



The Ohio State University
Fisher College of Business
Department of Management & Human Resources

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Course Overview

A goal of almost every individual is to be a part of an organization at some point in his/her life. Whether large or small, organizations consist of complex relationships among people. These relationships can influence the success or failure of individuals, groups, or organizations as a whole. This course will provide an overview of topics relating to the behavior of individuals in an organizational setting.

Throughout the course we will examine individual-, group-, and organizational-level issues and the management skills needed to be an effective and successful organizational member. For example, we will discuss what the individual brings to the organization (e.g., abilities, experiences, biases, personality) and how that can affect behaviors and relationships with others; we will examine the role of groups and teams in organizations and the conflicts and problems that can arise within them (e.g., how do you reward members?); and, we will examine the effect of organization change on the relationships with and among organizational members.

Readings, assignments, exercises and cases will be used to highlight the issues and problems that face organizations and their members and the skills needed to resolve them. At course completion, you should have:

1. a familiarity with the current topics in organizational behavior, such as motivation, engagement, diversity, teamwork, conflict, politics, leadership, cooperation and socialization;
2. the ability to ask the questions in order to apply these concepts appropriately to real situations;
3. a greater understanding of our role as organizational members, at both individual and group levels;
4. skills enabling you to identify, evaluate and resolve a variety of management issues.

Life in the Classroom

This will not be a lecture course. Classroom discussion is a vital part of the learning experience and is important for your grade (see below). You will need to come to class prepared to discuss the day's readings and to respond to the ideas and comments of others. I will facilitate a dialogue among the class participants rather than deliver a

monologue. I expect your interactions to be informed, well-reasoned and constructive. I expect classroom etiquette to follow “concert rules.” NOTE: Audio or video recording of the class is not generally allowed (speak with professor to request an exception).

Required Readings

Almost all readings will be made available online. These readings include case studies, short articles from professional and academic journals, and chapters from books. Some will be free and provided directly to our Carmen/Canvas account. Others will be made available for purchase through Harvard. You will find information about how to purchase from Harvard on Carmen/Canvas.

We will have one book to read for this class. It is Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness by Thaler & Sunstein. (ISBN-10: 014311526X ISBN-13: 978-0143115267)

Please note that there may be handouts provided (e.g., articles, cases, exercises or other readings) as needed and that not all class materials are discussed to the same extent.

Course Requirements

Students will be evaluated on the following.

Individual Written Analyses (40% of your grade)

Everyone is required to write *two written analyses*, one roughly 2-3 pages in length and the other roughly 4-5 pages in length.

- (1) The first will be an analytical essay due at the start of class, January 16th (15% of your grade);
- (2) For the second is a case analysis of “Henry Tam and MGI Team” due at the start of class on March 1st (25% of your grade):

Class Contributions (25% of your grade)

There are two elements to the grade of class contribution.

Part 1, 20%: This course requires a great deal of student involvement on a day-to-day basis. Each class period will include discussion, activities, or exercises that will require students to be in-class and prepared. Students will be graded on the quality of their comments in class, not the quantity. Quality is judged based on your ability to add substantively to class discussions or to advance the class discussion, and your contributions to small group exercises and discussions. Contribution grading looks something like this:

- 0 points: not present
- 1 point: in class, but just a warm body

- 2-6: quality of comments (a quantity, not quality, commenter will usually score in the low numbers here)
- negative points: for any disruptions to class including but not limited to regular tardiness, sidebar conversations, excessive contributions, or “bogus” contributions.

I may call on students but **VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION** is what will be most important for your grade. Therefore, it is up to you to make sure your voice is heard. **IT IS ALSO UP TO YOU TO ASK FOR FEEDBACK ON YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS.** I reserve the right to use pop-quizzes, the scores of which will be added to your participation grade.

Our class has a site on Carmen. Besides gathering materials through shared files, you may also be asked to use Carmen to participate in conversations or discussions prior to coming to class. Your contributions in Carmen will also be factored into your contribution grade. This system is in place for your benefit so feel free to use it regularly to make comments or queries to me and to your colleagues in the class.

Part 2, 5%: As business students, it is important that you keep up-to-date on business news—both for application of classroom concepts to the business world and to be able to converse intelligently about business issues. For this assignment, I ask that you find a current event and link it to our class in a one-page document (yes, it can be single spaced). Acceptable business periodicals for this assignment are: *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *Business Week*, *The Economist*, *Fortune*, *Forbes* and *FastCompany* or the like. The news item must be current (appearing within a week or two of when you write about it) and business related. I will be especially interested in your ability to make a connection to the class and to apply what you’ve learned (read: NOT “this article talked about compensation, and our class did too!”).

