



HME 425: Understanding People and Change in Organizations

Fall 2012

Mon. 9:00 - 11:45 a.m.

Location: PBL 04

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Course Overview and Objectives

Welcome to Understanding People and Change in Organizations! In this course, you will learn about the constant cycle of change through which organizations learn, grow, and succeed. A background in engineering enables you to be drivers of creative and innovative change in your organizations. However, change involves human and behavioral elements that are sometimes difficult to understand. Some of these elements include the individual-level qualities people bring into organizations, the interactive processes of working with others, and the nature of the organizational form or structure. With a better understanding of these elements, you will be better equipped to diagnose and address the challenge of driving growth and success in organizations.

The objectives of this course are for you to:

1. Learn about key qualities of individual differences such as cognitive biases, personality, emotions and attitudes that can influence how people experience change, and therefore learn, in organizations.
2. Understand essential characteristics of group work, such as leadership, communication, trust, and mutual respect through your own experience in a class team, and the analysis of group work in an organization.
3. Become familiar with various forms of organizational structures, and understand their role in how individuals and groups experience change.
4. Learn how to integrate and apply these insights into a coherent and actionable analysis of a real-world organization.

Required Reading Materials

- Cases and readings for class discussions can be purchased as a coursepack via the following link: <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cb/access/14510974>
- Other cases and readings for discussion will be provided in class or for free on Blackboard.

Grading and Course Requirements

I encourage you to bring up any questions about the syllabus or grading options during or after class. You can also set up a time to meet with me or the TA outside of class. Letter grades will be assigned as follows: A = 90 -100; B = 80 - 89; C = 70 - 79; D = 60 - 69; F = 0 - 60.

Graded Contributions	Sub-assignments	Percentage	Total
Participation	In-class	10%	
	Peer ratings by team	15%	25
Case Reports	Case I (Midterm)	15%	
	Case II (Final)	20%	35
Team Organizational Exploration	Team Plan	10%	
	Final Presentation	10%	
	Final Report	20%	40
	Total Points Available		100

Please see Appendix A for detailed descriptions of each assignment, and Appendix B for the schedule of readings, assignments, and speakers for each of our class sessions.

Course, School, and University Policies

This course will introduce you to some of the challenges faced in organizations, as well as challenge you with new experiences. Please ensure that you can commit to all the requirements in the class, and if you experience difficulty completing assignments at any time, do not hesitate to speak with me or the teaching assistant.

Using electronics in class: It is important for you to successfully integrate technology into your classroom experience:

- Let me know if you will be using a device regularly for translation purposes or to view an electronic version of the text book.
- We will negotiate criteria for when it is appropriate to use devices while guest speakers are present, teams are presenting, or when you have an emergency. Otherwise, I expect that we will all respectfully engage and listen to each other.

Writing support: If you have any concerns about your writing ability in completing the assignments for this course:

- Come talk to me, or the TA, and take advantage of the in-class feedback sessions
- Visit the Writing Resource Center (<http://www.case.edu/writing/writingcenter.html>) with drafts of assignments before they are due.

Academic integrity: Because they limit your own learning and create an atmosphere of unfairness in the class, cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. These acts include, but are not limited to, turning in written work prepared by someone other than yourself (including text downloaded from the Internet, or borrowing sentences from assignments submitted by others for this class in this or previous semesters), and making minor modifications to someone else's work and turning it in as your own. You are expected to abide by the standards described in the following resources, and to otherwise seek out clarification from me or the TA if you are unsure of what kinds of actions constitute cheating or plagiarism. Ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse for not producing your own original high-quality work.

- CWRU Standards of Academic Integrity Policy: <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/handbook/policy/integrity.html>
- Weatherhead Academic Integrity policy: <http://intranet.weatherhead.case.edu/academics/policies/integrity.cfm>.
- <http://library.case.edu/ksl/researchtools/citation/index.html>
- Avoiding plagiarism:
 - <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>
 - <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/apa.html>

Services for Students with Disabilities: At Case, and in my classroom, there is a commitment to providing all students with opportunities to take full advantage of the university's educational programs. Please let me know as soon as possible (preferably within the first two weeks of class) if you do need accommodations so I can ensure that they are made. All discussions will remain confidential. Please consult the following resources to see how we define and do our best to respectfully treat students who may have a disability:

- <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/handbook/policy/disability.html>
- <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/education/disability/>
- Disability Resources Office: Email - disability@case.edu; Phone - 216-368-5230; Location - 470 Sears Building.

