Course Description

Designed for public and non-profit managers rather than human resource professionals, this course gives a broad overview of HR dynamics and responsibilities. We’ll begin by considering different approaches to HR and placing them within the overall context of the public sector and non-profit organizations. Then we’ll cover basic personnel functions including recruitment, career development, performance appraisal, providing feedback and job design. Finally, we will explore current issues within personnel management, including diversity and identity at work and the role of unions.

The course focuses on “developing” human resources rather than the traditional notion of “managing” personnel. Its central theme is how HR policies and practices can enhance the learning and growth of individual employees, work teams and the whole organization, thereby ensuring high-level performance. We will emphasize practical application through case discussions and reflection on students’ experiences at work and in school. While the course will focus on values-based organizations, it will draw on ideas and materials from the public, non-profit and for-profit sectors.

By the end of the course you should: understand the HR responsibilities of a typical manager in a public or nonprofit organization; be familiar with traditional approaches to different HR functions as well as newer, learning-oriented approaches; and have an enhanced capacity to reflect on and, if you choose, modify your ways of thinking and acting in the world.

Course Expectations

- Since Managing Public Service Organizations is a prerequisite for this course, you will be expected to be familiar with the material from that course. Most importantly, this course assumes that you know how to analyze a case, both for class discussion and for a written memo.
- I’ll often ask you to reflect on your own work experience as part of thinking about and applying new concepts. Many of you come in with at least a year or two of full-time work experience, which should be directly relevant. For those of you without this
experience, draw on internships, summer jobs... even your experience as a student in a large organization like NYU may well be relevant.

- You will learn more if you come prepared to reflect on your own experience, your work styles, preferences and behaviors, and your embedded ways of thinking. Given the course’s emphasis on growth and development, you will have opportunities to assess and modify how you think and act in the world.

- As you are graduate students, I assume that you can take responsibility for your own learning. That is an abstract concept, but what it means (to me) in practice is that you do your best to find a meaningful way to connect with the material, to make it relevant for you. It also means that if there is something you don’t understand or is not working for you, you will let me know. You may also have expectations of me -- you can let me know those as well.

- While I hope you will learn from me and the course materials, I also expect that much of your learning -- and mine -- will be from each other. For that reason, class participation is extremely important and, therefore, so is class preparation by doing and reflecting on the readings.

Course Texts

- Required: Course packets are available at the Unique Copy Center.
- Required: Stone, D., Patton, B. and Heen, S. 2010. Difficult Conversations. New York: Penguin Books. Available at Professional Bookstore (or you may be able to get the book less expensively at Amazon.)
- All readings will be available on reserve at Bobst Library.
- Check Blackboard every week for announcements, reminders, assignments, etc.

Course Requirements

There are five course requirements; each accounts for a percentage of your grade. Here is an overview:
Job description and interview questions: 2-3 pages, single-spaced 10%
Course feedback memo: 3 pages, double-spaced 10%
Case analysis: 5 pages, double-spaced 25%
Final paper: 10 pages, double-spaced 35%
Class participation 20%

Total 100%

All papers should have 1 inch margins and use 12 pt. font.

Papers should be posted on Blackboard one hour before class begins on the day they are due; if not, they will be considered one day late. (Instructions for posting will be provided.)

Late assignments will lose one letter grade for each day they are late (which begins immediately after the posting deadline). If you are facing some kind of serious and urgent situation that could delay turning in the assignment, contact me as soon as possible to discuss other arrangements.

Job Description and Interview Questions: Due February 26. In this assignment, due the week we discuss recruitment, you will provide a 1-2 page job description and 1 page of interview questions, both single-spaced, for your own job or a job you know well, such as your boss or subordinate. You will receive a detailed description of the assignment.

Course Feedback Memo: Due April 2. In this paper, due the week we discuss giving feedback, you have the chance to give me feedback about the course. It should be about 3 pages, double-spaced, and should follow the suggestions for effective feedback as outlined in the course readings. Your memo will be graded by a fellow class member. I will provide a detailed description of the assignment.

Case Analysis: Due March 5, April 9, April 16 or April 23 in class. In this 5 page, double-spaced paper, you will analyze ONE of the teaching cases we use for class discussion. (You choose which case you want to use to fulfill this assignment. It is due the week we discuss that particular case.) Specific guidelines for each case will be provided beforehand. Specific cases and dates include:

“Prepare/21 at Beth Israel Hospital” due March 5.
“American Red Cross—South Central Connecticut Chapter” due April 9.
“Executive Women at Link.Com” due April 16.
“Diversity Programs at the New England Aquarium,” due April 23.

Final paper: Due May 7, the last day of class. In this 10-page, double-spaced paper, you will, in a sense, develop your own case based on your own experience and then analyze it, using
concepts from the course. Teaching cases are generally structured around a protagonist facing a particular dilemma or question. In this paper, you should identify a dilemma or question, related to one of the topics in the course, which you have faced in your work life, either from your current job or a previous one. Now you have a chance to think about that dilemma, with the benefit of new frameworks provided by the course and by other reading. How do you understand this dilemma, using these frameworks? What solutions did you try in the past? What would you suggest now? Further guidelines will be provided.

