Crossing the Line:
Exploring Unethical Behavior's Impact on Psychological Safety and Job Performance in Agile Settings

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ABSTRACT

Unethical behavior of team members has been a profound problem for many organizations, even working agile. However, research on unethical behavior remains scarce, resulting in that little is known about the implications of team members' unethical behavior. Research has proven psychological safety and job performance to be extremely important factors in achieving organizational success. Prompting these factors to be possibly impacted by unethical behavior, this research analyzed how team members' observed unethical behavior is related to psychological safety and job performance. While at the same time utilizing novel observational research methods in order to reduce researcher or respondent bias, and employing psychological safety behaviors as proxies to identify unethical behavior, the data shows neither significant correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety nor with job performance. In terms of theoretical implications, the research contributes to existing literature with the implication that psychological safety and job performance levels in organizations are not significantly affected by the presence of unethical behavior. Still recognizing its possible detrimental effects outside of this research, it is suggested that organizations engage in addressing unethical behavior, psychological safety, or job performance independently since managing unethical behavior on its own will not influence psychological safety or job performance. A practical recommendation for organizations is to enhance the quality of their ethics and compliance programs.

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Keywords

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1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast pace of change, organizations need to adapt to the ever-changing needs of society, which underlines the importance of innovations in business practices, products, and services (Brand et al., 2019). To do this, decision-makers at the top layers of management increasingly choose to utilize an agile approach, where, in contrast to conventional working methods, that heavily rely on hierarchically supervised departments, employees collaborate within flat teams (Junker et al., 2021). Agile teams are self-managed, cross-disciplinary, and highly flexible to cope with changes outside of the parameters of organizations (Kohnová & Salajová, 2021). The first serious discussions and forms of agile thoughts already started to develop during the 1970s and before, with for example research about iterative processes (Abbas et al., 2008). However, it was not until before the year 2001 that the Agile Manifesto was introduced by a group of seventeen software practitioners (Hohl et al., 2018). Simultaneously as agile research has progressed into more industries outside of software development, it has been recognized that Agile adoption is more likely to fail if the methodology is used in atypical ways too far apart from the original manifesto (Kruchten, 2011). Ignorance of the first key value to prioritize; 'Individuals and interaction over processes and tools' can be an element behind this failure (Clark, 2022).

Because agile success is dependent on these collaborative interactions, attention to psychological safety and ethical behavior is of great importance (Thorgren & Caiman, 2019). Psychological safety is "a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking" (Edmondson et al., 2022, p. 40) and plays a role in successful team performance as it has been suggested to improve communication outcomes, learning behaviors, and attitudes of team members (Buvik & Tkalich, 2022; Newman et al., 2017). In turn, a team member's ethical behavior, or unethical behavior, can act as an antecedent of the level of perceived psychological safety (Edmondson et al., 2022). This way, the work of Pearsall and Ellis (2011) suggests unethical behavior, defined as "behavior that "violates generally accepted moral norms of behavior" (De Bruin Cardoso et al., 2023, p. 6), to have a positive relationship with psychological safety. Indeed, individuals engaging in or proposing unethical actions to others may exploit the positive perceived psychologically safe environment to feel socially comfortable to do so and ultimately diminish the overall psychological safety level (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011).

Building on this discussion of unethical behavior's antecedents, a consequence of unethical behavior can be the mitigation of the level of job performance (Quade et al, 2016). In turn, job performance in most academic literature seems to be positively linked to psychological safety (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011). However, Eldor et al. (2023) propose this might not always hold true. This way, they suggest, for routine tasks, especially in contexts with high levels of psychological safety actually can reduce job performance as it may distract from core tasks and make employees more interested in novel tasks and pushing boundaries (Eldor et al., 2023). This might hold true for routine tasks in Agile teams as well. Moreover, since in agile teams, boundaries are often being pushed to obtain continuous improvement, this overabundance can become counterproductive. This way, research on the relationship between job performance and psychological safety appears to be able to uncover contradictory findings (Newman et al., 2017).

The real implications of how team members' unethical behavior manifests still remain unclear (Kaptein, 2008). The work of Pearsall and Ellis (2011) contains several shortcomings. Among the various limitations, one of the most important was that their study did not monitor or measure members' behavioral interaction within the teams. However, to understand how dynamics influence unethical behavior it is imperative to look at how team members verbally communicate. Moreover, in addition to this limitation of Pearral and Ellis (2011), much of agile research has relied on perceived observations, for example with the use of surveys or theoretical research approaches (Uludağ et al., 2022). Nevertheless, survey research methodologies are often vulnerable to researcher or respondent bias, as they might favor one certain perception over another (Mayer, 2021). A suggested better way of research is using video observation, as it gives more highly detailed informational insights when researching workplace behaviors and group dynamics (Beam, 2012; Tope et al., 2005). Furthermore, with the help of direct observations, the nuances of verbal behaviors within teams can be better understood as well. Verbal behavior is a behavior-behavior relation in which events are contacted through the mediation of another organism's behavior' (Vargas, 1988, p. 11) and is influenced by what antecedents proceeded first, and what consequences the speaker hopes to obtain from the verbal community as a result (Moore, 2000).

Taking this into consideration, studying the relationship between unethical behavior and psychological safety in an agile setting can extend beyond those boundaries, which could provide valuable insights. As a result, this thesis investigates the following research question:

How is agile team member observed unethical behavior related to perceived psychological safety and job performance?

With the use of video observation combined with additional survey data, this thesis will enrich the existing theory by going beyond perceived outcomes, contributing to better accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, the thesis will contribute to the literature on (observed) unethical behavior and its consequences, a rather understudied research domain (Kaptein, 2008; Gaspar et al., 2018). Lastly, critically understanding and addressing the influential power of unethical behavior on psychological safety and job performance, will help to unveil new focus points to organizational team optimization, contributing back to the core value of continuous Agile improvement even more.

The remainder of this thesis is structured as follows. First, a literature review is provided conceptualizing the topic, subsequent to which the methodology is explained. This is followed by an overview of the results and a discussion section accompanied by theoretical and practical contributions. The thesis concludes with its imitations, and recommendations for further research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review of this thesis will first delve into the Agile way of working, followed by a section concerning unethical behavior after which psychological safety is discussed, concluded with job performance.

2.1 The Agile way of working

The agile way of working was first developed in the software development industry as a way to get control over the limitations involved with traditional project development methods (Al-Saqqa et al., 2020). Some of the limitations were the heavy documentation and the extensive requirements involved with the conventional plan-driven method, which began to be perceived as exhausting and redundant (Islam & Ferworn, 2020). In comparison, teams in the agile way of working try to overcome these challenges and are iterative-based, flexible, responsive, and human-centered (Alzoabi, 2012). Moreover, a striking ability is the adaptability of agile methods to uncertain environments

(Alzoabi, 2012). Considering these many different characteristics of the agile way of working, agile remains a rather large-varied umbrella term in the existing literature (Laanti et al., 2013). However, a clear definition by Boehm and Turner (2005) argues agile methods are lightweight processes that employ short iterative cycles, actively involve users to establish, prioritize, and verify requirements, and rely on a team's tacit knowledge as opposed to documentation. "A truly agile method must be iterative (take several cycles to complete), incremental (not deliver the entire product at once), self-organizing (teams determine the best way to handle work), and emergent (processes, principles, and work structures are recognized during the project rather than predetermined)" (Boehm & Turner, 2005, p. 32). Outside of the different ways one could define the agile way of working, what reoccurs are the four values all agile methods contain (Abbas et al., 2008).

