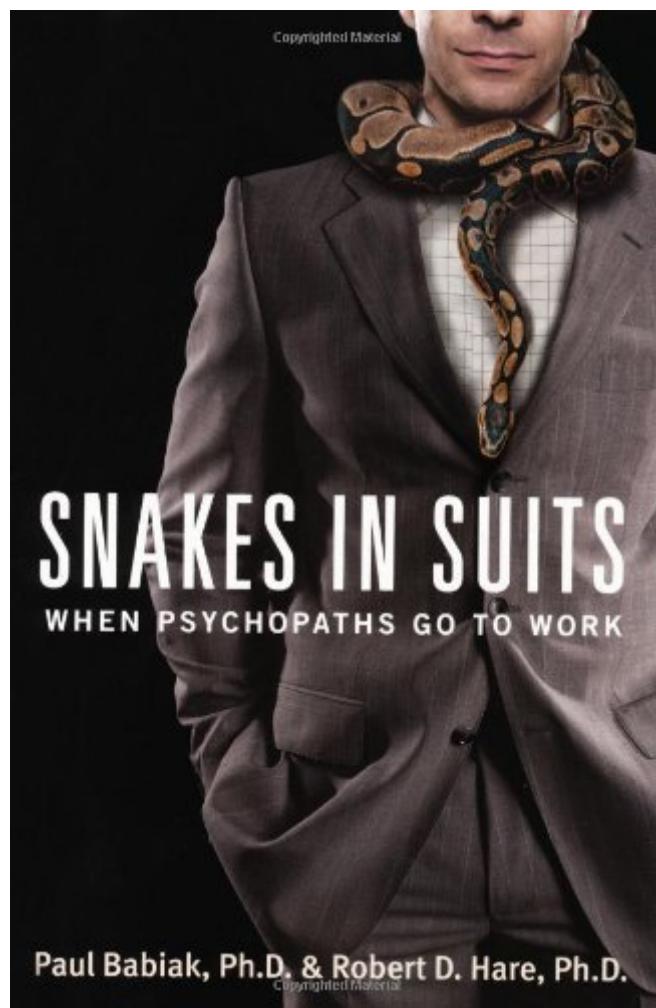


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Snakes In Suits: When Psychopaths Go To Work



Synopsis

Let's say you're about to hire somebody for a position in your company. Your corporation wants someone who's fearless, charismatic, and full of new ideas. Candidate X is charming, smart, and has all the right answers to your questions. Problem solved, right? Maybe not. We'd like to think that if we met someone who was completely without conscience -- someone who was capable of doing anything at all if it served his or her purposes -- we would recognize it. In popular culture, the image of the psychopath is of someone like Hannibal Lecter or the BTK Killer. But in reality, many psychopaths just want money, or power, or fame, or simply a nice car. Where do these psychopaths go? Often, it's to the corporate world. Researchers Paul Babiak and Robert Hare have long studied psychopaths. Hare, the author of *Without Conscience*, is a world-renowned expert on psychopathy, and Babiak is an industrial-organizational psychologist. Recently the two came together to study how psychopaths operate in corporations, and the results were surprising. They found that it's exactly the modern, open, more flexible corporate world, in which high risks can equal high profits, that attracts psychopaths. They may enter as rising stars and corporate saviors, but all too soon they're abusing the trust of colleagues, manipulating supervisors, and leaving the workplace in shambles. *Snakes in Suits* is a compelling, frightening, and scientifically sound look at exactly how psychopaths work in the corporate environment: what kind of companies attract them, how they negotiate the hiring process, and how they function day by day. You'll learn how they apply their "instinctive" manipulation techniques -- assessing potential targets, controlling influential victims, and abandoning those no longer useful -- to business processes such as hiring, political command and control, and executive succession, all while hiding within the corporate culture. It's a must read for anyone in the business world, because whatever level you're at, you'll learn the subtle warning signs of psychopathic behavior and be able to protect yourself and your company -- before it's too late.

Book Information

File Size: 796 KB

Print Length: 356 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins e-books; Reprint edition (October 13, 2009)

Publication Date: October 13, 2009

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B000QUCOAS

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #68,486 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #14 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Counseling & Psychology > Occupational & Organizational #51 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Business & Money > Organizational Behavior > Workplace #54 in Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling > Occupational & Organizational

Customer Reviews

I had been told about the title by a Psychiatrist in dealing with a family member who falls into the character traits as discussed in the book, but it was in my own profession that I fell victim to a particularly vicious psychopath and ended up being fired thanks to the deceptive manipulation and abuse of power and influence. Looking back I didn't stand a chance either way, but the book has helped me in particular in understanding the modus operandi of the psychopath and how he / she manipulates the "patrons" (those with influence and power), "Pawns" (myself / those who serve a purpose in getting what the psychopath wants) and "Patsies" (those with no benefit who frequently see what is going on and the real person behind the mask, because they are not worth manipulating) I feel that everyone should read this book and arm themselves with the knowledge of the agendas that a psychopath will frequently follow - very often the HR department (as in my case) will also be manipulated, so trying to defend oneself is nearly impossible. However understanding the way that others in positions of influence are manipulated is powerful knowledge, as the best defence against this behaviour is to play the psychopath at his own game, ie identifying and building stronger relationships with the "patrons" than he or she has. This might go against the grain of many hard working and honest individuals, but as the book states, influencing a person in order to look favourable as opposed to following a manipulative agenda is not unethical. I hate the idea of politicking and manipulation in any way, but one has to understand that having one's eyes open in all situations is a very powerful defense. I will from now on never keep quiet because I am afraid of appearing "arrogant". Watch in particular for signs of bullying and indifference to those in the mundane roles (in life and in work) as this behaviour frequently allows one to see who is behind

the mask. Make friends in high and low places - it allows you to see the bigger picture. Sometimes a psychopath will surround himself with "pawns", is those who do not serve any purpose or threat other than to create the impression of a strong support base. The book is careful not to label individuals as psychopaths, especially if you are not a professional and have had the opportunity to perform an analysis on the individual, so my label is perhaps not acceptable in the context, but in hindsight I have no qualms about using the label. Buy this book and recommend it to anyone who will listen.

Babiak and Hare know their topic well. I bought this book upon the recommendation of a friend who recently left a job that became unbearable due to the in-house psychopath that was running the show. I've also experienced first hand the havoc that is caused with psychopaths in power are allowed to run free. Babiak and Hare take us into the world of psychopaths and explore how they infect cultures. This is a valuable text for anyone who cares about the cultures that inform our lives (e.g, the workplace, churches, politics, business, etc.). As more people wake up to the "Snakes in Suits" the better off we will all be in addressing this threat appropriately. Babiak and Hare offer a valuable tool in helping us to unmask the snakes in our midst. Well done.

I first heard of this book via online discussion forums, and my interest piqued enough to want to read it. With topics and chapters arranged in an approachable format, the content proved to be an easy read. Emphasizing their main points (on what defines a psychopath vs, say, a narcissist) with each chapter, the authors deftly provided details about how psychopaths differ from other individuals (and other personality types). The fictionalized story they developed over the course of the book (a synthesis of several similar workplace characters the authors had encountered in their research studies) sent chills down my spine. Not a heartwarming topic for sure, but in some ways a realistic one.

A colleague of mine came across this book totally by accident and what caught his attention was the fact that Paul Babiak happened to be the HR Director with a company we both had worked for. I was positively impressed with Paul in his HR role and I was curious to read what he had to say about "Snakes in Suits". Snakes is in my opinion is too kind a world for the kind of individuals one may have the misfortune to meet in some corporations. I was not disappointed and I would strongly recommend this book to anyone finishing college and preparing to enter the corporate world.

It helped me understand the dynamics that go on in a workplace when a clever person with bad intentions is manipulating the situation. It challenges the worldview of a liberal religious person like myself who wants to be understanding of others and the book explains why churches like the one I belong to can be particularly vulnerable. We assume good intentions as a default and the idea of a "bad seed" is often not in our purview. It is quite a challenge, but a helpful challenge, to consider the idea that some are born without the nature necessary to morality and caring.

After losing a job for reasons that never made any real sense, this book really helped me to get clear on the dynamics and truth of what was going on with this manager. I can finally look at this situation and see the lies and intentional sabotage for what they are. Does not change the fact that my career has been derailed and extensive financial damage has been done, but it is helping me to take the next step to rebuild my career. I really feel empowered by this book, and instead of buying into the lies and the humiliation she attempted to make real, I am really thinking about writing a formal ethics complaint on her behavior and exposing the unethical behavior. Of course, this is with the understanding that upper management may be psychopathic, but at least I can get closure on this recent situation with a clear conscience.

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