OVERVIEW

“When I finally got a management position, I found out how hard it is to lead and manage people. The warm, fuzzy stuff is hard. The quantitative stuff is easy — you either don’t do much of this as a manager or you have people working for you to do it….as long as you can use an HP 12 calculator or a spreadsheet, you have the finance knowledge that you need for most management positions. I should have taken organizational behavior and social psychology — and maybe abnormal psychology, come to think of it.”

—Guy Kawasaki, in an interview with NYT columnist Adam Bryant (March 20, 2010)

Whether you’re already an experienced manager or aspire to become one, this course is designed to give you the tools you need to be more effective in leading teams and organizations. We’ll do this through three interrelated objectives:

- **Expand your management knowledge past common myths or intuitions on how people work.**
  - We’ll do this by using evidence-based research on the behavior of people and teams.

- **Hone your leadership and management skillset for current and future roles.**
  - We’ll do this through experiential assignments that practice class insights.

- **Apply leadership and other OB concepts to issues in your organizations.**
  - We’ll do this by applying the research we discuss to real situations in the workplace.
COURSE CONTENT AND ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: This schedule is tentative and may be adapted depending on our progress through the quarter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Class topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>9/27 (W)</td>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Class “why” &amp; “what”</td>
<td>• Evidence-based management</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A practitioner’s guide to nudging (skim)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/2 (M)</td>
<td>Leading by motivating</td>
<td>Extrinsic motivation</td>
<td>• Do financial incentives drive firm performance?</td>
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<td>10/4 (W)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Intrinsic motivation</td>
<td>• The power of small wins</td>
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<td>10/9 (M)</td>
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<td>Apply</td>
<td>Case: Gravity Payments</td>
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<td>10/11 (W)</td>
<td>Leading processes</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>• The new science of building teams</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/16 (M)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>• Organizational traps: Madness/wisdom of crowds</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/25 (W)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Noise: How to overcome...</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/30 (M)</td>
<td>Leading across differences</td>
<td>Personality &amp; culture</td>
<td>• How to become a better leader</td>
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<td>11/6 (M)</td>
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<td>Team composition</td>
<td>• Identity issues in teams</td>
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<td>11/13 (M)</td>
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<td>Apply</td>
<td>Case: Managing a Global Team (Sun Micro)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20 (M)</td>
<td>Leading through culture</td>
<td>Identifying culture</td>
<td>• Leading by leveraging culture</td>
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<td>11/27 (M)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Changing culture</td>
<td>• Manage your emotional culture</td>
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<td>11/29 (W)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Cultural change that sticks</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4 (M)</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Case: Campbell and Bailyn’s Boston Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/6 (W)</td>
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All materials are found in your Harvard Business School Publishing (HBSP) course packet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Individual written case analyses</td>
<td>Connect class concepts to the scenario; best two scores count</td>
<td>10/9, 10/25, 11/13 or 11/29</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Personal development journal</td>
<td>Reflection on work and theory</td>
<td>10/20 &amp; 12/1</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Team “nudge” project</td>
<td>Design and pilot test an intervention</td>
<td>10/6, 10/27 &amp; 12/4</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>Individual take-home (2 hour limit)</td>
<td>12/13</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Class contribution</td>
<td>Evaluated mid-quarter and at end</td>
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ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

In general, unless noted otherwise:

- All submissions should be made via Canvas (PDF preferred)
- Late submissions will receive a 10% deduction (based on total points) per day

Written case analysis (3 total; 30% of final grade, best two grades used)

As a part of our class sessions, we will discuss four HBS cases in detail. My expectation is that you read all of these and prepare for each discussion. In addition, you will choose three of the business cases for a written analysis. (You will have the option of dropping/skipping one if you are satisfied with your performance on the other two.)

*Deliverables:* These are due via Canvas before the start of class on the day of the case discussion. *Late submissions are not accepted.* Your written analysis of the case should be 1000-1500 words (approximately 2-3 pages single-spaced) and address the questions posted on Canvas.