Please hand in a **copy of the article** along with your **one-page analysis**. Depending on our class time, you may be called on to discuss your current event, although I cannot guarantee everyone will have this chance. But to improve my odds that I don’t get the majority on the last day of class, I’ve divided the class into 3 blocks based on last name. Please try to hand in your current event during your assigned “window” or earlier if you find something you want to write about before then.

January 11-February 1	February 1-March 6	March 6-April 19
Last name A-G	Last name H-P	Last name R-Z

Group Project (35% of your grade)

OSU HR Department has agreed to serve as our project site. More details will be provided throughout the semester (and working with another organization always

requires flexibility). OSU HR has provided 3 employee focus areas that represent HR challenges. Two teams (5 students per team) will be assigned to each focus area:

- Young Professionals – attraction (Why come to work at OSU?)
- Entry-Level – retention (Why stay at OSU? What value is there for me?)
- Long-term Career – engagement (How do we get employees to feel engaged after 15+ years?)

Each team will work independently tackling the problem(s) (research literature, competitive analysis, analysis of data, solution creation). This project will also involve data: analysis of data provided by the project partners, and data collected by you through focus groups, and/or surveys of leaders and employees in the relevant areas. After doing research and collecting information, you will develop a plan to resolve the key issue. Note that attraction, retention, and engagement issues may all be symptoms rather than problems themselves. Be on the lookout for that underlying core issue. In designing your solution, each team will be asked to incorporate ideas from the book Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness by Thaler & Sunstein.

Teams will present on the presentation day their research, diagnosis of the root problem and potential solution(s) for the representatives from OSU HR. This should include your proposed nudge(s) that you believe will help solve the issues as well as nudge(s) that you rejected and why you made the choices you did.

The general timeline/procedure will be:

- 2/8: OSU HR representatives will be at kickoff. They will discuss the specific issues for each of these groups and why they chose them. Be ready to ask them clarifying questions.
- Between kickoff and the presentation, you will gather data, analyze it, read more of the nudge book and related literature, and build a solution. Each team should appoint a contact person who will serve as liaison with the OSU HR representative. (See syllabus for various deadlines).
 - They have data. Lots of it. That is great but can be overwhelming. Working in your team, determine what specifically you will need and request it early. The more focused here the better for you.
 - Building off of that data, build focus group questions and determine who you want in your focus groups (e.g., all long-tenured in one, all short-tenured in another; or mixed groups; how many in each). Make request to OSU HR. NOTE: we may need to clear our focus group questions with HR so make sure you get to this early so you do not delay your project. Also, getting employees to a focus group might take time too.
 - We hope to dedicate one morning (March 8, tentatively) to focus groups. This may not work out. Plan to gather focus group data on your own time and if this works out, great and if not, you have a plan.
- 4/12: Final Presentations/Projects Due to OSU HR Representatives & me

I expect highly professional conduct and products from all teams. Additional information will be provided on a regular basis throughout the semester. Group members' grades will be based on both their work product and peer evaluations of their group contributions.

Additional Notes

OSU Disability Policy: The University strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. You are also welcome to register with Student Life Disability Services to establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu; 098 Baker Hall, 113 W. 12th Avenue.

Academic Misconduct: The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct, Section 3335-23-04 defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, possession of unauthorized materials during an examination and creating a hostile learning environment. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct. The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct may constitute "Academic Misconduct." Sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University. For more information, please reference: <http://oaa.osu.edu/coamfaqs.html#academicmisconductstatement>

Written Analyses Suggestions

Here are some general “dos” and “don’ts” about the case analyses assignments.

- You can get into trouble if you spend too much time/space on case facts and do not provide adequate analysis. Use the facts of the case to back up your conclusions and ideas. Assume I’ve read the case and know the assignment.
- Another problem...Drawing conclusions without the supporting arguments. Here’s an example: “XYZ’s process of [blank] did not support [concept a] and therefore failed to support [concept b].” This will work ONLY if the supporting framework is in place...why doesn’t the process support concept a? Why does not supporting a necessarily mean no support for b? Support comes from both your analysis and the materials (e.g., case, readings).
- A suggestion: Start by identifying the problem/concept and build your arguments from the materials.
- Another suggestion: Put the analysis that is running through your head on to the paper so I can see it.
- Good writing and cogent arguments are a plus.
- Look at both the big picture and the details...try to achieve a balance.
- Careful...try to not look at only one side of the argument and ignore the other. Taking a balanced perspective will aid in how you frame your arguments.
- And be consistent throughout...taking a position in question #1 and then the opposite position in question #2 is confusing to me. You cannot have it both ways.