Appendix A. Detailed Descriptions of Course Requirements and Assignments

Class Attendance

However, I understand that there might be circumstances that would prevent you from attending a session and in that case, you are to submit an absence form to Blackboard. You are allowed only one unexcused absence. Tardiness and unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade.

Class Participation

There are multiple forums for your participation in class learning, including directly contributing to class discussions, indirectly contributing to conversations within class and with guest speakers via Twitter, and within your class teams. You are expected to come to class having read and thought about the materials assigned for that session, and maybe even tweeting some thoughts and observations before class begins. You are also expected to be a good team member, showing up ready to work with others in a respectful fashion in class and in meetings outside of class. Some qualities of being a good class participant and team member include being attentive and involved, actively contributing ideas, being a good listener by linking your comments to others', making sure you add value to discussions by clarifying and highlighting important aspects of other ideas, and taking risks, or not simply repeating "safe" information from the readings but adding your original, unique contributions. See the Class Participation document on Blackboard for more characteristics of effective classroom contributions

Participating via Twitter: Each student will be instructed on how to sign up for a Twitter account if they do not already have one. Otherwise, students can use their own Twitter accounts to post responses to the class Twitter hashtag "#HIME425". You can use Twitter to post questions before and during class about the topics assigned for that day, and even address questions to guest speakers prior to their arrival, and during our conversation with them in class. We will review the Twitter feed at the beginning of each class session. I encourage you to post at least one question for each guest speaker before class, and post at least one tweet each week on your experience relating class concepts to your Organizational Exploration.

I will also tweet links to articles and reflections on course topics each week. Students are expected to demonstrate respect in their tweets for each other, for me, and for the guest speakers we welcome to class.

In-Class ratings: I will assess your class participation in terms of how you demonstrate the qualities and behaviors described above. These can be demonstrated in how you contribute to class activities, such as discussions and small group work, and how you enhance our class as a learning community overall, e.g. being collaborative and providing developmental assistance to other students.

Team Peer-ratings: You will be required to provide performance feedback on each of your teammates at the midpoint of the Change Management Exploration, and at the end of the semester. Positive feedback would reflect strong, consistent, and valuable contributions that sup-

port the overall functioning and morale of the team. A Peer Rating Questionnaire will be posted at www.cwru.qualtrics.com for you to use at the two time points.

Weekly Case Discussions

In the second half of each class session, after the presentation and discussion of that day's topic, there will be a case-based discussion. Students will be expected to prepare the case in class with their group (or will be notified to prep before class) and then present their conclusions and decisions in a lively discussion and debate. Each student is expected to participate in the case-based discussion by applying what has been learned in previous classes and by taking on the perspectives of the organizational actors described in the cases.

I encourage you to take notes on the responses to the cases provided by your team and the other teams in the class. What sorts of responses seemed most convincing? Were they grounded in key facts and framed in terms of what was discussed in our readings? What kinds of suggestions seemed most applicable to the case, as well as feasible for the characters in the case to pursue? These sorts of characteristics should be considered when you begin to write up responses to Cases I and II.

Cases I (Midterm) & II (Final)

The case reports that you will individually generate will allow you to practice analyzing a complex, potentially ambiguous organizational scenario and demonstrate your ability to apply the research-based insights discussed in class towards understanding and/or improving the conditions described in the case. These reports will also serve as an opportunity to hone your skills at creating written products that successfully convey information and recommendations about how behaviors relate to organizational outcomes. Since Case I will be your first attempt at creating this kind of written product, it is not assigned as large a grade as Case II.

For each report, you will receive questions specific to the case. In responding to the specific questions, you should generally organize your report as follows:

- Introduction: Demonstrate that you have read the case. Summarize the issue being faced, the main characters involved and what the key themes are, e.g. communication, teamwork, problem-solving, etc. (1-2 pages)
- Identify options and relevant concepts: Use the concepts we have discussed in class as tools for analysis. After identifying the core themes and concepts at stake, define them and the possible options that the characters in the case faced. (2-3 pages)
- Decision-making process: Be explicit about how you weighed the different options you identified (that may or may not have been obvious to the characters in the case). What made you choose the alternative that you ended up with? Include direct references to examples from the case throughout the report. What were the characteristics of the key players and their immediate environment that influenced their actions? (2-3 pages)
- Conclusion: what did you learn about teams, communication, change, or feedback from the analysis and discussion of this case that you did not know before? What assumptions have

Both case reports should be 8-10 pages long, and include your name, the title of the assignment, the date, and page numbers. They should also be written in 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. Any references (e.g. a bibliographic list of sources) citations (e.g. identifying in the text of your paper the source of an idea other than your own), footnotes and endnotes should follow American Psychological Association (APA) formatting rules (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). More details on how to think about and structure these assignments will be shared in class, and in materials posted to Blackboard. All final versions of the papers are to be submitted via Blackboard.