*Evaluation criteria:* Each analysis will be evaluated on the basis of (a) your understanding of the case scenario and details, (b) the depth of your critical thinking and analysis, particularly in connecting class concepts to the case, (c) the robustness of your recommendations and implementation plans, and (d) the professionalism of the document, including the quality of your writing, neatness, spelling, and punctuation. (Note: I do not expect or desire academic essays—these should be business documents.)

Personal development journal (10% of final grade)

The purpose of this journal is to provide a structure for reflecting on the intersections between your professional experience and the assigned readings or class discussions.

*Deliverables:* For each class session that has assigned reading (i.e. not the case discussion sessions), I would like you to write how it relates to your experience at work. This could be in many different fashions. You could describe how a class concept explains some phenomena that were originally rather confusing. Alternatively, you could take a framework from class and use it to describe ways that things in your workplace could be better implemented. Whatever approach you take, the final deliverable should be a journal of collected reflections on how the field of organizational behavior helps you interpret things at work. In the end, you should have nine separate entries (given the number of class sessions without presentations or case discussions). (NOTE: These are different than the “quick writes” that I often do at the end of class. Please do not submit these as your journal entries.)

*Evaluation criteria:* Since the purpose of this is more developmental than evaluative, I will only lightly grade in terms of quantity and quality. For the former, each entry should be roughly 2-3 paragraphs and there should be an entry for each class session with a reading attached to it (i.e. nine entries). For the latter, I’ll be looking to see a depth of critical thought that indicates you spent a non-trivial amount of time considering the ideas. You will submit a draft of the journals halfway through the quarter to allow me to check in your progress.
Team “nudge” project (20% of final grade)

For the team project, you will create a “nudge” to address a problem in the workplace. Nudges are subtle interventions (often to the environment or context) that leverage our understanding of human behavior to improve outcomes. This project has three major components:

1. **Identify a workplace problem:** Your first task is to identify a problem that you can address in your workplace or that of a friend or family member. (In other words, this isn’t fictional or hypothetical.) You should identify this with the end goal in mind—that you will create an intervention that changes behaviors around this problem. You should also identify prior attempts to solve the problem.

2. **Design a “nudge” intervention to address this problem:** The goal with a nudge is to create a change that is not heavy-handed or forceful, but is a subtle move to encourage behavioral change. The HBR article in your coursepack (“A Practitioner’s Guide to Nudging”) provides an overview, and you can also check out “Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness” by Thaler and Sunstein for more information.

3. **Pilot test and improve the intervention:** Deploy a small-scale test of your nudge to see if it changes the behaviors you hoped for. This will require pre- and post-intervention measures of the focal behavior.

**Deliverables:**

- Workplace problem identification (due Friday 10/6): In a one-page, single-spaced document, describe the organization and problem for which you will be designing an intervention. At this point, you may want to outline a few early nudge ideas so I can give you feedback.
- Intervention and test design (due Friday 10/27): In a one- or two-page, single-spaced document, describe your proposed nudge and testing procedure.
  - OPTIONAL: If your team is experiencing any challenges working together, this is a good time to get in touch with me and schedule a conversation.
- Final report (due Monday 12/4): This 7-10 page (single-spaced) write-up should represent a full summary of your project. If you’d like, the prior deliverables (problem identification and intervention/test design) can be a part of the final report. You may want to consider addressing:
  - Why the initial problem exists
  - Why do you expect your intervention to work
  - The implementation challenges with the nudge
  - The performance of the intervention
  - Future improvements on your design
- Presentations (Monday 12/4 or Wednesday 12/6): You will provide a 10-12 minute presentation on your project, with questions to follow.

