

REVISED VERSION

**University of Michigan
Ross School of Business**

**Human Behavior and Organizations:
Managing for Excellence in Work Organizations
MO501 – 451**

SYLLABUS

Fall 2009

September 9 – October 21: Wednesday, 7PM – 10PM R0220

November 4 – December 9: Wednesday, 6:30PM – 9:30PM R0220

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1. Overview

This is a course on how to create, foster and manage organizations in which people thrive and perform at their best. It assumes that employee and group thriving is the key to organizational excellence. The challenge in managing from this perspective is how you can design contexts (jobs, organizational cultures, structures, processes) that enable employees and groups to thrive. The challenge at a personal level is how you find and/or create a context in which you thrive and manage at your best. The course maintains this dual focus: (1) on your role as manager, 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 new and exciting paradigm for managerial practice called Positive Organizational Scholarship. The core premise of this paradigm is that managerial excellence (and personal flourishing) is fundamentally tied to creating/enabling organizational contexts that build human strengths and unlock the positive and generative dynamics of vibrant human communities.

2. 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 your theory of practice into use
3. To create opportunities for you to learn about these ideas and tools from: (1) case studies; (2) personal reflection; 3) readings; (4) and class discussion.
4. To create a classroom climate where we model and experience the positive organizing dynamics that we will be studying.

3. 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.

4. 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.

Classroom time will be devoted to extensions, connections, and discussions of prepared materials. You will get the most from each class by participating actively in class discussions each day. Contributions from everyone are critical to the success of the course and to the shared learning experience.

5. Class Participation

Your active and engaged participation is essential—for both your own learning and that of the other students. You have accumulated valuable experience in organizations; your experience provides rich material for helping us to understand human and organizational behavior.

You are expected to attend every class session having read, thought about, and prepared the assigned material (it will not always be reviewed in class). You should be prepared to contribute to all class discussions, demonstrating your preparation by asking questions whenever necessary and by integrating the vocabulary and concepts from the readings into your comments.

Class discussions provide the opportunity to practice speaking and persuasive skills, as well as the ability to listen. Effective class comments may address questions raised by others, integrate material from this and other courses, draw on real-world experiences and observations, or pose new questions to the class. High-quality participation involves knowing when to speak and when to listen or allow others to speak. Avoid comments that are vague, repetitive, unrelated to the current topic, disrespectful of others, or without sufficient foundation. The best class comments:

- make or raise issues that are relevant to the current focus of the class;
- show curiosity and a willingness to experiment;
- use facts and data to support arguments and conclusions;
- take into consideration the ideas already offered by others;
- help to build a positive learning environment for everyone;
- help others feel safe about participating.

6. Best Self Exercise

The document “Reflected Best Self -- Assignment and Instructions” (in your printed course materials) should be used to conduct this assignment.

- Commonality/Theme Analysis (2.5 pages maximum, single spaced, formatted in three columns). Use the three-column format described in Step 3 in “Reflected Best Self: Assignment and Instructions to Participants.” A minimum of three (3) examples for each commonality/theme are expected. You should identify no fewer than 4 and no more than 6 commonality/themes. These 4 – 6 are your key strengths. (50 points)
- Best-Self Portrait (1.5 pages maximum, double spaced). See Step 4 for an example. Every commonality/theme you identify in Step 3 should be included in the portrait. (50 points)

You will be given additional instructions during Class 8. Your Commonality/Theme Analysis and Best Self Portrait are due as a written report at the beginning of Class 12.

If you decide to expand your Reflected Best Self into your Action Plan, then the document “Bringing my Reflected Best Self to Life” (in your printed course materials) will be helpful.

7. Action Plan

Your Action Plan is devoted to achieving a specific goal by applying 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., figures, graphs, or tables). Make sure you refer to each exhibit in the body of the paper.

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

1. Your Goal (20 points)

This is a detailed description of the goal that you have decided to pursue in your Action Plan. Your goal is a future state that you can describe with some detail, with measurables attached to it, and that has a deadline and milestones along the way. Your goal can be work-related or personal, as long as it reflects one or more of the topics of our course. Examples of topics include: job (re)design, job crafting, high performance teams, motivation and rewards, culture, best self, etc.

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 one or more of the topics of our 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 must take place after the end of the semester.

2. Analysis of Current Situation (25 points)

Provide a detailed analysis of the 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). The requirement to analyze a current situation means that your Action Plan cannot be devoted to something that is entirely prospective; it must include something about you and your life that is real now, and that you want to improve.

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 10 to 15 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.
- Your specific objective for each action.
- What you (or others) will do, by when, with whom.
- 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.

8. Evaluation

Your overall course grade is based on these components:

Case analysis (take home midterm)	Written case analysis due at the beginning of Class 8. Hard copies only. No late submissions will be accepted (late submissions earn a grade of 0).	30%
Best-Self exercise	Best Self report due at beginning of Class 12. Hard copies only. No late submissions will be accepted (late submissions earn a grade of 0).	20%
Participation in Online Reciprocity Ring™	At least five (5) requests and five (5) contributions made by our last class meeting.	10%
Your Action Plan	Due no later than 7:00PM, Monday, December 14, 2009. A drop box will be provided for you at the main reception desk at the Ross School. No late submissions will be accepted (late submissions will earn a grade a 0).	40%

Grading policy: I am required to adhere to the Ross School grading policy, which states: “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.”

Class 1

Date: Wednesday, September 9 (7PM – 10PM)

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, 2003.

Online survey #1: Please complete online survey #1 by Friday, September 11 AND before reading the materials for Class 2. You will receive email notification of the survey and how to access it.

