Executive Leadership
B7720 - Fall 2015

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Overview
This course is designed to help students with their current and future leadership challenges, with a special focus on executive leadership. The major themes of the course are: 1) personal foundations for leadership, 2) strategic leadership, and 3) leadership of change and innovation. The learning in this course will utilize, build on and extend concepts covered in the following core course:

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I. Personal Foundations for leadership
We will examine the key personal skills required for leading. Researchers have identified a set of personal skills that are important for executive success, including self awareness, self-management under pressure and stress, empathy, and influencing skills. Some of these skills can be described collectively as emotional intelligence competencies. This course is designed to strengthen students’ skills in these areas, and prepare students to develop these skills in others. Students will increase their self awareness via a variety of assessment tools and exercises. We will relate these personal skills to the specific challenges of negotiations and leading organizational change. We also will examine the dynamics of derailment - the patterns and factors associated with executive careers that stall or fail.

II. Strategic Leadership
Executive leaders must set the direction of their organization and determine how to best deploy their limited resources to create the most value. While the focus of this course is not business strategy, students will obtain a practical framework for “strategic learning” that addresses strategy creation and implementation. This course will also examine a variety of issues related to strategic leadership, including decision-making, leadership communication, and the cognitive and emotional “traps” that can imperil effective decision processes.
III. Leadership of Change & Innovation

How do effective leaders influence organizations, groups and individuals to move in a particular direction? What are the specific “levers” that managers have at their disposal to mobilize organizations and shape individual behavior? We will study the key activities and skills required for successful leadership of change. We will examine influence strategies from multiple levels – ranging from the interpersonal to organizational and cultural dimensions of change.

Leadership Development Activities

A critical component of this course is personal assessment utilizing a variety of tools, including self-assessment of your behavioral style and leadership practices. Each student will use these tools and data to generate insights and develop a leadership credo.

The tools for this course include:

1) Social Styles (paper and pencil self assessment)
2) Leadership Practices Inventory (paper and pencil self assessment)

Detailed instructions will be provided for each of these tools.

Course Format

This is an interactive, “hands on” course emphasizing learning via self-study and personal assessment, small and large group discussion and debate, and personal application projects. One of the risks of a case-based approach is to draw prescriptive conclusions regarding a particular style, approach or strategy based upon a single case example. We will use cases to illustrate leadership principles that have been supported by research and scholarship. Sessions will be grounded in theory and research findings while providing students with practical frameworks and tools.

Grading & Attendance Policy

Leadership Credo. (50%) You will be given an assignment to create your Leadership Credo which answers the questions:

1. What do I stand for as a leader?
2. What is our organization’s vision and how will we win?
3. What do we stand for as an organization?

During the last session on the topic of Values Based Leadership, the assignment is due. The 4-5 p.m. period (Sunday through Wednesday) is provided for small groups to work on their Leadership Credos (B - group/individual). You must be ready to “stand and deliver” your Leadership Credo in 5 minutes or less on Thursday’s final session.

You are expected to visit our Linkedin EMBA Executive Leadership group page each day to offer your answers to the following questions.

Day 1: Do the principles that define who you are and guide your approach to leadership come more from the lows or highs of your lifeline story? Why?
Day 2: Does your vision for your organization serve as a unifying goal that engages the hearts and minds of your followers? How?
Day 3: Do the strategic priorities for your organization define those few things your organization will do better or differently than your competitors? How?
Day 4: Do the target values and behaviors that define your organization’s culture form the foundation to drive success? How?
**Final Exam.** (30%) The final exam will be closed-book. It will stress the in-class and reading material to a roughly equal degree. The exam is scheduled for Friday from 1:00 to 3:00 PM, November 21st; final details on time and room are forthcoming.

After you receive your final course grade, you are welcome to view your exam in our office. However, the exams themselves will not be retumed but will be kept for a full year after the course is over, during which time they will be available for viewing and discussion. Final exams serve multiple goals. First and foremost, they are a means of evaluating how well students have mastered the course material. Second, they can be used as a basis of learning. Of these two goals, it is our department’s view that for final exams, the former is more important than the latter. The construction of reliable, discriminating, and valid exams is a very difficult task. Retuming exams precludes the use of those test questions in subsequent exams for many years and thus hinders the evaluation of future students. Given the primary goal of exams – to evaluate students’ knowledge – retuming exams would make it more difficult for that goal to be achieved.