**Evaluation criteria:**

- Challenge: Does your nudge address a non-trivial workplace behavior?
- Rationale: Is your nudge informed by knowledge of human behavior discussed in class?
- Depth of problem-solving: How well did you push through initial difficulties?
- Professional presentation: Is your report and presentation accessible to a busy executive?
Final Exam (20% of final grade)

The final exam for this course will be conducted as an online, take-home exam. The exam will have a two-hour limit that begins once the exam is started. This will be an individual effort—no group work allowed. It will consist of several “case style” essay questions that present a short scenario and ask you to interpret it through the lens of this course. My expectation is that you’ll be able to write 2-4 paragraphs on each one. These will be evaluated in terms of (a) the depth of your critical thinking, (b) the degree to which your arguments are grounded in concepts from class, and (c) the professionalism of your document.

Contribution to the class (20% of final grade)

Given the content of this course, I employ a substantial amount of discussion in our classes. Since participating in class is a baseline expectation in the MBA program, I expect that everyone will do so to some degree. Effective and worthwhile discussion includes contributions that:

- Demonstrate knowledge and integration of course material with personal experience
- Build on responses of others
- Offer critical but respectful analysis of others’ comments
- Use of logic, precision, and evidence in making arguments
- Go beyond the “I feel” level of introspection

As such, your participation grade will be evaluated in three ways: (1) the frequency of your contributions, (2) the quality of your contributions (based on the criteria above); and (3) the professionalism of your conduct (punctuality, preparedness, respecting class/team members and their contributions, and refraining from conduct that is distracting). My baseline grade for participation is a 9/10, and I will adjust this up or down for individuals that exhibit participation patterns that are exceptionally above or below the standards of the Foster School. I will provides marks for this at the midpoint and the end of the quarter.

Grading details

- **Grades are not given—they are earned.** In your professional careers, employees who do what is expected of them are generally considered to be average performers. Those who do what is expected of them but do it excellently are good performers. But those who go above and beyond what is expected of them and do it excellently are stars. In order to earn above average grades in this course, your work will need to go above and beyond expectations.

- **If you wish to dispute a grade on an exam or assignment, please return the assignment in question to me along with a written one-page statement describing your dispute within one week.** Indicate specific questions/items which you would like me to consider, and back up your claims with specific notes, page numbers, cites, etc. Do note that I reserve the right to adjust your grade in either direction based on my reanalysis of your assignment.
ADMINISTRIVIA

Class Attendance

Class attendance with your scheduled section is critical to participation in the learning experience. In accordance with Foster MBA Program policy outlined in the Student Handbook (p. 6), attendance is required aside from circumstances related to (1) illness or (2) unavoidable conflict with a project at work. Regardless of the rationale for missing a class meeting, please note that you are responsible for (a) notifying me by email or phone and (b) making up the content or learning experience that takes place in your absence. Please work within your core team to address any material you may have missed, and please contact me afterward should you have lingering questions or concerns about course content.

Technology, Professionalism and the Classroom

Each student is expected to be on time to and prepared for each class meeting as well as fully engaged in class discussion throughout the class meeting. I ask that you only use your laptop or mobile device for class-related activities. Research shows that being online (surfing the Web, checking email, texting, etc.) inhibits your ability to learn and distracts those around you (including me—yes, I can tell). Thanks for supporting this policy.

The Honor Code

I employ the principles and procedures espoused by the Foster School of Business MBA Honor System to maintain academic integrity in the course. The Honor Code of the Foster School expressly prohibits cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, and lying to administration or faculty as it pertains to academic work. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be handled by referral of the matter to the Foster MBA Honor Council.

I expect that you will complete all deliverables required in the course in accordance with the principles of the Honor Code and submit them by the due dates assigned. If you have any uncertainty about how the Honor Code applies to a specific deliverable in the course, please ask before taking action; when it is not possible to ask before acting, please err on the side of conservatism.

Disability Resources

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students, 448 Schmitz, 206-543-8924 (V/TTY). If you have a letter from the office of Disability Resources for Students (formerly Disabled Student Services) indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for this class.