Course Syllabus for  
Mgt. 590, STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT  
Summer Session, 2010  
June 11-12, June 18-19, June 25-26

“Strategies take on value only as committed people infuse them with energy.”

-- Philip Selznick, 1957

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Overview and Course Content

It is essential that executives in both public and private organizations know how to responsibly lead their businesses on a strategic path to long-term success. Your previous coursework in the MBA program has given you many concepts and analytic tools to effectively develop an organization. These courses representing numerous functional areas (accounting, finance, marketing, organizational behavior, information systems, economics, etc.) have been presented to you in an independent stand-alone fashion. To create effective organizations the learnings from these courses need to be integrated in order to formulate strategies, make strategic decisions, and create action plans for implementing those strategies and decisions. The primary purpose of this course is to assist you in this integration process and to help you take a total systems view of organizations – a view necessary for CEOs and General Managers.

Learning to view organizations from a total systems approach is complex and challenging, but absolutely necessary in order to effectively manage a modern organization. Strategic management has become an important approach in helping you analyze and evaluate the operations of any business firm. To take a total system view requires that one understand the values and component parts that make up the overall operations of any business endeavor in an integrated and unified way. In addition, every firm must operate in some external environment. Success or failure of a firm is a function of how the firm responds to the factors that make up the external environment. The overriding objective for this course is to help develop your skills and ways of thinking which are uniquely appropriate to a total enterprise management within a complex, dynamic environment. Whether you want to develop your own firm, work in the non-profit sector, or work in a governmental or public business, the strategic management discipline is a key resource to practicing managers.

General Course Objectives

The general objectives for this course are twofold. First, the class should help you in the mastery of course material so that you can competently discuss issues of strategic management and apply these concepts to organizations in which you are a member. The second general objective of this course is to create a forum for personal introspection. Class activities will push you to examine your organizing and life assumptions that you seldom think about and that many of us are unaware. Course material may suggest new views that could be utilized to design
organizations and how these different assumptions may create new organizational forms as well as very different experiences for members of these groups

Learning Methods

Classes will be conducted in a seminar style, with intensive discussion of the readings and other seminar topics. Students are expected to have thoroughly prepared the material, and to take active responsibility for discussing each topic in order to enrich learning in the seminar. During the seminar individuals are encouraged to use their personal experience as a means to integrate and validate course material.

This may be a very different method of learning than you are used to, but a learning/teaching method that is appropriate for the advanced student in a capstone course like strategic management. Due to our small class size we have the opportunity to employ this technique.

According to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seminar): The word seminar is derived from the Latin word seminarium, meaning "seed plot". One definition (http://www.answers.com/topic/seminar) suggests that sem·i·nar (sĕmˈə-nər) is: A small group of advanced students in a college or graduate school engaged in original research or intensive study under the guidance of a professor who meets regularly with them to discuss their reports and findings. The Wikipedia goes further in describing a seminar:

Seminar is, generally, a form of academic instruction, either at a university or offered by a commercial or professional organization. It has the function of bringing together small groups for recurring meetings, focusing each time on some particular subject, in which everyone present is requested to actively participate. This is often accomplished through an ongoing Socratic dialogue with a seminar leader or instructor, or through a more formal presentation of research. Normally, participants must not be beginners in the field under discussion (at US universities, seminar classes are generally reserved for upper-class students, although at UK and Australian universities seminars are often used for all years). The idea behind the seminar system is to familiarize students more extensively with the methodology of their chosen subject and also to allow them to interact with examples of the practical problems that always crop up during research work. It is essentially a place where assigned readings are discussed, questions can be raised and debates conducted. It is relatively informal, at least compared to the lecture system of academic instruction.

It will be my responsibility to set the structure for the seminar. I will help everyone get involved in discussions. I will pose questions, counter your explanations, encourage you to think in new ways, push you to consider further issues, etc. I will seldom answer your questions, nor will I lecture in a traditional style. Answers will come from you and your seminar colleagues. It will be your responsibility to grapple with the material, and to identify learnings and practical applications. Learning outcomes from seminars often result in a deeper understanding of the material, and an understanding that is grounded from your own analysis and interpretation. The seminar will likely challenge you. It will require that you be active, come prepared, and open to learning.