Exploring Change Management Team Project:

This assignment gives you the opportunity to gain experience working as a team and to better understand the frameworks and tools offered in this course by using them. You will be asked to use the tools and frameworks we discuss in class to analyze a change initiative in an organization.

As a team, you will analyze a change that is either taking place at the moment, or one that has been recently “completed” within the past 12-18 months. Some examples of these changes might include the introduction of a new technology to the organization; some restructuring of the organization; a merger; a spin-off; or an expansion. Any of these kinds of changes will most likely involve some interaction amongst changes in technology, production processes and organizational and human resources processes. Your task is to understand the nature of the change, what happened, what worked, what did not, and what might have been done differently.

After selecting an organization to investigate, you can begin to collect the information you need to learn more about the change and how it has unfolded. You can accomplish this not only through combing through the organization's publicly-accessible website and printed materials, but also through interviews (in-person and over the phone if necessary) and observation (where allowed).

Finally, in your analysis, you will evaluate the change initiative. How did it go? Was it successful, and were the people involved happy with the outcomes? Why did things go well or not so well? If the change did not go so well, what would you recommend for how the organization could have avoided the problems (if possible) or get things back on track? In total, this assignment accounts for 40% of your final grade. Grading rubrics for each sub-assignment and further details will be posted on Blackboard and discussed in class.

Timeline and description of tasks:

- Note: All written products should include the name of your team, the title of the assignment, the date, and page numbers. They should also be written in 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins. These products should be submitted via Blackboard.
- *September 10: Team Assignments announced*
- *September 24: Team Plan due*

- Prior to beginning the exploration your team will create a 5-6 page plan detailing:
- Using the competencies you identified in your Professional Development course, outline the strengths and weaknesses of each team member and the potential challenges of integrating as a team. Describe how you will integrate each other's competences and areas for improvement. (1.5 pages approx.)
- The expectations, roles, and responsibilities of each team member, how you will communicate and schedule meetings, how you will motivate each other, and also handle absences or slippage from deadlines. (1.5 pages approx.)
- The priorities your team has for completing the Exploration, and a plan of action for kicking off and following through the project. (1.5 pages approx.)
- The metrics you will use and the records you will keep to assess your ongoing progress and the final outcome of the project. How will you know when you are working well or not, and how will you adapt? (1.5 pages approx.)
- *October 1: Organization Selection due*
 - Email me the name of the organization whose change initiative you will study no later than this date. If you are having difficulties locating or gaining access to an organization prior to this please let me know so I can help.
- *October 29: Presentation of Progress Reports*
 - These reports or "check-ins" will serve as an impetus for you to start drafting your final products a few weeks before the due date, as well as allow for feedback from me and the rest of the class.
 - The progress report will consist of a 10-minute PowerPoint or Prezi presentation that describes your team, the organization you are studying, the methods you have used, the main themes you have uncovered so far, the issues you are currently facing with which you need help/feedback, and your plans for finalizing the project. At this point in the project, I expect that you would be able to articulate a specific strategy for data collection, a summary of the data you have collected thus far, your future plans for data collection and a timetable for these tasks. No more than 10 slides are to be used. In order to ensure that all teams have an opportunity to share on their progress, your team should practice your presentation to ensure it does not go past 10 minutes.
- *December 5: Presentation of Change Management Reports*
 - At the end of the semester, your team will compile your observations and analysis into a formal oral presentation to be made to the rest of the class and representatives of the organization that you studied. All audience members present will rate your presentation (myself and your peers). Criteria for evaluation will be finalized in class.
 - The Change Management Reports will consist of a 20-minute PowerPoint or Prezi presentation that first introduces your team and the organization you are studying. You will then describe the methods you have used and why you thought they were appropriate. Then, using text, images, charts, tables, printed materials, or role-playing, you will share with us the main aspects of how your organization planned its change initiative, actually experienced it, and its outcomes. What recommendations would you make to management (who you are

encouraged to invite and have present), to either increase the success of their existing change effort, or to enhance the likelihood of success of future change initiatives? What associative or even causal linkages can you draw between the organization's structure, behavior, environment, and the trigger for change? You must also present a strong conclusion that demonstrates what you all know now that you did not know before, based on your research.