WEEK 1

January 9, Introduction

READINGS:

- Case: handout

January 11, Do Managers Matter? (Inputs and Outcomes of People Management)

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: Google's Project Oxygen
- "Google's 8 Point Plan..." NYT Article

ASSIGNMENT: Ahead of today's class, please visit our Carmen/Canvas site and in the Discussion labeled "Boss Discussion" write a short reflection (few sentences) on a memorable boss you have had or have currently (no names please). What made this person memorable (positively or negatively)?

WEEK 2 (FIRST WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE)

January 16, Innovation and Creativity (Assignment #1 DUE)

READINGS:

- Hindo, B. At 3M, a Struggle Between Creativity and Efficiency, *BusinessWeek*, June 11, 2007.
- Lashinsky, Adam, How Apple Works, *Fortune*, August 25, 2011
- Netflix Culture: <http://jobs.netflix.com/culture>
- Malcom Gladwell, "Why do we equate genius with precocity" *New Yorker*, October 20 2008

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #1 (TO BE HANDED IN and UPLOADED TO CARMEN):

Please write an essay of about 2-3 pages on this: Is creativity and innovation in organizations more about people or place? Please make sure to incorporate our class into your analysis. Also, feel free to provide personal examples if they help you make your points but do not rely on them solely.

January 18, No Class (trip to CA!)

WEEK 3

January 23, Personality: Information or pigeon-holing?

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: "A day in the life of Alex Sanders..."
- Adam Grant "MBTI, If You Want Me Back, You Need to Change Too," LinkedIn, September 22nd, 2013.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20130922141533-69244073-mbti-if-you-want-me-back-you-need-to-change-too?trk=mp-reader-card>

ASSIGNMENT: Ahead of today's class, please visit our Carmen/Canvas site and take the personality test (short version) that I have posted. Please bring your results to class but know that I will not require you to share them (so be honest!).

QUESTIONS: Do you think organizations should use personality testing? If so, for what? If you have taken a personality test in the past, do you think it was an accurate reflection of you? Consider...does your answer to Q2 influence your answer to Q1?

January 25, Identity & Persuasion: Do others see me like I see me?

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: Carla Ann Harris...
- Goffman "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life"

QUESTIONS: On the one hand, there is the desire from an identity perspective to be "authentic" and on the other, Goffman's view that we are all managing impressions and thus "actors." Think, ponder and be ready to discuss!

EXERCISE: We will be doing an exercise in class. Prior to coming to class, please think of up to 5 "identities" you have. For example, some for me might be: professor, wife, mother, woman, Midwesterner.

PROJECT NOTE: Select project team members (be careful to get a mix of individual skill sets). We will select project topic. Begin to do background reading on project. Gather materials on competitive environment.

WEEK 4

January 30, Motivation: Changing Direction

READINGS:

- Read this first...Case: Boyle, D.C. (1992). Employee motivation that works, HRMagazine, p. 83-89.
- Rao, H. & Sutton, R.I. "Bad to Great: The path to scaling up excellence." McKinsey & Company, February 2014.
- Dan & Chip Heath "Get laziness on your side" FastCompany May 1, 2008.

ASSIGNMENT: Ahead of today's class, please visit our Carmen/Canvas site and in the Discussion labeled "Motivation Discussion" write a short reflection (few sentences) on what you find motivating and/or demotivating?

QUESTIONS: What do you think about Boyle's system to motivate workers in his company? Did your opinion change after you read the other two articles? If so, how? If not, why not?

February 1, Motivation: Does Compensation Solve It?

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: Engstrom Auto Mirror Plant, HBS Case #2175.
- Kerr, S. "On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B" Academy of Management Executive, Reprint Feb 1995.

QUESTIONS: What are the causes of the problems (not symptoms) at Engstrom? What would you change and what effect would it have on motivation?

PROJECT NOTE: At this point you should have completed your background on OSU as an employer and have started analysis of the competitive landscape. Appoint someone to be your liaison.

WEEK 5 (PROJECT KICK-OFF!)

February 6, What is a "nudge?" And how do they work?

READINGS:

- Thaler & Sunstein book up to p. 102
- Please read all materials relating to OSU HR posted on Carmen

ASSIGNMENT: As a team, come to class with 5 questions that you would like to have answered by OSU HR. Also, come to class with an accounting of your team members' skills, preferences, constraints and the like in preparation for how you might divide tasks.

February 8, Project Kick off! OSU HR visits us.

READINGS:

- None. However, it might help if you research on your own about nudges and OSU HR (lots of data online).

QUESTIONS: Be ready to listen, take notes, and ask questions!

WEEK 6

February 13, It's close to Valentine's Day, Let's talk about our feelings

READINGS:

- Case: Connors Freight Lines, from Wagner, J.A. III & J.R. Hollenbeck (1992). Management of Organizational Behavior. NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- *SLW here...note that you do not have a lot of reading for today. Make progress on your project!*

EXERCISE: We will do an in-class exercise.

