

15:304 Spring, 2017
Being Effective: Power and Influence

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This is a course about power and influence. All organizations are fundamentally political. Players (people, organizational units) have different self-interests and different perspectives and objectives. The players also differ in the power or resources that they bring to bear in order to advance their perspective. If you are to be effective, both with respect to the goals of the organization and with respect to your personal goals, you need to be able to map these differences, understand your own interests and objectives, and understand how operate in the environment. In addition to being able to think strategically you also need a set of skills that can be summarized via the words “power, persuasion and influence.”

This course aims help you improve upon your mapping, strategic, tactical, and persuasion skills. We will use a variety of material, drawn from the business and public worlds, to do this.

Course Requirements

1. The course is built around readings, cases, and several movies. You will be expected to come to every class having prepared and ready to discuss the material.
2. There will be two “reflection” classes on different topics. For these classes we will rely entirely on readings and no cases. Again, you should come prepared to discuss this material. In these discussions we ask you to use examples from your own experience to illustrate your points and aid in the reflection. **For each of these sessions you should at the beginning of the class turn in a brief paper (no more than five printed pages) with your reflections on the topic. These will be graded.**

For each of these two classes I will pick a student at random and ask him/her to lead off with a five minute reflection drawing on her/his paper. You **WILL NOT** be graded on this presentation. The class will then react to this presentation and we will then move into a more general discussion.

3. Starting about halfway through the course I will also randomly select students to begin each class with a five minute reflection drawn from personal experience regarding any theme that we have discussed. **Again, you will not be graded** on the presentation (assuming you take it seriously). We will have a brief class reaction/discussion and then proceed to the material for the day.

NOTE: I WILL MAKE THE RANDOM ASSIGNMENTS FOR BOTH TYPES OF PRESENTATIONS NEXT WEEK. IF FOR SOME REASON YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE IDEA OF BEING SELECTED AND PRESENTING PLEASE LET ME KNOW ASAP

4. There will be an in-class quiz on the last day based on a mini-case that I will hand out at the beginning of the session.
5. I have tried to be sensitive about not assigning too many readings on top of the cases. In fact some classes have no readings beyond the case. However I have also tried to provide useful readings and I expect that you will actually read what I have assigned for the relevant classes.

Grading

Class participation:	50%
Two reflection papers	25%
Quiz	25%

The Movies

We will discuss several movies in class. You should watch the movies before the class and we will discuss them during the class. Several of these are available on Netflix or other similar services. I will describe how to access the others during the first class

Class Participation

We aspire to engaging and high-quality class discussions. We can achieve high-quality if participants make sound, rigorous, and insightful diagnoses; apply course materials appropriately; and contribute lessons from their own experience productively. The conversation will be engaging if participants are willing to take risky or unpopular points of view; participate in debates and role plays; use logic, precision, and evidence in making arguments; and are constructively critical. Obviously everyone must be both present and prepared for each class; thus, unexcused absences and lack of preparation will be counted heavily against your grade.

Policy on Individual Work

Written products must represent your own individual work. Copying or otherwise using any other outside materials on any assignment without proper citation constitutes plagiarism (see: <http://libguides.mit.edu/infonav>). Any student who copies or knowingly allows his/her work to be copied or who uses outside materials in the preparation of assignments without proper citation and reference will receive an F grade for the assignment and will be reported to the MIT Committee on Discipline. Similar papers may not be submitted to separate courses without explicit prior approval of both instructors. During the quiz, any student who either receives or knowingly gives assistance or information concerning the quiz will receive an F grade on the quiz and violations will also be reported to the COD.

Please also consult the “Values@MITSloan” document uploaded on Stellar for more information.