The values in the Agile manifesto include individuals and interactions over processes and tools, working software over comprehensive documentation, customer collaboration over contract negotiation and lastly responding to change over following a plan (Beck et al., 2001). When using the agile manifesto, its values, and principles, a team is known as a 'squad' (Salameh & Bass, 2021). Each squad is positioned parallel with other squads upon which they aim for common development goals (Salameh & Bass, 2021). Hence, agile teams are self-managed, and centered around collaborative decision-making and shared leadership principles (Salameh & Bass, 2021). In the agile way of working, squads go through fixed periods of time, called sprints, to fulfill an assigned workload (Žužek et al., 2020). Through the sprint, in general, three types of meetings are held. In the sprint planning meeting at the beginning, project requirements will be discussed and divided into tasks among team members (Žužek et al., 2020). After that, the squad holds short daily stand-ups, refinements, and demo meetings, during which team members report on their progress, what they will work on that day, and possible difficulties they could have (Žužek et al., 2020). Finally, the sprint will be concluded with a retrospective meeting, in which the squad reflects on the sprint cycle, as a means to discover improvement points for the next sprint (Žužek et al., 2020). This method of project planning with short cycles puts forward several benefits that are valuable for organizations such as ease of following dynamics in changing customer demands, simplicity to add characteristics to keep up with industry innovation, better product alignment by inclusion of client feedback, earlier possible detections of errors stemming from end-of-sprint-testing and increased employee motivation, positively contributing to performance (Koi-Akrofi et al., 2019).

2.2 Unethical behavior
The agile way of working does not only alter the way of project management but also has implications for individual team member behavior. A problem is however the occurrence of 'ethically questionable activities', or more concisely: unethical behavior. Unethical behavior is prone to disrupt psychological safety within a squad, which can ultimately pose problematic issues with regard to the mitigation of job performance (Hosain, 2019; Quade et al., 2016). However, because what is ethical differs across the globe, it is hard to pinpoint what these moral norms of behavior actually are, and so is the understanding of unethical behavior (Chorev, 2012). In organizations, often professional codes of conduct are used to control employees' unethical behavior, which refers to "either illegal or morally unacceptable to the larger community" (Askew et al., 2015; Babri et al., 2019; Jones, 1991, p. 367). In this thesis, this last

definition will be used, in which the larger community will correspond to agile squads.

Redding (1996) proposes a classification framework to analyze unethical behavior within organizational contexts (Redding, 1996). Redding's typology consists of a set of categories representing clusters of interconnected behavior. Redding acknowledges that the typology is not perfect and that the categories are probably neither all-inclusive nor mutually exclusive. However, the typology serves as a great starting point. Hence, this thesis will build further on Redding's (1996) work and categorized unethical behavior into the following classifications: coercive, destructive, deceptive, intrusive, secretive, and manipulative-explorative.

Regarding the category coercive, unethical behavior can be intimidating, repressive, and/or threatening behaviors by abuse of power, consequently leading to violations of another person's autonomy (Redding, 1996). Furthermore, this category can be exemplified by intolerance of dissent, restrictions on freedom of speech, refusal to listen, and using formal rules to avoid discussion and complaints (Redding, 1996, p. 28). Mattson and Buzzanell (1999) divide the coercive category into three additional message type sub-dimensions, namely message ambiguity, double-blind, and denial of ability to respond. Message ambiguity is defined as "messages that prompt receivers to experience doubt or uncertainty about message meaning", which can result from strategic and calculated intentions (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999, p. 56). Double-blind messages can be clarified as "contradictory, denial, and cancellation, meaning that one message is incompatible with, denies, or negates the other" (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999, p. 56). Lastly, denial of the ability to respond are "messages preventing individuals from entering into authentic discussion, gaining the floor and being heard' (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999, p. 56).

Moving on, destructive unethical behavior can be described as aggressive, abusive, or insensitive ways of conduct violating someone's self-esteem, reputation, or held feelings (Redding, 1996). This category might be associated with insults, derogatory innuendos, epithets, jokes (particularly on the aspects of gender, race, sex, religion, and ethnicity), put-downs, backstabbing, and defamation (Redding, 1996). Lastly, in this category, using truth as a weapon, fake openness, and silence can be included.

In the deceptive category, unethical behavior can relate to dishonesty, lying, and unfairness (Redding, 1996). More characteristics of this behavior can be "willful perversion of truth in order to deceive, cheat, or defraud, exemplified by purposefully misleading messages"(Redding, 1996, p.30). This can be done by for instance using words that can have double meanings, or using nice words to downplay something (Redding, 1996). Moreover, this category can include lying, and malicious message modification (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999; Redding, 1996).

Next, intrusive unethical behavior are commonly actions of surveillance, usually hidden, that breach another's privacy rights (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999). For example, this can be done by hidden cameras, computers, and phones (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999). Considering the significantly increasing use of technology in recent years, it could conceivably be hypothesized that intrusive unethical behavior through technology will grow in the future (Griep et al., 2021).

Secretive unethical behavior, however, is displayed more on the forefront and often concerns dishonesty, lying, and unfairness (Redding, 1996). Characteristics of this behavior can be "willful perversion of truth in order to deceive, cheat, or defraud,

exemplified by purposefully misleading messages" (Redding, 1996, p. 30). This can be done by, for instance, using words that can have double meanings or using nice words to downplay something (Redding, 1996). Moreover, this category can include lying and malicious message modification (Mattson & Buzzanell, 1999; Redding, 1996).

Lastly, in the Manipulative-Exploitative category, unethical behavior usually pertains to "demagoguery messages that reflect a patronizing or condescending attitude towards the audience" (Redding, 1996, p. 33). It includes overlooking the interests of others and maliciously playing into the fears and ignorance of others (Redding, 1996).

Looking into what probes these behaviors, at the individual level, unethical actions usually stem from self-interest in order to gain personal advantage (Hu et al., 2024). Individual-based reward systems rationally further incentivize individual unethical behavior (Hu et al., 2024). Team-based reward systems at first hand seem to be team-benefitting by definition, however, it is likely correlated to individual benefits (Hu et al., 2024). Team-based rewards individual members receive are namely interdependent on the performance of others (Hu et al., 2024).

2.3 Psychological safety
As acknowledging the dynamics of employee (un)ethical behavior is of great importance to organizational integrity as established in the previous section, the role of psychological safety should next be examined. Psychological safety can be defined as a shared belief system by team members in which they perceive security for interpersonal risk-taking and encompasses confidence while voicing one's thoughts without feeling edged towards embarrassment, rejection, damage to self-image or perceived status (Edmondson, 1999; Kessel et al., 2012). Psychological safety is an important component within team dynamics and plays a key role in achieving higher levels of agile performance (Kessel et al., 2012). Psychological safety, namely, has a contributing effect on social interactions, self-organization, self-reflection, learning behavior, information sharing, innovating capacity, and team members' motivation to speak up, which are the building blocks on which agile teams are based (Hennel & Rosenkranz, 2020). In turn, this is suggested to improve agile performance (Hennel & Rosenkranz, 2020). In a literature review, psychological safety is not only linked to mere team performance, but also to individual-level antecedents such as supportive organizational practices, rewarding co-worker relationships, and individually held perceptions of team characteristics similarity (Newman et al., 2017). Lastly, it is suggested that clear guidelines greatly play a role in promoting psychological safety as well (Cave et al., 2016).