Class 2

Date: Wednesday, September 16 (7PM – 10PM)

Topic: **Fostering excellence through building and enabling high-quality connections and generalized reciprocity (positive social capital)**

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

Wayne Baker and Jane E. Dutton, "Enabling positive social capital in organizations." Chapter 18 in Exploring Positive Relationships at Work: Building a Theoretical and Research Foundation. J. Dutton and B. Ragins (Eds.). Lawrence Erlbaum, Inc., 2007.

Rob Cross, Wayne Baker, and Andrew Parker, "What creates energy in organizations?" Sloan Management Review, Summer 2003, pages 51-56.

Optional additional reading: "Relationships: The New Bottom Line in Business." This is chapter 1 from a great book on relationships by Roger Lewin and Birute Regine, Weaving Complexity and Business, New York: Textere, 2001, pages 1-16.

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 2009

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 on September 16, 2009 (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.

Online survey #2: Please complete online survey #2 by Friday, September 18 AND before reading the materials for Class 3. You will receive email notification of the survey and how to access it.

Class 3

Date: Wednesday, September 23 (7PM – 10PM)

Topic: **Fostering excellence through the design of 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.

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?

Class 4

Date: Wednesday, September 30 (7PM – 10PM)

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?

Class 5

Date: Wednesday, October 7 (7PM – 10PM)

Topic: **Fostering excellence through the design of high performance teams**

Case: Taran Swan at Nickelodean Latin America (A)

Readings: "Managing your team" (note)

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 reading: Amy Edmundson, Richard Bohmer and Gary Pisano, "Speeding up team learning," Harvard Business Review, October 2001, pages 125-132.

Class 6

Date: Wednesday, October 14 (7PM – 10PM)

Topic: **Fostering excellence through motivation and rewards**

Case: The Best-Laid Incentive Plans," Harvard Business Review, Jan. 2003, pages 27-33.

Readings: Steven Kerr, "On the folly of rewarding A while hoping for B," Academy of Management Executive, 1995, Vol. 9, No. 1, pages 7-16.

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, 2003, pages 139-154. 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, 2000, pages 99-120.

Class 7

Date: Wednesday, October 21 (NO CLASS MEETING)

Topic: **TAKE-HOME MIDTERM EXAM – Distributed at end of Class 6**

We don't meet for the next two weeks due to midterm exams and fall break. During this period, we have a take-home midterm exam. You will be given the case and instructions at the end of Class 6. Your written case analysis is due at the beginning of Class 8. Only hard copies are accepted. No late papers are accepted (and will earn a grade of 0).

TIME CHANGE!

OUR CLASS WILL MEET FROM 6:30PM to 9:30PM STARTING WITH CLASS 8. This time change is in effect through the end of the course.

Class 8

Date: Wednesday, November 4 (6:30PM – 9:30PM)

Topic: **Fostering excellence through organizational culture**

Readings: Andrew Hargadon and Robert Sutton, "Building an innovation factory," Harvard Business Review, May-June 2000.

During this class meeting you will receive specific instructions for starting your Best Self Exercise. Be sure to bring "Reflected Best Self -- Assignment and Instructions" and "Bringing my Reflected Best Self to Life" to this class meeting.

Class 9

Date: Wednesday, November 11 (6:30 – 9:30)

Topic: **Managing Crises (Cultivating compassion through leadership)**

Case: The Heart of Reuters (A)

Reading: J. E. Dutton, J. P. Frost, M. Worline, J. Lilius and J. Kanov, "Leading in traumatic times." Harvard Business Review, January 2002.

Preparation questions:

1. Identify important actions that Reuters took in response to the 9/11 trauma. In doing so, make sure that you choose the actions that you believe were most pivotal.
2. What made it possible for Reuters to take the actions you identified in Q1?
3. What was the role of leadership in explaining the pattern of response?
4. What do you think Reuters would need to do in order to retain the learning from this experience for future crises? (e.g., how could they make the lessons stick?)

Class 10

Date: Wednesday, November 18 (6:30pm – 9:30PM)

Topic: **Fostering Excellence through Organizational Design**

Case: AES Honeycomb (A) (to be distributed in Class 9)

Preparation questions:

1. Why are Sant and Bakke feeling pressure in the summer of 1992? As Sant, what would be your concerns?
2. What are the origins of Sant and Bakke's problems? What's your diagnosis of the Cedar Bay and Shady Point episodes?
3. What changes, in any, would you advise Sant and Bakke to endorse?
4. AES founders thought they were creating a new form of business enterprise. In your opinion, is there anything new or distinctive in the AES approach?
5. What should they say to AES shareholders about AES values?

Class 11

Date: **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23 (6:30PM – 9:30PM) Note change of day!**

Topic: **Managing Change (Positive emotions and resilience)**

Case: B. Joseph White: Resilience in Action (to be distributed and discussed in class)

Readings: Barbara. L. Fredrickson, "The Value of Positive Emotions." American Scientist, July-August 2003.

Class 12

Date: Wednesday, December 2 (6:30PM – 9:30PM)

Topic: **Managing Yourself (Building on your strengths and the strengths of others)**

Reading: Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander, Chapter 4: Being a contribution. In The Art of Possibility, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2000.

Your Best Self report is due at the beginning of this class meeting. We will use the results in class. You will be given complete information and instructions in a prior class meeting. Please make sure you give yourself ample time to complete the Best Self process!

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.

Online survey #3: Please complete online survey #3 by Friday, December 4. You will receive email notification of the survey and how to access it.

Class 13

Date: Wednesday, December 9 (6:30PM – 9:30PM)

Topic: **Organizational Change and Revitalization**

Case: Implementing POS at Prudential

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