

# EMERGENT LEADERSHIP & TEAM DEVELOPMENT – MGT 412

Department of Management  
College of Business Administration  
University of Wisconsin, La Crosse  
Spring 2008

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Welcome students!

This course focuses on key differences between management and leadership and the importance of leadership in the context of effective team building. The emphasis is on organizational change and the role that leadership plays in providing direction for this change. Collaborative and non-hierarchical strategies that facilitate team building will be discussed as an alternative to top-down behavior. The course will provide opportunities to think deeply and systematically about the development of leadership skills and the creativity, initiative and motivation critical to that development. Prerequisite: MGT 308.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Are you a leader? Do you feel like you are a good leader? You think that leaders are able to let people behave according to their will. Moreover, everybody knows that leadership is something written in the DNA. No matter your efforts, you cannot learn how to be a leader. In this world, there are lucky people who got charisma, are trustworthy, and have all attitudes that make them natural-born leaders, and others who cannot be that way. Nothing is so pathetic such as non-leaders acting as leaders. You also know that leadership always comes together with roles. Therefore, the President of the United States, for example, is a leader because of his position. Etc. etc.

The main objective of this course is to let you understand that modern scientific knowledge on leadership keeps us very far from the sentences I wrote above. This class is about leadership, not actual leaders. Effective leadership can be taught, and learnt of course. It relates more on *how* people think, and behave than on *what* position they have within a given organization. It is about the understanding of human characteristics, and individuality more than having the power to force other people to do something. And what moves individuals depends on their capability, willingness, and the situation, the problem, or the challenge they are facing. Broadly speaking, understanding other people means that effective leaders discover something deep about themselves.

This class is also about teams. It is about teamwork, not how we can sum up each individual's contribution. We could define the leader on the extent to which he or she has followers. The group context stems out as one of the main variables here. One of the main aims of the course is to focus on the fact that the great leadership stems out from team excellence. And individuals shape the team, and makes the leader a bad, good, excellent, or terrible one – e.g. we know about Socrates because one of his followers, Plato, wrote about his dialogues, and his philosophy.

Broadly speaking, the main aim of the course is to provide you with tools, concepts, ideas, models, approaches, and theories that make you understand what leadership is. However, if the words you read above have any sense, this helps your *personal* together with your *professional* development.

### *Specific objectives*

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Define leaders from followers on a technical basis
- Understand what makes an effective leadership
- Get clearer ideas on people's behavior (why individuals behave that way)
- Relate intelligence to leadership
- Teamwork, and effective team leadership
- ...

## **MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS**

### *Assignment #1 – Who's your favorite leader?*

The goal of this assignment is to observe, understand, and analyze leadership in practice. You are asked to check out if leadership models, theories, and approaches work in practice.

Find out the leader whose life, behavior, or thinking is of interest to you. Corporate leaders as well as any other leaders are welcomed. The most important point here is that you will be able to analyze the leader from a theoretical perspective. Textbook, and lectures are helpful in this case.

Please follow the guidelines:

- find the one you think is a great leader,
- collect information on his/her life, behavior, and/or thinking. You want to use the web, newspaper articles, journal articles, official and unofficial biographies, and writings of all kinds,
- then try to match the information you found with models, and theories of modern leadership,
- write a report of 1,000 words (minimum) in which you
  1. present your leader (leadership traits): why he/she is a leader, describe the main events of his/her life, and his/her ideas, why do you think his/her contribution is important,

2. choose one or more leadership theories, and try to explain why the individual you selected is/was an effective leader: (a) characteristics, (b) followers, (c) intelligence, (d) understanding, (e) etc.
3. explain why he/she lost the leadership (e.g. wasn't able to understand change, or another leader took his/her place, and the like) or preserved it indefinitely.

You may work alone or be one in a group of 2-4.

**Due: March 24**

*Assignment #2 – Role playing, and peer reviewing*

This assignment has the objective to improve your leadership, and relational skills. Find a real situation that looks challenging (e.g. a company that changes its core products, that encounters problems with the new product on the market, a student organization organizing a meeting at the university level, a foundation that tries to raise money, etc.). Find information on the basis of your personal experience and/or in relation to newspapers, journals, and web sources.

At this point, you will act as if you were in charge of making decisions, and I need you to write a short report (1,000 words) where you address the main points of interest, and try to keep everybody to your positions. The report must be appropriate, depending on the audience and the case/story you have chosen (e.g. shareholders, Board of Directors, organization members, Members of the Parliament, etc. all played by the class).

When writing the report, please follow the guidelines:

- (1) presentation of the organization,
- (2) analysis of the challenge they are facing (strength, and weaknesses),
- (3) write what is to be done as if you were the man/woman in charge of making decisions, and
- (4) provide directions.