Guidelines provide support to enhance the psychological safety of workplace environments in which squads operate and reflect the degree to which the psychological health of workers is valued (over productivity) (Dollard et al., 2019). Measuring the dynamics of psychological safety has been attracting considerable interest (Newman et al., 2017). The majority of studies have been using quantitative survey methods and measured effects merely related to perceived psychological safety (Newman et al., 2017). However, to gain deeper insights, suggested is to use observational methods. To do this, a list of observable measures of psychological safety was suggested by O'Donovan et al. (2020): voice behavior, defensive voice behavior, supportive and unsupportive behavior, learning or improvement behavior, and familiarity behavior. In Appendix A, a descriptive account is given for these behaviors.

2.6 Individual Job Performance
Relating to the behaviors by O'Donovan et al. (2020), research has shown a correlation between these behaviors with psychological safety (Cheng et al., 2014; Edmondson, 1999; Jamal et al., 2022). In turn, psychological safety has a positive relation to performance (Hennel & Rosenkranz, 2020). The term individual job performance in the literature is scattered in its interpretations. However, Koopmans et al. (2014, p. 63) attempt to provide a definition of it as "behaviors or actions that are relevant to the goals of the organization". Furthermore, Koopmans et al. (2014) remark individual job performance solely encompasses behaviors that a person can control and leave out restrictions stemming from the environment (Koopmans et al., 2014). Psychological safety on its own is not sufficient in order to achieve high performance of team members and is only one of the "fuels" (Edmondson, 2018, p. 21). For example, Chen et al. (2007) take months in position, perceived organizational support, leader-member exchange, and individual empowerment, as variables influencing individual performance, showcasing how multifaceted job performance can be.

3. METHODOLOGY
The following section encompasses the methodology used in this thesis.

3.1 Research design
The aim of this thesis is to explore the correlation between observed unethical behavior with perceived psychological safety and job performance. To achieve this, a mixed-methods approach, which can be defined as 'the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques)' (Burke Johnson et al., 2007, p. 123) was used. Using a mixed methods approach offers the advantage of increased validity and reliability, which leads to better findings of research questions than when only mono methods are used. (Manzoor, 2021; Sharma et al., 2023). In this thesis, the qualitative part is concerned with the coding of videotaped meetings, the quantitative part includes data resulting from the surveys as well as correlation analysis.

3.2 Sample
To conduct this research, data from a large Dutch financial institution was used, originally collected by researchers from the Organizational Behavior, Change Management and Consultancy (OBCC) group at the University of Twente, in the Netherlands. A sample of video observations is used containing data from three agile teams. All teams were followed in their sprint planning, refinement, and retrospective meeting. Psychological safety levels increase as agile team members work together over time, which positively impacts performance (Dusenberry & Robinson, 2020). At the same time, research also suggests in contexts of high psychological safety, more instances of unethical behavior can be found (Pearsall & Ellis, 2011). The most relevant meeting used for the sample was therefore considered to be the retrospective meeting.

The agile teams in which the individual members were observed in the sample were randomly chosen. In total, 19 individuals were observed during the team's retrospective meetings, of which between five to eight members per team. The sample individuals' demographics differed in terms of cultural background, gender, age, experience, and education level. The identified nationalities were Dutch, English, Thai, Brazilian, and Russian. One team was mono-cultural. 74% of the sample was male. The average age of all individuals was 39,9 years, more

precisely for Team 1 this was 47,6 years, whereas for Team 2 this was 42,3 years. For Team 3 the average age was 35,56 years. Of the total sample, 10 individuals have three years working experience of working in Agile or more. Six individuals received a university master's degree as their highest attained education level. Three individuals' highest attained education level was an HBO master's degree. The remaining sample acquired differing educational levels, ranging from Bachelor of Applied Sciences (HBO) to vocational degrees.

3.3 Measurements

3.3.1 Observed unethical behavior

First, because unethical behavior was not directly measured in the original data set obtained by researchers of the University of Twente, it was attempted to create a proxy model using the behaviors within the psychological safety codebook, categorized according to Redding's (1996) typology.

To do this, following Panchal et al. (2022), initially, a comprehensive list of 37 behaviors proposed in a psychological safety codebook developed by researchers of the University of Twente was reviewed. After that, Redding's description of his (1996) typology was evaluated and used to divide behaviors of the psychological safety codebook into possible corresponding categories: coercive, destructive, deceptive, intrusive, secretive, and manipulative-exploitative. This was done by taking into account Redding's (1996) original descriptions of the categories, and then linking them to corresponding keywords in the descriptions and the codebook behaviors explanations. Please see Appendix B for an example.

The corresponding behaviors of the psychological safety codebook into which unethical behaviors can be identified and categorized according to Redding's (1996) typology can be seen in Table 1. In summary, a total of 19 possible unethical types of behaviors were found, however, only code categories and not the specific codes were coded with the psychological safety codebook. Moments of unethical behavior were measured during these behaviors. The other behaviors of the psychological safety codebook did not directly fall into Redding's categories (1996) of possible unethical behaviors. The downside of using a proxy is that if variables are not sufficiently constructed, the result might be somewhat biased, which should be taken into account (Seltzer, 2021). To mitigate this risk, triangulation, using a mixed-method approach was used, together with personal judgment to critically assess the findings.

3.3.2 Perceived psychological safety

To operationalize the measure of perceived psychological safety, self-rated survey data of the sample was used. Surveys were administered consistently at the end of the meetings and contained in total three items considering measuring safety: "During this past meeting, it felt safe for me to… 1; make suggestions 2; give my opinion, 3; speak up". The survey was based on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The survey showed a reliable Cronbach's alpha measurement of 0.9.

3.3.3 Individual job performance

Lastly, individual team member performance measurements were used. This was done by using survey data obtained after the retrospective meeting of the sprint. The survey was developed by Gibson et al. (2009) consisting out of four 7-point Likert scale questions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questions used were 'employee is consistently high performing', 'employee is effective', 'employee makes few mistakes', and 'employee does high-quality work'. The survey showed an acceptable Cronbach's alpha measurement of 0.8.

3.4 Data analysis techniques

3.4.1 Qualitative analysis of video recordings

For the qualitative part, deductive thematic analysis was used, identifying moments of unethical behavior with behaviors of the proxy. Thematic analysis involves the description and interpretation of patterns in data and should be done in a flexible way (Majumdar, 2019). Recommended is Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase guide, which involves familiarizing yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Majumdar, 2019). Within this thesis, this involved systematically exploring the video tapings as well as reading provided transcripts, using the proxy model to identify possible instances of unethical behavior, reviewing its context, and documenting segments fitting legitimate unethical behavior. The sample data from the video tapings were imported into Observer XT, which is a highly comprehensive software suited for behavioral research (Noldus, n.d.)

3.4.2 Quantitative analysis

Next up, the data was imported into RStudio, a statistical computing program. After this, to see how agile team members' observed unethical behavior relates to perceived psychological safety and job performance, correlation analyses were performed. A correlation test was performed between observed unethical behavior and job performance, as well as one between unethical behavior and perceived psychological safety. Unethical behavior counted as a number of frequencies, can be considered to be a continuous variable. Perceived psychological safety, measured in this thesis by a Likert scale as discussed before, also is a continuous variable. Lastly, measured in the same way, the continuous variable type also goes for job performance. For both correlation analyses, continuous variables were measured. Before proceeding, the normality of the data was tested with the Shapiro-Wilk test, which didn't turn out to hold true for all variables. In the case of normal data distribution for both two tested variables in either correlation test, Pearson's r correlation test was used. The results of the test can fall between -1 to +1 (Frost, 2024). If the data for a variable was not normally distributed, Kendall's Tau was utilized, which results can also fall between -1 to +1. A value of 1 indicates a strong positive correlation between two variables, whereas for a value of -1, the opposite holds true. A value of zero suggests no correlation.

