MORS 430: Leadership in Organizations

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Section 61

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The goal of this course is to enhance your leadership skills. The course is designed to prepare you to lead high-performing, successful teams and organizations.

A key leadership task is to assemble the skills, talents, and resources of individuals and groups into combinations that best solve organizational problems at hand. You must manage people, information, and processes to accomplish organizational goals; you must make things happen, often under conditions or timeframes that are not of your own choosing. You must also understand how to introduce others’ skills and abilities into your teams. Successful leaders are able to diagnose problems, make effective decisions, influence and motivate others, manage diversity, tap into and motivate the human and social capital of organizational members, optimize cross-functional teams, and drive organizational change.

This course will enable you to achieve these objectives. The course provides fundamental, cutting-edge tools from behavioral science that will improve your ability to analyze organizational dynamics and take robust action.

Course Format

Each day we will focus on a particular set of leadership skills. Our goal will be to distinguish between effective and ineffective strategies. We will accomplish this by discussing key theoretical concepts accompanied by cases or exercises.

This course reflects a dual focus on practical and conceptual training. Articles in the course packet introduce key concepts and useful ways of thinking about common situations in complex organizations. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to assess your own natural tendencies in leadership challenges through the case studies and class exercises.

You should come to class prepared to engage in a challenging leadership exercise that you have never seen or experienced before. You should also come to class prepared to summarize key points from the day’s readings and to contribute to our debriefs of the day’s exercises. As you complete each reading, ask yourself:

- What is the basic argument the author makes?
- What are the key concepts/principles?
• So what? How does this matter for an organization?
• What are the implications for the kinds of challenges I face as a leader?
• How can I apply this to my firm, my job and my career?

Kellogg is a professional school, and we expect that you will act professionally both inside and outside of class. This course should provide you with the skills and intuition necessary to professionally lead a variety of teams in different organizations in a professional way. We will therefore teach you both about leadership and about how to lead.

Thus, an essential contribution we ask each of you to make to this course is to be professional in your actions in the class and your interactions with your instructors and your classmates. In particular, treat our exercises seriously. This does not mean you have to be stern and not enjoy the exercises. Instead, it means that you should take your roles in the exercises seriously and strive to accomplish the objectives given to you. You should try to do well and you should never demean either the exercises or the people you are interacting with after the exercises are over. You should think about your strategies and work hard to make sure they are appropriate and effective. You should consider the consequences of your actions within the framework of the exercise and what they might be in other situations. You should do as well as you can within the constraints of the situation.

One more thing about our classroom sessions: in our debriefs, we will discuss what happened and why. We'll discuss strategies that worked and strategies that didn't. If you should use a strategy that didn't work, I will ask you about it and expect you to be open and willing to discuss it. These exercises will likely be new to everyone. Therefore, people will not always choose completely optimal leadership strategies in the exercises. By delving into the thinking that led to a particular strategy, we can better understand our decision-making and behavior and adjust for future leadership challenges. So we are not picking on you when we ask you about your strategies. To learn as much as we can in this class, we need to discuss not just what happened but why. These discussions will show how important post mortems are to future leadership strategies; they also provide us with an opportunity to not only learn about leadership but also about ourselves.

Other Expectations

We expect that you will all act professionally in this class. Thus, we expect that you will attend each class, on time, and notify us in advance if you must miss a class. If you think of our meetings as work meetings, i.e., as if you were working full time and our meetings are an important part of your job, you'll know what we expect.

The Honor Code
This course adheres to the guidelines established in the Kellogg Honor Code and the Kellogg Code of Classroom Etiquette. The complete text is available on the Honor Code website:  https://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu/policies/honor-code.aspx

The Honor Code is enforced at Kellogg and violations are subject to disciplinary sanctions. Honor Code issues seldom arise because of Kellogg’s culture. We truly hope that these kinds of issues will not arise in this class.

The discussion in this syllabus of the Honor Code may not cover all applications of the Honor Code. If you believe something is unclear or has been omitted, please let us know.

One of the highlights of the honor code is that all written assignments must be your original work. You may not use others’ materials containing solutions or partial solutions to any assignment (including solutions prepared by current and former Kellogg students). If your analysis contains information from outside sources, then you must properly cite the sources.

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<th>Course Requirements and Assignments</th>
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**Course Citizenship (10%)**

As a member of this class community I expect good citizenship, which includes showing respect for one another and your ideas, engaging in constructive dialogue and debate, preparation before each class by reading and thinking about the material, engagement with class activities and exercises, and being thoughtful of the time of others.

