

**MGMT-GB.3165, Section 10
Power and Professional Influence**

Draft Syllabus for Fall, 2016 – Subject to change

**Fall 2015
Time: Monday, 6-9PM
Location: KMC 5-140**

**Instructor: Joe Magee
Tel: (212) 998-0108
jmagee@stern.nyu.edu**

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%), two brief self-reflective and analytic memos (35%), one worksheet documenting your own influence network (10%), and a case analysis (25%).

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.

Memos (35%)

You will write two 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 (15%): What are your goals, with respect to power and influence, for the next five years of your career? Be as concrete as possible in describing your goals (e.g., What position(s) would you like to attain?), discuss why they are important to you (e.g., What do you hope to accomplish in those positions?), and articulate specific action steps that you plan to take to achieve those goals (e.g., What is something you can do within the next year to make progress toward one of your goals?).

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 medium-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: On NYUClasses prior to Session 2

MEMO B (20%): Analyze a situation you have faced in your career that relates to a point we discussed in class. 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: On NYUClasses prior to Session 4

“Your Own Influence Network” Worksheet (10%)

Due: Session 3 at the beginning of class

Case Analysis on Crucial Career Moves: John Dean (25%)

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 listed under Session 6 for this reading.

Due: On NYUClasses prior to Session 6

COURSE MATERIALS

Required

- Power and Professional Influence coursepack available online at Harvard Business Publishing: <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/39290679>. You will need to create an account if you have not purchased any material at this website before. Most of the readings are contained in this coursepack, unless I could provide them for free on NYUClasses (denoted as such in the syllabus).

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.

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 (Sep 19): 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 (Sep 26): Reputation, Personality, and Power

***REMINDER: Memo A is due on NYUClasses prior to class.**

Caro, "On His Way" Ch. 13 of *The Path to Power*

Caro, "In Tune" Ch. 16 of *The Path to Power*

Isaacson “The Reality Distortion Field” Ch. 11 of *Steve Jobs*

[NYUClasses] Reingold, “Rush Hour” (Profile of Russell Simmons) *Fast Company* article

Questions for each reading:

1. What individual attributes did Johnson, Jobs, and Simmons possess that were/are sources of power?
2. What did Johnson, Jobs, and Simmons do to build their reputations?
3. What did effective performance mean to Johnson, Jobs, and Simmons?

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 (Oct 10): 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 (Oct 17): Communication and Interpersonal Influence

***REMINDER: Memo B is due on NYUClasses prior to class.**

In-Class Activities: Analysis of Your Own Network and Kidney Exercise

Optional (after class): 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"
Cialdini, Ch 7, "Scarcity: The Rule of the Few"

Session 5 (Oct 24): Practicing Professional Influence: Organizational Change Simulation

You will be assigned to pairs that will need to bring a laptop to class.

Readings: Change Management Simulation Background Materials: 3 documents available on NYUClasses/Resources/Readings (not in coursepack)

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

Session 6 (Oct 31): Crucial Career Moves for Power and Influence

***REMINDER: Case Analysis of John Dean is due on NYUClasses prior to class.**

Readings: Hill & Rennella, "Martha Rinaldi" *HBS case*
Dean, "Reaching for the Top, Touching Bottom" Ch. 1 of *Blind Ambition*
[NYUClasses] Dean, "Blind Ambition" excerpts of *HBS case* (continuation of "Reaching for the Top, Touching Bottom")

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?

Case: John Dean

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. How has Dean mismanaged his career with respect to building relationships and his reputation?
3. What specific steps could Dean have taken to avoid this situation?

Optional (after class): Pfeffer, Ch 3, "Choosing Where to Start"
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"