

From the Editor

Why do I think there is a need to raise the issue of the dark side of leadership?

The majority of the research and scientific publications on leaders and leadership have been focused on the positive, even romantic aspects of the behavior of leaders, as well as analyses of the positive influence of such behavior on the members of a given organization and on organizations as a whole.

The recently visible trends in the sciences on organization, aimed at *positive organizational scholarship*,^{1, 2} seem to confirm this thesis. They focus their attention on the positive aspects of human nature, providing essential research on such topics such as positive organizational behavior,^{3, 4} servant leadership,⁵ authentic leadership,⁶ and spiritual leadership.⁷

1 Cameron, K. S., Dutton, J. E., and Quinn, R. E. (Editors) (2003) *Positive Organizational Scholarship: Foundations of a New Discipline*, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.

2 Luthans, F., Avolio, B. J. (2009) "The 'Point' of Positive Organizational Behavior," *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30, pp. 291–307.

3 Dutton, J. E. and Ragins, B. R. (Editors) (2007) *Exploring Positive Relationships at Work: Building a Theoretical and Research Foundation*, Mahwah, Erlbaum, New Jersey.

4 Dutton, J. E., Worline, M. C., Frost, P. J., and Lilius, J. (2006) "Explaining Compassion Organizing," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 51, pp. 59–96.

5 Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., and Henderson, D. (2008) "Servant Leadership: Development of a Multidimensional Measure and Multilevel Assessment," *Leadership Quarterly*, 19, pp. 161–177.

6 Avolio, B. J. and Gardner, W. L. (2005) "Authentic Leadership Development: Getting to the Root of Positive Forms of Leadership," *Leadership Quarterly*, 16, pp. 315–338.

7 Fry, L. and Kriger, M. (2009) "Towards a Theory of Being-Centered Leadership: Multiple Levels of Being as Context for Effective Leadership," *Human Relations*, 62, pp. 1667–1696.

Why, then, do I see the need to publish an issue of *Human Resource Management* dedicated to the “the destructive side of leadership?” There are several reasons for this.

The very first reason has been provided by management know-how (practice), where the last decade has abounded in numerous examples of corruption scandals in modern enterprises—the sources of which can be traced back to the unethical behavior the respective leaders. The sheer quantity of corrupt behavior can be attributed not to the corporations themselves, but to the specific behavior of the leaders of those organizations, including Kenneth Lay (founder and CEO of Enron Corporation), Jeffrey Skilling (CEO of Enron), Bernard Ebbers (CEO of Worldcom), Leo Hindery (CEO of Global Crossing Limited), Richard Scrushy (CEO of Healthsouth) and last, but not least, Dennis Kozlowski (CEO of Tyco Corporation).

Second, it is virtually impossible to carry out work and research on the development of positive leadership without a thorough knowledge and understanding of the destructive side of leadership—mistakes made by leaders, their unethical behavior leading to the collapse of many organizations as well as a decline in public confidence in the corporations and their leaders.

Third, research into the “dark side of leadership” is a new, emerging source of knowledge in the field of human resource management.

Fourth, one can observe a significant gap in the above topics in scientific publications available on the market—both noncyclic publications and periodicals. Based on my own personal experience, this is the first thematic issue of a scientific journal on this subject in Poland, and one of very few in the world.

I have deliberately strayed away from a standard layout in this issue, suggesting articles arranged in alphabetical order. I think that this will not disturb the reader’s reception (hopefully a favorable one) of the contents of the articles.

Although this issue is devoted to the dark side of leadership, the intention behind its genesis is that of a first step towards the positive—light—side of leadership. Corruption scandals that have shaken the last decade and the related ethical crisis of the business world may push forward the following questions:

Is there any hope that trends driven by greed and selfishness, which in the last decade were so characteristic for so many organization leaders, can be reversed? Is it possible to educate virtuous, socially responsible, global leaders who approach others with dignity and respect and are driven by a willingness to help others? Answering “No” to these questions would be tantamount to losing hope and faith in mankind and goodness, which is truly the essence of humanity.

This issue—entitled “Dark Sides of Leadership”—would not have been possible without the efforts, commitment, passion, and kindness of many people whom I would like to thank most heartily.

I thank the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Stanisława Borkowska and the Editorial Council for looking kindly upon my proposals and allowing me to publish them in such a prestigious and well-established magazine as *Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi* [Human Resource Management].

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the authors of all the articles that make up this issue for their hard work, adherence to deadlines, and creation of great content that makes this issue very special and unique.

I also thank the copy editor, Mrs. Magdalena M. Wojtaszewska, for her help and unceasing support in working on this issue. I also thank my family for its presence.

So, Dear Reader, please join us in our journey to understand the destructive side of leadership, which, as we do hope, is a first step towards positive leadership.

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Scientific Editor of this Issue