

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. How to stop your organisation turning toxic
By John Gibbs
One way or another, bad organisational culture costs - possibly big-time - according to Leanne Faraday-Brash in this book. The book identifies a number of attributes of destructive workplace cultures, encourages an honest appraisal, and gives advice on how to improve culture to enhance opportunities for everyone. The many ways in which cultural problems in an organisation may arise include through peer groups, job-related selection criteria, unhelpful existing cultural norms, a "the end justifies the means" attitude, poor self-awareness and low accountability, poor management skills, fear of confrontation, and personality disorders. The author provides an extensive inventory which can be used to diagnose cultural problems. Part 2 of the book discusses the particular cultural problems of corruption, unethical business practices, workplace bullying, discrimination and harassment, and incompetent leadership. Part 3 discusses a range of strategies and techniques for intervening in toxic situations and improving the culture at various different levels within an organisation. Anyone with a reasonable amount of leadership experience will recognise at least some of the situations described by the author. It takes constant leadership vigilance to maintain a positive organisational culture and keep out the toxic elements which so easily creep in, and this book will provide invaluable assistance for senior managers in assessing the risks and identifying and dealing with cultural issues when they arise.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Thoughtful and practical advice for targets and terminators of inappropriate behaviour
By J Garland McLellan
Vultures don't always wait for carrion to die before they strike; often they will target the most sensitive and delicate parts as these are the most succulent feed source. In corporate life, as in the wild, vultures survive by picking on the weak and unwary as well as feeding on the carcasses of those who have recently given up the struggle. In the wild they are a useful part of the ecosystem; cleaning and carrying away festering remains. In corporate life they can roost and feed in the heart of even vigorous organisations, ravaging performance, profit and public perception. This book begins with a clear guide to recognising the different types of corporate vulture, both lone and in flocks (or committees to use the correct collective noun). Of course, corporate vultures don't always hunt in broad daylight and the book has some handy hints to help you diagnose their presence from the inevitable traces of their presence even when they are not in clear sight. The behavioural checklists allow even an EQ dunce to work out what might be wrong and the later chapters provide simple ideas for fixing it. The sections on bullying, harassment and discrimination are written from a practical stance rather than a moralistic or legal one and, although the book is published by an academic press, there is little dry or esoteric academe in it. Throughout the book Leanne's voice can be clearly heard. At times the book feels like a conversation with the author. It is a comfortable chat with a caring mentor rather than a lecture from an expert but the expertise and experience shine through. This is a book with a purpose. The book has taken some gutsy positions and illustrates its points with recent Australian case studies that caused a press sensation. Leanne is capable of adding insight to well-known stories that readers may find familiar and enhances this by providing anecdote from her own consulting and executive career that build upon and extend the material into unknown and exciting territory. This book extends the science of organisational culture whilst providing a toolkit for modern managers and directors to diagnose and correct the prevailing culture in their organisations. It frightened me with its casual references to legislation that deposits the responsibility for provision of culturally appropriate workplaces, free from harassment, bullying, discrimination or oppression, clearly into the arena of board activity. The legislation exists; few directors consider it in an ongoing or pervasive manner as they go about the business of creating successful organisations. Fortunately the following chapters give some easily applied strategies for dealing with the issues and instilling a decent culture. The advice on handling an incident investigation is clear and avoids recommending the procedural unfairness of many other authors who seem to deem that any accused is automatically guilty. There is a chapter for 'victims' (I prefer to use the word 'targets') of vultures which contains sound strategies for coping with vultures, either alone or in concert. Regardless of whether you feel yourself, like Conan, to be bound at the mercy of a vulture, or like, like Mandela, to be responsible for the formation of a new and decent culture this book will give some thoughtful insights and some irresistible calls to action. Available at www.leannefaraday.com. * Julie Garland McLellan is a professional non-executive director, board and governance consultant and mentor. She is the author of "Dilemmas, Dilemmas: practical case studies for company directors", "The Director's Dilemma", "All Above Board: Great Governance for the Government Sector" and numerous articles on corporate strategy and governance.

Vulture Cultures is a provocative and entertaining book that articulates, in vivid detail, the tell-tale signs and symptoms of destructive workplaces. From the incompetent to the incomprehensible, the disruptive to the dastardly, this book will explain how bad behaviour gains a foothold and what perpetuates it against all good common sense. The book provides both high-level strategies and readily applicable tips for the CEO and the change leader as well as the vulnerable and the victimised. Vulture Cultures does not dwell on the sociopath or the employee with a personality disorder. In truth, for all the sensationalist hype that surrounds them, they account for a very small percentage of the workforce population. All the characters, cultures and case studies are 100% real and based on Leanne's 20-year history consulting. After you have read this book you will never look at your organisation in the same light again!

From the Author
Leanne takes a subject that is confronting and challenging to most and makes it understandable and

manageable. Avoiding jargon while balancing theory with plenty of examples to which readers at all levels of experience can relate, *Vulture Cultures* makes the topic of organisational culture accessible to anyone. I highly recommend this book!

Mark Stoermer, Director Corporate Services, City of Melbourne
I love this book. Leanne is a gifted writer and the knowledge and the stories she shares are so powerful. A must read for every leader who wants to shape a better culture.

Dimitra Manis, Senior Vice President, Global Head of People, Thomson Reuters
This is an outstanding contribution to the solution of an age old problem; the effects of bullying and bad leadership in the workplace. It is not difficult to recognise many of the characters that Leanne portrays but what is often forgotten is the extreme detrimental effect they have on the organisations with which they are involved and not uncommonly lead.

Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC, Former Chief Justice, Chair of the National Centre Against Bullying
Exemplary, well prepared and thoughtful. Leanne's delivery is totally engaging and fun, but always leading to a profound conclusion. The results were transformative, and I heartily endorse anyone from any sector to use the most dynamic and passionate facilitator I have ever worked with.

Patrick Orsini, General Manager Brotherhood of St Laurence
Her solutions are ingenious, yet practical. I always come away thinking: Now why didn't I think of that?

Marianne Matin, Workforce Planning Engagement Manager, SMEC