For those of you who are typically dependent learners, this seminar will likely feel awkward at first, and it might even feel more efficient if the instructor would just “tell you the answers” or distill the information in a way that identifies the key points. A key learning in seminars is becoming an independent learner. A vital skill of the CEO/General Manager. In all assignments I want you to wear the hat of a CEO/General Manager. Your focus should always
be to learn how to ensure long-term competitive superiority of a firm. You also should be asking yourself, how do I pull together all these courses I have taken in the MBA program and the analytic tools they offer. This type of integration is something that when one does, they never forget.

Components of the Course

Learning Teams

The primary structure around which this course is designed is the team and team learning. All class participants will be assigned to one of two learning teams. The team will be a semi-autonomous structure in which you will engage in course content. Fellow team members will help you to master course material and concepts, work with you on in-class exercises and cases, listen to your analyses and applications, provide support and feedback to you, etc. The majority of the learning from this course will be generated through discussions and exercises with your learning team as well as the entire seminar group. You will need to develop strong working relationships with your team members so that you can teach and learn from each other. We will engage in a team building activity at the beginning of the seminar to help your team get off to a good productive start.

In Class Activities and Exercises

As described above the class will be designed as a seminar and may often feel more like a workshop than a traditional class with lectures. A major emphasis of these class sessions will be increasing your self-insight as well as your managerial/interpersonal skills. In particular, one managerial skill that will be emphasized in the course will be how to create an effective team. You will need to be actively engaged in class in order to learn from these classroom experiences.

Course Readings, Cases, and Exercises

All participants are personally responsible for reading all class assignments, understanding the material, and demonstrating their knowledge/understanding of course material in the seminar. The readings for the course will come from four books order for the class (Kim and Mauborgne, Collins, Brown and Eisenhardt, and Quinn). For purposes of facilitating class discussion these books will be divided among learning teams to help ensure that we fully address their concepts and ideas during our class seminar sessions.

Reflected Best-Self Exercise and Personal Learnings Paper

All class participants will also engage in two research/writing activities of a personal nature:

Reflected Best-Self Exercise. Each individual will collect data on their best-self, analyze this information, write a reflected best-self portrait, and hand in a written report on these activities. The assignment is due our third weekend meeting in June 25-26. A handout is provided with further details (Appendix A).

Personal Learnings Paper: Each individual will write a concise paper (2-3 pages) documenting what they have learned about strategic management and themselves from participating in this course. In this paper you will also need to access your skills as a productive team member.
More specifics on this assignment will be given as the seminar proceeds. This assignment will be due shortly after our last class session. We’ll decide as a class when this is due.

**Individual Participation and Preparation**

Since the class will be conducted as a seminar it is critical that all students participate fully, but in a manner that will result in effective learning for all members. We will be co-producing knowledge so it is critical that students follow some general rules of seminar behavior. First, students will be expected to be able to listen, discuss, and critique key points of assigned readings at each class session to demonstrate mastery of the material. Ratings of class participation will be based largely upon students’ demonstrations of knowledge and understanding of readings as reflected in comments, reactions, and questions; reactions to discussion questions; comments which show connections among different concepts and issues; comments connecting the classroom to actual practice (e.g., examples from work); listening and non-judgmental attitudes; and group process and nonverbal behaviors. All of these behaviors are relevant in an administrative setting and reflect administrative skills. The following standards will be used when assigning participation grades:

- **A:** Consistent, active involvement without dominating; high level of knowledge and insight; comments are on topic; efficient use of air time; interacts with, refers to comments of, and/or draws out other students, challenges ideas respectfully, is willing to test new ideas and thoughts, integrates materials from numerous readings, class norms followed.
- **B:** Regular involvement; good level of knowledge and insight; interacts effectively with others comments and thoughts, comments are on topic; class norms followed.
- **C:** Occasional comments; usually on topic.
- **D:** Rare comments, usually on topic, norms not followed.
- **F:** No participation, or participation always off topic, norms not followed.

**Evaluation and Grading**

**Grading components (percentage)**

- Seminar Participation and Preparation (75 percent)
- Reflected Best-Self Report (10 percent)
- Personal Learnings Paper (15 percent)

**Required Texts**

- Quinn, R. E. (2000) *Change the World: How Ordinary People can Achieve*
Some Other Thoughts on the Course

This course will demand a fair amount of work from you! My expectations are very high. You will be challenged to discuss your beliefs and values in the context of organizational situations and to appreciate sufficient levels of complexity that are not easily understood with the limitations of ordinary human cognitive processes. You will lose points with me if you miss class or fail to actively engage in discussions. You will not lose points for contributing half-baked ideas, asking philosophical questions, or challenging teaching approaches.

