive impact.[45] Alternately, it could be the case that you define success based on the achievement of recognition and fame. Or, it could be that you tend to happiest when others approach you to seek your opinions, help or practical insights – thus indirectly conveying to you that you are a respected individual/profession in your chosen field. In other words, the onus is on you to define success in a manner that suits you the best. However, being successful denotes the actual *act* of reaching that success that is generally validated in extraneous terms.

Think about your own definitions and goals. How do you define success? Maybe it's associated with a certain lifestyle, having a family that others envy, seeing the success of those close to you, or knowing that you're having a positive impact. Or perhaps success for you is defined by the achievement of fame and recognition. Maybe you feel most successful when others defer to you, seek you out for your help or opinions, or when you are considered the top expert in your field. Success is defined in your own way. Being successful is the *act* of achieving that success: typically validated externally. Thus, the fundamental difference between success and successful is the word “achieving”; it's a qualifier. It's what separates the pursuit of success from the result itself.

The word “achieving” represents action since it ends with ‘ing’, thus transforming a noun into an actionable verb that denotes progress and motion.

It is for this reason that being successful a verb and you need to ‘do’ something in order to be successful.

However, the one possible shortcoming of this approach is that you’re setting yourself to a high standard, that upon reaching it, can make you vulnerable to hubris – something that you must guard against, no matter what. After all, it is your life and you deserve to live it in a manner that should be able to make you proud about some of the things you have been able to accomplish. [46] As journalists and authors often say, “Your best story is your last one. You have to prove yourself with each new project”.” So, this is your chance; go out there and make yourself count, but steer clear from the dangerous path of hubris because it will lead you nowhere.

In 2015, researchers at the global advisory firm Transform Performance International (TPI) undertook a seminal study into the mindset of successful people - thousands of individuals at the top of their profession including[47]:

- Chuck Pol, formerly chair of the Vodafone US Board of Directors, chairman of the Vodafone Foundation, and Americas President of Vodafone Global Enterprise.

- Colleen Schuller, Vice President and Head of Employee Experience at GlaxoSmithKline Pharmaceuticals.
- Louis Jordan, formerly Partner and Vice Chairman of Deloitte.
- Dilip Mailvaganam, Business Development Director at Microsoft.
- Phil Benton, General Manager at Adidas.

The research findings discovered the concept of Destination Beliefs: core, foundational, beliefs held by an individual. The term “Destination” was used because all participants regarded their professional (and personal) life as a journey: progression on a direction of travel that requires movement, motion, progress and action.

Destination Beliefs, it was concluded, embody a single, over-arching truth. They majorly impact upon our sense of self, of who we are, and why we do what we do, providing identity and driving individuals to behave in certain ways; those behaviours lead to specific outcomes, good or bad.

Destination Beliefs have been central to humankind’s worst excesses (such as the Holocaust, the Inquisition, Apartheid) and better moments (such as the founding of the United Nations, the day Yuri Gagarin became the first space traveller or Bob Geldof’s unshakeable belief that music could help eradicate Ethiopian famine). For as Research lead and TPI Partner Ian Mills commented “what we often hold to be true, both for ourselves and others, are presuppositions. We presuppose their

veracity, act in ways that support the presupposition and reinforce the same presupposition as a belief when we ‘discover’ it worked or fulfilled its promise.”

Mark Ridley, another partner eloquently summarized “As we believe, so we will behave.

The TPI study suggests that everybody has the same Destination Belief which relates to success: it’s called the Fulfilment Destination Belief and proposes “I am most fulfilled when I am successful”.

It demonstrates not only a burning desire to be successful but that success aids progression to both professional and personal fulfilment. Fulfilment, therefore, is the primary component of a state of satisfaction that comes from knowing you’ve either achieved or are on track to achieve [50]:

Here, we begin to see the significance than many individuals place on being successful. It provides them with satisfaction, fulfilment and ultimate identity. We are our beliefs. We live and die by them.

Beliefs seal our fate for good or for worse because the Fulfilment Destination belief is nothing more than a mental trap that gets us into trouble.

Colour vision is a response to the different wavelengths of light absorbed by the object being viewed. The eye receives 'white light' modified by the absorbed

wavelengths, and the spectrum of light received is measured in the retina, which then sends a signal to the brain for processing. There is nothing subjective about that signal, which can only be interpreted one way. Defective colour vision does not occur in the brain, it is instead a malfunction of the sensor, which in this case is the three types of cone cell in the retina. 'Green' does exist. It is a specific absorption spectrum of reflected electromagnetic radiation over a range of wavelengths.

Hubris is not analogous to color blindness, where the eye is sending a 'wrong' signal to the brain. The hubristic managers' brains get the same environmental signals as everyone else, but they ascribe a different terminology to their experiences influenced by the Fulfilment Destination Belief.

For example, we see colors, but only recognize them as such because our brains have learned to assign a terminology to signals received from the three types of cone cell in the retina of the eye. Similarly, the pressure waves of molecules striking the eardrum are given various learned associations by the brain.

It provides insight on the runaway nature of hubris, and why to some, hubris becomes so deep-rooted that it evades the conscious mind.

A number of research studies by Christine Porath as well as her colleagues demonstrate that the behavioral traits of positive leaders are associated with employee outcomes that are deemed pro-social. In contrast, behaviors that end up modeling workplace civility are known to have a stronger effect as compared to any conventional approach associated with increased employee satisfaction.[60] In turn, this is inclusive of helpful employee feedback, which goes a long way in providing

developmental opportunities, communicating a vision and offering bonuses/ pay raises for well-performing employees. In this context, it is notable that those who pay importance to civility are associated with the peak layers when it comes to employee retention, satisfaction as well as engagement.[33] For this reason, it is important to pause workplace incivility; it is paramount for leaders to reinforce positive behaviors that normalize positive workplace culture.

Meanwhile another line of research, known as organizational scholarship, emphasizes on how leaders can improve organizational as well as individual outcomes by demonstrating positive prosocial interactions rathe rather than their negative counterparts. To that end, scholars emphasize on resiliency, personal strength, restoration as well as myriad forms of holistic leadership that help maximize human potential to a considerable extent.[57]

Hubristic behavior arises from the subconscious brain that assigns a distinct vocabulary for intricate environmental signals which the brain processes on the basis of Fulfilment Destination Belief. Subsequently, our behaviors result in actions that further puts us on a hubristic spiral that leads to one’s downfall. This only ends upon Nemesis’s arrival following which retribution is sought.

