

University of Michigan
Ross School of Business

SYLLABUS

Human Behavior and Organizations: Managing for Excellence in Work Organizations

MO501 – 451

7:00 PM to 10:00 PM. Mondays, Sept. 9 – Oct. 14, 2013
6:30 PM to 9:30 PM, Mondays, Oct. 28 – Dec. 2, 2013

R1220

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(Please ask! Glad to meet before or after class, or another convenient time and place.)

Overview

This is a course on how to create, manage, and lead organizations in which people thrive and perform at their best. It assumes that individual and group thriving is the key to organizational excellence. The leadership challenge is to design contexts (jobs, organizational cultures, structures, processes) that enable individuals and groups to thrive. The personal challenge is how to find and/or create a context in which you thrive and lead at your best. The course maintains this dual focus: (1) on your role as leader, designing and enabling contexts where others can thrive; and (2) on your personal quest to find and create contexts where you flourish and perform at your best. The course draws from a paradigm for managerial practice called Positive Organizational Scholarship (POS). POS originated at the Ross School and has become a well-established field. The core premise of this paradigm is that leadership and personal excellence are fundamentally tied to creating/enabling organizational contexts that build human strengths and unlock the positive and generative dynamics of vibrant human communities

Goals for the course

1. To develop a theory of practice of how to create organizations, units and jobs that foster excellence
2. To enrich your portfolio of practical tools and ideas for putting theory into practice
3. To create opportunities for you to learn about these ideas and tools from: (1) case studies; (2) personal reflection; (3) readings; (4) in-class activities, (5) videos, (6) class discussion, and (7) applications.
4. To create a classroom climate where we model and experience the positive organizing dynamics that we study.

Course materials

Most of the materials we use in this course are available as a packet of course materials. Some materials are provided on our Ctools site. Other materials will be distributed in class.

“Optional additional readings” are not provided in the course materials. These are listed in case you want to explore a topic in more depth.

Weekly Class Assignments

The specific assignments for the course sessions are described on the following pages. To ensure a high quality learning experience, it is critical that you prepare thoroughly before each class meeting. Read the assigned materials, draw from your business, organizational, and life experiences, and address the specific preparation questions listed.

Ross Commitment to Learning and Attendance Policy

The Ross learning experience transforms students by developing the ability to think rigorously, work collaboratively, and lead effectively. The classroom and course work are the foundational components of the Ross learning and growth process. Classroom activities are central to each student’s experience – an experience they share with their classmates and faculty to develop each student’s knowledge and personal growth and that of the student body as whole. Due to the importance of this shared experience, you are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, stay in class throughout and be prepared to contribute to the learning process for all. The expected level of engagement goes far beyond mere physical presence in class. Rather, you should come to each class having read all material, prepared all assignments, and ready to share your insights and thoughts with your classmates. You should remain engaged and attentive throughout class, both for your own learning and in respect to the rest of the Ross community. Violations of these expectations will be reflected by reductions in your class participation grade. **Attendance at all class sessions is required.**

Technology Policy

This class adheres to a no-electronics policy, which is meant to support our classroom learning environment. Use of electronic devices during class is not allowed. When laptops are required for class, you will be informed in advance.

Academic Honor Code

Personal integrity and professionalism are fundamental values of the Ross School and University of Michigan community. This course will be conducted in strict conformity with the Academic Honor Code. The Code and related procedures can be found at the following website: www.bus.umich.edu/Academics/Resources/communityvalues.htm. The site also contains comprehensive information on how to be sure that you have not plagiarized the work of others. Claimed ignorance of the Code and related information appearing on the site will be viewed as irrelevant should a violation take place. Finally, the printouts of lecture slides handed out in class are copyrighted material. Copies are for your **personal use only**.