**Class Participation.** (20%) This is subjective; we look for participation that contributes to the flow of the discussion both in class and in virtual interactions with your EMBA Executive Leadership classmates on Linkedin. In a perfect world, students will use examples from their work experience (“In my company, we did it this way…”) which illustrate the principles under discussion. It doesn’t hurt to show that you did the reading. You probably want to avoid being the person who causes the other students to roll their eyes when you begin speaking.

**Note on Class Participation**
Participation is an important part of the learning process in this course. The emphasis is on quality participation, as opposed to your quantity of airtime. Your class participation will be evaluated using several criteria, including: 1) offering a unique insight in a class discussion or debate, 2) relating theory to practice by sharing personal experiences that help illuminate the ideas being discussed and 3) demonstrating insights related to assigned readings and cases. In order to participate meaningfully, it’s critical to be prepared via timely completion of readings. Finally, monitor your level of participation to ensure you are contributing and using your “fair” amount of air-time. We’re happy to provide feedback at any time about your level and quality of participation.

This course is tightly designed and students are expected to attend all sessions. **If you cannot attend for any reason, please notify the course RA.**

**Grading & Attendance Policy, continued**

**Students are permitted one absence from the course, and attendance at all other class sessions (barring a medical or religious conflict) is required for a grade of “H.” Attendance at nine of the ten class meetings is therefore necessary, but not sufficient, to receive a grade of “H.”**

A “late penalty” will be applied to a paper that is turned in after the due date by which the late paper will be reduced by one grade (except for medical reasons). For example, if a paper of “H” quality is turned in late, it will be assigned a grade of “HP.”
Text and Readings
Reading assignments are listed under the class session in which they are due. Reading can be found in the course reading book or in the text, The CEO’s Boss: Tough Love in the Boardroom (Columbia Business School Publishing, 2010). Some readings are designated as required for completion before class while others are reference readings whose materials will be covered in the class sessions. In addition, some readings and materials may be handed out in class.

Office Hours with Professor
Please contact us directly to schedule an appointment. We are happy to discuss any aspect of your learning in the course. Also feel free to contact the TA for a meeting or consultation.

Feedback
We welcome dialogue and feedback about any aspect of the course experience.

Class Schedule

Session One
Date/Time: Monday, September 14th
9:00 AM -- Noon

Topics: Course overview
Leadership vs. management
Key personal skills for leadership

Synopsis: Knowing what you stand for as a leader opens the door to leadership for others. Leadership is about coping with change and strategic leadership is about those few things that make the biggest difference. Knowing your behavioral style is an important first step in knowing yourself.

Required reading: Kotter, John, P., What Leaders Really Do.
Klepper, W. M. & Nakamura, Y. T., Corporate Leadership and the Personal Leadership Credo.

Reference reading: Text: Chapter 1, The Social Contract

Tools: Social Styles self-assessment inventory
Leadership lifeline and Credo Assignment

Session Two
Date/Time: Monday, September 14th
1:00 – 4:00 PM

Topic: Negotiation Skills - Part 1

Synopsis: You don't get what you deserve, you get what you negotiate.
Leaders are constantly confronted with the need to negotiate and resolve conflicts. In this session, we’ll consider the dynamics of “enlarging the pie” and claiming as much as possible from it. We’ll highlight common distortions that lead negotiators to leave value on the table and discuss principles for negotiating effectively. This session will draw upon results of the Rio Copa exercise.


Session Three

Date/Time: Tuesday, September 15th
9:00 PM -- Noon

Topic: Negotiation Skills - Part 2

Synopsis: The stakes are high, the stress is higher, and some people not only cope but prevail.

How well you learn to negotiate has major implications for your effectiveness as a leader. In today’s class, we will learn tips used by expert negotiators that relate to the circumstances under which various styles of negotiation are the most successful. We will then put ourselves in these situations and develop our own negotiation style, working to incorporate strategies that we may currently lack.

Session Four

Date/Time: Tuesday, September 15th
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Topics:  Leadership Style
Dynamics of derailment

Synopsis: Your Social Style and your Leadership Practices makeup your Executive Leadership behavior. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) overtakes IQ over time in its importance for executive success. Your Leadership Credo will serve as a capstone assignment and learning experience for this course.

Required Readings: Deogun, Nikhil, Lublin, Joanne, & McKay, Betsey, Tone Deaf.

Gibson, Richard, Fast Fall.

Hogan, Robert. Trouble at the Top: Causes and Consequences of Managerial Incompetence.