Class Participation: I hope this class will be informal, talkative, humorous and happy. I encourage you to think out loud and try out ideas in class. As noted in the course expectations, I consider class participation to be central to our ability to learn from each other. Furthermore, being an effective manager requires – at a minimum -- sharing one’s ideas and thoughts in small and large groups. Therefore, class participation is a major component (20%) of the grade. This includes attending each class, paying attention to the discussion, and contributing thoughtfully. It also means having done the readings and being prepared to answer questions.

I do understand that some students may be reluctant to speak in the full group. Therefore, the participation grade will be based on participation both in the full group and in small groups, though full group participation will count for roughly 3/4 of the total. Also, at the end of the semester, I will ask students to identify the classmates from whom they learned the most (whether from full or small group discussion). The results will also be factored in to the participation grade (it will only raise the grade of those identified; it will not lower anyone else’s grade.)

“A” Level Participation
- Absent no more than once during the semester. Sends email ahead of time to tell professor that will miss class.
- Offers input often (roughly once or twice per class). Note: offering input does not mean you will always be called upon.
- Comments are clear, succinct, and relevant to the current conversation.
- Takes risks in answering difficult questions or offering unpopular ideas.
- Is prepared for class, as evidenced by:
  - Applying ideas from the readings to the discussion
  - Challenging or extending ideas in the readings
  - Integrating or contrasting ideas from current readings with previous readings

“B” Level Participation
- Absent no more than twice. May not send email to professor ahead of time.
- Offers input occasionally.
- Comments are sometimes unclear, long-winded or not relevant to discussion.
- Answers questions but rarely takes risks.
- Is less prepared for class (see above)
“C” Level Participation
- Absent no more than three times. Doesn’t email professor ahead of time.
- Offers input rarely.
- Is unprepared for class.

Course Outline
Introduction to Developing Human Resources
Week One, January 29: Course Introduction
Week Two, February 5: Human Resources in Public and Non-Profit Organizations
Week Three, February 12: Individual Learning
Week Four, February 19: Learning, continued

Basic Human Resource Functions
Week Five, February 26: Recruitment
Week Six, March 5: Job Design
Week Seven, March 12: Career Development
MARCH 19 SPRING BREAK
Week Eight, March 26: Performance Appraisal
Week Nine, April 2: Giving Feedback
Week Ten, April 9: Volunteers

Current Issues in Human Resources
Week Eleven, April 16: Gender at Work
Week Twelve, April 23: Race at Work
Week Thirteen, April 30: Unions
Week Fourteen, May 7: Course Review

Course Readings, Applications and Assignments
Note: If the reading is in the course packet, it will be followed by (course packet). Otherwise the reading is a book or is on-line.
Another Note: Both applications and assignments are opportunities to apply concepts learned in class to some kind of real world experience or situation. However, assignments are graded, while applications are not.

Week One, January 29: Course Introduction

Application: Identify “burning questions” about human resources based on work experiences

Week Two, February 5: Human Resources in Public and Non-Profit Organizations

Application: We will have a guest speaker: Anna Trask, HR consultant and former VP of HR at large health insurance company. We will also analyze a brief case handed out in class.

Week Three, February 12: Individual Learning
• [For those of you who have read this book for another class, you can either re-read it (there’s a lot in there to digest) or you can read the first four chapters of Kegan, R. and Lahey, L. L. 2001. How the Way We Talk Can Change the Way We Work. San Francisco: Jossey Bass. Do this reading as your assignment for both this week and the next week. The entire class will be reading later chapters of this book for Week Nine. The book is available at the Professional Bookstore.]

Application: Prepare a two-column case. I must receive these by Saturday, February 9.

Week Four, February 19: Learning, continued
• [For those of you who have read this book for another class, see Week Three.]

Application: Small group discussions of two-column cases.

Week Five, February 26: Recruitment

Assignment: Job Description and Interview Questions.
Note: We will have a guest speaker: Michele Maglione, Assistant Commissioner, Office of Recruitment & Diversity, Fire Department of New York.

Week Six, March 5: Job Design


**Application**: Prepare case: “Prepare/21 at Beth Israel Hospital” Case A, Harvard Business School 9-491-045. (course packet)

**Week Seven, March 12: Career Development [readings subject to change]**


- Stahl, R. “Non-profit careers – Links in a chain.

**Application**: We will have a guest speaker: Rusty Stahl, Visiting Fellow in Residence at Wagner/RCLA; Fellow at Tides Foundation; former Executive Director at Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy.

**Week Eight, March 26: Performance Appraisal**


**Application**: TBA

**Week Nine, April 2: Giving Feedback**

Assignment: Course Feedback Memo

Week Ten, April 9: Volunteers

- Ellis, S. J. 2010. *From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success.* (You will only be required to read several chapters which will be identified.) Philadelphia, PA: Energize, Inc.


Week Eleven, April 16: Gender at Work


Week Twelve, April 23: Race at Work


**Application:** Prepare case: Scott, E. “Diversity Programs at the New England Aquarium” from the Case Program at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (course packet)

**Week Thirteen, May 7: Unions**


**Application:** We will have a guest speaker: Ashley Adams, Massachusetts Education Association.

**Week Fourteen, May 14: Course Review**

**Application:** Discussion about a brief case handed out in class. Also, students will meet in small groups to discuss final paper.