This can lead to a continuing process of refinement (for better or worse), depending on the direction of travel) as the refined thesis is in turn synthesized with its new inner contradictions. When better, synthesis of contradictory ideas and tensions

leads to new knowledge – enlightenment. When worse, the synthesis leads an individual to “spiralling out of control” till – welcoming Nemesis.

[Fig. 2.2]

Jim Collins, a best-selling author discussed this spiral in the context of the bankruptcies at WorldCom and Enron. He elaborated as to how some people’s decision to synthesize contradictory viewpoints went awry:

It is in situations like this that the term ‘slippery slope’ comes into play. People who embezzle money don’t start off writing themselves £50,000 checks. Embezzlement typically begins by taking small sums of cash, with the perpetrator sometimes believing that they will pay it all back. Then they find ways to justify their actions. Perhaps the boss is requiring them to socialize with wealthier clients and they need the money to “keep up appearances”? Having committed the initial fraud, there are always reasons that an embezzler can use to justify their actions. By the time they are halfway down the slippery slope, there’s no turning back.

Recall how Icarus flying towards the sun, enjoying his new-found freedom and the power of his wings, forgot his father’s warnings and his greatest shortcoming; his own morality. Warnings, no matter how great, are easily forgotten in moments of perceived greatness. Knowledge of the warning, an original thesis has been revised through Hegel’s process of progression: what was a warning is now simply a piece of advice. Upon the next iteration, advice is now simply irrelevant – it is for the ears of

mortals, not I. Because I am special, I am different. I am unique. As Icarus could not escape his hubris before plunging to his death, so too have many leaders seen their careers perish; feeling that they could do no wrong, they flew towards greatness ablaze with glory until they were consumed by it all.

All of us seek to escape the bonds of mortality to build a legacy which lives on beyond us. The very idea of business and politics is to craft a name for yourself; buildings and businesses live on as monuments to the individuals who created them; lands from small hamlets to nations rise and fall on the political aspirations of those who wish to shape the world in which they live. Many of these start as altruistic endeavours, but given the right mix of hubris, power and societal opportunity, even the most generous, wellbeing individual can destroy both themselves and their hard-won careers in the flames of naked ambition.

Great CEOs and executives are successful because they're great. But there's a point of diminishing returns — a time when they can't top that last success. Stockholders and boards of directors who grow accustomed to the fantastic achievements are less satisfied with just good ones. Even if the success is beyond what ordinary mortals and employees could pull off, there is always the demand and expectation that each successive achievement will be greater than the last. Unfortunately, even the savants among us can only pull off so many stellar achievements. Just as drug addicts learn, there's a point where your addiction kills you. You can't keep 'upping the dosage' without paying the piper.

Indeed, a consistent theme highlighting some of the key aspects of Bonaparte's reign career was his propensity to aim for something better and bigger. Each success compounds upon the previous, and the brain feeds our Fulfilment Belief that the next success is achievable – some people call this delusion of grandeur. To that end, Bonaparte certainly did have an immense sense of hubris surrounding his ability to dominate others.

In modern day parlance, the linkage between hubris and egoism becomes easier to understand when we consider the fact that senior leaders take a lot of undue credit for the impressive performance of their organization.

In modern day parlance, the linkage between hubris and egoism becomes easier to understand when we consider the fact that senior leaders take a lot of undue credit for the impressive performance of their organization.

It is not difficult to see how leaders can create a version of reality that aligns with their vision of who they think they are, or who want to be known for. Success is never just down to the work or contribution of a single individual, yet some leaders delude themselves that it is. Honing in on a single instance; a decision, or a ‘genius’ insight, (that of course, they themselves provided,) and then visualising it, as the turning point, the killer punch, the key to the success, ensures that they hold on to that coveted feeling that success brings; fulfilment. Yet, as we know, the more someone experiences the thrills of success, the desire to hold on to, multiplies

exponentially, as the risk of losing, becomes too great and too fearful to contemplate.[12]

[B] Step 2: Adulation

Success brings adulation: excessive admiration and praise of oneself. Keeping it in check is the difference that makes the difference

Compared with executives from the 1950s, modern CEOs are doing a lot more to transform today’s industries. Unlike their older counterparts who were mostly unknown and unrecognized by anyone outside the company, today's executives are front and center on every social media platform known. They Tweet their own opinions, blog, and show up on Facebook and in the comments of articles on LInkedIn. The executives of our parents and grandparents shunned the press. They spoke only in short sentences created by PR departments.

However, modern CEOs write books, hire publicists,– promulgate personal philosophies and give their consent for spontaneous interviews. Even the ordinary citizen who has no interest in business, entrepreneurship, fame or fortune knows who they are. Who wouldn't? Their faces adorn every magazine from Sports Illustrated, GQ, The National Enquirer, People and Reader's Digest, as well as BusinessWeek, Time, and the Economist.

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If seeing their faces on magazines weren't enough, they're also on YouTube, giving keynote speeches, and being interviewed on the evening news about the issues that

shape our public and personal agendas. They criticize lawmakers on investing public money, and they even stand up to be arrested in public protests. People respect them for their views on things unrelated to businesses such as the best places to visit for vacation, or wearing appropriate attires when speaking to their followers. Ask anyone, for instance, what Steve Jobs wore (jeans and black turtlenecks) and what Mark Zuckerberg wears (jeans and short-sleeved gray t-shirts). Today's CEO isn't just a name and a face, they're a brand. And, they're encouraging others to be brands too. We're becoming a society known for what our brand is, not what our character is. And that's often where hubris begins.[40]

The larger-than-life leaders are especially suited to give a fresh stimulus to cultural development." [12]

Freud coined the term[13] after reading the cautionary tale from antiquity about Narcissus: he was a beautiful young man in Ancient Greece. Although he was beloved by many, Narcissus had only disdain and contempt for the people around him. One day, a sweet nymph named Echo spied Narcissus who was hunting in the woods and fell immediately in love with his good looks. Sensing someone was following him, Narcissus called out. Echo attempted to embrace him – agitated at that intrusion, Narcissus admonished her and pushed her away. Sobbing, Echo ran deep into the woods. But for the sound of an echo, the nymph would never be seen again. Nemesis, furious, set out to punish Narcissus: leading him to a clear, still pond, she showed Narcissus his exquisite reflection. When the man laid eyes on

himself he was at once infatuated. Narcissus remained at the bank of the pond, staring at himself until he died.

In 2017, professor of psychology at Iowa State University Zlatan Krizan and his colleagues published a paper on the Narcissistic Spectrum model, defining the core features of narcissism and a set of personality traits that determine an individual's particular "flavour" of narcissism.