OUTLINE OF COURSE

February 8	Introduction
	INFLUENCING
February 13	12 Angry Men WATCH MOVIE PRIOR TO CLASS
February 15	Donna Dubinsky
February 21	Rob Parsons
February 22	Incentives: VDS Systems
February 27	First Reflection Essay: Gender and Power
	LEADING
March 1	12 O'Clock High WATCH MOVIE PRIOR TO CLASS
March 6	Wolfgang Keller
March 8	Henry V WATCH MOVIE PRIOR TO CLASS
	MAPPING THE TERRAIN
March 13	Holy Cross Hospital
March 15	Pierre Frankel
March 20	SIP
March 22	SIP
	GAINING AND LOSING PERSONAL POWER
April 3	Jerry Sanders
April 5	Margaret Thatcher AND Lewis Gluckman
April 10	San Jose Diocese/Laura Esserman
APRIL 12	LBJ AND Henry Kissinger
April 19	Second Reflection Essay: Building Power From Nothing
April 24	Angela Merkel AND Tina Brown
	DILEMMAS
April 26	Osterman Racing
May 1	Slade Printing
May 3	Lincoln WATCH MOVIE PRIOR TO CLASS
	STARTING OUT
May 8	Matt Leeds AND From Geek To Man
May 10	Erik Peterson
May 15	Wrap Up
May 17	In class quiz

CASES AND READINGS

February 8

Introduction

February 13

Watch Twelve Angry Men (Henry Fonda Version) prior to Class. Details will be provided.

Study Questions:

1. Come prepared to analyze how the Fonda character influences his fellow jury members. What tactics and strategies of influence does he employ? Why is he effective?

February 15

Case: Donna Dubinsky (HBS 9-486-083)

Reading

Jackell, Moral Mazes, Chapter 3, "The Main Chance"

Study Questions:

1. Why was Dubinsky initially so successful at Apple?
2. Why did she respond the way she did to the JIT proposal? (put yourself in her situation: intellectually *and* emotionally.)
3. What do you think she should have done differently? Be specific.

February 21

Case: Rob Parsons At Morgan-Stanley (HBS 9-498-054)

Reading:

Jerry Useem, "Why It Pays To Be A Jerk," The Atlantic, June 2015

Robert Sutton, The No Asshole Rule, Chapter 2, "The Damage Done"

Study questions:

1. What is your assessment of Rob Parson's performance? Should he be promoted?
2. If you were Paul Nasr how would you conduct the performance appraisal conversation? What would be your goals? What issues would you raise and why and how would you raise them? How would you try to influence Parsons?
3. If you were Rob Parsons what would be your goals in the performance evaluation? How would you conduct yourself? How would you try to influence the process?

February 22

Case: Visionary Design Systems (HBS 9-495-011)

Reading:

Steven Kerr. "On the folly of rewarding A, while hoping for B."

Study Questions:

1. What is your assessment of the VDS philosophy and compensation system? How effective is compensation in driving behavior?
2. What is empowerment at VDS? Do you agree with the definition on p. 7? If not, what do you think empowerment means?
3. What is your analysis of the PDM problem? How should it be resolved? What changes in strategies or policies, if any, do you recommend?

February 27

First Reflection Essay: Gender

Question: Drawing on your own organizational experience, describe power and influence dynamics with respect to gender. Who had power and who did not and why? How do you explain this distribution of influence? How, if at all, did gender based power dynamics evolve over time? What kinds of feedback mechanisms were at play? If things should change how could that change come about?

Note: The examples you write about can be positive or negative. I am not looking for any particular point of view but rather for realistic description and analysis.

Readings

Rosabeth Kanter, Men and Women Of The Corporation, Chapter 8, “Numbers: Minorities and Majorities”

Jeffrey Pfeffer, “Women’s Careers and Power: What You Need To Know”

Mary Blair-Loy, Competing Devotions: Career and Family Among Executive Women, Chapter 1, “Introduction” and Chapter 4: “Reinventing Schemas: Family Life Among Full-time Executive Women”

March 1

Case: movie: Twelve O’clock High (starring Gregory Peck)

Watch this movie before coming to class

Come prepared to discuss leadership styles and lessons drawn from this movie

March 6

Case: Wolfgang Keller at Konigsbrau-TAK A.E. (A) (HBS 9-498-045)

Study questions:

1. What is the problem in this case, what needs to be fixed, and how?

March 8

Case: Watch the movie Henry V (Kenneth Branagh version)

Watch the movie before coming to class

1. What is Henry V's leadership style and how does it evolve? How effective is it and why?
2. How does Henry utilize rhetoric? What are his techniques?
3. What do you learn about the difference between the public and the private Henry?

Orient yourself by reading a brief history (for example

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-V-king-of-England>) . When watching the movie focus on Henry's leadership style, his use of rhetoric, and how he evolves.

March 13

Case: Holy Cross Hospital: The Road To A New Culture (Stanford GSB Case No. HR-16)

Study questions:

1. John Johnson has introduced an entire system's worth of changes at Holy Cross Hospital. How well has he done at designing and implementing these changes?
2. How effective has he been in selling others that his ideas are correct and doable?
3. How do you assess his leadership style?