The style of teaching in this course may be significantly different from what you’ve experienced in other courses. Much of my time will involve designing processes and structures in which this class can successfully accomplish learning objectives. I will provide the structure through a sequence of activities that will expose you and your classmates to particular organizational dynamics or intellectual inquiries. These activities include discussions, mini-lectures, questions and answers, and exercises that place the lessons to be learned in context. As an instructor I have the responsibility for controlling the rate and degree of conceptual input through assigned readings, lectures, and interventions. In addition, it is my role to model leadership and, as a part of the learning process in the course, may (or may not) choose to share my thinking processes. I will try to facilitate your learning and the discovery of new insights.

All students are expected to attend all class meetings and to come prepared to fully participate in the activities that have been scheduled. Preparation includes reading and writing assignments in advance with enough depth and concentration so you can develop the background and concepts needed in order to contribute effectively. Since the medium of learning in this course is interaction, you are expected to participate actively in all events and to attempt to influence others as well as to allow yourself to be influenced. As a student you are expected to respectfully challenge the instructor as well as your peers when there are differences of opinion, and to seek clarification and explanation when necessary. Students are expected to recognize the resources in the class and to ask for help from those who can give it. If unavoidable absences occur, you are expected to take steps to see that activities planned for the date of the absence can be carried out as scheduled. This may require notification to the people concerned and affected, substitution by other persons, or other measures as appropriate.
Appendix A

Reflected Best Self Exercise: Assignment and Instructions

All of us can recall our own extraordinary moments, those moments when we felt that our best self was brought to light, affirmed by others and put into practice in the world. These memories are seared into our minds as moments or situations in which we have felt alive, true to our deepest selves and pursuing our full potential as human beings. Over time, we collect these experiences into a portrait of who we are when we are at our personal best. To help compose a best-self portrait, it is important to draw on the perceptions of significant others who have unique and valuable insights into the ways we add value and make a contribution. The Reflected Best Self (RBS) exercise creates an opportunity for participants to receive feedback regarding who they are when they are at their best.

In this exercise, you will obtain data from other people to create a more extensive reflected best-self portrait. You will obtain short descriptions of who you are and what you do when you are at your very best from a diverse array of significant people in your life. From this feedback, you will learn important things about yourself that you may have never realized before.

The goal of this feedback exercise is five-fold.

- To generate awareness of how others see you when you are at your best
- To enhance understanding about what kinds of work situations bring out the best in you
- To create personal and career development plans and actions, based upon the reflections that your reflected best-self feedback generates
- To provide a tool for future times when you may be discouraged and need to get back on track
- To assess the individual strengths that exist within your learning groups.

Directions

In this exercise, you will develop a reflected best-self portrait based on feedback from an array of significant others. There are several steps to follow:

Step 1: Identify Respondents

Identify 10-20 people you know well. These may be colleagues (former or current), friends (old or recent), family members, customers, supervisors, or anyone who has had extended contact with you. Think about who will give you their honest opinion. The more diverse the group is, the better. Also, realize that due to time constraints, everyone will not be able to respond. Ideally, you need at least 10 responses to complete this part of the assignment, so ask enough people to ensure at least 10 responses.

1 Developed by Robert E. Quinn, Jane E. Dutton, and Gretchen M. Spreitzer
Step 2: Compose a Feedback Request Form

Compose a feedback request (see example request below) and email it to the 10-20 people identified in Step 1. Although this request may seem awkward or difficult for you, participants have found this assessment to be a profound learning activity, and that significant others are quite willing to assist with this exercise. Over time, we have found that 10-20 is the desired number of respondents to collect sufficient data.

_Sample Email Request for Feedback_

As part of my college program, I am taking a course that requires me to construct a profile of the ways that I add value and make a contribution. I have been asked to contact twenty people who know me well. I am to request that each person provides me with answers to three questions and as many examples as you can provide. All questions ask you to describe me when I was at my best. I would like to invite you to help me with this exercise.

I appreciate your taking time to do this for me. This will require you to think about your interactions with me and to identify those incidents/behaviors when I was at my very best in your eyes. In writing, please be sure to provide examples so I can understand the situation and the characteristics you are describing.

Your feedback to me:

Please provide me with three examples of how I add value by completing the following statements.

1. One of your greatest strengths is ...
   
   For example, I think of the time that ..... 

2. What I value most in my relationship with you is ...
   
   For example, I think of the time that ...

3. One thing that I think is unique about you (in a good way) is ...
   
   For example, I think of the time that ...

Please e-mail your responses to me by (insert date). Thank you very much for your cooperation. I will be sure to tell you what I learn.