Krizan says. "Most people are very low on the spectrum, but then of course you have some people who are very high. People come as combinations of these different personality tendencies. It's a continuum."

Krizan believes there are two distinct dimensions of narcissism: grandiose and vulnerable.

Grandiose narcissists are the stereotypical narcissist: obnoxiously bold, overconfident, and arrogant.

Vulnerable narcissists, on the other hand, tend to be passive-aggressive, resentful, and emotionally reactive.

Both types and the spectrum between them share the core feature of entitlement and a belief that one's own needs matter more than those of others.

What makes a mental health issue a diagnosable condition is typically based on how much it gets in the way of one's ability to function. But Krizan explains that if one's narcissistic needs are continuously met and reinforced, they are less likely to lash out in problematic ways. This means that diagnosable narcissists are more likely to fly under the radar; there may be more narcissists than we think, particularly in environments where being special, different and having unique abilities are highly sought-after and well-rewarded.

"What's pathological or problematic always needs to be evaluated within the cultural context," Krizan says. "If you have almost unlimited power and resources you may rarely be in places where your narcissistic needs are threatened in such a way that it would actually cause a disruption." A poor person with those same needs for grandiosity, in a different culture that doesn't reward self-absorption, might be much more likely to exhibit problematic traits [13]

To that end, several studies have associated acquisition premiums with praise from the media and relative pay as far as the CEO is concerned[14].

The path to a position of power does not always start with a pre-defined map that carefully lays out the route to success. Take for example, the route that Joseph Nacchio followed. Little was he to know at the time, that as a consequence of either not paying attention to where he needed to be, or a simple miscalculation on that

particular day, was to prove a defining moment for the career he then pursued. Fast forward several years, and Nacchio, was not working at the fast-moving consumer goods company that he had envisaged working for. Instead he was working at one of the large telecommunication's companies in the USA instead. It was at AT&T, where we start to see unfold before us, how quickly an individual can get lose themselves to Hubris.

Nacchio, began marking his mark at AT&T early on. He quickly established himself within the company. He stood out. His intelligent, measured approach to complex issues was professional, focused, but highly competitive. It was evident, he had his sights on a management level role and it was also true that management viewed him as someone with a great deal of potential. It was not long before he landed a management position, which was followed up in the early 1990's, with what was a significant endorsement of his capabilities. Given the opportunity to run a significant segment of AT&T''s business, was a big deal within itself. But the fact that no one of his age had ever been awarded a position at that level was the icing on the cake. The confidence and self-assuredness that had been evident to those around him prior to the promotion evaluated his sense of self. In other word's the underlying warning signs of his narcissistic tendencies, that had been always been there, were given the permission to become more pronounced and more visible. With a heightened belief in his own capability, he was not shy in talking about himself and had full belief that the CEO role would be his, it was simply a matter of a time.

For anyone able to read between the lines, or spot the patterns, Nacchio was not only going above and beyond acceptable standards of competition and a desire for the corner office, but he was also displaying the kind of arrogance that earns one adversaries. The narcissism that Nacchio displayed was obvious to his colleagues. Even executives angling for the chief executive role didn't display the aggression and backstabbing Nacchio did. It's a wonder that he rose as fast and far as he did — and it's a testament to a narcissist's ability to manipulate, charm, intimidate, and maneuver in the highly political climate of industry.

However, he was also accused of insulting the intelligence and mental stability of the firm's leading executives. AT&T inevitably became disenchanted with him. It became clear in the mid-90s that they had passed on Nacchio and were looking elsewhere for a different kind of leader. Nacchio was looking too. He found what he wanted when he became Qwest's CEO in 1997.

A Forbes article quoted examples, further affirmed that Nacchio had during his tenure exhibited classic narcissistic behaviouts; known for derisory comments targeted at known for [AT&T's] top leaders, he would discount their intelligence and even was said to have questioned their mental tability."[33]

do Nacchio presented Qwest with an ambitious turnaround plan to transform the firm into a behemoth. Like most narcissists who being to believe in their own self-importance, he turned up the amp, his confidence and compelling delivery coupled with a strong intellect was enough not only impress Qwest, it wooed them right into his web. The firm had spent a decade in deploying fiber-optic cable firms and were

now been lured and convinced that Qwest could redeploy their technological prowess in alternatives wats and would position their dominance in the industry, under his guidance, of course. Nacchio quickly came up with a business plan, which included launching an IPO.

Publicly, he began to be vocal and highly active amongst the media circuit. Each time, portraying increasingly grandiose visions for what he had in mind for Qwest. The media lapped it up, the plans seemed impressive, bold and compelling. By 2000, Nacchio acted. by launching a hostile acquisition of telecom player US West for $45.2 billion. The negative market reaction to his action, was witnessed by the hit the stock price took. Narcissistic leaders remain immune to the idea that they get things wrong. Nacchio remained defiant. After all, he could assert evidence that something is clearly adrift that this move had caused Qwest's yearly revenues to increased threefold to $3.9 billion.

His audacious move and level of confidence surged, but the firm's performance was stalling. Gowth slowed by 2001 and was followed with the lost of many key government deals. At the same time, people started to challenge Nacchio and he was faced a barrage of criticism about his compensation package. The New York Times questioned his annual package, his million in stock options and bonuses. However, he remained as defiant as ever. and did not even consider the idea that it was perhaps time to try and stop further losses and make a course correction.

At this point in time, hubris was an integral part of his life and Nacchio did not concede his mistakes at all; he even began mocking his critics and the media without showing a modicum of remorse or introspection. He must not have believed his own defense of his plans for Qwest. He began a series of sales involving personal stock valued at over $100 million between January and May 2001. Ultimately, Nacchio had to reassign due to board pressure a year later in June 2002. In 2007, Nacchio was found guilty of 19 charges of insider trading before being imprisoned. It was a hard lesson for Qwest to learn — that confidence is often hubris. It is a lesson that he would do well to have learned over a period of time.

In War and Peace, Tolstoy comments on Bonaparte's narcissism: "He alone-with his ideal of glory and grandeur developed in Italy and Egypt, his insane self-adulation, could justify what had to be done." [16]

So, why do some people develop narcissism? Different theorists have come up with various explanations and it seems likely that biological, psychological, social and other environmental factors are involved; to date no clear genetic links have been found. The truth is, we don't really know precisely how it develops. What we can say with confidence is that the belief we live in a time when narcissism is increasing is not new: in 1987 Robert Emmons wrote: "although the 1970s were characterized as the me generation interest in narcissism shows no sign of abatement in the 1980s" [17].

