

MGMT-GB.3165, Section 10
Power and Professional Influence
DRAFT SYLLABUS – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Fall 2015
Time: Monday, 6-9PM
Location: TBD

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for individuals interested in learning more about the art and science of influence in organizations. Many people are ambivalent, if not disdainful, of those who seek to wield power and influence at work, but power and influence are key mechanisms by which *things get done*.

For those considering careers in management, it is important to be able to diagnose situations as opportunities to exercise power and influence in order to form and implement new strategies. In addition, managers are usually on the receiving end of these processes. An astute manager knows how to anticipate moves that others will make, how to block or avoid them when they have undesirable consequences, and how to help these moves succeed when their consequences are beneficial.

The course aims to provide you with “political intelligence” in a sense. After taking this course, you will be able to: (1) diagnose the true distribution of power in organizations, (2) build your own professional sources of power, and (3) develop influence techniques so that you can resolve conflict more effectively, foster cooperation, and lead change in organizations. These skills will be invaluable throughout your career.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

You will be evaluated on the quality of your contributions to class discussions (30%), one report of your own performance in an out-of-class simulation (10%), and three brief self-reflective and analytic memos (40%).

Participation (30%)

Much of what you gain from this course will be an exposure to the ideas and insights of other students. As such, it is essential that you come to class prepared to share your perspective with others and to test your analyses against the analyses of your classmates.

All class sessions will involve active discussion based on the readings and cases, with an emphasis both on theoretical questions and practical implications. You should be prepared to share your ideas and to listen to and interpret the issues presented by others. The use of laptops is not permitted in our classroom in order to avoid distracting your classmates; however, you may use tablets to refer to the cases during class. Keep in mind that your goal should be to contribute high quality, rather than high quantity, comments and questions. High quality

contributions reflect (a) rigorous analysis or diagnosis, (b) integration across material, and/or (c) thoughtful recommendations for the characters in cases or your peers in the classroom.

Attendance and participation in each class session is expected, and it is graded for each meeting rather than using a summary judgment at the end of the course. If you must miss a class, it is essential that you notify me at least 24 hours in advance so I can make arrangements for any in-class exercises. You will receive no class participation credit for any classes missed. If you miss more than two class meetings, you will receive an incomplete. These attendance and class participation policies apply to any and all reasons for missing class.

“Your Own Network” Worksheet (10%)

Due: Session 3 at the beginning of class

Case Analysis on Critical Career Choices: John Dean (20%)

Write an analysis of the John Dean case (the *Blind Ambition* readings), 3 double-spaced pages maximum, 1-inch margins, 12-point font. Be sure to address each of the questions below:

1. How did Dean get into this mess? What were the factors outside of his control, and what were attributes of him as a person?
2. Using the Model of Career Development introduced in Session 4, how has Dean mismanaged his career?
3. What specific steps could Dean have taken to avoid this situation?

Due: Session 5 at the beginning of class

Memos (40%)

You will write three memos designed to help you analyze past and present episodes in your career and strategize for your future. These memos should be brief: each one is limited to 2 double-spaced pages, 1-inch margins, 12-point font. As a set, they are intended to help you reflect on and apply course concepts to areas and issues important to your professional goals. Refer to “Tips for Influential Writing” attached to the Memo A assignment on NYUClasses.

MEMO A (10%): What are your goals, with respect to power and influence, for the next five years of your career? e.g., What position(s) would you like to attain? What do you want to accomplish in those positions? What broader goals do you have that will require some degree of power and influence? etc.

For many of you, this may be a difficult memo to write because you are not used to adopting a long-term perspective in thinking about your career path. Nevertheless, identifying a set of long-term goals is a necessary first step in taking a course such as this. Having no clear set of goals is like having no clear sense of direction. Although you may struggle with this memo, please give it your best effort.

Due: Session 2 at the beginning of class

MEMO B (15%): Describe two situations in your professional life, one in which you have flourished and one in which you have had difficulty. What aspects of your personality or reputation contributed to your outcomes in each situation? What about your relationships or resources contributed to your outcomes in each situation?

Due: Session 4 at the beginning of class

MEMO C (15%): Describe a situation you have faced in your career that relates to a point we discussed in class (NOTE: The situation must be different from any situations discussed in prior memos). I don't want you to regurgitate what we have covered in class. Instead, apply the concepts we have introduced to dissect a particular episode or relationship you now better understand.

The purpose of this memo is to present thoughts and reactions to the material covered in class. The criteria for this assignment are similar to the criteria for a good comment in class. That is, the memo should be relevant, concise, and extend the analysis of the class material in a useful way. In writing this memo, you should assume that we share the common ground of the class experience and start from there. Please do not waste time summarizing the case or the class discussion.

Due: Session 6 at the beginning of class

COURSE MATERIALS

Required

- Power and Professional Influence Case/Reading packet fee (online at NYU Bookstore)
- Class handout fee (online at NYU Bookstore)
- Change Management: Power and Influence simulation fee (online at Harvard Business Publishing for Educators)

Optional

- Pfeffer, Jeffrey. (2010). Power: Why Some People Have It and Others Don't. Harper Business.
- Cialdini, Robert B. (2008). Influence: Science and Practice. (5th edition). Allyn & Bacon.

Additional readings and other course materials will be provided on *NYUClasses* or handed out in class.