The main goal is that of improving your leadership skills. You may work as a team, and work all together to convince the audience that your plan will work, and it is the best, given the situation. Of course, material on the case you will select needs to be available to the class by the weekend before your address (presentation) is scheduled. Providing the class with your report on the issue remains up to you.

The class will be asked to give you a peer-review on the basis of how effective you have been presenting your ideas. We will schedule classroom presentation beginning Tuesday, February 12, 2008.

You may work alone or be one in a group of 2-3.

*You are strongly invited to contact me so to check if the idea works in a role-game setting BEFORE you start working.*

**Due: to be scheduled (paperwork no later than April 29)**

## **MINOR ASSIGNMENTS & CLASS PARTICIPATION**

Your active (or proactive) participation in class activities is core in this leadership course. I think that taking part to lectures is fundamental for both your personal growth, and professional development. My suggestion is to attend this class every time it is scheduled. Your evaluation is based on:

- (a) participation to class activities (e.g. raising your hand, asking questions, taking part to debates, etc.),
- (b) homework, and minor assessment quality (I'll grade them), and
- (c) your ability to develop, during the semester, a personal leadership style (questionnaires, and other tools will help you in this self-, and peer-evaluation).

*Minor assessment*

Find “leadership” cases on the news. You will be asked to present the news of the last week to the class (in 5-10 minutes, depending on you, at the beginning of each lecture). Readings will be assigned week by week. Here too, you may work alone or be one in a group of 2-3.

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE \***

Week 1	January 29	Introduction The key to leadership	Chapter 1-2
Week 2	February 5	Leadership in a changing world	Chapter 2
Week 3	February 12	A general model of leadership	Chapter 3
Week 4	February 19	Levels of leadership The moral side	Chapter 4 Chapter 5
Week 5	February 26	People’s behavior Six steps to leadership	Chapter 6 Chapter 8
Week 6	March 4	Rationality & leadership	Chapter 9
Week 7	March 11	More on rationality Strategic thinking	Chapter 9 Chapter 11

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\* The above schedule and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

Week 8	March 24	Strategic thinking	Chapter 11
Week 9	April 1	Test 1 on introductory issues (chapters 1-10, class notes, slides, and assigned readings)	
Week 10	April 8	Leading others	Chapter 13
Week 11	April 15	Teams	Chapter 14
Week 12	April 22	Organizational design	Chapter 15
Week 13	April 29	Leadership & change	Chapter 16
Week 14	May 6	... still leading? Course summary	Chapter 16
Final test	Tuesday, May 13	Test 2 on the second part (chapters 11-16, class notes, slides, and assigned readings)	

## REFERENCES

**Required book:** Clawson J.G. 2006. *Level Three Leadership. Getting Below the Surface* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Upple Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

**Readings:** to be assigned.

### *A note on plagiarism*

**plagi·a·rism n.** 1. copying what somebody else has written or taking somebody's else's idea and trying to pass it off as original; 2. something copied from somebody else's work, or somebody else's idea that somebody presents as his or her own.

If I don't provide you with the information related to this definition (Encarta World English Dictionary, 1999) I behave like a plagiarist.

A widely accepted academic (and legislative, in some nations) rule states that you must provide written evidence of material used in your work when it belongs to (has been created by) another person. In any case, you want to make sources of information explicit in your work.

The reproduction of a single part or of the whole work without any reference to the original author is commonly known as “plagiarism.” Personally, I don’t want you to be scared about UW-L policies on plagiarism. However, you will be scared about *my* policy on this issue: plagiarism leads automatically to an “F” in relation to the assignment, and thus biases the whole final grade (i.e. you fail the class). I think that plagiarism is something to be avoided since it displays no consideration for the others’ work, and a clear attempt to cheat. This is not admitted in any case. It reveals the lacking of fundamental moral attitudes, fundamental for you as a person, and for you as a worker.

**META-CLASS ACTIVITY**

**Leadership in practice: a proposal**

Sport offers a great opportunity to see what leadership is in everyday life. Spontaneous leaders, and “formal” ones can be easily found when teams engage in competitions such as UWL inter-murals.

Here is my proposal: to create one team (maybe two), and take part to the UWL indoor soccer championship. Every week, a different student will be asked to play as assistant coach of the team, and make the tough decisions: choose players, offensive or defensive tactic, substitutions, etc.

This proposal needs to be better defined, but we can work it out in class if we reach consensus among us.

**GRADING (WEIGHTS)**

Class participation	30%
<i>includes minor assignments, homework, and all class activities</i>	
Assignment #1	10%
Assignment #2	30%
<i>of which: 20% paperwork 10% presentation</i>	

Tests	30%
Final grade	100%

**GRADE SCALE**

<b>A</b>	93-100%
<b>A/B</b>	89-92%
<b>B</b>	83-88%
<b>B/C</b>	79-82%
<b>C</b>	70-78%
<b>D</b>	60-69%
<b>F</b>	< 59%