3.4.3 Episode Analysis

To get a deeper understanding of the quantitative results, 2 episodes within the video recordings were picked to be further analyzed. Episode analysis involves "representing temporal knowledge" (Parthasarathy, 1995, p. 53) and "refers to a time interval in the development of a dynamic process or behavior of an entity. … described using time series of multiple attribute values" (Andrienko et al., 2023, p. 1). The rationale for choosing these two episodes includes the understanding that both episodes originate from the team meetings with the most instances of unethical behavior in contrast to the other meeting, in order to look into the dynamics of how unethical behavior correlated with psychological safety and job performance. Next to this, among many others, the episodes were chosen regarding the fact that these episodes feature outstanding significant unethical moments in the meetings, where a clearer understanding of its effects is more likely to be maximized.

Codebook behaviors	Coercive	Destructive	Deceptive	Intrusive	Secretive	Manipulative-exploitive
1. Disagreeing	▓					
2. Delegating tasks	▓					
3. Sharing future plans	▓	▓				
4. Interrupting (destructive/disrespectful)	▓					▓
5. Discussions within small sub-groups	▓	▓				▓
6. Reacting cold/ignoring a joke	▓				▓	
7. Correcting others	▓					
8. Denying faults or blame others	▓		▓			▓
9. Evading confrontation	▓				▓	
10. Making a negative joke		▓				
11. Providing factual information		▓				
12. Informing about issues or mistakes		▓				
13. Facial expression or body language indicates disengagement or indifference		▓			▓	
14. Providing negative feedback (destructively)		▓				▓
15. Providing negative feedback (constructively)			▓			
16. Using aggressive language		▓				
17. Aggressive body language		▓				
18. Talking about personal, non-work matters				▓		
19. Sudden closed body language					▓	

4. RESULTS

The following section moves on to describe the obtained results in detail. First starting with a descriptive analysis of unethical behavior in all teams.

4.1 Descriptive Analysis of Unethical Behavior

4.1.1 Team 1

Team 1 had a job performance score of 4.4. This data was collected by averaging individual job performance scores based on the survey questions. The meeting's mean psychological safety score was 4.8, together with a standard deviation of 1.7. The team consisted of eight team members. In total 2191 behaviors were coded in a meeting with a duration of 53 minutes and 3.92 seconds. According to the codebook, voice, collaboration, learning or improvement, and familiarity behaviors should contribute positively to the level of psychological safety. Respectively, defensive voice, defensive silence, silence, and unsupportive behaviors should do so negatively. Neutral behaviors are not recognized as the name indicates to have a positive or negative influence on psychological safety. Taking this into consideration 52,9% of the coded behavior should contribute positively to the level of psychological safety, whereas 46,5% negatively. The remaining percentage are neutral behavior codes. However, unethical behavior, to be seen in Table 1, can be hidden in almost all categories of the code book so all behaviors were reviewed to detect unethical behavior. In total, there were 66 unethical instances in the total meeting. Forty-four instances can be accounted for in the destructive category of Redding (1995). Furthermore, 14 can be appointed to the coercive category as well as six in the deceptive category. Lastly, there were both one instances for the manipulative as well as for the secretive category.

4.1.2 Team 2

To continue, based on the mean individual survey scores, the job performance score of Team 2 was 5.3. This was calculated in the same manner as for Team 1. The meeting psychological safety scored 4.8 with a standard deviation of 1.7. In this meeting, six out of the original seven team members with whom the team sprint started were present. In the meeting, which lasted 57 minutes and 36.29 seconds, a total of 1717 behaviors were coded. The total negative instances impacting psychological safety accounted for 49,6%, whereas the total positive instances were 50,32%. The remaining percentage contains neutral behavior, not impacting psychological safety. However, the total amount of observed unethical behavior in this meeting was 122. Of these instances, 88 can be categorized in the destructive category. Moreover, 19 can be appointed to the coercive category. Eight instances were counted in the manipulative-exploitative category, whereas for the deceptive category that was seven. Zero instances were observed in the secretive category. This meeting in total had the highest number of unethical behaviors of all teams.

4.1.3 Team 3

Team 3 accounted for eight team members working in a sprint. The meeting duration was 57 minutes and 39,63 seconds. The job performance score was 5.0, again calculated using the average job performance scores derived from survey measures. The meeting psychological safety scored 6.4 with a standard deviation of 0,5. In total, 1401 coded behaviors were found. Of these behaviors, 84,9% behaviors at first hand positively impacted psychological safety, whereas that was 12% to influence psychological safety negatively. The remaining percentage was coded as neutral behavior. A total of 29 instances were observed to be unethical. Twenty-four of these behaviors can be sorted into the deceptive category of Redding (1995). Two instances of the total amount of unethical behaviors can fall into

the coercive category. This also applies to the deceptive category. One instance was found in the secretive category. No instances were found encompassing the manipulative category. Of all the teams, this team had the least amount of observed unethical behavior.

Table 2: Unethical Behavior, Psychological Safety, and job performance metrics sorted by team and category

Category	Team 1	Team 2	Team 3
Destructive	66.67%	72.13%	82.76%
Coercive	21.21%	15.57%	6.90%
Deceptive	9.09%	5.74%	6.90%
Manipulative-exploitative	1.52%	6.56%	0.00%
Secretive	1.52%	0.00%	3.45%
Intrusive	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Total amount of unethical instances	66	122	29
Psychological safety score	4.8	4.8	6.4
Job performance score	4.4	5.3	5.0

When looking at Table 2, which gives an overview of all team's metrics on unethical behavior together with their psychological safety and job performance scores, unethical behavior is most frequently categorized into the destructive or coercive category. The secretive and intrusive categories together had to least number of scores. Another interesting pattern that emerges when comparing the teams is with all scores being relatively high, team 3, which was involved with the least number of instances of unethical behavior, attained a considerably higher psychological safety score. The team with the highest number of instances of unethical behavior, team 2, achieved the highest score for job performance.

4.2 Correlation analyses

In the section that follows the results of both correlation tests will be discussed.

4.2.1 Unethical behavior and psychological safety

In order to run the correct correlation analysis between observed unethical behavior and psychological safety, first, the normality of the unethical behavior data had to be checked. Hence, a Shapiro-Wilk test was run and resulted in $W = .99$ and $p = .860$. The p-value, over .05, implies there is significant reason to believe the data is normally distributed. The same test was performed to verify the normality of the psychological safety scale as well. The result indicated $W = .75$ and $p = <.001$. Unlike the first normality test, here the p-value is significantly small, strongly suggesting the psychological safety data was not normally distributed. For this reason, using Pearson's R correlation test was not considered to be acceptable. Instead, Kendall's Tau was used to examine the correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety. The correlation test indicated $\tau = -.82$ and $p = .221$. The result first portrays a negative correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety. However, it should be noted the significance level of the test is not below 0.05. This means there is not a significant correlation between the variables.