Step 3: Analyze Feedback

Read all of your feedback and take notes on the key insights. Look for commonalities across the responses. Create themes where you find a commonality and link the several examples to it. You may find it useful to use a table like the following.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commonality/Theme</th>
<th>Examples Given</th>
<th>My Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Creative</td>
<td>1. Innovative builder of new projects for education.</td>
<td>My ideas tend to be bold and creative. I am an innovative builder of the new. I tend to bring a new vision to the old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Find new solutions for old problems in department relationships with my boss.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Guided company in transforming itself.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 4: Compose the Reflected Best-Self Portrait

Create a written portrait of your best self that captures the wisdom in your data. Here is an illustration of a reflected best-self portrait:

*When I am at my best, I tend to be creative. I am enthusiastic about ideas and I craft bold visions. I am an innovative builder who perseveres in the pursuit of the new. I do not waste energy thinking about missed opportunities or past failures nor do I take on the negative energy of the insecure or worry about critics. I stay centered and focused on what is possible and important.*

*I use frameworks to help me make sense of complex issues. I can see disparate ideas and integrate them through “yes and” thinking. So I make points others do not readily see. In doing so, I frame experiences in compelling and engaging ways. I paint visions and provide new ways for people to see. I use metaphors and stories to do this. I find the stories in everyday experiences, and people find it easy to understand them. The new images that follow help people to take action.*

*In helping others, I try to empathize with them and understand their needs. I give them my attention and energy but I allow them to be in charge. In exercising influence, I try to enroll people, not force them, in new directions. I invite people to work with me. I use dialog to help people surface their ideas, and then I weave them together with others until we create knowledge in real time. I ignore symptoms and focus on the deep causes. I help people and*
groups surface the darkest realities and the most painful conflicts. From these emergent tensions comes the energy for transformation. I liberate people from their fears and help them embrace new paths. In all of this I try to model the message of integrity, growth, and transformation.

Due Date:

Your written Reflected Best-Self Portrait is due our last weekend (June 25-26). In your report please provide details from your data collection and analysis (maybe in an appendix) as well as your best-self portrait. We will share these in class with your learning group and will profile the strengths that exist among the members of our team.
Michael R. Manning, Ph.D. Bio

Professor Michael Manning has dedicated his professional career to educating and developing executives/managers, consulting with and designing effective organizations, and creating applied action research processes and intervention techniques. He consults extensively with business owners and top corporate officials in both public and private sectors throughout the US and internationally in Mexico, Europe and the Baltic States, the Middle East, and the Far East. Dr. Manning publishes broadly in academic journals in the field of organizational change and development. He also researches issues of occupational stress. Recent research is on the role of emotional contagion in processes of change. His special expertise is designing and implementing large group interventions for whole systems change, creating specialized management development workshops, creatively designing action research, and teaching and applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Dr. Manning is Professor of Management at New Mexico State University located in Las Cruces, New Mexico. He has held faculty appointments at Case Western Reserve University and the State University of New York at Binghamton. He is a distinguished visiting faculty member at the Executive Doctoral Program in Organization Development at Illinois Benedictine University and at the Fielding Graduate University in the School of Human and Organization Development. Professor Manning lectures frequently at Aalto University (formerly the Helsinki School of Economics and the Helsinki University of Technology) in Finland and works extensively with faculty colleagues at the Instituto Tecnologico de Desestudios Superiores de Occidente in Guadalajara, Mexico. During Fall 2004 Professor Manning was a visiting professor at the Consortium Institute of Management and International Business Studies in Asolo, Italy.

As a university professor, Dr. Manning has educated executives and managers from diverse companies such as GM, Ford, Lubrizol, British Petroleum, Picker International, IBM, Cleveland Clinic, TRW, General Electric, Progressive Insurance, Rubbermaid, Eaton Corporation, Nokia, etc. In addition, he has trained numerous individuals to be organizational consultants. His former doctoral students are now with universities such as Stanford, William & Mary, Dartmouth, and George Mason and companies such as Boeing, Alcatel-Lucent, Motorola, Boeing, Hewlett Packard, and McDonald’s Corporation. His teaching has been recognized with numerous awards. He was elected to the executive board of the Organization Development and Change Division of the Academy of Management in 2003 and served in various capacities on the board until 2009. He was Program Chair (2005-2006) and Division Chair (2007-2008). Dr. Manning is also a current member of two editorial boards: the Journal of Applied Behavioral Science and the Journal of Change Management.