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# How to spot CEOs who oppress their employees

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Autocratic leaders display an attitude of self-importance and the need to dominate others.  
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What do Mariah Carey, Kanye West, Kim Kardashian, Simon Cowell, Madonna, Oprah Winfrey, ousted Zimbabwe president Robert Mugabe, Turkey president Recep Erdogan, and US president Donald Trump all hold in common? Each shows strong warnings signs indicative of Narcissistic Personality Disorder hinged on grandiose displays of self-importance, the need for praise, and the need to dominate other people.

Examples within a workplace include a CEO who frequently garnishes media attention but whose staff widely loathe the firm and feel neglected.

Alternately, a CEO who boasts about their affiliations to high status board members they brought onboard or famous institutions they beget to nebulously partner with the organisation.

Perhaps a new CEO who fails to listen to the advice of his or her new executive team and all the while craves the spotlight and plaudits from the media or donors or shareholders rather than focus on the effectiveness of their own work deliverables.

Drew Pinsky and Mark Young found that celebrities are almost 18 per cent more narcissistic than the general population. In Kenya, we are not strangers to celebrity CEOs. While we retain several highly competent, empathetic, and humble corporate executives, we also suffer from show off attention seeking CEOs.

Some of the most frequently seen CEOs in the Kenyan public eye include those executives whose firms pay their staff and managers the lowest in their respective industries, highlighting the joy such leaders get by dominating staff and negotiations.

Researchers Arijit Chatterjee and Timothy Pollock just released a journal article in the prestigious Academy of Management Review highlighting how to spot narcissistic CEOs. Such chief executives satisfy their need for acclaim by going after celebrity in the media and aligning themselves with high-status board members.

Narcissistic CEOs then gratify their need to dominate other people by hiring other executives of lower status, younger age, and less experience who in turn will likely show more respect towards and dependence on the CEO.

Narcissistic chief executives manage each work group differently with a combination of rewards, punishments, and manipulative influencing tactics. Such individuals also use their power to garnish board members unlikely to challenge their own leadership.

Clear transparent organisational policies, independent and powerful board members, annual CEO performance reviews, 360-degree evaluations on the CEO, independent internal audit, and independent human resources audits each help flag and mitigate against narcissistic chief executives.

If you desire to check your own level of narcissism, Robert Raskin and Howard Terry developed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory that the Business Daily readers may find here: <https://openpsychometrics.org/tests/NPI/1.php>.

The test holds 40 comparisons such as: when people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed, versus, I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so. I can usually talk my way out of anything, versus, I try to accept the consequences of my behaviour.

I like to have authority over other people, versus, I don't mind following orders. I am no better or worse than most people, versus, I think I am a special person. Sometimes I tell good stories, versus, everybody likes to hear my stories.

One can see which represents narcissism and which represents normal human desires. The higher your score in the online test when taken honestly and truthfully, the greater your level of narcissism. If you score lower on the test, then remember the types of questions so that you can spot narcissism in your colleagues and your organisation's leaders.

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