MSE 608B - MANAGEMENT OF ENGINEERING PROFESSIONALS
Thursdays, 7:00 - 9:45 pm, Class Number 12179, Fall 2004

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Office Hour for MSE 608B: Thursdays, 6:00 - 6:50 pm

My sincere appreciation to my many former students for their expressions of need for a course such as this, with particular appreciation to Frank Bates (M.S. Engineering Management, 2000) for his contributions to its initial development.

Texts   • Hill, Linda A. **Becoming a Manager: How New Managers Master the Challenges of Leadership**, 2nd Edition. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2003. ISBN 1-59139-182-2.
• Hofstede, Geert. **Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind.** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997. ISBN 0-07-029307-4. (Author with the Institute for Research on Intercultural Cooperation, University of Limburg at Maastricht, The Netherlands)

Additional Readings   • Deeprose, Donna. "Recognize Behaviors as Well as Outcomes" and "Foster Intrinsic Rewards," from *How to Recognize and Reward Employees*. New York: Amacom, 1994. ISBN 0-8144-7832-8
• Longenecker, Clinton O. and Laurence S. Fink. "Creating Effective Performance Appraisals." *Industrial Management*, September-October 1999.
• Sachs, Randi Toler. "Preparing for the Hiring Interview" and "Getting Answers to Tough Questions," from *How to Become a Skillful Interviewer*. New York: Amacom, 1994. ISBN 0-8144-7831-X
• Straub, Joseph T. "Appraising Performance," from *The Successful New Manager*. New York: Amacom, 1994. ISBN 0-8144-7834-4
• Swan, William S. with Phillip Margulies. "Why Managers and Employees Dread Performance Appraisals," "Performance Appraisal Systems," and "What Goes Wrong and Why: Eight Common Appraisal Errors," from *How to do a Superior Performance Appraisal*, (including a copy of Swan's model performance appraisal system). New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1991. ISBN 0-471-51469-1
• Weiss, Donald H. "Safe Firing Practices" and "Safe Discipline and Firing Practices," from *Fair, Square and Legal*. New York: Amacom, 1995. ISBN 0-8144-0253-4

Additional Resources

Volumes of some of the reference materials compiled by students in a prior semester for the research assignments on Hiring Processes, Performance Evaluation, Termination Processes, and Conflict Management will be made available in the Reserve Book Room of the Oviatt Library.

Background and Purpose

A key attribute of the technical professional is his/her emphasis on and interest in professional values and goals rather than those of an organization. The technical professional who advances to a management position must become a leader of technical peers (and, often, of technical superiors), increasing his/her emphasis on organizational values and goals, while simultaneously maintaining technical peer respect. With managerial responsibility comes the need for knowledge of functioning within the broader organizational structure (e.g., the "pushing paperwork" held in great disdain by most technical professionals) and the need for accomplishing technical tasks through others (rather than predominantly on one's own). As one consequence of these needs, the essence of this course is the creation of a learning community in which aspiring and current managers of technical professionals can gain essential knowledge and experiential skills relevant to a selected range of organizational responsibilities entailed in the management of technical professionals, from "pushing paper" to hire a technical professional employee, to multidisciplinary and multicultural technical professional work group considerations and interactions.

General Course Structure

The manner in which this course is structured is such that active participation of all class members throughout the semester is essential.

There are four collaborative research assignments. Class members will be grouped by the instructor into research partnerships (typically 2-3 students) for each research assignment, such that each class member will work collaboratively in four different partnerships. Each partnership will be responsible for making an informal 15-minute class presentation and preparing a written report on its work. Presentation order will be randomly assigned. Copies of the written reports are to be prepared by each partnership and distributed to all class members. The performance of each partnership will be evaluated by its members, as well as the instructor.

There are six somewhat structured discussion sessions, which will be conducted by collaborative discussion teams. Class members will be grouped by the instructor into discussion teams (typically 4-5 students). Each collaborative discussion team will be responsible for leading and conducting one discussion session. The performance of each discussion team will be evaluated by its members, as well as the instructor.