This portion of the grade will be based on your regular attendance of class and showing up on time during breaks. A class of 40+ students requires careful attention to fairness and mutual respect for one another. We expect you to attend every class on time and to stay for the entire class session. Each class will have a 15 minute break. **It is critical to show up on time** at the start of class and **after the break**, as we will often initiate an exercise right away, and we will need everyone in attendance to help make the exercise go smoothly. Always let the instructor and our TA know **at least 24 hours in advance** if you will miss a class so that we can make arrangements for any in-class exercises to be certain that your classmates do not suffer from your absence. **Absences that are not notified ahead of time will automatically result in a grade penalty.** Students who are absent for two or more sessions will likewise experience an automatic grade penalty.
Finally, I expect you to be engaged in the classroom experience. **Phones and laptop computers are not allowed during class lectures**, unless I tell you otherwise. You are allowed to use iPads in class to open class assignments, take notes, or to read the lecture slides. Please do not use iPads for personal use (e.g., checking email) during class as this can be very distracting for your fellow classmates.

**Leadership Development Exercises (25%)**
A key part of the learning process in this course is to take the lessons you are learning and apply them to real business situations. To facilitate this, you will be asked to complete three Leadership Development Exercises, each focusing on one or two tools that a leader can use to achieve success. One of these will be completed individually and two will be completed with your assigned group. These exercises will challenge you to use the concepts presented in the course to analyze a business case. An added benefit of these assignments is that they will help you prepare for the final exam.

These are relatively brief written assignments – a 1 or 2 page, double-spaced report with 12-point font and 1” margins all around. They are due at the start of class, noted below. Please submit all assignments on Canvas:

- **Exercise I:** Decision-Making  January 23  (Group Assignment)
- **Exercise II:** Persuasion  February 13  (Individual Assignment)
- **Exercise III:** Motivation-Culture  February 27  (Group Assignment)

**Senior Leadership Case Analysis (30%)**
Your career success will depend at least in part on how effectively you manage your professional relationships. These relationships will give you access to information, skills, and expertise and will determine your power and your opportunities. This project provides an opportunity to spend some time reaching a deeper understanding of how to develop, manage, and execute social relationships to get things done.

Each member of your group will be required to interview at least one senior executive regarding their experiences. These executives can be from firms you previously worked for, from firms you would like to work for, or simply from industries that interest you. Everyone should interview someone different (i.e., no repeat interviews).

Anticipate having to interview each leader at least once to gain an understanding of their situation, the nature of their network, how they manage their network, and how they use their network to tackle the organizational challenges discussed in class. Following these interviews, your group will write an analysis of your executives’ networks. In this analysis, you will compare and contrast the executives’ approaches to meeting their leadership challenges. You should compare the networks they have developed, how they manage these networks, and what their general strategies are for accomplishing goals. The names of the
executives will be kept strictly confidential; you should use an alias when discussing your interviewees in your analysis.

Detailed information on this assignment is included on page 17 of the syllabus. The 10-page analysis is due by 5:00 p.m. on March 21. As a part of this group assignment, you will be asked to evaluate the performance of all of the members of your group, including yourself.

**Final Exam (35%)**
The final exam will be a closed-book exam that will consist of a series of multiple choice and short answer questions. The exam will take place on March 20.

**Previous Knowledge of Cases**
If you are familiar with a case or a class exercise, please do not discuss your prior knowledge with other students as this can ruin their learning experience. Telling other students (in any section) about your experience with cases and exercises is an honor code violation. If you are concerned that your prior experience with a case will be an issue, please let us know before class.

**Recordings, Postings, Blogging, Tweets, Social Media, etc.**

No audio or visual recordings can be made of the class without permission of the instructor and, in many cases, the students in the class. In addition, exercises and their solutions are confidential per the Kellogg Honor Code. They are all copyrighted and cannot be circulated, blogged about, or posted in any form on social media. If you are unsure as to the application of these rules, please see us and ask.

**Course Materials**

The course packet contains many of the assigned readings. Additional readings not in the course packet can either be found on the Canvas website or will be sent to you by the TA.

Finally, please note the pre-first-class reading assignment (see below). Thanks.
Leadership and decision-making
Class 1

In preparation for the first class, please read Speed Ventures and prepare a written memo (<1 page in length) that includes (1) an explicit recommendation to race or not race and (2) a rationale for your decision. Do not discuss the case or your recommendation with anyone. (NOTE: IF YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH A CASE, PLEASE INFORM ME BY EMAIL BEFORE CLASS).