Evaluation

Class Attendance	Regular class attendance is expected as part of the Ross Commitment to Learning and Attendance Policy. You may have up to two absences without a penalty.	10%
Class Participation	Regular class participation is expected as part of the Ross Commitment to Learning and Attendance Policy.	10%
Case analysis (take home midterm)	Written case analysis submitted in Drop Box on our course Ctools no later than the beginning of Class 7. No late submissions can be accepted (late submissions earn a grade of 0).	30%
Best-Self exercise	Reflected Best Self report due at beginning of Class 11. Hard copies only. No late submissions will be accepted (late submissions earn a grade of 0).	15%
Action Plan	Written Action Plan submitted in Drop Box on our course Ctools site no later than 6:30PM, Sunday, December 8, 2013. No late submissions can be accepted (late submissions earn a grade a 0).	35%

Grading policy: According to the Ross School grading policy for core courses, “approximately 25% of students will receive the grade “excellent.” The 25% limit is an absolute standard in core courses. The ratio of “goods” to “passes” should be about 1 to 1 or approximately 35% for each category. Approximately 5% of students will receive the grade, “low pass.” This expectation does not mean an instructor must force a certain percentage of low passes, but it certainly is not expected that a course would have no low passes.”

Reflected Best Self Exercise (RBSE)

The Reflected Best Self Exercise (2nd edition, 2011) will help you develop a strong best-self portrait that you can use to guide your decisions, to lead yourself and others, to act with confidence and courage, to prepare and see possibilities for the future, and to face and handle challenges. The RBSE is described in detail in the reading in your course materials. The deliverable is due at the beginning of Class 11. It should have two parts:

- Aggregated story reflection (Table 3 on page 5 in RBSE 2011) (2.5 pages max, single spaced, follow Table 3 format). A minimum of three (3) examples for each theme is required. You should identify no fewer than 4 and no more than 6 themes. These 4 – 6 are your key strengths. (50 points)
- Best self portrait (see example on page 6 in RBSE 2011) (1 page max, single spaced). Every theme you identified should be included in the portrait. (50 points)

Action Plan

Your Action Plan is devoted to helping you achieve a specific goal that is part of your vision of success. During Class 7, we will use a visioning exercise to get you started. **Your complete vision statement should be included as an exhibit in your Action Plan.** In Section 1 of your Action Plan, include a **summary** of your vision statement and a clear description of the specific goal you will pursue for your Action Plan. This goal should be clearly related to your vision.

Your Action Plan should reflect a clear understanding and application of the principles, concepts, practices, tools, and examples of Positive Organizational Scholarship. This Action Plan should reflect all relevant class materials; it should make explicit reference to those that you **use**.

Please use 12-point font, double spaced. Page limit is 10 pages plus up to 5 exhibits (e.g., vision statement, figures, graphs, or tables). Make sure you refer to each exhibit in the body of the paper.

Title Page (name, email, postal mailing address for returning the paper, phone number)

1. Your Vision and Goal (20 points)

This is a summary of your vision statement plus a detailed description of the goal that you have decided to pursue in your Action Plan. (Your full vision statement should go in an exhibit at the end of your paper.) Your goal should be clearly related to your vision and reflect one (or more) of the topics of our course. The goal must be something you can achieve after the end of this semester, but no longer than 12 months in the future.

To be successful, your goal must be clear, specific, and well-formulated. Your goal will be evaluated using the following criteria, so please explicitly address each point in your goal statement.

- Your goal clearly reflects your vision.
- Your goal is clearly related to one (or more) of the topics of this course.
- Your goal is meaningful and important to you.
- Your goal is specific and concrete.
- The attainment of your goal is measurable.
- The final attainment of your goal takes place after the end of the semester.

2. Analysis of Current Situation (25 points)

Provide a detailed analysis of your current situation, using all relevant tools, concepts, principles, practices, and examples from our course. For example, if you choose job (re)design as a topic, then you would want to use the job characteristics model (as well as other materials that are relevant).

3. Your Actions (35 points)

This section is a detailed description of the specific actions you plan to take to achieve your goal. You should have 8 to 12 actions. If attaining your goal requires buy-in or actions/decisions from others (such as your boss), then you should include an action about how you will persuade them and get them on board. You should arrange these actions in a timeline, showing when each action will be taken, as well as major milestones along the way. Actions will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Detailed description of each action (be sure it reflects topics/materials from our course).
- Your specific objective for each action.
- What you (or others) will do, by when, with whom.
- Any risks inherent in this planned action and how you intend to address these risks. If none, please explain.
- Specific measures: How do you know if you've achieved your objective?

4. Key Insights and Learnings (20 points)

Use this section to communicate the key insights and learnings you had in the course of doing this assignment—such as about yourself, about your work, about your group, about your organization, etc.

Class 1

Date: Monday, Sept. 9

Topic: **What is organizational excellence? How do you know when you see it?**

Case: Southwest Airlines
Required—must read and prepare before our first class meeting!