COURSE PLAN

Week 1 -- 26 August 2004
        Introductions - to the instructor, class members, and the course
        Formation of research partnerships
        Formation of discussion teams

Week 2 -- 02 September 2004
        Reading Assignment:
- Hill - pages ix-xix, 319-335, and 1-45
- Hofstede - both Prefaces, the Guide, and pages 1-19

        Discussion Questions - Set One:
- Hill identifies several sets of expectations and/or roles for a manager. From the perspective of the "average" technical professional, rank the expectations/roles from most to least difficult to fulfill, and justify your ranking.
- Hofstede identifies several levels of culture. How might each of these levels impact the ranking that you have identified for the expectations and/or roles for a manager?

        DUE to instructor: • Team 1 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report

Week 3 -- 09 September 2004
        Reading Assignment:
- Hill - pages 47-85
- Hofstede - pages 23-48
- Excerpts from Sachs; See details in Additional Readings

        Discussion Questions - Set Two:
- Hill's theme in the reading assignment is that managers must change their professional identity, and that new managers are usually not cognizant of that need. Consider the orientation process for a new technical professional hire from the perspective of (a) an existing technical professional in the organization, and (b) the manager of the new hire. What might the differences be in their roles in the new hire orientation process?
- The Hofstede reading assignment addresses the concept of power distance. The Sachs reading provides some managerial guidance for an interview. In what ways might power distance affect the interviewing of a prospective new technical professional hire? How might a manager address differing perceptions of power distance in his/her assessment of an interviewee?

        DUE to instructor: • Team 2 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report

Week 4 -- 16 September 2004
        Quiz One: Multiple-Choice and/or Short Answer Questions on Reading Assignments
        Partnerships presentations: Hiring Processes Research Assignment

Week 5 -- 23 September 2004
        Partnerships presentations: Hiring Processes Research Assignment
        DUE to instructor: • Written Research Assignment Reports
                                  • Partnership One Peer Review Reports

Week 6 -- 30 September 2004
  Reading Assignment:
  - Hill - pages 87-145
  - Hofstede - pages 49-78
  - Excerpts from Deeprose, Longenecker/Fink, Straub and Swan/Margulies; See details in Additional Readings

  Discussion Questions - Set Three:
  - Hill addresses two types of <u>manager</u> responsibilities that impact employee performance. In what ways might a manager's <u>failure</u> to adequately fulfill these responsibilities affect an employee's performance evaluation?
  - Hill addresses subordinate diversity in the context of level of experience. Hofstede presents one source of subordinate cultural diversity in the context of individualism and collectivism. How might these contexts be properly identified and utilized to more effectively manage a group of technical professionals?

  DUE to instructor: • Team 3 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report

Week 7 -- 07 October 2004
  Quiz Two: Multiple-Choice and/or Short Answer Questions on Reading Assignments
  Partnerships presentations: Performance Evaluation Processes Research Assignment

Week 8 -- 14 October 2004
  Partnerships presentations: Performance Evaluation Processes Research Assignment
  DUE to instructor: • Written Research Assignment Reports
                           • Partnership Two Peer Review Reports

Week 9 -- 21 October 2004
  Reading Assignment:
  - Hill - pages 147-192 and 303-317
  - Hofstede - pages 79-108
  - Excerpts from Weiss; See details in Additional Readings

  Discussion Questions - Set Four:
  - The reading from Hill concerns the need for managers to understand themselves and to productively address stress. Consider a situation in which a manager must terminate a likable engineer who works conscientiously but consistently produces marginally acceptable work. What kinds of self knowledge and stress management might be important in this situation?
  - What impact might Hofstede's masculinity-femininity dimension of the employee and the organization have on the manner in which the manager addresses the preceding situation?

