

# The Journey of the Corporate Hero

Prof. and Deputy Dean Aarti Ramaswami, ESSEC Business School, Asia-Pacific, and Prof. Vesa Peltokorpi of Saitama University, explore how the impact of abusive management on employees' wellbeing can be tamed – or not.

**Related research:**

Vesa Peltokorpi & Aarti Ramaswami (2019): Abusive supervision and subordinates' physical and mental health: the effects of job satisfaction and power distance orientation, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, DOI: 10.1080/09585192.2018.1511617



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*An alliance with a purpose*

# THE 3 Ps IN A CoBS POD

 **PERCEIVE**  
with a set of key takeaways

 **PROJECT**  
with food for thought: on yourself, your organisation and the wider context

 **PERFORM**  
by putting it all into practice using action tips





## ● PERCEIVE

with a set of key takeaways

- Supervisors' negative behaviours have detrimental effects on employees' physical and mental health, company finances, the state and the taxpayer.
- Abusive supervision is characterised by the long-term mistreatment of subordinates, including zero praise, bullying, humiliation and silent treatment.
- On a psychological level, stress can be thought of in terms of resources depleted verses resources renewed or gained. Losing resources has a much more negative effect on people than similarly valued gains.
- An employee's level of job satisfaction has little impact on this loss of resources.
- Culture has an impact: inequality and hierarchical relations between individuals are seen to be normal, expected, and accepted more in East Asian countries such as Japan.
- To combat abusive supervision, companies can: state expected leader attributes during recruitment; set up awareness initiatives; take the intercultural aspect into account; set up supportive social resources for employees.



Read the full article:  
<https://councilcommunity.org/2020/01/21/the-journey-of-the-corporate-hero/>



● **PROJECT**  
with food for thought

- From your perspective, what constitutes stressful conditions at work?
- What is the relationship you share with your supervisor or manager?
- To what extent do you feel valued for your contributions? How often do you receive recognition or praise at your workplace?
- How do you perceive the level of morale in your company/ workplace to be? To what extent do you feel that your company takes adequate action to promote employee wellness?
- To what extent is stress in your workplace affecting your life outside the organisation? If so, how?
- What nationalities and cultures are represented in your organisation? What differences can you notice in how different nationalities and cultures react to and deal with stress?
- On that note, how often does your company provide cultural sensitivity training to its managers?
- To what extent have you experienced, or been victim to, supervisor mistreatment? What emotional and psychological impact did this experience have on you? How could you have been better prepared? What support system could be set up in your organisation to help employees battle through the resulting physical and mental stress produced?

*Thoughts*

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# ● **PERFORM**

by putting it all into practice

## CHECKLIST

- 1. As a leader or HRM, refine the manager recruitment process** in order to pay special attention to expected team leader attributes during the selection process. Note down the 3 things your organisation is doing right in your hiring process and the 3 additional things that it could do to increase the effectiveness of picking the right leaders.
- 2. Conduct awareness initiatives** among HR staff and managers on the negative effects of abusive supervision.
- 3. Offer training in intercultural management and educate managers** on how cultural value orientations shape the outcomes of manager-employee interactions. For example, inequality and hierarchical relations are noticed to be accepted more in East Asian countries such as Japan than in the more egalitarian Western countries such as the UK and USA.
- 4. Conduct regular job satisfaction surveys to serve** as an early indicator of health-related issues to come and help set initiatives to mitigate abusive supervision.
- 5. Set up mechanisms for employees to express themselves** (ex: online forum, suggestion box, grievance procedure, whistleblowing system, contact with a wellbeing manager). Offer support and understand the challenges they face through one-on-one meetings. This will help foster trust and alleviate pressures.



# Getting involved


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