4.2.2 Unethical behavior and job performance

The second correlation, aiming to investigate a relationship between unethical behavior and job performance, first included establishing the normality of the job performance data. A Shapiro-Wilk test generated $W = .96$ and $p = .637$. The p-value is greater than 0.05 and therefore indicates the data to be normally distributed. Since both data were normally distributed, it was justified to use Pearson's R correlation test. Resulting of this test, $r = .40$, and $p = .741$. Taking into account that the p-value is over the .05 threshold, the result is insignificant. This means, there is no evidence of a correlation between observed unethical behavior and performance.

4.3 Episode Analysis

To explain the quantitative results further, two specific episodes were picked to zoom in on the correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety. The meetings of Team 1 and Team 2 accounted for the highest number of unethical behavior instances, making episodes from these teams have the most potential to shed light on the dynamics and patterns of this variable.

4.3.1 Episode analysis 1, team 2.

The first episode analysis involves a situation where one of the team members provides negative feedback to another team member in a rather aggressive manner which was according to the established categorization an instance of unethical behavior. The episode takes place in 66 seconds.

First, the blaming team member (Follower 1) expresses reflective feedback about what the other could have done differently. Because this happens in a very irritated way, it can be categorized in the destructive unethical behavior category. Follower 5 responds to this by taking on a slightly self-defensive attitude in his way of responding. Follower 1 seems to become even more irritated by this and responds with a disingenuous question. At the same time, Follower 1 makes a fairly aggressive hand gesture and irritated looks away. Following this, follower 5 begins to increase his posture moderately and starts to proceed to answer. However, Follower 1 interrupts Follower 5 by using an aggressive raised voice. Follower 1 expresses even more irritation about Follower 5. Follower 5 proceeds by naming a contextual factor, as a reason for the situation. Follower 1 responds with a very irritated and aggressive voice, at the same time using aggressive body language, which lasts about 25 seconds. The episode ends with a final irritated comment from Follower 1, after which Follower 1 looks away with snide laughter as well. The full transcript of this episode can be read in Appendix C.

The unethical behavior of Follower 1, fostering a rather tense environment, at first hand, could have implied a negative impact on the overall psychological safety level. However, when observing the group dynamics of the other group members short before, during, and after this episode, this is not the case. The other team members present still are actively engaged in the meeting. They contribute to make suggestions, continue with open communication, and are comfortable to speak up, indicating signs of psychological safety (Hennel & Rosenkranz, 2020).

4.3.2 Episode analysis 2, team 1

The second episode takes place in a context of 64 seconds, immediately after which the team has just finished putting up notes with positive and negative reflections about the past sprint.

The episode contains a series of negative remarks by mainly Follower 4.

Follower 4, starts the episode with a negative comment about the number of positive notes, clearly expressing his highly irritated criticism about the team. Follower 5 responds to this while trying to counter this negativity. Follower 4 in turn responds with a skeptical comment, from an observer's view, doubting the teams' capabilities. Then follower 4 shifts the topic to another team member by asking for a status update about a certain topic. The designated team member responds to this, through which the episode shortly continues. At the end of the team members' given update Follower 4 responds with a clearly passive-aggressive statement, questioning the other's competence. Later, Follower 4 follows up with a sarcastic remark, further belittling the other team member. The teammate shortly reacts reserved to this. The episode moves forward with Follower 4 making a highly disrespectful exclamation about what one of the other teammates is doing. These behaviors can all fall into destructive unethical behavior as by the categorization in Appendix B. Thereupon, Follower 7 tries to break the tension. The episode ends with Follower 6, on which the remark was targeted, who responds back with a defensive sarcastic comment. The full transcript of this episode can be read in Appendix D.

Although this episode shows instances of unethical behavior, mainly in the destructive category, the team after this instance continues with the meeting in a constructive manner. Namely, all team members still felt safe to openly speak up about other topics after the episode ended. The episode analysis showed that even though there are instances of unethical behavior involved, the team's psychological safety seems to remain unaffected, therefore validating the quantitative results.

5. DISCUSSION

The present research was set out with the aim of assessing the impact of observed unethical behavior. While the findings appear to be in somewhat contrast to previous research studies, as the results show a non-significant relationship, they offer significant contributions to the existing literature. Research on unethical behavior till present still remains scarce and is mainly focused on undercovering its antecedents, such as psychological entitlement, self-serving justification, moral licensing, job insecurity, desire to raise its own status, creativity, and perverse incentives (Kaptein, 2008; Vladu & Matica, 2022). Distinctively, this thesis has made an effort to expand into a rather new area of interest namely its correlational consequences. The following section moves on to establish several theoretical implications.

5.1 Theoretical implications

5.1.1 Unethical Behavior and Psychological Safety

Pearsall and Ellis (2011) have proposed that in teams where individual team members feel more psychologically safe, the environment can serve as an incentive to engage in unethical behavior. This can be attributed to the possible impression for team members to feel more at ease to do so. While Pearsall and Ellis (2011) portray unethical behavior and psychological safety to have a positive correlational effect, in this research's results this appears not to be the case, as it points toward the two variables to have no correlation in any regard. There can be several possible explanations for this conflicting evidence.

The most notable contrast here is that Pearsall and Ellis (2011) engaged in a different measurement methodology. Psychological safety was assessed by utilizing survey data based on three Likert scale-based questions. However, the measurement for unethical behavior was dissimilar. In Pearsall and Ellis' (2011) research, unethical behavior is only concerned with cheating of high

school students. Firstly, this was based on a hypothetical question rather than a real-life situation. Their second method employed was indirectly measured as well.

In contrast, this research used novel observational data empowering the possibility of better accuracy. Moreover, this research did not limit itself only to 'cheating' as unethical behavior. Unethical behavior involved a more expansive understanding, including 19 possible forms of unethical behavior as to be seen in Table 1, constructed by using Redding's (1995) classification framework to analyze proxy measures of unethical behavior.

Redding (1995) called for more research on his framework to make it evolve over time and transform the original framework into a real 'scientific taxonomy'. Many of the original codebook behaviors could directly be classified into Redding's (1995) proposed categories, at the same time indicating ethical behaviors among those remaining. Instances of observed unethical behavior, analyzed during the video recordings, consistently corresponded with Redding's (1995) classifications. Redding's (1995) framework in this research has proven to be both flexible and instrumental to use for unethical behavior research in Agile settings. Moreover, by using the proxy, it has been shown that the framework can be personalized and adapted to support various studies, including for researchers who make use of codebooks. Accordingly, the findings verify the validity of Redding's (1995) framework for use in unethical behavior research.

The observed difference can also be attributed to sample differences, which can, at the same time, possibly account for the non-significant result. The significant factor here is that Pearsall and Ellis's (2011) research included a sample almost 20 times larger the size in terms of individual participants and over 42 times larger in terms of the number of groups compared to this research sample. Furthermore, it is important to note the much smaller group sizes used by Pearl and Ellis (2011), which could have possibly implied a different effect in terms of unethical behavior and psychological safety (Newman et al., 2017).

5.1.2 Unethical behavior and Job performance

However, the research question was not only designed with the objective to investigate a correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety. This thesis also undertook to explore a possible correlation between unethical behavior and job performance. The non-significant results suggest no direct correlation between unethical behavior and job performance. This indicates the potential for job performance to remain unaffected by changes in the level of unethical behavior.