Objectives:
• Introduction to the course
• The three basic leadership skills
• Key aspects of effective decision making

Reading (before class):

Assignment:
• Speed Ventures (Please read the case material prior to class and come prepared to discuss)
Influence
Class 2

Objectives:

- Learning the science of persuasion
- Interpersonal and procedural tactics of influence

Read:


Exercise:

- 12 Angry Men (in-class video)
**Negotiations**  
Class 3

**Objectives:**

- Assess your skills at making interactive decisions
- Equip you with the core principles of expert negotiating tactics

**Read:**

- Abhas-Bussan negotiations exercise (to be assigned before class)

**Assignment:**

- Negotiation Exercise to be completed in class (preparation reading to be distributed after class 2)

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**Due: Group LDE 1 (Decision-Making)**
Leading High Impact Teams
Class 4

Objectives:

- Strategies for building and leading high impact teams

Read:


  https://hbr.org/2017/03/the-new-science-of-team-chemistry

Assignment:

- Before class, take the following online quiz:
  o  https://businesschemistry.deloitte.com/#/landing

- Group Performance Exercise (to be completed in class)

Discussion question:

- Think of a team that you’ve been a part of in the past. What made it effective/ineffective?
Culture
Class 5

Objectives:
- Learn how strong organizational cultures can be inconspicuous but savvy management tools for creating competitive advantage
- Strategies for building a strong and effective culture

Read:
- HubSpot culture slide deck (on Canvas)

Cases:
- HubSpot
- Bridgewater Associates

Assignment:
- Bring to class an artifact (an object that reflects the culture and values) of an organization to which you’ve belonged.

Discussion questions (please come to class prepared to discuss):
- Consider the organizational culture in your last job – how would you describe it? Is it a strong or weak culture?
- What makes a culture strong and how does it benefit companies? What problems might a strong culture create?
- What kind of business is HubSpot? What are its core competencies?
- What tools does HubSpot use to implement its culture?
- Characterize the culture of HubSpot via descriptions of artifacts, core values, and assumptions.
Emotional Intelligence and Motivation
Class 6

Objective:

- Understand the five dimensions of emotional intelligence
- Learn skills for recognizing and regulating your own emotions in motivating others
- Understand what motivates people to change their behavior

Read:


DUE: Individual LDE 2 (Influence)
Strategic Social Networks
Class 7

Objectives:

- Assessment of your social capital
- Strategies for tapping the hidden resources in contacts
- Leading by using social capital

Readings:

- Capital Partners case and Assessing Networks guide (on Canvas)
- Six Degrees Worksheet (on Canvas)

Discussion questions:

- What kind of professional social network have you developed?
- What value have you created by being a relationship broker with other people in your network?
- Think about the business leaders/entrepreneurs you know. How do they use their social networks to create value?
- At Capital Partners, what did Michael Mach do to build an organization that could use social networks as a form of leadership and influence?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of organizing in this way?

Assignment:

- Complete Six Degrees Worksheet (on Canvas)
- Prepare to discuss the Capital Partners case by reading the case and the Assessing Networks guide
- You can bring a laptop to this class so you can access the Capital Partners networks spreadsheet during the case discussion
Building Collaborative Social Networks
Class 8

Objectives:
- Building collaborative networks
- Strategies for strengthening relationships among team members

Readings:

Exercise:
Reciprocity Ring – Building and Using Social Networks in Real Time
The reciprocity ring is a unique exercise that illustrates how the networks in your class can make your dreams, wishes, or desires come true. For this session, come to class with a wish or request for something you need. For example, maybe you’ve always wanted to fly in a fighter jet taking off from an aircraft carrier (this is an actual dream that has come true from this exercise!). I’ll explain the rest in class.

DUE: Group LDE 3 (Culture and motivation)
Understanding and Influencing Change: EIS Simulation
Class 9

Objectives:

- Gauge your performance in a simulated change program

Read:


Case:

- EIS Simulation

Assignment:

- Download the EIS simulation on your laptop and bring it with you to class (Note: We will need one computer for every assigned group, which you will learn about on the day of class)
Leading Organizations
Class 10

Objectives:

- Learning how to lead large-scale organizational change efficiently and effectively
- Bringing it all together in (re)designing firms: decision-making, influence, teams, networks, incentives, culture, change and strategy

Read:


Discussion Questions:

1. Which strategies were effective at securing adopters in EIS? Which were ineffective?
2. Who do you target with a change initiative?
3. How do you figure out what tactics work with what targets?
4. When should you time your tactics for motivating and achieving change?
Senior Executive Case Analysis (SECA)

Your own career success depends in part on the effectiveness of your professional network. This project provides an opportunity to spend some time developing a sophisticated understanding of how successful leaders and senior executives initiate, develop, and manage their ties to accomplish their objectives. Your task is to analyze the social network of a leader using the concepts discussed in the course. You will interview a leader to gain an understanding of their situation, the nature of their network, and the way in which it is managed.