In *The Leader on the Couch*[18] characterized narcissism as a spectrum on which we all exist, ranging from healthy self-esteem to pathological egotism:

“Constructive narcissism develops in response to ‘good enough’ care. Parents who give their children a lot of support, age-appropriate frustration, and a proper ‘holding environment’ for their emotional reactions produce well-balanced, positive children who possess a solid sense of self-esteem, a capacity for introspection, and an empathetic outlook. These individuals have a high degree of confidence in their own abilities and are highly task- and goal-oriented.” (p.29)

Looking at the list of attributes these constructive narcissists possess, it is notable how closely they match the most commonly sought characteristics in job advertisements, especially those for leadership jobs. By this analysis, not only is narcissism not all bad, it is to a great extent the very ‘stuff’ of effective leadership. However, Kets de Vries writes that:

“Reactive narcissism develops in people who have been damaged in some way. It takes root when phase-appropriate development is interrupted, frustrating experiences are poorly handled, and parents are either distant and cold or overindulgent and unrealistically admiring. In those circumstances, children develop a defective sense of identity and have difficulty maintaining a stable sense of self-esteem. As adults, they remain deeply troubled by inadequacy, bitterness, anger, depressive thoughts, and lingering feelings of emptiness and deprivation. They may develop a sense of entitlement, believing that they deserve special treatment and that rules and regulations apply only to others.” (p. 29)

In sum, from a psychoanalytic perspective, the foundations of narcissism lie in a sense of inadequacy and attendant insecurity. Examples in public life suggest that,

alongside parental failings, a sense of being ‘not quite one of us’ are a common trigger for such feelings of insecurity. Examples include British Prime Minister Boris Johnson (a pupil at the leading British private school Eton College, but not from an established, aristocratic family); or Adolf Hitler (not wholly Arian or German). These people show a tendency towards the ‘zeal of the convert’, rooted in efforts to ‘prove’ to themselves and others that they belong. As such, they tend to focus on the externalities of belonging (dress, mode of speech, associates, group memberships, espoused values) rather than internalities (personal history, core beliefs, enacted values). In turn, this helps to generate an obsessive focus on reputation and the opinion of others. Behaviors which buff and polish apparent - rather than actual - virtues become paramount.

We can see similar features among those who aspire to positions of power in the corporate world. As an example, a significant proportion of Partners in the major accounting and consulting firms are able, ambitious people who did not enjoy the privilege and advantage in early life that their later outward success might lead us to expect. We cannot say with confidence whether or not people from such backgrounds are more likely to indulge in questionable (or downright illegal) behavior, but we can be confident that they operate under pressures which their more privileged, and hence more ‘at home’ colleagues do not have to contend with. Often born into families of moderate means, early academic success marked out these individuals as different from their peers, and often from their families. They may have been the first from their family to attend University or the first to move away from their hometown in generations. The dislocation which starts with being ‘not quite one of us’ among their early peers often persists at University, where they perceive themselves to be ‘different’ from the more privileged majority. Outsiders

again, they often work hard to shed the markers of their difference (accents, forms of speech, mode of dress) and ape those of the groups to which they aspire to belong.

This process of self-alienation may be an important ingredient in the development of a dissociation between an individual's internal sense of who they 'really' are and the externalities which are so crucial to creating and maintaining the markers of belonging in the new group. The challenges for these unfortunates are not resolved by attainment of the externalities: the high earnings which let them buy big houses, expensive cars and the other accoutrements of 'powerful people'. Instead, they seem to cement a sense of shame and inadequacy, which is only heightened by the expectations of others that they must maintain the façade.

In our work with leaders like this we find a range of strategies for dealing with the pressures they face. Some manage to maintain their sense of self and their connections with those they have 'left behind'; the symbols of their origins woven successfully into an integrated whole. Others are less fortunate, turning to alcohol, drugs, prostitutes and other 'salves' for their pain, which in private moments they can admit. And others persist in the process of self-alienation, striving for ever more external affirmation that they DO belong. These are the people who seem to be most at risk of narcissism, and the greater their success in accumulating those externalities, the greater the risk.

Ernest O'Boyle and colleagues (2012)[19] take a slightly different approach, focusing on narcissism as a personality trait – potentially the outcome of the developmental challenges described above – in terms of relatively stable and enduring ways of thinking, feeling and behaving in response to our environment. From an evolutionary perspective, we can think of personality as a set of strategies that humans develop

to navigate the social landscape to which they have had to adapt, and meet their basic needs: for status, acceptance in the group, and access to mates and other critical resources.

Some people address these challenges primarily by seeking to get along with others, being agreeable, helpful and co-operative and making a positive contribution to the group's tasks. Others focus on getting ahead, seeking opportunities to beat the competition and take the prize. One of the primary appeals of the evolutionary approach is that its basis of explanation is simple: what works persists. In other words, if we ask why narcissists behave as they do, the answer from evolutionary psychology is that it works.

[C] Step 3: Glorification

Eventually, leaders tend to believe the exaggerated adulation and accolades showered on them. This denotes the 'glorification' phase, which takes the shape of self-adulation, a deadly spiral. [71]

With the click of a mouse, social media allows individuals to receive instant external validation of their ideas, their lives, their fashion sense, or their looks. Where once a few interactions were enough validation, the need for bigger numbers took over. As with any addiction, be it drugs, alcohol, porn, food, or attention — enough is never

enough. With the increased access to what others think, or don't think of us, there's also an increase in mental health issues around self-esteem, depression, anxiety and even suicide related to social media.

A new study argues that the connection between mental health and the Internet may be more complex than experts think. A recent study involving 10,000 English kids in the 13-16 age group covered in The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health (August 2019 issue) argues that the connection between mental health and the Internet may be more complex than experts originally thought. It was fond that social media harms the mental health of girls by making them more vulnerable to bullying.

Social media does more than depress us and keep us from sleeping. It adds to the number one mental health issue in the world — anxiety.

Social media led anxiety comes from more than the pressure to share one's life with others on Facebook. It comes from the pressure to be as happy, successful, and beautiful and content as other social media users you see. Most of us feel happy for others experiencing and sharing a good life, but an increasing number of people feel jealous, depressed, enraged, or even homicidal or suicidal with what they see on Facebook and other forms of social media.