- *December 10: Change Management Report Paper due*

- At the end of the semester, your team will also turn in a 12-15 page profile report that conveys the contents of your presentation in written form, and which also documents your team's performance and learning. You may incorporate feedback from the presentations in your final written report as well as attach supporting information and appendices. This report (and the presentation) should have clearly detailed sections that cover: The Report should have sections similar to your presentation's:
- Introduction: Which organization did you explore, and what does it do? What are its core competencies? Who are the leaders and founders? What sort of vision was/is guiding the organization's behavior? How has it been performing in the recent past? Who are the major stakeholders that it needs to satisfy? (1 page)
- The change: What sort of change was the organization undergoing? Was it interpreted as positive or negative? What triggered the change? What was the organization's process for noticing the trigger, making sense of it, and reacting to it? (1-2 pages)
- Methods: How did you go about collecting information (through interviewing, phone calls, archival or web research)? How did you gain access, and who were your main contacts? Why were those methods best suited for this organization and the kind of change it faced? What obstacles did you face and how did you change tactics or manage these roadblocks? (2 pages)
- Findings: What did you find out? What surprised you? What sort of assumptions did you realize were being held by you (as investigators) and by the organizational actors? What sorts of behavior/reactions were attempted? What failed or was successful? Could they have avoided the problem? How so? (3-4 pages)
- Conclusions and Recommendations: What do you know now that you didn't know before? How does this organization's story challenge what we have seen in textbooks and prior research? What would you recommend to the organization based on what we have learned in class? What would you anticipate if you were faced with a similar issue? (2-3 pages)
- Reflections on your team experience: How well did you adhere to your Team Plan in executing the project? What challenges did you face as a team (e.g. communication in new teams is difficult, providing constructive but negative feedback is really hard), and how did you overcome them? What opportunities did you encounter, and how did you take advantage of them? What practical advice about motivating and managing people would you offer to others based on your experience as a team and what you learned from the organization you studied? (2-3 pages)

Appendix B. Schedule of Readings, Assignments, and Speakers

Date	Topic	Readings	Cases	Assignments	Speakers
Aug. 27	Course Introduction	Robbins & Judge: Chapt. 1	Carter Racing (in-class)	Submit Learning Plan Vision Statement and Timeline	
Sept. 3	Labor Day				
Sept. 10	Transforming Organizations and Managing Change	Robbins & Judge Chapt. 16 Lawson & Price, 2003 (Blackboard)	Best Buy in the News (in-class)		Melvin Smith (WSOM)
Sept. 17	Individual Behavior in Organizations	Robbins & Judge Chpts. 2 & 3	Alex Sander (coursepack)		
Sept. 24	Workgroups and Teams	Robbins & Judge Chpts. 8, 9, & 10	Collaborative Problem-Solving (Blackboard)	Prep Team Plans	Kiran Pandey (GE)
Oct. 1	Motivation and Incentive Systems	Robbins & Judge Chpts. 6 & 7	Barbara Norris (coursepack)	Team Plans due; Kickoff Team Project	
Oct. 3				Collaborative Problem-Solving Case Report due	
Oct. 8	Functionality in Teams	Robbins & Judge Chpts. 5 & 12 Hargadon & Bechky, 2006 (Blackboard)	The Team that Wasn't (coursepack)		Jen Johnson (WSOM)
Oct. 15	Negotiating Change		New Recruit (in-class)	Case I due: Gravity Probe B?	
Oct. 22	Fall Break				

Oct. 29	Workshop on Exploring Change Management Projects			Peer evaluations (I) due	
Nov. 5	Leading Change	Robbins & Judge Chapt. 11	Paul Levy (coursepack)		Andrew Watterson (Brown Flynn)
Nov. 12	Organizational Structure and Learning	Robbins & Judge Chapt. 14 Bechky, 2003 (Blackboard)	Building the Team: The Ares-I-X (Blackboard)		
Nov. 14				Paul Levy Case Report due	
Nov. 19	Organizational Culture and Change	Robbins & Judge Chapt. 15	STEREO: Organizational Cultures in Conflict (Blackboard)	Confirm in-class visits of org. reps from team project	Andy Halko (Insivia)
Nov. 26	Managing the Organization through the Change Process	Managing Change: Winning Hearts and Minds (coursepack)	Medisys Corp. (coursepack)		
Dec. 3	Course Review			Exploring Change Management Team Presentations Peer evaluations (II) due	
Dec. 10	Case II due Exploring Change Management Team Project Paper due				