The finding is somewhat surprising as it differs from traditional assumptions which often suggest unethical behavior does have a correlational effect on job performance (Quade et al., 2016). Quade et al. (2016), for example, suggest there to be a negative correlation. Furthermore, Hosain (2019) suggests a possible positive correlation between unethical behavior and job performance. He did this by building his study on the work of Umphress et al. (2010) who introduced the term 'Unethical Pro-organizational Behavior', "actions that are projected to promote the effective operation of the organization or its members (e.g., leaders, CEOs) and breach the core social values, norms, existing laws or standards of proper code of conducts" (Hosain, 2019, p. 1). The discrepancy in this research's absence of unethical behavior to have correlation a with job performance might be explained by several factors.

First, it could be the case that the sample size was too small, given the sample size was rather limited to containing 19

observed individuals divided across three teams. Possibly running the same correlation analysis on a bigger sample size could have indicated a different result. This way, for example, the sample size used by Quade et al (2016) was more than nine times as big. Secondly, the measurement of unethical behavior as well as job performance was different. The degree of unethical behavior by Quade et al. (2016), for example, was measured by supervisor ratings of employees. To do this, Quade et al (2016) used survey data based on 8 questions using a 7-point Likert scale. Job performance was measured in a likewise manner, using a total of nine questions. Contrary, in this research, unethical behavior was measured using observations by video recordings and using a proxy model. Moreover, in this research, job performance was measured using self-rated data, using four questions. Thirdly, there is a plausible chance that the multifaceted complexities related to job performance, such as level of psychological safety, months in position, perceived organizational support, leader-member exchange, and individual empowerment, may have outplayed a more significant effect than unethical behavior alone (Chen et al., 2007; Hennel & Rosenkranz, 2020).

Another area of discussion considering the overall non-significant relation found between unethical behavior and psychological safety or job performance is the incubation of time in its measurement. Unethical behavior was only observed during the duration of the specific meeting, not overlooking that instances of unethical behavior could have occurred without being obvious to be observed. Measurement of the variables of psychological safety and job performance were each taken directly after the retrospective meeting. The findings of this research, based on a single timepoint data measurement, suggest that on a short-term basis, no correlation will exist. However, unethical behavior, psychological safety, and job performance levels are dynamic constructs that can fluctuate and may take time to manifest a significant impact. (Alessandri et al., 2014; Pearsall & Ellis, 2011; Welsh et al., 2015). A measurement of all three variables over a longer period of time could imply different derived results.

The research answers Pearsall and Ellis's (2011) call to investigate the outcomes of unethical behavior on psychological safety outside of their selected university environmental context. The results of this observational study were conducted using a sample working within an Agile financial organization and, contrary to Pearsall and Ellis (2011), found unethical behavior is not able to affect psychological safety. The contextual difference could possibly be of power here.

Significantly, the research adds value in moving away from conventional research approaches by utilizing observational data. Not undermining its strength, relying on survey data could have exposed some of the implications of unethical behavior. However, survey data could not have been able to expose interplaying dynamics to fully understand unethical behavior as the used observational data did.

Altogether, the research adds to the existing literature on the correlational effects of unethical behavior. The findings, showing that neither psychological safety nor job performance is related to observed unethical behavior is quite a favorable outcome. While ethical behavior is ideally preferred instead to promote psychological safety and job performance (Aranzaméndez et al., 2014; Atti, 2024), the lack of significance found in this research implies psychological safety and job performance levels can be maintained regardless of unethical behavior. Through this, the research adds an interesting dynamic within the perspective of consequences of unethical behavior, wherein not much has yet been investigated.

5.2 Practical implications
The results of this study have several practical implications. The findings show unethical behavior not to have a correlational effect with psychological safety. Unethical behavior and job performance remain not to have a correlation within the findings of this research as well.

This implies that if there are (some) individuals in a team who are actively engaging in unethical behavior, whether aware or unaware, it neither would affect the environmental level of psychological safety of others, nor job performance. However, when organizations turn a blind eye to unethical behavior, regarding this current research's results, it is likely that minor incidents will gradually develop into increasingly severe incidents, which is undesirable (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010). Outside of the non-significant correlational results found within this research, still, a surplus of unethical behavior, lack of psychological safety, or job performance can be linked to ultimately negative business outcomes overall (Newman et al., 2017).

Taking this into account, it is suggested that organizations independently address unethical behavior, psychological safety, or job performance knowing one aspect will not correlate to affect the other. To do this, it is highly crucial to raise awareness on these topics among top management. In turn, lower (Agile) management layers should be made alert, ultimately with the aim to spread awareness throughout the entire organization. Strategies to limit unethical behavior, preserve psychological safety, or support job performance might include holding or offering secondary training courses.

Research has shown that training is suitable for improving short-term team goals, making it potentially applicable to Agile settings considering their temporal nature (Paulus, 2023). However, in terms of psychological safety, this interpretation must be taken note of with some degree of caution, accounting for the potential dark side of the effect of too-much-psychological safety, posing a loophole treat leading to undesired outcomes to unethical behavior performance (Newman et al., 2017). Kaptein (2022) makes similar implications in terms of the effect of (un)ethical behavior, implying "that the more ethical an organization becomes, the higher, in some respects, is the likelihood of unethical behavior" (p. 297).

A second recommendation for organizations is to strengthen their ethics and compliance programs, as they help to prevent unethical behavior (Cabana & Kaptein, 2024). A large sum of organizations already is doing this, however, 70% of programs surveyed by the Ethics and Compliance Initiative (2023) are reported to be underdeveloped. Possibly, this can have to do with "decoupling", defined as "when organizations symbolically comply with external pressures by adopting an ethics program but either do not actually implement the program or do so only weakly" (Cabana & Kaptein, 2024, p. 2) Accordingly, to make a real difference, organizations should strive to increase their efforts to enhance the quality of their installed programs.

5.3 Limitations and further research
Next to its contributions, this research is bounded by limitations that need to be addressed. First, this study is limited to a small number of participants, as it only contained 19 individuals within three teams. This has reduced the power of the study, through which, therefore, the findings cannot be generalized. Consequently, it is suggested that future research will be conducted using a sample of a larger group of participants to increase the potential statistical power of the findings.

A second source of sample weakness in this research, which could have affected the measurements of unethical behavior and job performance, was the context in which the participants were selected. The participants were all part of one financial Dutch institution. Internal whistleblower protection mechanisms that employees have access to, such as human resources departments or ethical helplines, are often set up by such organizations (Apparna & Arasi, 2023). Mechanisms like this, in theory, could have potentially already reduced the perception through which team members are likely to engage in unethical behavior. Therefore, the number of occurring instances of unethical behavior might have already been reduced before the start of the observations. Moreover, possibly the individuals who agreed to participate as a research sample might already have had a high job performance either way, though the correlation test could have been affected. Consequently, it is recommended that future studies use random sampling techniques to reduce these biases, as well as purposeful sampling for participants who work outside of financial institutions in order to identify and understand if the context in which this research was conducted could have been an influencing modifier. Lastly, in terms of time context, this research's sample data was measured from one single point in time, future research might want to progress with longitudinal studies.

Another limitation was that although for this research extremely novel observational data was used, still two out of 3 measurements used relied on survey self-report using Likert scales. Survey data is vulnerable to researcher and sample bias (Mayer, 2021). Consequently, this fact in turn could have decreased the positive and novel aspects of the observational data. Notwithstanding this limitation this study has made an effort for, it is suggested to other researchers also to incorporate observational research methods. This with the goal of attaining greater research reliability of potential findings.