In an August 2019 article in the Washington Post, Beth McGinty from Johns Hopkins University said, "This is a very understudied area." She wasn't kidding. Experts in

both technology and gun policy say there's just not enough research into the connection to understand if there is a link, or how to address it. [16]

~~The deadlier~~As mentioned before, Hubris is evidenced in all walks of life such as business, politics, science, military, entertainment, academia, medicine and sports, among several other factors. In terms of aviation, investigations concerning fatal plane mishaps identified erroneous judgments made by a person who is in an authoritative position – the captain, who dismissed the concerns expressed by other crew members.[103]Furthermore, the crew was unable to question the decisions made by the captain. In medicine parlance, Atul Gawande opined that the behavioral traits of doctors who medicalized human life and did not reconcile with the fact that life and death are inevitable sides of the same coin was a fine illustration of unreasonable hubris in the chosen profession. He contends that it is important for doctors to move away from what they are supposed to do – save lives, and focus on things that make life meaningful.

Phenomena associated with hubristic behavior were witnessed in the investigators of some critical fraudster studies that have found mention over the past few studies. Among several examples, two articles are cited from the world of medicine and three articles from the domain of physics. Until 2005, Hwang-Woo was regarded as one of the pioneers in the domain of stem cells, particularly renowned for the articles published in the Journal Science, where it was pointed out that he was able to succeed in developing embryonic stem cells through the act of cloning. Not without a

reason, he was declared "Pride of Korea." [104] However, it was later found out that all of these reports were, in fact, untrue. This is a classic example of how hubris elevated the status of an undeserving man who was later subject to a great deal of humiliation. There have been several such incidents in the past which have impelled many people to eat humble pie, even forcing some of them to commit suicide.

Meanwhile Winkler came up with a theory for scholars as well as writers who put a lot at stake in order to popularize potentially worthwhile concepts or impact contemporary events by getting the message conveyed to the general public, albeit in a distorted and inaccurate manner[105]. In this regard, Winkler posited that such a phenomenon actually bears resemblance with a disease that is characterized by the presence of pleasant exhilaration, followed by somnolent phantasies and eccentric indulgences. In a similar manner, Diamandis said that Nobel Prize laureates undertaking projects or accepting positions in excess of their capabilities were subject to pride. [106] As per Diamandis, Nobel Prize seems laureates seem to be consumed by hubris to such a great extent that they are led to believe that they are in possession of super-powers which enables them to do whatever they want to do.

Therefore, acclaimed scientists would do well to resort to humility as opposed to building an imaginary castle built on the shaky foundation of hubris. However, they are recommended to go a lot further and strive hard to challenge as well as eradicate hubristic tendencies. In this regard, leaders have a particularly important role to play as they are encouraged to undertake a discussion on hubris and accompanying behaviours with peers, team members as well as stakeholders in order to reinforce the significance of humility during the course of their daily lives[20].

Those endless lists of contraindications' that scare us as we read the patient information leaflets included with our medicines refer to small subsets of patients

who respond in a different way to the majority. In order to improve the information from statistical trials, the trend in medicine is to classify patients according to genotype in order to predict which group of patients will benefit most from the medicine. The pharmaceutical companies who best manage this complexity will be the successful companies of the future.

Meanwhile the deadlier results of the Internet and its impact on mental health are more likely to make the news — think of 22-year-old Elliot Rodgers, the 2014 California shooter who killed six women and then himself. He went on his death rage after complaining on YouTube that he was a virgin, and that beautiful women wouldn't pay attention to him. Rodgers killing spree is one of the most well-known examples of social media and its impact on mental health. Authorities believe his involvement with other young men on the Internet may have helped fuel his anger [16].

Evidently, Rodgers was not alone in his rage. He was active in online groups of men like him before he killed. His actions and death made him a martyr and hero among a growing community of online men's rights members who advocate for violence against women

While the Internet might not be the cause of specific mental illnesses, it certainly does provide a culture and platform for certain illnesses to proliferate and spread their tentacles around. Sociopaths, stalkers, and psychopaths are increasingly using the Internet and social media to stalk, bully, and terrorize their victims for a reason: they themselves are a victim of hubris in more ways than one [21].

While the link between mental illness and social media is yet to be studied extensively enough to make a connection between the shootings and the Internet, there is no question that social media has become the new communication foundation for any and all organizations, large or small, for-profit or non-profit. The world of social media has permeated both our private and public lives. We are connected 24/7 to the lure of what might seem like a true connection, but, sadly, it's quite the opposite. As a result, the internet with its enticing yet empty social promises has created the perfect environment for several forms of mental illness [17].

The total number of people who use YouTube is 1,300,000,000: 5 billion videos are watched on a daily basis. With the exponential growth in the emergence of startups, media outlets, the number of reality television shows, and Vimeo, YouTube, and Facebook content, an increasing number of people are getting the much-talked about 15 minutes of fame. Add to the fact that 6-in-10 people say they prefer to watch video online rather than on television, and it's easy to see why the linkage between addiction and fame is worrisome.[16]

If money buys us things, services and "stuff" then social capital buys us influence, reciprocity and networks. The core importance of social capital is the goodwill that others have towards us. It's a resource we can't buy or sustain with authenticity.

Its power and value lie in the structure and content of the person or company who creates it. Social capital flows from the information, influence, and solidarity that occurs when people interact with each other.

Not accumulating and “spending” the goodwill you or your company accumulates is akin to being social bankrupt.

If, for instance, you were stranded on a desert island where “money” was a certain sort of rare seashells, and all you had were £100 notes, you would starve unless you found a way to make find or generate what passed for “capital” on that island. If, after 40 years, you are rescued and return home with pockets full of seashells ready to buy a home, I suspect you would not receive much attention from any one at an estate’s agents. The same is true with social capital. The ecoculture for today’s business and personal environment requires social capital/currency. You’ve got to learn to recognise, make, and spend, social currency with the same attention to numbers as you would your financial resources.

The psychological mechanisms by which social approval operates have been well-documented. Perhaps the most fundamental process is that of Confirmation Bias, a phenomenon first identified in 1960 by Peter Wason[22], is the cognitive bias whereby we seek out, notice and attribute validity to data which confirm our expectations, and fail to seek out, ignore and discount data which challenge them. In the intervening years, researchers have identified a wide variety of consequences which flow from this fundamental bias.

Daniel Kahneman (the renowned psychologist who, together with his life-long collaborator Amos Tversky, was awarded the 2002 Nobel Prize in Economics for their work on cognitive biases and demonstrating the fallacy of economic rationality) offers us the phenomenon of WYSIATI (What You See Is All There Is)[23]. This phenomenon helps to explain 'optimism bias' (a close cousin of confirmation bias) and the 'planning fallacy', whereby we routinely underestimate how long projects will take and how much they will cost, because we assume that nothing beyond what we have already identified will require to be done to achieve the plan. The consequence of this is that we repeatedly bite off more than we can chew.