  DUE to instructor: • Team 4 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report
                           • Proposal Summaries for Research Assignment Four

Week 10 -- 28 October 2004
  Quiz Three: Multiple-Choice and/or Short Answer Questions on Reading Assignments
  Partnerships presentations: Termination Processes Research Assignment

Week 11 -- 04 November 2004
        Partnerships presentations: Termination Processes Research Assignment
        DUE to instructor: • Written Research Assignment Reports
                                  • Partnership Three Peer Review Reports

Week 12 -- 11 November 2004
        Reading Assignment:
- Hill - pages 193-282
- Hofstede - pages 109-138

        Discussion Questions - Set Five:
- The reading from Hill addresses strategies for skills and influence acquisition for first-time managers. What do you consider to be the <u>two</u> most important learning tasks for the <u>aspiring</u> first-time manager to undertake? Justify your selections.
- The Hofstede reading explores uncertainty avoidance. In what ways might an <u>aspiring</u> first-time manager's cultural heritage with respect to uncertainty avoidance help or hamper his/her preparation for the position?

        DUE to instructor: • Team 5 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report

Week 13 -- 18 November 2004
        Reading Assignment:
- Hill - pages 283-302
- Hofstede, pages 139-158 (Chp 6) and pages 177-204 (Chp 8)

        Discussion Questions - Set Six:
- In what ways might an aspiring first-time manager of technical professionals in the United States use the concepts discussed in the reading from Hill and Chapter 6 of Hofstede to prepare for the position?
- Assume that you are the manager of a multicultural group of 10 to 12 technical professionals. How might you apply the concepts discussed in the reading from Hill and Chapter 8 of Hofstede to manage intergroup conflict in an effective manner?

        DUE to instructor: • Team 6 - Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Report

Week 14 -- 25 November 2004 -- Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15 -- 02 December 2004
        Quiz Four: Multiple-Choice and/or Short Answer Questions on Reading Assignments
        Partnerships presentations: Conflict Management Research Assignment

Week 16 -- 09 December 2004
        Partnerships presentations: Conflict Management Research Assignment
        DUE to instructor: • Written Research Assignment Reports
                                  • Partnership Four Peer Review Reports

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

• Class members are encouraged to maintain personal and professional standards consistent with The Fundamental Principles of the Code of Ethics of the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology:

> *Engineers uphold and advance the integrity, honor and dignity of the engineering profession by:*
> * *using their knowledge and skill for the enhancement of human welfare;*
> * *being honest and impartial, and serving with fidelity the public, their employers and clients;*
> * *striving to increase the competence and prestige of the engineering profession; and*
> * *supporting the professional technical societies of their disciplines.*

• Class members are expected to attend class sessions and to be prompt.

• Class members are expected to be considerate and respectful of one another.

• Budgeting 5-6 hours per week for this course, in addition to class attendance, is not unreasonable.

• All written assignments submitted for evaluation must be typed. Please do *NOT* use report covers; simply staple the pages together in the upper-left-hand corner. Professionalism dictates timely completion and submission of assignments. *Tardy assignments are unacceptable to the instructor and potentially unfair to other class members. Intellectual property rights must be complied with for all assignments.*

For additional information regarding the following items, see also FAQs at <www.csun.edu/~msem>

• Withdrawing from (dropping) this course should be accomplished during the first two weeks of instruction. Please note that failure to *officially* drop any course results in a grade of U, which is the equivalent of an F for your transcript and grade point average.

• It is a University requirement that all undergraduate and graduate students *must pass* the Writing Proficiency Examination (WPE) as part of earning their degree. Graduate students *must pass* the WPE before completing more than 12 units in their graduate program. Students who earned an undergraduate degree at CSUN in Spring 1982 or thereafter have already met the requirement. Delaying the completion of the WPE requirement can delay your graduation.

• It is a University requirement that all graduate students whose overall undergraduate degree grade point average was less than 3.0, and who have not taken the General Aptitude Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), *must* take the test before completing more than 12 units in their graduate program. A delay in meeting the GRE requirement will delay your classification and can delay your graduation.

• The major of each student in this class will be verified using the University course roster. Students whose majors are not correct should submit a *Change of Objective for Graduate Students* to Admissions and Records within the first three weeks of the semester.

• The classification status of each graduate student in this class will be verified. Conditionally classified graduate students who are eligible for classification must submit a *Request for Classification* during the first three weeks of the semester. Eligible students are in the correct major, have met their WPE and/or GRE requirements, and have a GPA of 3.0 or better.

RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS DESCRIPTIONS

Research Assignment One: Hiring Processes

- Research the complete hiring process for technical professionals at the employers of partnership members
- Compile examples of key forms used in the process
- Prepare step-by-step summaries of key steps in each hiring process
- For each hiring process, identify and summarize the nature of the hiring authority and hiring responsibilities of the manager who will supervise the new hire
- Summarize the primary similarities and differences among the processes and the manager's hiring authority and responsibilities
- Deliverables:
    - Informally present (maximum 15 minutes) a summary of research findings to class; presentation order will be randomly assigned
    - Distribute copies of written report summary, together with example forms, to all class members at the time of the presentation, and submit complete report to instructor
    - Submit Partnership One Peer Review Reports

Research Assignment Two: Performance Evaluation Processes

- Seek out one publicly available reference that addresses at least one ostensibly desirable performance evaluation process
- Summarize the process provided in the reference
- Research the performance evaluation process for professional employees at the employer of one of the partnership members
- Acquire copy of primary performance evaluation form (if any) used as part of the employer's process
- Prepare a step-by-step summary of the key steps in the employer's process
- Critique the employer's process in the context of the reference selected
- Critique the performance evaluation form in the context of the employer's process
- Deliverables:
    - Informally present (maximum 15 minutes) a summary of research findings to class; presentation order will be randomly assigned
    - Distribute copies of written report summary, together with example forms, to all class members at the time of the presentation, and submit complete report to the instructor
    - Submit Partnership Two Peer Review Reports

Research Assignment Three: Termination Processes

- Seek out and summarize at least four publications that address termination processes.
- Based on the publications researched, class handouts, and other sources as appropriate, identify at least two productive managerial approaches to the implementation of a termination process.
- Research and summarize termination processes for professional employees at the employer of one of the partners.
- Acquire copies of primary termination forms used as part of the employer's process
- Evaluate the role(s) of a professional employee's manager in the termination processes of the organization.
- Deliverables:
  - Informally present (maximum 15 minutes) a summary of research findings to class; presentation order will be randomly assigned
  - Distribute copies of written report summary, together with example forms, to all class members at the time of the presentation, and submit complete report to the instructor
  - Submit Partnership Three Peer Review Reports

Research Assignment Four: Conflict Management

- The theme for this assignment is managing conflict – between people who report to you; between you and someone who reports to you, *or* between you and a managerial peer. Within this theme, project partners should identify and propose their own applied research assignment.
- Deliverables:
  - Brief proposal summary due to instructor by Week 9 of the semester
  - Informally present (maximum 15 minutes) a summary of research findings to class; presentation order will be randomly assigned.
  - Distribute copies of written report summary to all class members at the time of the presentation, and submit complete report to the instructor
  - Submit Partnership Four Peer Review Reports

COURSE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION STRUCTURE

60 %   Four collaborative research partnership assignments (15 % each)
10 %   One collaborative discussion team assignment
20 %   Four multiple-choice and/or short-answer quizzes on reading assignments (5% each)
05 %   Attendance and professionalism
05 %   Participation and active learning (based in part on Partnership Peer Review Reports and Discussion Team and Team Member Assessment Reports)

Letter Grade Scale: A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = 0-59%
Please note that, contrary to the instructor's practice in most courses, Plus/Minus Grading *WILL BE USED* for this course