

Ulf Schaefer

LEADERSHIP, HUMAN RESOURCES AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

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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.

Teaching domains

Change Management

Managerial Ethics and Responsible Leadership

Team Management

Conflict Management

Latest publications

SCHAEFER U., BOUWMEESTER O.

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

MUELLER U. P., SCHAEFER U.

The Dirty Dozen: how unethical behaviour creeps into your organisation

The European Business Review, July, 2016, pp.37-41

SCHAEFER U., RATHJE S.

The seven styles of influencing: A workbook for managers

Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Berlin, Germany, 2013

SCHAEFER U., KOROTOV K.

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

SCHAEFER U., SCHMITZ B., MUELLER U. P.

MEG AG: A Special Organizational Culture

2023, The Case Centre, Great Britain

SCHAEFER U.

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

2021, Amsterdam Business Research Institute, Netherlands (The)

Grants & Honors

Top 50 Bestselling Case Authors 2024/25 - The Case Centre , 2025

Top 50 Bestselling Case Authors 2022/23 - The Case Centre , 2023