Major projects routinely run over time and budget - recent evidence on major project performance indicates that we are not learning from previous experience[24]. Why? Rather than confronting the root causes of over-optimism – their own optimism bias primary among them – the leaders of these projects routinely attribute their difficulties to unforeseeable externalities.

As such, confirmation bias appears to provide a promising perspective from which to make sense of another source of hubris: the unquestioning acceptance of 'evidence' and feedback which confirms the 'rightness' of our prior beliefs, and the dismissal of information which bring those beliefs into question.

This strategy has its limitations. When confronted with plain facts which appear to undermine the favoured narrative, the narrator faces a dilemma: persist with denials, or acknowledge the facts and seek to create a new narrative which nonetheless leaves the narrator in a positive light. An effective way to do this, much used by

magicians, is to draw attention to other features of the situation which are more favourable to the narrative.

Effective deployment of this strategy commonly involves reframing the definition of 'success' in terms which include those criteria which make the individual look good, and discounts those by which they look less appealing. For example, at the time of writing, campaigning is gathering momentum ahead of the 2020 US presidential election. The Democrat Party has just initiated impeachment proceedings against President Donald J Trump, on the grounds that he abused his office by demanding the President of Ukraine conduct an investigation into the activities of the family of Joe Biden, his likely Democrat rival for the Presidency. Tellingly, along with Trump's oft-voiced claim that the process was a 'witch-hunt', he encouraged voters to remember that the US economy was stronger than ever and unemployment lower than ever.

Self-evidently there is no logical connection between the question of whether or not he abused his power and the state of the US economy, but that of course is not the point: his intention, and more often that we might find comfortable, his impact, is to distract attention from those features of the situation which may make him look unappealing and focus instead on those which make him look good.

There may, however, be more direct ways in which narcissists generate the public approval they so cherish. Brian Little[25] reports that narcissists evaluate their own work as especially creative. Whilst objective review of their work indicates nothing of the kind, Little notes that narcissists also pitch their ideas more enthusiastically and effectively than others do. The result? Narcissists are not just self-deluding: they can

delude others into believing in their not-so-special creativity. And this provides the ‘proof-point’ to shore up their fragile self-admiration.

[D] FAKE NEWS

“It must be true. It’s on the internet” Don’t laugh, millions of people believe that popular meme. Whereas journalists were once able to block, confirm, or corroborate information, that’s no longer the case. And, in their rush to be first in a “Twitter broke it with video and photos” first world, even the major news networks don’t always take time to do their due diligence, preferring at times to get the word of breaking news out first and ask forgiveness for errors later. It’s a competitive world. Being first with the news can often trump being most accurate with the news.

The concept of fake news ~~isn’t~~is far from being new. H.G. Wells science fiction book, The War of the Worlds panicked the nation (or a small part of the nation) [18] when the book was narrated by actor and future filmmaker, Orson G Wells. Parts of the book were adapted to be part of an American radio drama anthology series.[26]

The one hour program began with music and an announcement about the adaptation off the infamous The War of the Worlds. Over the next 30 minutes,-“bulletins” interrupted dance music to tell listeners something odd was happening. At first, it was a few explosions on Mars, which made way for a report about an object descending from the sky, before a strange-looking cylindrical object was cited. Eventually, Martians attack curious onlookers using a heat-ray, being confronted by

the US Military and doing battle with humanity until being destroyed by earth's microbes. [17]

Orson Welles then began to read.

For the next half hour "bulletins" interrupted dance music to tell listeners something odd was happening. At first, it was a few explosions on Mars, This was followed by a report of an object falling from the sky, then sightings of a strange cylindrical object. Eventually, Martians emerge from the cylinder and attack curious onlookers using a heat-ray, being confronted by the US Military and doing battle with humanity until being destroyed by earth's microbes.

Notably, the episode is famous for being the first "fake news" event — even though listeners were told throughout the show it was a dramatization. 2018 was the 80-year anniversary of the event. And while the Martian landing was "fake news" the bigger fake news came out of the news media's reporting on the extent of the panic the show caused. The extent of the panic, from jammed highways of people fleeing the city, to people dying from heart attacks, or hiding in their basements, was the real fake news. The radio show had a small listenership, and while some people thought the show was "too realistic," most did not panic.

What happened then, and what happens with the news body, is a cognitive bias called an availability cascade.

Hitler coined the expression “the Big Lie” in Mein Kampf. Hitler believed (and told his advisors) that a certain form of credibility always lies within the big false story.

What we’ve learned from The War of the Worlds, and the Big Lie and fake news of all kinds is that people don’t always read listen or look for the facts of an event. They tend to react to their perception or belief about what is being said, shown or read.[74]

The assumption people will make the correct decisions when presented with the facts is known as the Enlightenment Fallacy. However, this assumption is false as humans do not share a common decision-making code the same way computer systems do. In fact, different experiences lead to different decisions when people are faced with the facts.

There are many factors that contribute to fake news – including confirmation bias, which is the predisposition to search for information confirming one’s pre-existing beliefs; and the power and influence of numerous parties who benefit from telling the story they tell. What is interesting to note is that within the next four days after the War of the Worlds broadcast, there was a dramatic resurgence of sales of the 1949 novel, 1984 by George Orwell. Sales of Orwell’s book are said to have soared by 10,000% making it a number one bestseller.

On Friday, January 20th, 2017, the day Trump took office, we saw the reignition of fake news (later called “alternative truths”). After the swearing-in ceremony, Sean Spicer, President’s secretary, announced to that it was the biggest ever audience to witness -a singular inauguration.” The reality was that the number of participants was no larger than 600,000 much less, in fact, than Obama’s validated attendance numbers (1.8 million for his 2009 inauguration and 1 million for his 2013 inauguration).

After facing much media criticism of the comment, Spicer later corrected himself, saying that more people had watched the ceremony via social media, live streaming, and television rather than physically attending. It is indeed true; Nielsen TV ratings around the event were higher than ever before. But the bottom line is that there is no way to prove whether or not viewership related to the inauguration. This is a question that may never quite get answered.

From Kendal Jenner with her 28 million-and-counting Twitter followers where she regularly tweets about fashion, to Elon Musk's unfiltered, sarcastic, politically incorrect and even downright rude ~~Tweets~~Tweets[19], to President Trump’s 63,853,404 million followers-and-counting, and his 44,000 tweets about politics, the media, and his opinions, there’s a “whole lot of fake tweeting and reporting going on,” says the Washington Post

According to the *Post*, this turns into an average of more than 23 ~~+~~ claims on a daily basis. Certainly, what these latter statistics reveals is that it is highly likely that hubris is an element that could very well exist ~~–~~ in all such cases which deserves our recognition and acknowledgement.