LAPTOP/TABLET POLICY

No laptops are allowed in class, except on the day of the Change Simulation. The course depends too much on your participation to be distracted by your classmates' screens. Tablets are permitted only to refer to the cases during our case discussions.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

Session 1: Naïve Influence: Introduction to the Course

Readings: Jick & Gentile "Donna Dubinsky" *HBS case*

Case: Donna Dubinsky and Apple Computer, Inc.
1. Why was Dubinsky initially successful at Apple Computer? (1981-1984)
2. How and why did things begin to unravel for Dubinsky?
3. How did Dubinsky react and why?
4. What should Dubinsky have done differently?
5. What were Debi Coleman's advantages and weaknesses?

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, "Introduction"
Pfeffer, Ch 1, "It Takes More than Performance"

Session 2: Reputation, Personality, and Power

***REMINDER: Memo A is due at the beginning of class.**

Readings: Caro, "On His Way" Ch. 13 of *The Path to Power*
Caro, "In Tune" Ch. 16 of *The Path to Power*
Auletta, "Power, Greed and Glory on Wall Street" *Times* article
Auletta, "The Men, the Money, the Merger" *Times* article
Reingold, "Rush Hour" (Profile of Russell Simmons) *Fast Company* article

Case: Lyndon Johnson (Questions for the Caro readings)
1. What individual attributes did Johnson possess that were sources of power?
2. What did Johnson do to build his reputation?
3. What did effective performance mean to Johnson?

Case: Lehman Brothers (Questions for the Auletta readings)
1. What did Glucksman do to orchestrate Peterson's ouster?
2. How did Peterson's personality and interests contribute to his fate?
3. What happened to Glucksman's power base once he took over?
4. What role did Glucksman's personality play in his own outcomes?
5. What should Glucksman have done differently?

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, Ch 2, "The Personal Qualities That Bring Influence"
Pfeffer, Ch 8, "Building a Reputation: Perception Is Reality"
Cialdini, Ch 1, "Weapons of Influence"

Session 3: Building Your Bases of Power: Resources and Relationships

***REMINDER: Complete “Your Own Network Worksheet” and bring to class.**

Readings: McGinn, “Heidi Roizen” *HBS case*

Case (in class video): Excerpts from Rick Burns’ “New York” about Robert Moses

Case: Heidi Roizen

1. What steps did Roizen take, over various jobs, to develop a network? To maintain it?
2. What are the strengths of Roizen’s network as we see it at the end of the case? The weaknesses?
3. What suggestions would you give Roizen for adjusting and maintaining her network as she becomes more involved as a high-tech VC?

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, Ch 5, “Making Something Out of Nothing: Creating Resources”
Pfeffer, Ch 6, “Building Efficient and Effective Social Networks”

Session 4: Allies, Trust, and Conflict Resolution

***REMINDER: Memo B is due at the beginning of class.**

Readings: Hill, “Amelia Rogers at Tassani Communications” *HBS case*
Hill & Rennella, “Martha Rinaldi” *HBS case*

Case: Amelia Rogers at Tassani Communication

1. What is going on here? Why did Burns call Johnson? Why did Johnson call Rogers?
2. What does Rogers know about the client?
3. Would you describe this as a political situation? Why?
4. What should Rogers do? Should she speak to Burns? Should she speak to Paglia? (Think in very concrete terms here).

Case: Martha Rinaldi

1. Based on what you know before she starts at Potomac Waters, did Martha Rinaldi take the right job?
2. In what ways did Rinaldi misread the power relationships and dynamics of her colleagues? What did Follett (her boss), Vaughan (her co-worker), and Rinaldi all do to contribute to the issues that developed?
3. What were Follett’s, Vaughan’s, and Rinaldi’s sources of power?
4. What else could Rinaldi have done to navigate these relationships more effectively? Think of specific moments when she could have taken specific actions.
5. Should Rinaldi leave Potomac Waters? If not, who should she talk to and what should she say to improve her situation going forward?

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, Ch 3, “Choosing Where to Start”
Pfeffer, Ch 9, “Overcoming Opposition and Setbacks”
Pfeffer, Ch 10, “The Price of Power”
Cialdini, Ch 2, “Reciprocation: The Old Give and Take...and Take”
Cialdini, Ch 5, “Liking: The Friendly Thief”

Session 5: Interpersonal Influence

***REMINDER: Case Analysis of John Dean is due at the beginning of class.**

Readings: Dean, "Reaching for the Top, Touching Bottom" Ch. 1 of *Blind Ambition*
Dean, "Blind Ambition" excerpts of *HBS case* (continuation of "Reaching for the Top, Touching Bottom")

In-Class Activity: Kidney Exercise

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, Ch 11, "How—and Why—People Lose Power"
Pfeffer, Ch 12, "Power Dynamics: Good for Organizations, Good for You?"
Cialdini, Ch 6, "Authority: Directed Deference"
Cialdini, Ch 7, "Scarcity: The Rule of the Few"

Session 6: Practicing Professional Influence: Organizational Change Simulation

***REMINDER: Memo C is due at the beginning of class.**

There is no preparation needed for today's class, but you will be assigned to pairs that will need to bring a laptop to class.

Optional (after class): Cialdini, Ch 4, "Social Proof: Truths are Us"
Cialdini, Ch 3, "Commitment & Consistency: Hobgoblins of the Mind"