Each and every member of your group will be required to interview at least one senior executive regarding their experiences. The choice of the leader is up to you. Try to choose someone who you believe will be candid, open, and insightful. Choose someone who might serves as a good contact in the future. These executives can be from your previous firms, from firms you would like to work for, or simply from industries that interest you.

Following these interviews, your group will write an analysis of the executives’ networks. In this analysis, you will compare and contrast the leaders’ approaches to meeting the challenges they face, apply concepts you have learned about social networks and power while also integrating the full range of other key concepts and frameworks from the class. Projects will be graded for their grasp of the class material, their insight into the manager's social situation, and clarity of their presentation.

Key Elements of the Assignment:
- Each Teammate must interview one leader on the role of networks in career success.
- Teammates then integrate their individual leader observations into one coherent analysis, using the theoretical material we covered in class as a reference point for best practices.
- Produce a 10 double-spaced page report with 12-point font and 1” margins all around for 5 person teams. 6 person teams get 11 pages.

The analysis of the managers, their networks, and the lessons you have learned from examining them is due by 5 pm on March 21.

Key Elements of the Analysis
The paper should have a three-part structure:

1. An introduction to your analysis and the executives. What is your paper's thesis? Who are the leaders you interviewed? This introduction should include a brief (1-2 paragraphs) description of each executive’s situation, and if applicable, the problem being faced.

In an Appendix you should include a one paragraph description of every leader that was interviewed, describing their responsibilities and creating a network map of their network. Thus, every leader that was interviewed will have their own network map.

2. Body of Analysis
You should organize and focus your analysis in terms of course concepts, and should use those concepts to explain the similarities and differences you observed. That is, the experiences...
of your leaders should be compared and contrasted to draw general lessons about which strategies are most useful under which conditions. See potential questions below.

3. There should be a conclusion section titled: “Recommendations for Kellogg Students.” This section should be one to two pages and include concrete recommendations for building value and capital for Kellogg students. These suggestions should focus on what students could do tomorrow in their teams, the next summer in their internships, and immediately after graduation. For example, describe how what you learned can help students do better in selecting company presentations; meeting company presenters; making contacts during their first summer jobs; switching fields or industries; preparing for the transition from employee to partner; and other critical activities related to career advancement or building company equity.

NOTE: The most informative analyses go beyond description (a story about or description of the executives' networks) to an explanation of why something happened the way it did using the concepts from class. Well-organized papers that stress the most important factors rather than simply provide a data-dump of all the possible factors are evaluated more highly.

In all other respects, the project is yours to define. Be creative, yet professional.

Here are some Questions to Consider in Developing your Analysis

1. How is the leader positioned for action and getting things done? How are barriers to action overcome? You could ask about a recent example of this (this could provide a focal situation for the analysis): For example, ask how she or he leveraged contacts to respond to a situation and why it worked or did not work. Probe for how networks could be better structured, maintained or used, in light of the pattern of dependencies the person faces.

2. What are the kinds of contacts and exchanges that the executive uses for different purposes and in different contexts—for example, to make decisions, to get a specific task accomplished quickly, to gain influence, to get information, to seize an opportunity to advocate or implement change?

3. How has trust and commitment been developed with their network contacts? What kind of information is shared with different contacts and why? What role does reputation play? Does he/she form many ties or few ties? How much redundancy is there in the person’s network?

4. How does the executive’s network (size, number of structural holes, clique, entrepreneurial, monopolist) match his or her objectives? How could it be improved? What is the strongest entrepreneurial opportunity (i.e., where can the most value be added)?

5. How is the executive positioned in terms of diversity of relationships? Where is the executive’s sponsorship or mentoring structure? How has this changed over his/her career? What was the person’s experience with “developmental” relationships—either as a protégé, mentor, sponsor, or combinations of these?

6. How does the corporate culture impact network processes?

7. How do the leader’s relationships map onto the formal organizational structure?