A similar claim could be made regarding Kendal Jenner. Wisely, Kendal took a break from social media — specifically from Instagram back in 2016[66]. Why? Speaking on The Ellen DeGeneres Show, Jenner said that social media was taking over her life. Her decision, she told DeGeneres, came down to wanting a “detox”. Jenner said she was surprised that her decision was Twitter and social media worthy – she had only been off social media for a week, telling people she “would be back.” Whether her brief detox was a publicity stunt or a true concern for her social media addiction is something only she knows. However, she is back in the social media limelight once again, so she might not be that concerned. As with all hubris-nemesis personality types, the narcissist spiral is obvious. The news that her “leaving” social media went viral and reinforced her decision, and generated more attention just reinforces the hubris-nemesis pattern [71].

Evidently, Elon Musk’s tweets, similar to that of Trump, ranged from being rude to being politically incorrect. When he was asked by Sanford C. Bernstein & Co analyst Antonio Sacconaghi about the future capital requirements of Tesla, Musk shut him down saying: "Excuse me. Next. Boring bonehead questions are not cool." [27]

All three personalities attract social media attention by Tweeting different things. It's not the topics that matter as much as the patterns they create — narcissism, personal success, belief in the press/media attention that follows, uncritical attention of accolades, to the breaking of social and legal rules — believing they no longer apply to you. All three of these social media giants have crossed into rule-breaking territory, and they're getting attention for it.

In June 2019, Jenner went into a Bodega and came out carrying a single can of Coca Cola, which just happened to perfectly match her outfit. The social media community debated whether the event was staged, or real — concluding it was "probably a Coke sponsored ad." Who cares?

Well, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), a federal agency dedicated to protecting consumers, for one. If a post is part of a paid campaign, it must be clearly communicated as an advertisement. The FTC has strict rules about paid advertisements posted on online platforms like social media accounts without that communication.[2]Jenner definitely posted a photo of herself buying the Coke on her Instagram and Twitter pages. All of the Kardashian-Jenner sisters have been accused of not taking the rules seriously, and believing that the rules don't apply to them.

People continue to accuse them of getting paid for ad placements without disclosing their professional relationship with the brands they promote. It's safe to say Jenner is in the last stage before nemesis appears. Advertising and FTC rules are one thing, but Jenner has also broken fashion rules, appearing in denim shorts at the 2017 Cannes Film Festival. While her rule breaking may seem trivial and juvenile to those outside the Kardashian-Jenner-fan-haters circus, for those in the movie and fashion industry, the rules she's breaking are serious. They haven't escalated to the level of Bonaparte believing he could dominate the Russians in 1812 – but give it time.

Whether you support, "the wall" or not, it's interesting to watch the building of it, as well as the "rules don't apply to me," attitude of President Trump unfolding.

In an August 2019 article, Vanity Fair writer Bess Levin stated: "Secretary Mark Esper is expected to approve the White House's request to reroute $3.6 billion in Pentagon funds to the project, money that the president decided to divert from apparently less important Defence Department projects after lawmakers refused to pony up $5 billion." [20] How the wall is being funded seems to be illegal, a point obvious to White House staffers who have pointed this out to the President[28]. How the wall is being funded seems to be illegal, a point obvious to White House staffers who have pointed this out to the President.

Separately, Levin said that Trump, waived standard procedural mechanism and impact assessments citing national security concerns on the pretext of national security concerns.

In an immigration meeting held with lawmakers, Trump conceded that while a barrier is not an ideal situation, he tried his best to explain to his supporters about the prudence of this decision. In the hierarchy of the hubris-nemesis scale, Trump must please his supporters in order to continue to feed his narcissistic supply of admiring followers; increase the positive press attention he's getting for "keeping his promises,"; build his success record for accomplishing what he promised, reasonable, or practical or not; by believing that his social media followers are right, and that he is "great," or is "the chosen one," it's just a short shuffle to the stage he's in now — believing laws don't apply to him.

So how does Elon Musk's politically incorrect, unfiltered engagement with social media follow the same hubris pattern and progression? Because his Tweets, like those of Trump and Jenner, reflect his attitude and actions.

In February 2017, Elon Musk tweeted the image of a cartoon of a unicorn farting electricity on a mug – created by Tom Edwards, a Colorado potter. A month later Musk tweeted the same image to promote his firm's sketch pad feature, but the media reported the unicorn as Musk's design, not Edwards. Edwards was getting

uncomfortable with this since Musk never compensated him, nor asked permission to use the image. After this image formed part of the automobile, Edwards finally asked to be compensated for his design. Initially, Musk just ignored Edwards. Then he flat out refused Edward's attorney's letters. After Lisa Prank, Edwards's daughter tweeted against this move, both sides has since then engaged in an intense twitter battle that has polarised people from both sides of the spectrum.

It is easy to get caught up in the tempest in a teacup, or mug, but breaking the rules, believing that rules don't apply, and the arrogance Musk displays show us that while context can vary, the pattern remains the same.

[C] Step 4: Canonisation

After a period of Glorification, society lauds those to a pedestal where they are immortalised. This is the point by which Glorification is so strong, the individual becomes "canonised" – celebrated as such – above rule and order because rule and order are for mortals only.

Freud referred to this group as "exceptions" to the stated rules, and include those who are guilty of violating the rules and getting others to sacrifice. This usually happens in cases where society anoints a person or corporation to become deity-like after a period of excessive glorification.

Sex trafficker and paedophile Jeffery Epstein invested heavily in the MIT Media Lab, albeit surreptitiously. CNN was then told that “the lab's leadership made it clear that Epstein's donations were to be kept under wraps,” and hidden from the university [21].

By the time most CEOs are fired, or driven out of their company, or succeed in running it into the ground, their hubris has advanced to the point of their believing no rules, not social, not moral, not ethical, spiritual, civil or criminal rules or the law, apply to them. They get away with this for a while, but not for long. Jefferey Epstein (and others like him), learned that even when he was “held accountable” for breaking the rules, his punishment was little more than a few months of inconvenience. Epstein pleaded guilty to a felony charge of solicitation of prostitution involving a minor in 2008[29].

Former U.S. President George W. Bush, and then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, overreached in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Ford Motors turned down the minivan concept, insisting they knew best that consumers wanted station wagons; Lee Iaccoa at Chrysler took the minivan concept and ran with it, saving Chrysler.