Reference Readings: Text, Chapter 2: Tough Love in the Boardroom

Goleman, Daniel, What Makes a Leader

Special Guest
Edward Gormbley, Managing Partner, Worforce Partners
Edward is an entrepreneur with big-company skills and a start-up spirit. He started in the family construction business and went on to start two companies before graduating from college. He then spent a decade in the fertile training ground of General Electric as a corporate finance professional and private equity investor, from which 3i (a FTSE-100 company) recruited him to be the CFO of its North American division. His experiences span numerous industries and over ten countries.

**Tools:** Leadership Practices Inventory

**Session Five**

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, September 16th
9:00 AM -- Noon

**Topic:** Wounded Warrior Project: Leading from the Front

**Synopsis:** In the fall of 2013, Steven Nardizzi, a cofounder and the executive director of the Wounded Warrior Project (WWP), finished reviewing a draft of the organization’s five-year strategic plan. Time had moved unbelievably quickly since 2003, when Nardizzi and several friends and veterans were moved to action by the stories of the first wounded service members returning home from Afghanistan and Iraq. With the 10-year anniversary of the WWP on the horizon, the organization could look back on many successes. Yet for all the organization’s successes, Nardizzi and his team believed that it was facing a significant inflection point.

**Required Readings:** Klepper W. M., Wounded Warrior Project: Leading from the Front

**Reference Readings:** Text: Chapter 3, Why the Right Partnership Matters

**Special Guest:**
Wounded Warrior Project Board/Executive Leadership (TBD)

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**Session Six**

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, September 16th
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Topic:** The CEOs Boss: Tough Love in the Boardroom

**Synopsis:** CEOs requires a partnership with their boss—the Board—in order to be effective executives. Tough love is needed to close any gaps between their capabilities/style and the requirement of the company to address its current challenges. Lessons learned from The Market Basket, family business which consumed the New England press headlines in the summer of 2014—a lack of alignment between the company strategy, the CEO’s leadership requirements and the levers of its business system

**Required reading:** Klepper, W. M. Demoulas Market Basket: A Governance Challenge

Text: Chapter 6, What Directors Need to Know Before Committing to a CEO

Special Guest
Eric Gebaide, Board Member, Demoulas Market Basket
Mr. Gebaide has over 20 years of advising and operating public and privately held technology companies in every phase of their development, as an attorney, merchant and investment banker. Throughout his career, Mr. Gebaide has advised on over 40 successful transactions including mergers, acquisitions, restructurings, bankruptcies, private placements and joint ventures throughout North and South America, Europe and Asia, totaling over $1 billion of value. Mr. Gebaide earned his MBA with honors from Columbia Business School, as well as a JD cum laude and AB from the University of Miami.

Session Seven

Date/Time: Thursday, September 17th
9:00 AM -- Noon

Topic: Strategies for Improving Decision Making

Synopsis: A mind is a terrible thing.

Do you ever find yourself reading the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times and wondering how politicians, respected executives, and analysts could make so many bad decisions? Managers make poor decisions for a variety of reasons. One of the most basic reasons is their reliance on simplifying mental strategies (i.e., heuristics). In this session, you will be encouraged to “think about how you think,” so that you can become more aware of your use of heuristics at the time that (1) you are using them or (2) others are using them on you. Further, we will focus on strategies by which the use of these heuristics can be avoided.


Session Eight

Date/Time: Thursday, September 17th
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Topics: Interpersonal Influence Tactics
Persuasion

Synopsis:
We all know that money is a huge motivator, but what happens when money is taken out of the equation? Leaders must find other ways to persuade and influence others. In this first of two class sessions, we consider various methods of influence that you can and must use to become persuasive leaders. Robert Cialdini has written extensively about six methods of social influence, including those not based on monetary incentives. Our discussion will focus on how to apply these six methods to wield greater influence.

**Readings:**
- What Shamu Taught Me About a Happy Marriage, Amy Sutherland, New York Times.

**Session Nine**

**Date/Time:** Thursday, November 20th  
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Topic:** Change

**Synopsis:** Getting the clowns to run the circus

**Readings:**

**Session Ten**

**Date/Time:** Friday, September 18th  
12:00 PM – 2 PM

**Topics:** Values Based Leadership  
Your Leadership Credos  
Course Integration and Summary

**Synopsis:** You are Executive Leadership in action. Your Credos will define your executive leadership (personal, strategic and interpersonal) for your followers. You’re the best of the best – make a difference!

**Readings:** Klepper, W. M. & Nakamura, Y. T. Leadership in times of crisis.

**Reference Reading:** Text:

**Final Exam**

**Date/Time:** Friday, September 18th  
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM