



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
**SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS**

Department of Management  
*MGT 213, Change Management*  
Tuesdays 3:30 – 6:00 PM, 361 Duques Hall

Fall 2008

**INSTRUCTOR:** Tjai M. Nielsen, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM *and* by appointment.

***COURSE DESCRIPTION:***

This course is designed as a foundation course for all MBA students. Students will be exposed to theories and practical examples of management and organizational behavior in the context of change. The focus of this course is on change management and is designed for all students regardless of their areas of professional specialization. The content of this course will meet the needs of those who would benefit from a framework for understanding the relationship between change management, organizational behavior, and organizational effectiveness.

***COURSE OBJECTIVES:***

The primary objective of this course is to introduce students to the behavioral and developmental components of individual-, group-, and organization-level change. It is designed for students who may or may not specialize in this area, but who wish to be successful in a competitive organizational environment. The material presented in this course will be a combination of research, theory, and practical application in the fields of leadership, management, and organizational behavior.

***LEARNING OBJECTIVES:***

- Students will be able to articulate the fundamental components of organization-, team-, and individual-level change.
- Students will be able to identify the key challenges and success factors related to organizational change.
- Students will be able to utilize multiple approaches to leading and managing change.
- Students will be able to identify the most common sources of resistance to change.
- Students will be familiar with multiple methods for facilitating effective organizational change.
- Students will appreciate the key challenges faced during the process of change.

### **METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:**

These objectives will be accomplished through lectures, discussions, readings, group and individual exercises, and other activities. To provide the most up-to-date coverage of the topic, lectures may only supplement the material covered in the text and may only partially overlap it. Additional readings and exercises may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. This course makes use of **Blackboard**, an on-line system designed to facilitate and support course objectives.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- 1) *Big Change at Best Buy* (2003), Elizabeth Gibson & Andy Billings, Davies-Black.
- 2) Additional reading materials from a variety of sources (e.g., *Harvard Business Review*, *Sloan Management Review*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, etc.). All additional readings will be made available on **Blackboard**.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

**Academic Integrity.** Academic honesty is an absolute expectation of all class participants and applies to *all* class-related activities. Any violation of academic integrity will result in failure of the assignment and course. I encourage each of you to review the university's policy regarding academic integrity at [www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity) if you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty or you have questions. In addition, please see [www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code/html](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code/html) for GWU's *Code of Academic Integrity*.

**Participation.** Education is not a spectator sport, it requires active participation by all who seek it. Expectations regarding participation are described in more detail under "Assignments and Evaluation" below.

**Attendance.** A substantial amount of material will be covered during class activities & discussions that will not be covered in your readings. Moreover, it is difficult to be an active participant in class if you are not there. Missing more than one class session during a **full semester course** will significantly impact your ability to meet the learning objectives of this course. Class members are responsible for all materials covered in every class session.

**Appeals.** Disagreements regarding grading will occasionally arise whenever pure objectivity is not established. These controversies will be handled in the following manner: Within **one week** of receiving the graded assignment, the petitioner should submit a one page paper detailing reasons why the answer given is adequate or deserving of more points. Points will be awarded based on the logic and thoroughness of the presented arguments. The purpose of this is to transform a typically unpleasant experience into a learning one, as committing complaints to writing often leads to valuable insight.

***ASSIGNMENTS and EVALUATION:***

- 1) **Class participation**
- 2) **Case analysis**
- 3) **Position paper**
- 4) **Final exam**

***Class participation.*** Participating in class includes offering insightful observations, asking specific and constructive questions, being thoroughly prepared for discussions and exercises, and generally contributing to a productive learning environment. This class requires active ***and*** informed participation from all students. Active participation will be expected and should include: 1) coming to class prepared, having completed all assignments and readings; 2) actively participating in class & team activities; and 3) consistently sharing your unique perspective.

It is essential that ALL reading assignments be completed before class begins. Students are expected to attend all sessions and to actively discuss and evaluate the assigned reading material. Effective participation includes contribution of comments that demonstrate knowledge and integration of the assigned readings, building on the responses of others, and critical, but respectful analysis of others comments. As such, this reflects not simply the frequency of your class contributions, but also: (1) **quality** (ability to speak from what you have read; ability to advance in-class discussion and debate; use of logic, and evidence in making arguments; and going beyond the "I feel" level of introspection); and (2) **professionalism** (attendance, punctuality, preparedness, respecting class members and their contributions).

**Weekly readings** - For each week's readings, two students will be assigned as the "class leads" for that session's readings. It is the responsibility of the "class leads" to prepare brief, high-level, written summaries (approx. 1/2 of a page for each article or chapter) and two study questions for each article. These students, however, will NOT be responsible for leading class discussion or answering a majority of questions about the assigned articles. "Class lead" assignments will be made on the first day of class. At the end of the term you will have brief summaries of all the articles which will help you prepare for the final exam.

**\*Your FULL participation will constitute 15% of your final grade.**

**Team Case Analysis.** You will be provided with two case studies to choose from for analysis. This assignment will force you and your team to grapple with the kinds of decisions and dilemmas managers confront every day. You will be required to analyze and synthesize conflicting data and points of view, to define and prioritize goals, to persuade and inspire others who think differently, to make tough decisions with uncertain information, and to seize opportunity in the face of doubt.

There are many approaches for writing a case analysis. The most effective approach for your case will depend on a variety of factors. However, your analysis should include at least some of the following components:

1. **Analyze the organization's history, development, & growth.** A convenient way to investigate how an organization's past strategy and structure affect it in the present is to chart the critical incidents in its recent history.
2. **Identify the organization's internal strengths & weaknesses.** A SWOT analysis is an effective way to identify key strengths & weaknesses in an organization's value creation functions such as sales, marketing, research & development, and/or operations.
3. **Analyze the external environment.** Identify environmental opportunities and threats. You should apply all the information you have learned about the relevant industry to analyze the environment the organization is facing.
4. **Evaluate the SWOT analysis.** Having identified the organization's external opportunities and threats in addition to its internal strengths and weaknesses, you should contemplate what these findings mean. Is the organization generally in a strong competitive position? If so, what are the implications for the case?
5. **Analyze corporate-level strategy.** Define the organization's mission and goals before analyzing its corporate-level strategy; Then, identify its line(s) of businesses and the nature of its subsidiaries and acquisitions. It is important to analyze the relationship between an organization's businesses. For example, do they share information? Do they exchange resources?
6. **Analyze business-level strategy.** If the organization has only one business, its business-level strategy will be identical to its corporate-level strategy. If it has more than one business, identify and analyze each business unit's strategy. For example, what is the organization's general strategy... differentiation, low cost, focus? How do these carryover to each business unit (i.e., some may focus on differentiation while another focuses on low cost).
7. **Analyze structure & control systems.** What structure and control systems is the organization using to implement its strategy? For example, does the organization have the right level of vertical differentiation (i.e., appropriate numbers of levels in the hierarchy or decentralized control) and/or horizontal differentiation (i.e., does it employ a functional structure but *should* employ a product-based structure?).
8. **Make recommendations.** The last part of any case involves making recommendations based on your analysis. The quality of your recommendations is directly related to the quality of your previous analysis. Recommendations should specifically address the problems or issues that you have identified earlier in your case paper.

Do make sure you analyze the material rather than simply restating what is in the case. You are expected to do outside research on the company and/or on the issues raised in the case to provide further input to your analysis. As stated previously, your last section should include recommendations for the future. These recommendations should specifically address the problems or issues that you identified earlier in your case paper. Your case analysis is due at the beginning of class on 10.28.08. **Please note, late papers will not be accepted. \*Your performance on the team case analysis will comprise 20% of your final grade.**

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*Team change project.* The **change projects** should be realistic efforts to make an organizational change somewhere in your environment. We will discuss possible change projects as a class and come up with several possibilities. Once a list of possibilities is established, you will choose the project that most interests you. Project teams will need to include at least three people and no more than six. Since this project must be completed within the semester, we will focus on organizations to which you already have access (e.g., GWU; etc.). Once you and your teammates have agreed on the details of your change effort, you will be required to put this on paper in the form of a project proposal. These proposals should be no more than one page and should describe the organization, project goals, why the project is important, and initial ideas about how it will be approached. Project proposals are due at the beginning of class on 9.23.2008.

During the course of your change project, careful notes should be kept regarding specific approaches; milestones; successes; obstacles; and team dynamics. These notes will help inform a summary of your change project that should be written up in the form of a term paper. This paper should include a detailed account of the project (i.e., goals, approaches; theoretical rationale for approaches; obstacles encountered; and results). In addition, you should analyze your own change process in an effort to identify strengths, weaknesses, possible improvements, reasons for success/failure, and the sustainability of your change efforts. This term paper is due at the beginning of class on 12.2.2008. You and your team will also be required to present the results of your project in class on 12.2.2008. **Please note, late papers will not be accepted. \*Your team change project will comprise 30% of your final grade.**

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*Final exam.* The final assessment will cover topics from readings, lectures, class discussions, and exercises and will be comprised of essay and multiple choice questions. Typically, your final exam will include 10-15 short essay questions, 5-15 multiple choice questions, and 2-5 long essay questions. The exam is generally designed to test your ability to apply the concepts you have learned during the course of the semester, as opposed to simply testing your ability to memorize information. Examples of previous exams will be provided to help you appreciate the kind of questions that are typically used and help you prepare more completely. **\*Your performance on the final assessment will constitute 25% of your final grade.**

Assignment	Official grade
Class participation	15%
Case analysis	20%
Change project	20%
Presentation	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>30%</b>
Teammate evaluation	10%
Final exam	<b>25%</b>

Final grade	Total % score
A	93%-100%
A-	90%-92%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C+	77%-79%
C	73%-76%
C-	70%-72%
F	Below 70%

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9.2.08 Session 1	1) Introductions to each other; 2) Discussion of possible change projects		
9.9.08 Session 2	1) Anticipating change; 2) Formation of project teams	BB1; 1) <i>Evolution &amp; Revolution as Organizations Grow</i> , Greiner; 2) <i>The Rhythm of Change...</i> Mintzberg	
9.16.08 Session 3		Guest Speaker	
9.23.08 Session 4	1) The challenge of change 2) Change and organizational culture	BB2&3; 1) <i>Developing the Competitive Organization</i> , Beer et al.; 2) <i>Choosing strategies for change...</i> Kotter et al. 3) <i>What Holds the Modern Company Together</i> , Goffee et al.; 4) <i>There is Nothing So Practical as a Good Theory...</i> Schein; 5) <i>Building Organizational Integrity...</i> Kayes et al.	Team change p
9.30.08 Session 5	Organization level change	BB4,5,&6; 1) <i>The Smartest Guys in the Room...</i> (Enron video)	
10.7.08 Session 6	Leadership & organizational change	BB7; 1) <i>What Leaders Really Do</i> , Kotter; 2) <i>Teaching Smart People How to Learn</i> , Argyris	
10.14.08 Session 7		Guest Speaker	
10.21.08 Session 8	1) Organizational resistance to change; 2) Project team update presentations	BBB; 1) <i>Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail</i> , Kotler; 2) <i>IT'sy Change Programs Don't Produce Change</i> , Beer	5 min. update presentation per team
10.28.08 Session 9	Sustaining change	BB9,10,1 1; 1) <i>The Balanced Scorecard</i> , Kaplan et al.	Case analysis due
11.4.08 Session 10	Team level change	1) <i>A dynamic model of top management team effectiveness</i> , Edmondson et al.; 2) <i>Why Hospitals Don't Learn from Failure</i> , Tucker&Edmondson; 3) <i>The development and enforcement of group norms</i> (Feldman)	
11.11.08 Session 11	Team level change	1) <i>Team 114SC10111...</i> Nisfer, Edmondson; 2) <i>The 1996 Mount Everest Climbing Disaster: A Breakdown in Team Learning</i> , Kayes	
11.18.08 Session 12		1) <i>Why Do Employees Resist Change</i> , Sirebeh. 2) <i>The Young and Clueless</i> , Bunker	

11.25.08 Session 13	Leadership development	<i>High Flyers (chapters 1,2,3,&amp;4), McCall;</i>	
12.2.08 Session 14	Project team presentations	<b>Project Presentations</b>	1) 15 min. presentations from each project team 2) Project team papers due
12.2-8.08		<b>Final Exam</b> <i>The take home final exam will be given on our last meeting day (12.2.08) and will be due on 12.8.08 by 12:00 PM (noon).</i>	