Some people can break all the rules and win. In fact, it's the generals and military leaders that emerge victorious battle after battle that often do. Napoleon was one of these people as he ravaged country after country, and town after town, building troop loyalty, casting fear and awe into those he conquered. He also added to his own perfect win record and nursed his ego and hubris with the care of a mother nursing her first infant.[23]

Emboldened by his success and increasing power and reputation, he exhorted his army to loot all nations that they happened to pass as opposed to passively depend on the breadcrumbs offered by France. Almost all his battles involved a lot of excitement and drama. For example, in 1796, he attacked the Duchy of Parma for evading a trap established by Austrians. However, he decided to invade and plunder the Duchy because he wanted to. His emerging hubris was unparalleled by any invader who had gone before him.

The culture of death, the coldness, and the breaking of rules Napoleon exhibited during his career wasn't limited to wartime or Napoleon's time. Contemporary businesses are just as ready, willing and able to break the rules. In August 1991, Salomon Brothers, conceded their guilt concerning violations of Treasury Department guidelines. They didn't do so under threat of fines, or sanctions, but out of arrogance. The regulations were specifically designed to rein in Salomon's excesses, yet only agitated and annoyed the corporation. Salomon's former CEO, John Gutfreund however, wasn't dismayed. Where have we seen that culture and attitude before? Oh yes, wherever there is a hubris-nemesis personality. The entitlement caused the Treasury Department to suspend the firm's trading privileges

No industry is immune to hubris, or the failure that accompanies it. One particularly fascinating industry whose hubris and resulting encounter with nemesis is America’s automobile industry. Hubris and the fall of the auto industry is described using the

words of James B. Stewart[30]: “A fascinating look at how ego and hubris destroyed an industry . . .”

Ingrassia writes: “They see others as inferior, so they don’t listen to them. They lack patience, compassion, or an awareness of their own faults. Nor do they see their companies deteriorating around them so they respond to chaos and crisis by ignoring them. When two-year losses for General Motors totaled in excess of $12 billion, the firm’s CEO declared a letter to shareholders in 2007.

Leaders with hubris are demeaning when engaging with employees. When staffers disagree with them or get in their way, they tend to explode with self-righteous anger, either firing the person or attacking them. They also want to be served.[23]

At one time the same two car companies that came begging Congress for a bailout General Motors (GM) and Chrysler, promised to change the world. And, for a short time they did. GM developed organizational principles that changed forever how corporations around the US, and even the world, operated. GM scientists also invented the air conditioner and the mechanical heart pump. In 1955 they became the first company to earn $1 billion in a year. The year after their 100--year anniversary, GM filed for bankruptcy. The reason, says Ingrassia, along with foreign competition, union battles, mismanagement, and a failure to give consumers what they really wanted, was hubris.

Leaders with hubris are quick-tempered, condescending, and demeaning to employees. When staffers disagree with them or get in their way, they tend to explode with self-righteous anger, either firing the person or attacking them.

In *Rule Makers, Rule Breakers*[31] University of Maryland Professor Michelle Gelfand shows that cultures vary significantly in the extent to which they accept, or even encourage, rule breaking. In ‘tight’ cultures, people are encouraged to conform by adherence to strict social norms and deviance is punished. She proposes that cultural ‘tightness’ results from a history of experiencing threats to survival, and that this effect can be seen at both national and local levels. In her research she found that children from working class homes are more likely than upper class children to endorse statements such as ‘a functioning society requires strong punishments for wrongdoing’. When asked to list words they associate with the word ‘rules’, the most common terms are ‘good’, ‘safe’ and ‘structure’. In contrast, upper class children, who face far fewer threats to their safety and survival, are brought up in ‘loose’ cultures and encouraged to believe that rules are made to be broken. Citing Buckingham and Coffman’s *First Break all the Rules* and Copeland’s *Breaking the Rules and Getting the Job* as guides for the upper classes, Gelfand notes that their children’s associations with the word ‘rules’ are more likely to include terms like ‘bad’, ‘frustrating’ and ‘constricting’.

Gelfand’s analysis suggests that those who are not fearful of threats to their survival are less inclined to see rules as positive, valuable, and requiring adherence. Instead, ‘loose’ culture people are more inclined to see them as frustrating restraints on their behavior. So, how does this influence their actual behavior? Fascinatingly, she goes on to show that upper class drivers (as inferred from their driving expensive cars such as Mercedes) are 4 times more likely to cut off other cars at an intersection with

four-way stop signs than drivers of modest cars. And even more revealing, modest car drivers never cut off pedestrians at these intersections (an illegal act in California), whereas drivers of expensive cars did so on 46% of occasions. The scale of the research is not reported but, if representative, it shows a staggering difference in respect for the law, and one which sits in stark contrast to the stereotype of the blue-collar criminal.

Another potential cause for unruly behavior may lie in the absence of rules which are explicit and acknowledged as legitimate to constrain conduct. In *Leadership in Administration*[32]*,* Philip Selznick's classic 1957 treatise on leadership, the author distinguishes between organizational management and leadership: management is concerned with *routine* decisions regarding the application of appropriate means to achieve defined ends, whereas leadership is concerned with *critical* decisions that have a bearing on the fundamental character of the organization. For Selznick, responsible leadership requires a conscious consideration of the wider implications of decisions for the distinctive role, character and competencies of the organization and of its institutional integrity (the coherence among these necessary for its self-preservation).

He defines leadership as irresponsible where it fails to set goals and define the principles (rules, in effect) by which those goals will be pursued. At one end of a spectrum of irresponsibility, we see managers grasping for expedient solutions to presenting problems, which Selznick refers to as 'opportunism'. At the other end of the spectrum we see them avoiding the hard choices necessary to institutional integrity by flights to abstraction, which he refers to as 'utopianism'. For Selznick, overly abstract goals and principles – to grow our revenues, make more profit, become leaders in our field – are similarly irresponsible, leaving the field open for

people to interpret them in terms which may confer personal advantage even as they corrode the institution.

He acknowledges that the distinction between management and responsible leadership is often overlooked and that critical decisions are often made as if they were routine, so that the organization evolves in a chaotic, haphazard fashion. He observes that the most corrosive consequence of the ‘drift’ which ensues is the erosion of organizational character, which leaves the organization attenuated, confused and unable to resist the challenge of strong competition. We might speculate that it also contributes to the erosion of the foundations for ethical behaviour, the absence of clear guidance giving apparent license to ‘do whatever it takes’.