QUESTIONS: Prepare the questions at the end of our little case for today.

February 15, Leaders and Feelings and Motivation, oh my!

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: Alice in Wonderland (A)
- Sutton, R.I. True leaders are also managers, HBR.

QUESTIONS: Is Marike a manager? A leader? Or both? What does gender have to do with it, if anything? Said another way, can male and female leaders behave the same way and get the same results? Why or why not?

PROJECT NOTE: Data requests for OSU HR should be in their hands. Start thinking about data you might want to collect from employees in focus groups to augment.

WEEK 7

February 20, Is Leadership necessary in all groups?

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: "Army Crew Team (A)"
- Read...Duhigg, C. "What Google learned from its quest to build..."

QUESTIONS: What is causing the problems with the varsity boat? How would you solve them? What theory(ies) support your ideas? Also, when is it better for a group to be leaderless vs led?

February 22, Is Leadership about Power?

READINGS:

- Case: The case of Dick Spencer, from Wagner, J.A. III & J.R. Hollenbeck (1992). Management of Organizational Behavior. NJ: Prentice-Hall.

- Huber, V.L. (1981). The sources, uses, and conservation of managerial power, Personnel, p. 62-71.
- Grant, Gino & Hoffman “The hidden advantages of quiet bosses” HBR article.

QUESTIONS: Prepare the questions at the end of the case.

PROJECT NOTE: Research on topic should be in process. Data analyses should be moving along. Focus group questions should be close to finalized (shorter = easier to collect for you and for them).

WEEK 8 (WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE)

February 27, Groups and Leaders and Conflict

READINGS:

- Steward “Voting to hire a chief without meeting him,” NYT, September 21, 2011.
- Cosier, R.A. and C.R. Schwenk (1990). Agreement and Thinking alike: Ingredients for poor decisions, Academy of Management Executive, 4(1), 69-74.
- Janis, I. (1982). Groupthink, Second Edition, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, Chapter 1 and 2.

ASSIGNMENT: Ahead of today’s class, please visit our Carmen/Canvas site and in the Discussion labeled “Conflict Discussion” write a short reflection (few sentences) on a time when conflict undermined or benefitted a decision-making process (no names please).

March 1, Putting it together, Assignment #2 Due

READINGS:

- Harvard Case: Henry Tam and the MGI Team

ASSIGNMENT: Please see document posted on Carmen/Canvas for details about this assignment.

PROJECT NOTE: Focus group questions should be finalized.

WEEK 9

March 6, Back to Nudge

READINGS:

- Half will read and report out on “Money” section
- Half will read and report out on “Health” section

QUESTIONS: How might nudges be used for attraction, retention, and engagement?

March 8, Time for Focus Groups? (we take Ty Shepfer's class too)

PROJECT NOTE: I am hoping we can schedule a bunch of focus groups for today. If not, we will read the case/reading scheduled on the last day of class.

SPRING BREAK (ENJOY!)

WEEK 10

March 20, Ty Shepfer takes this day

March 22, Ty Shepfer takes this day

WEEK 11

March 27, Group Process

READINGS:

- TBD

March 29, Group Process II

READINGS:

- TBD

PROJECT NOTE: Teams should be 99% finished with their projects. I set aside this week in case any groups needed help with process and/or with content of their projects. If you are all in great shape, I can provide instead other (fun!) materials to cover here. DO NOT wait until this week to make progress.

WEEK 12

April 3, Practice Presentations ½ the groups

April 5, Practice Presentation ½ the groups

PROJECT NOTE: Each group will get a chance to show us what they have got and get feedback. Remember, this isn't just a competition, but it is also an opportunity to learn from and help one another.

WEEK 13 (OSU HR PRESENTATIONS/PROJECT BOOKS DUE)

April 10, Persuasion

READINGS:

- Cialdini, R. (2001) "Harnessing the Power of Persuasion" HBR, 79(9), 72-81.
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April 12, FINAL PRESENTATIONS! PROJECTS DUE (we take Ty Shepfer's class too)

WEEK 14

April 17, Whew! Circling Back and Closing Loops

READINGS:

- Revisiting the Case: Google's Project Oxygen

ASSIGNMENT: Please prepare your team member feedback forms to turn in to me.

QUESTIONS: The OSU HR project...what did you learn?

April 19, Overview Day, Something to give you pause...

READINGS:

- Case: Carter Racing (A)
- Harvard Reading: Hammond, J., R. Kenney, and H. Raiffa (1998). The hidden traps in decision-making, HBR, Sept-Oct, p. 3-9.

QUESTIONS: Please prepare the following questions prior to coming to class. What do you do? Race or not? Why did you make that decision? What factors do you consider?