

# RISKY BUSINESS



Career success depends more on an individual's ability to get along with his or her supervisor, peers, and employees than it does on intellect or technical skill. Perhaps that is why some people seem to succeed with little more than a wink and a smile. Most of the time, these individuals are friendly, spontaneous, and fun loving. At their worst, however, they can be flighty, impulsive, or outright Machiavellian. How can you be sure your employees are using their powers of persuasion for good, not evil?



# BORN WITH A SILVER TONGUE

To understand how people's mischievous side can impact their careers, we should look at personality from two perspectives: bright-side personality and dark-side personality.

## BRIGHT-SIDE PERSONALITY

The **strengths** and **weaknesses** people display under **normal circumstances**.

## DARK-SIDE PERSONALITY

The **derailing characteristics** people display in times of **stress and pressure**.

Mischievous individuals were often raised in family environments characterized by inconsistency. As adults, this tends to make them charming, friendly, and spontaneous. They are comfortable taking risks, and tend to brush off failure easily. However, the ambiguity that characterized their upbringing also leads these individuals to be suspicious of others' motives, and to rely on charm and manipulation to get ahead.



# PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

Hogan measures risk prone and manipulative tendencies using the **Mischievous** scale of the **Hogan Development Survey** (HDS), a personality assessment tool that measures dark-side personality characteristics along 11 scales. The HDS uses performance data from thousands of individuals across nearly every major job, level, and industry. It is the only assessment tool that measures dark-side personality.

- **No-Risk, Low-Risk** – On the one hand, individuals with no- and low-risk scores on the HDS Mischievous scale tend to be seen as responsible, willing to follow the rules, and concerned with the consequences of their actions. On the other hand, they tend to be risk-averse, and avoid embracing new ideas or taking a stand on important issues.
- **Moderately Low-Risk** – These individuals tend to be seen as responsible, dependable, and respectful of organizational hierarchy. They tend to make decisions deliberately, typically thinking through the likely outcomes, and are unlikely to take unnecessary risk.
- **Moderately High-Risk** – Individuals with moderately high-risk scores on the HDS Mischievous scale seem charming, adventurous, and pleasure seeking. They tend to make quick decisions, albeit sometimes without considering the likely outcomes. They are unlikely to dwell on past mistakes.
- **High-Risk** – These individuals are daring, interesting, and fun. They seem skilled at influencing others' perceptions to advance their personal agendas, and willing to circumvent rules and tradition when they interfere with a chosen action. They also tend to be unwilling to learn from their mistakes, often blaming poor outcomes on others.



# CHECK YOUR CHARM

So, how can you keep your mischievous employees, or your own mischievous tendencies, in check? First, it is important to note that individuals who score high on the HDS Mischievous scale will likely view feedback as an attempt to impose meaningless rules or expectations. They will blame past mistakes on others or rationalize them away, so it is important to be assertive in identifying areas of concern. High-scoring mischievous people should be encouraged to:

- **Play to your strengths** – High-scoring mischievous individuals are natural charmers. Use that charm to engage with the team, but remember that team members are people, not pawns.
- **Slow your roll** – When faced with an important decision, resist the urge to act impulsively. Instead, come up with three or four courses of action and think through all of the possible outcomes, good and bad.
- **Don't burn your bridges** – No man is an island, and you're better off building bridges than burning them. Making realistic promises, sticking to agreed-upon timelines, and following through on commitments are important for building loyalty.
- **Fess Up** – To err is human. When mistakes are made, apologize to the people who were affected rather than trying to explain it away.

Career success depends on the ability to build and maintain meaningful, productive relationships. By understanding their natural tendencies, high Mischievous individuals can use their charm and charisma to inspire loyalty in others without alienating their coworkers.

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## ABOUT HOGAN

Founded in 1987, Hogan Assessments pioneered the use of personality assessment to improve workplace performance. Hogan's assessment solutions help businesses reduce turnover and increase productivity by hiring the right people, developing key talent, and evaluating leadership potential.

How do **you** derail? Find out at [howdoyouderail.com](http://howdoyouderail.com).