Lastly, the scope of this study was limited in terms that it made use of a proxy in order to be able to identify unethical behavior by using Redding's (1995) framework. While the framework in this research has proven to be flexible, a natural progression of work for other researchers is to develop Redding's (1995) framework to categorize unethical behavior even more, to make this suitable for all unethical behavior research contexts. Bearing in mind the overall additional research needed on the subject of unethical behavior's correlational effects in the general literature.

6. CONCLUSION

This research aimed to investigate a correlation between agile team members' observed unethical behavior with perceived psychological safety and job performance. The findings of the research, attained with a novel observational methodology, show no direct correlation between unethical behavior and psychological safety, meaning psychological safety is not to be affected as the amount of unethical behavior team members engage in alters. Between the two variables of unethical behavior and job performance also no correlation was found, meaning job performance is likely not to change as the level of unethical behavior fluctuates. The research makes contributions to the existing literature by implying that the insignificance found, suggests existing psychological safety and job performance levels in organizations can be maintained regardless of unethical behavior. A source of weakness in this research was, unfortunately, a relatively small sample was used. Accordingly, continued efforts are needed in research on unethical behavior to be able to generalize the findings.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Observable measures of psychological safety

Category	Description	Additional information
Voice behaviors	"Voice, defined as nonrequired behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge with an intent to improve rather than merely criticize" (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998, p. 854).	Voice behavior can exist out of two distinctions namely: speaking out and speaking up (Liu et al., 2010). Speaking out is directed towards peers, while speaking out is directed towards leaders. (Liu et al., 2010). In the agile setting, peers can be seen as the individual team members. Despite the fact that agile teams are self-managed without a leadership-specific role, the product owner who is accountable for maximizing the outcome of the project team is often seen as such and can act as a leader to speak up to (Kantola et al., 2022). Regarding personality traits, it is found extraversion, conscientiousness, and proactiveness within The Big Five Personality Traits model are positively linked to voice behavior (Crant et al., 2010). Interestingly, by a similar study, it was found extraversion, thus contributing to voice behavior, at the same time appears to be linked to higher levels of unethical behavior. (Koodamara et al., 2020)
Defensive voice behavior	"Motives of self-protection" (Van Dyne et al., 2003, p. 1361)	Defensive voice behavior is often based on fear, as well as on feeling afraid and personally at risk (Van Dyne et al., 2003). Within the defensive voice category team members are more likely to agree, and contrary try to avoid disagreement with others. Individuals engaging in defensive voice behavior will focus on positive aspects of a certain situation, rather than criticizing (Qi & Ramayah, 2022). Knowledge hiding to protect oneself from negative opinions is also part of defensive voice (Qi & Ramayah, 2022).
Silence behavior	"Intentionally withholding relevant ideas, information, and opinions" (Van Dyne et al., 2003, p. 1363)	"The key difference between silence and voice is not the presence or absence of speaking out/up, but the actor's motivation to withhold versus express ideas, information, and opinions" (Van Dyne et al., 2003, p. 1360). Silence behavior, just like voice behavior, can be further divided into 3 subtypes: acquiescent defensive silence, and prosocial silence (Van Dyne et al., 2003). Acquiescent Silence is based on disengagement, defensive silence on self-protection, and prosocial silence on cooperation (Van Dyne et al., 2003). O'Donovan et al. (2020) include examples such as facial expression or body language indicating fear/disengagement and close body language.
Supportive behavior	Actions that support team member task performance (Shin et al., 2015).	In this category O'Donovan et al. (2020) include examples such as sharing procedures, knowledge experience and future plans, active listening, use of inclusive language, agreeing positively to input, acknowledging achievements, and delegating tasks.
Unsupportive behavior	Behavior that can be insulting (Barth & Wessel, 2021).	In this category, O'Donovan et al. (2020) include examples such as interrupting, discussion within small sub-groups, and reacting cold/ignoring a joke.

Learning or improvement-oriented behaviors	Behavior " associated with a willingness to understand and engage in learning" (Mutiawati et al., 2023, p. 1315).	Within learning behavior, goal orientation and self-efficacy are influencing variables (Mutiawati et al., 2023). Furthermore, O'Donovan et al. (2020) include examples such as reviewing Own progress and performance, asking for feedback, solutions, and input, looking for improvement, and informing the team about issues or mistakes.
Familiarity behaviors	Behavior stemming from a stimulus with a previous encounter (Henson, 2015)	Member familiarity is suggested to improve team performance and can be multidimensional, differing between professional work-related familiarity and familiarity with others at a personal level (Maynard et al., 2018). O'Donovan et al. (2020) include examples such as talking about personal, non-work matters and laughing about a joke.

Appendix B: Linkage of Redding's (1996) categories to the psychological safety behaviors

Redding's (1996) category	Codebook behavior	Corresponding keywords in Redding (1996)	Corresponding keywords in Redding (1996)
Coercive "**Coercive** (intimidating, repressive, threatening, etc.) **acts** .. of behavior reflecting abuses of power or authority, resulting in (or designed to effect) unjustified **invasion of autonomy** this includes: **intolerance of of dissent**, restrictions of freedom of speech; **refusal to listen**; resorting to formal rules and regulations to **stifle discussion**; to squash complaints" (Redding, 1996, p. 27)	Disagreeing	Sharing own opinions that contradict what others (in or outside the team) have said, or that other team members disagree with. Every behavior through which a person disagrees with others.	intolerance of dissent
	Correcting others	Speaking up to correct what is being said by another team member. Every behavior through which another team member has to do exactly as they were said, given existing norms or arrangements, etc.	Coercive act
	Denying faults or blame others	Every behavior that shows that a person is defending their own self-interest or putting someone else at fault. E.g., when discussing mistakes or problems, a team member denies their own fault/blames others.	stifle discussion
	Evading confrontation	When a difficult or confrontational issue is being discussed, the team member shifts focus to other or more positive issues rather than directly addressing the difficult issue.	stifle discussion, refusal to listen
	Reacting cold/ignoring a joke	When a joke is made, the team member either does not laugh or continues as if they did not hear the joke. This category is also scored when a person genuinely did not have heard the joke.	Refusal to listen
	Sharing future plans	Providing work-related information on actions or procedures that will take place after the meeting or much later.	Invasion of autonomy
	Delegating tasks	Every behavior through which tasks/roles are divided/discussed	Invasion of autonomy
	Interrupting(destructive/disrespectful)	Team member talks over another or (abruptly) interrupts another team member in a disrespectful manner. This is unsupportive as it makes it harder for the rest of the team to understand what the first person is trying to say. It could also be coded if someone does not build on the thing the other person was saying	Refusal to listen
Destructive ''(**aggressive**, abusive, insensitive, etc.) acts **attacking the receiver's self-esteem, reputation,**	Discussions within small sub-groups	A small number of team members have a sub-conversation during which they are temporarily is engaged from the work-related team discussion and do not share with others	Intolerance of dissent, restrictions of freedom to speech
	Making a negative joke	No direct explanation	Jokes
	Providing factual information	Every behavior through which a person (who is not the team leader or chairperson of the meeting) neutrally shows/announces work-related facts and/or provides negative or contradictory facts	'Truth' as a weapon

