

Ulf Schaefer

Associate Professor of Practice



Knowledge Group: Leadership, Human Resources and Digital Technologies

Research Domains: Leadership

Teaching Domains: Change Management, Conflict Management,
Managerial Ethics and Responsible Leadership, Team Management

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Biography

Ulf joined SDA Bocconi in April 2019 as an Associate Professor of Practice in the knowledge group "Leadership, Organization & Human Resources". His teaching portfolio spans and connects themes of leadership, change/transformation, group dynamics, decision-making, and organizational ethics. Ulf is the program director of the Emerging Leaders Program that SDA Bocconi offers in collaboration with ESMT Berlin.

Ulf's research interest focuses on understanding (un)ethical behavior in organizations via the lens offered by moral psychology. Specifically, he studies how people and groups normalize unethical behavior via moral disengagement, that is, via a cognitive reconstrual of morality and agency. Ulf authored "Moral Disengagement as a social process" and "The seven styles of influencing", published articles in academic and managerial journals, and wrote numerous (some best-selling and award winning) case studies.

Before joining SDA Bocconi, Ulf was a strategy consultant at A.T. Kearney, a co-founder and consultant of The Launch Group, a manager at DaimlerChrysler, and director and head of strategy consulting Germany for Sapient Corp. Between 2005 and 2019, Ulf was a program director at ESMT where he designed and implemented more than 100 executive education leadership development interventions, working across Europe, and in Turkey, Russia, Nigeria, Argentina, Brazil, UAE, Qatar, Israel, Lebanon, Singapore, and China.

Ulf remains co-affiliated with ESMT as visiting lecturer and is the program director of its Leading Change Initiative program. Additionally, Ulf regularly teaches for HEC Paris, IAE Buenos Aires, HPI Potsdam, and serves as a tutor for case writing and case teaching with The Case Centre.

Ulf earned an M.A. in Philosophy, Mathematics, Logic and Theory of Science from the University of Bonn (Germany) after studying in Bonn and at UC Berkeley and UT Knoxville (USA). He earned an MBA from Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus Universiteit (The Netherlands) after studying in Rotterdam and at Richard Ivey School of Business, Western University (Canada). Ulf completed his PhD at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (The Netherlands) investigating moral thought and behavior in social contexts.

Cases in International Case Collections

MEG AG: A Special Organizational Culture

SCHAEFER, U., B. SCHMITZ, U. P. MUELLER - "MEG AG: A Special Organizational Culture" - 2023, The Case Centre, Great Britain

How Unethical Behavior Creeps into an Organization: Fake Accounts at Wells Fargo

SCHAEFER, U., U. P. MUELLER - "How Unethical Behavior Creeps into an Organization: Fake Accounts at Wells Fargo" - 2021, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Lea Block at Seuzach AG: Initiating Digital Transformation

MUELLER, U. P., U. SCHAEFER, N. I. GRASSELLI - "Lea Block at Seuzach AG: Initiating Digital Transformation" - 2021, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Deutsche Bahn AG: The heartless train conductor

MUELLER, U. P., U. SCHAEFER - "Deutsche Bahn AG: The heartless train conductor" - 2015, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Who's Responsible for the Drawbridge Drama?

MUELLER, U. P., U. SCHAEFER - "Who's Responsible for the Drawbridge Drama?" - 2010, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Anna Frisch at Aesch AG: Initiating Lateral Change

MUELLER, U. P., U. SCHAEFER - "Anna Frisch at Aesch AG: Initiating Lateral Change" - 2010, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Do You Really Think We Are so Stupid?' A Letter to the CEO of Deutsche Telekom (A, B, C)

KOROTOV, K., U. P. MUELLER, U. SCHAEFER - "Do You Really Think We Are so Stupid?' A Letter to the CEO of Deutsche Telekom (A, B, C)" - 2009, The Case Centre, Great Britain

Articles in Scholarly Journals

Reconceptualizing moral disengagement as a process: transcending overly liberal and overly conservative practice in the field

SCHAEFER, U., O. BOUWMEESTER, "Reconceptualizing moral disengagement as a process: transcending overly liberal and overly conservative practice in the field", Journal of Business Ethics, 2021, vol. 172, no. 3, pp. 525–543

The Dirty Dozen: how unethical behaviour creeps into your organisation

MUELLER, U. P., U. SCHAEFER, "The Dirty Dozen: how unethical behaviour creeps into your organisation", The European Business Review, July 2016, pp. 37-41

Discussing values in executive education: From "non-discussable" to learning management of meaning

SCHAEFER, U., K. KOROTOV, "Discussing values in executive education: From "non-discussable" to learning management of meaning", Training & Management Development Methods, 2010, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 15-21

Other

Moral disengagement as a process: Effects of moral disengagement on moral judgments of others and shared cognition in groups

SCHAEFER, U., "Moral disengagement as a process: Effects of moral disengagement on moral judgments of others and shared cognition in groups", Amsterdam Business Research Institute, 2021

Articles upon Request/Invitation

Beyond "bad apples" and "crooked executives"

SCHAEFER, U., "Beyond "bad apples" and "crooked executives"", ESMT Update, 2019, vol. 7, pp. 5-9

5 ways organizations can decrease offensive behaviors in the workplace

YAROSLAVSKY, S., U. SCHAEFER, "5 ways organizations can decrease offensive behaviors in the workplace", Human Resource Executive, 17 July 2019

Practice-Oriented Books

The seven styles of influencing: A workbook for managers

SCHAEFER, U., S. RATHJE - "The seven styles of influencing: A workbook for managers" - 2013, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin, Germany