Preparation Questions:

1. What does excellence look like in organizations and in individuals?
2. What does excellence look like in Southwest Airlines?
3. If you were trying to assess excellence where you work, what would you use as indicators?

Optional additional reading: If you become fascinated with Southwest Airlines, there is a terrific book on the company by Jody Hoffer Gittel, *The Southwest Airlines Way*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005.

Class 2

Date: Monday, Sept. 16

Topic: **Positive social capital: high-quality connections and generalized reciprocity**

Readings: Chapters 1 and 5 from Jane E. Dutton, *Energize your workplace: How to create and sustain high quality relationships at work*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003, pages 1-20; 109-138

Rob Cross, Wayne Baker, and Andrew Parker, "What creates energy in organizations?" *Sloan Management Review*, Summer 2003.

We will conduct an activity in this class, called the Reciprocity Ring™, which creates generalized reciprocity. (Be sure to read the following Proprietary Materials Agreement that governs the use of the Ring in MO501.)

PROPRIETARY MATERIALS AGREEMENT

TO: Students in MO501 Fall 2013

FR: Alana Martin, assistant to the CEO (alanam@humaxnetworks.com)

Humax Corporation is delighted to provide you with a one-time use of its Reciprocity Ring™ materials and technology for MO501.

I understand that your participation in the Reciprocity Ring™ for MO501 is voluntary, and that you do not have to participate if you do not choose to. By participating in the Reciprocity Ring™, you agree to the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Terms and Conditions for Use

I understand and agree that all materials, concepts and information ("Materials") presented during the class meeting in September 2013 (the "program"), either orally or in writing, are the property of Humax Corporation ("HUMAX"), or further are in some instances protected by copyright. I agree not to reproduce, copy, or otherwise duplicate, or distribute, lend or otherwise transfer any copies of such Materials without the express written permission of HUMAX.

I also agree to first obtain the written consent of HUMAX before using the Materials themselves, either reproduced or modified, in any seminar, training program, workshop, consulting or similar business activity that I make available to my clients or to the public for the purpose of financial gain.

Class 3

Date: Monday, Sept. 23 (7 – 10 PM)

Topic: **Open book management**

Case: Open Book Finance

Reading: “The Great Game of Business: Executive Summary”

Preparation Questions:

1. What are the basic elements of Open Book Finance (OBF)?
2. What are the costs of benefits of implementing OBF?
3. What are the challenges to implementing OBF?
4. Is OBF right for every company?

Optional additional reading: Jack Stack, *The Great Game of Business* (with Bo Burlingham). New York: Currency/Doubleday, 1992; *A Stake in the Outcome: Building a Culture of Ownership for the Long-Term Success of Your Business* (with Bo Burlingham). New York: Currency/Doubleday, 2003.

Class 4

Date: Monday, Sept. 30 (7 – 10 PM)

Topic: **The strengths perspective**

Case: Heidi Roizen

Preparation Questions:

1. What are Heidi’s strengths?
2. What is the evidence of her strengths?
3. How did she play to her strengths at different stages in her career?

Reading: Laura Morgan Roberts et al., “How to play to your strengths.” *Harvard Business Review*, January 2005

During Class 4 you will receive specific instructions for starting your Reflected Best Self Exercise (RBSE). Be sure to bring to this class meeting: (1) “The Reflected Best Self Exercise” (2nd edition, 2011) and (2) your laptop (with wireless) for use with the RBSE in class.

Class 5

Date: Monday, Oct. 7 (7 – 10 PM)

Topic: **Motivation and rewards**

Case: “The best-laid incentive plans,” *Harvard Business Review*, January 2003.

Readings: Steven Kerr, “On the folly of rewarding A while hoping for B,” *Academy of Management Executive*, 1995, Vol. 9, No. 1..

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, Chapter 12: 150 Ways to Encourage the Heart. In *Encouraging the Heart: A Leader's Guide to Rewarding and Recognizing Others*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999, pages 151-174.

Preparation Questions:

1. Should Rainbarrel revisit its approach to performance management? Yes or no?
2. Come to class with a plan of action and be prepared to defend it!