or deeply held feelings: reflecting **indifference towards** or contempt for basic values of **others**. Includes: **insults derogatory innuendoes**, epithets, **jokes**, put-downs, back-stabbing, character assassination. It includes **'truth' as a weapon** or in alleged 'openness'. It also can include **silence"** (Redding, 1996, p. 28)	Informing about issues or mistakes	Speaking up about and discussing issues that are directly relevant to the work, for instance, quality or safety. Note that only when this behavior is directed very clearly towards one other person, it must be coded as "focused towards individuals". In all other cases, this behavior is coded as "focused on the team as a whole"	'Truth' as a weapon
	Providing negative feedback (destructively)	Every behavior told in a harsh/unpleasant way which leads to a negative experience/evaluation in relation to a person, the team, an action, or a project. The feedback should be pointed to a specific person or (sub) group, or (verbally) pinpointing people.	Attacking the receiver's self-esteem, reputation, or deeply held feelings
	Using aggressive language	Displays of (micro)aggression in (tone of) voice, i.e. raised voice	Derogatory innuendoes, insults
	Facial expression or body language indicates disengagement or indifference	Every behavior that lasts at least 2 seconds that shows that someone is not (attentively) focused on the meeting.	Silence
	Reacting cold/ignoring a joke	When a joke is made, the team member either does not laugh or continues as if they did not hear the joke. This category is also scored when a person genuinely did not have heard the joke	Silence
	Aggressive body language	Displays of (micro)aggression in body language, i.e. large gestures	Aggressive act
	Sharing future plans	Providing work-related information on actions or procedures that will take place after the meeting or much later.	'Truth' as a weapon
	Verifying progress and performance	Team member asks about initiatives or aspects of their own or team's performance that are working well or need to be improved.	
	Discussions within small sub-groups	A small number of team members have a sub-conversation during which they are temporarily disengaged from the work-related team discussion and do not share with others.	Indifference towards others
Secretive

"Forms of nonverbal communication, especially **silence** and including **unresponsiveness**. It includes behaviors such as hoarding information (… 'culpable silence') and sweeping under the rug of information that, if revealed, would expose wrongdoing or ineptness" (Redding, 1996, p. 32) | Evading confrontation | When a difficult or confrontational issue is being discussed, the team member shifts focus to other or more positive issues rather than directly addressing the difficult issue. | Silence, unresponsiveness |
| | Facial expression or body language indicates disengagement or indifference | Every behavior that lasts at least 2 seconds that shows that someone is not (attentively) focused on the meeting | Silence, unresponsiveness |
| | Sudden closed body language | Team members suddenly close their arms and/or start leaning backward. | Silence, unresponsiveness |

	Reacting cold/ignoring a joke	When a joke is made, the team member either does not laugh or continues as if they did not hear the joke. This category is also scored when a person genuinely did not have heard the joke.	Silence, unresponsiveness
Manipulative-exploitative **"Deliberate attempt of a source to prevent receivers from discovering the source's intentions**. Utterance of messages that reflect a patronizing or condescending attitude toward the audience. Demagogues who, **without concern for the best interest of the audience**, seek to gain compliance by **exploiting people's fears** or areas of **ignorance**" (Redding, 1996, p. 33)	Providing negative feedback (destructively)	Every behavior told in a harsh/unpleasant way which leads to a negative experience/evaluation in relation to a person, the team, an action, or a project. The feedback should be pointed to a specific person or (sub) group, or (verbally) pinpointing people.	(no) Concern for the best interest of the audience, exploiting people's fears
	Denying faults or blame others	Every behavior that shows that a person is defending their own self-interest or putting someone else at fault. E.g., when discussing mistakes or problems, a team member denies their own fault/blames others.	Deliberate attempt of a source to prevent receivers from discovering the source's intentions
	Interrupting (destructive/disrespectful)	Team member talks over another or (abruptly) interrupts another team member in a disrespectful manner. This is unsupportive as it makes it harder for the rest of the team to understand what the first person is trying to say. It could also be coded if someone does not build on the thing the other person was saying.	Deliberate attempt of a source to prevent receivers from discovering the source's intentions
	Discussions within small sub-groups	A small number of team members have a sub-conversation during which they are temporarily disengaged from the work-related team discussion and do not share with others	(No) concern for the best interest of the audience, exploiting people's ignorance
Deceptive ''(dishonest, lying, unfair, etc.) acts reflecting 'willful perversion of truth in order to deceive, cheat, or defraud'. This includes evasive, or deliberately misleading messages. In turn, includes deliberate use of ambiguity. Also, bureaucratic-style euphemisms to conceal designed to cover up defects, to **conceal embarrassing deeds**, or to **'prettify' unpleasant facts**' (Redding, 1996, p. 30)	Providing negative feedback (constructively)	Every behavior expressed in a nice way which, nonetheless, leads to a negative experience/evaluation in relation to a person, the team, an action, or a project. More friendly tone of voice.	'Prettify' unpleasant facts
	Denying faults or blame others	Every behavior told in a harsh/unpleasant way which leads to a negative experience/evaluation in relation to a person, the team, an action, or a project. The feedback should be pointed to a specific person or (sub) group, or (verbally) pinpointing people.	Conceal embarrassing deeds
	Evading confrontation	When a difficult or confrontational issue is being discussed, the team member shifts focus to other or more positive issues rather than directly addressing the difficult issue.	Conceal embarrassing deeds
Intrusive "Tactics such as the use of hidden cameras, the taping of telephones, and the application of computer technologies to the monitoring of employee behavior. In other words, surveillance. But … also **less obvious forms of intrusiveness**. For instance, … questions regarding religion, marital status, and political affiliation" (Redding, 1996, p. 31)	Talking about personal, non-work matters	Any discussion that is not about work	Less obvious forms of intrusiveness

Appendix C: Transcript episode analysis 1, team 2

F1:. And say like yeah you guys can say that you do- now don't have time for it or – or whatever-

F5: But this was done during the same day that was my <>. The same day <>.

F1: Yeah but you need to repeat it, right?

F5: Repeat? <>-

F1: First the issue was that you didn't have the access

F5: Uhhuh, <> it's blocked. So if we put a post-it now-

F1: Yeah

F5: So it is in red, it's marked blocked where you have comments, but it's missing a post-it so.

F1: Silvio, just in general right? okay, it's blocked but also like people can help you getting it unblocked, right?

F5: <>

F1: So Edwin is also in the <> training. So we can also say to Edwin: "Hé, Edwin come on can you just sit together now with Silvio, and can you just really explain what – what the issue is". You sit together, get it explained and then it's get unblocked, right?

<>

F1: Tsja!

Appendix D: Transcript episode analysis 2, team 1

F4: And we only have three positive notes.

F5: No. No no no no no.

F4: But, that will come.

F5: I was just going to say. I think it is important to also <say something, so to speak>.

F4: Are we done then? : <F&M>?

F3: Yes, that's going in the right direction - almost - yes, it's going in a very good direction. Much faster than we expected actually. So uh, that uh, uh, is now converted to uh, we- we- we- we are then done on our side. Then the only thing we have to wait for is uh, uh-

F4: Control.

F3: Yeah, well, what's is it called, <name> still has to build his uh his thingy of course. We have very little there, uh, but you- but you already have the tables ready, uh, so we're actually already there.

F4: You already knew that, right? At the end. Otherwise you'll lose it, right? Had a good holiday.

F3: Yes.

F4: Jesus! It's about keywords!

F7: You never do that otherwise, write down so much. Hahaha.

F6: Nice man.