Optional additional readings: Jody Hoffer Gittel, Chapter 11: Avoid Finger Pointing—Measure Performance Broadly. In *The Southwest Airlines Way: Using the Power of Relationships to Achieve High Performance*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. Charles O'Reilly and Jeffrey Pfeffer: Chapter 5: The SAS Institute: Succeeding with Old-Fashioned Values in a New Industry. In *Hidden Value: How Great Companies Achieve Extraordinary Results with Ordinary People*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 200.

Class 6

Date: Monday, Oct. 14 (7 – 10 PM)

Topic: **Designing jobs**

Readings: M. Seligman, Chapter 10: Work and personal satisfaction. In *Authentic Happiness*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002, pages 165-184.

J. Greenberg and R. Baron, Highlights on job design. In *Behavior in Organizations*, 8th Edition, Prentice Hall, 2003, pages 212-219.

Adam Grant, "How customers can rally troops." *Harvard Business Review*, June 2011.

Preparation Questions:

1. What are the most important features of jobs that drive effectiveness?
2. What could be done to redesign your own job to make you more effective in it?

*****YOUR TAKE-HOME MID-TERM EXAM WILL BE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS 6. IT IS DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS 7, POSTED ON CTOOLS*****

NO CLASS MEETING ON OCT. 21 DUE TO MID-TERM BREAK AND TAKE-HOME EXAM

Class 7

Date: Monday, Oct. 28 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **Visioning**

Readings: Ari Weinzweig, "Creating a company vision," INC Magazine, February 2011.

<<http://www.inc.com/magazine/20110201/creating-a-company-vision.html>>

We will conduct a visioning activity in this class that will guide you through the process of creating your vision. A vision is an image of what success looks like at a specific point in the future. At

the end of this class meeting, you will have a draft vision statement. You can then revise this statement for use in your Action Plan.

Class 8

Date: Monday, Nov. 4 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **Job crafting**

Case: Job Crafting at Burt's Bees

Preparation Questions:

1. What is job crafting and how does it related to job design?
2. What are the dimensions of job crafting?
3. How is job crafting done at Burt's Bees and what are its benefits—to the individual and to the company?
4. What are some potential downsides to job crafting?

Class 9

Date: Monday, Nov. 11 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **High-performance teams**

Case: Taran Swan at Nickelodean Latin America (A)

Preparation Questions:

1. Evaluate Swan as a team leader. What are her strengths and weaknesses?
2. How effective is the team? Justify your assessment.
3. Should she appoint an interim director?

Optional additional readings: Amy Edmondson, "Teamwork on the fly." *Harvard Business Review*, 2012; Amy Edmondsdon, *Teaming: How organizations learn, innovate, and compete in the knowledge economy*. Jossey-Bass, 2012

Class 10

Date: Monday, Nov 18 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **Managing positive emotions**

Case: Zappos: Happiness in a Box

Preparation questions:

1. Why is cultural fit so important at Zappos?
2. What does the company do to foster positive emotions and high quality connections?
3. What are the downsides to the Zappos happiness model?
4. How can the lessons of Zappos be applied in your workplace?

Readings: Barbara. L. Fredrickson, "The value of positive emotions." *American Scientist*, July-August 2003.

Optional Survey: Interest in the Zappos model led to the creation of a consulting and coaching firm, Delivering Happiness. They offer a free happiness at work survey for individuals and groups at www.happinessatworksurvey.com.

Class 11

Date: Monday, Nov. 25 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **Building on and using your strengths and the strengths of others**

Reading: Adam Grant, "Givers take all: The hidden dimension of corporate culture." *The McKinsey Quarterly*, April 2013

Optional additional readings: Donald Clifton and James Harter, "Strengths investment". In K. Cameron, J. Dutton and R. Quinn, Positive Organizational Scholarship. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2003.

Your Reflected Best Self Exercise report is due at the beginning of this class meeting. We will use the results in class. Bring a hard copy of your RBSE report to Class 11 for use during this class meeting.

Class 12

Date: Monday, Dec. 2 (6:30 – 9:30 PM)

Topic: **Organizational change and revitalization**

Case: Implementing POS at Prudential

Reading: Kim Cameron and Emily Plews, "Positive leadership in action: Applications of POS by Jim Mallozzi, CEO, Prudential Real Estate and Relocation." *Organizational Dynamics*, 2012.

Note: Please bring your laptops (with wireless) to class so that you can complete the online course evaluation.