March 15

Case: Pierre Frankel, A & B (HBS 9-312-070 9-312-071)

1. What obstacles does Frankel face and how can he remove them?
2. Has Frankel established himself as a change agent? How effective has he been to date?
3. Who should be in Frankel's coalition? Who should be ignored or neutralized? How?

April 3

Case: Jerry Sanders (HBS 9-498-021)

Reading:

Malcom Gladwell, "Six Degrees of Lois Weinberg"

Study Questions:

1. How effective has Jerry Sanders been?
2. How has Jerry Sanders built his career, what is his strategy?
3. What persuasion tactics does Sanders employ?

April 5

Case: Margaret Thatcher (HBS Case 9-497-018)

Case: Ken Auletta, "Power and Greed On Wall Street: The Fall of Lehman Brothers," New York Times, February 17, 1985.

Study questions:

1. What bases of power did Thatcher develop in her early career?
 2. How did she exercise influence? How did she build credibility?
 3. What lessons do you draw from this case for building "success syndrome" in your own career? What questions does it raise?
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1. Why did Glucksman succeed in this power play? On what sources of power did he rely?
 2. What could Peterson have done differently to prevent his own ouster or minimize the potential problems for the firm? What sources of power did he have?
 3. Develop two specific action plans for Peterson. In the first, outline what he might have done to prevent Glucksman from claiming his job. In the second, outline steps he might have taken after his meeting with Glucksman.

April 10

Case: The Roman Catholic Diocese of San Jose (HBS 9-303-069)

1. Who are the stakeholders the bishop must be aware of and how likely are they to want change? Why are these stakeholders involved with the church and how does that intersect with the objectives of the church's change process?
2. The church is an extremely flat organization. What are the powers that the bishop possesses and how has he used them to effect change?
3. Assess the Bishop's influence strategy
4. Moving forward, what should the bishop do to succeed?

Case: Laura Esserman (A)

1. What are Laura Esserman's strengths?
2. What are some of her weaknesses ,or difficulties?
3. What about the situation makes changing things difficult? What about the situation makes it political?
4. What do you think Esserman has done well so far in her efforts? What do you think she has done less well?
5. What should she do now? Be specific, so someone could actually implement your suggestions. Provide a rationale for why you think the suggestion will work and how it will help her accomplish her objectives?

April 12

Case: Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992, Ch. 4, "Harvard: The Ambitious Student, 1947-1955."

1. What was the context or environment at that time, both in the country generally and in the political science department at Harvard, at the time Kissinger was a student? What opportunities did this environment present?
2. What were Kissinger's apparent goals when he was at Harvard, first as undergraduate student and then as a doctoral student? What was he trying to accomplish?
3. What did Kissinger do, what specific actions did he take, how did he spend his time, with what effects? Why were his actions apparently so effective?
4. What bases of power was Kissinger able to develop?
5. What personal strengths and weaknesses did Kissinger have? How self-aware was he of them? What did he do to capitalize on his strengths and mitigate his weaknesses?

Case: Robert A. Caro, *Master of the Senate: The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, New York: Knopf, 2002, Ch. 17, "The Nothing Job," pp 383-419.

1. What about the situation gave Johnson some advantages in building power from a position, Assistant Democratic Leader, that traditionally had neither power nor visibility?
2. What sources of power and resources did Johnson develop? How?
3. What actions and what personal attributes are required to accomplish what Johnson did, transforming seemingly marginal jobs and roles into significant sources of power?

April 19

Case: Second Reflection Essay: Building Power From Nothing

Question: Building Power among the powerless is difficult. The powerless have few personal resources and they may face opponents with considerable power. Yet on occasion the powerless succeed. Consider the Civil Rights Movement, the Gay Rights Movement, or cases of community organizing (for example the Dudley Street Initiative in Boston),. In your essay pick an example (from your personal experience or press reports or other source) of a powerless group that attempted to change their circumstances. Analyze, using the tools described in the readings as well as throughout the course, how they attempted to do this. Did they succeed or fail? Why? What might they have done differently? And what does all this teach you about power and influence in our careers.

Readings:

Paul Osterman, Gathering Power, Chapter 2, "Building Organizations"

Saul Alinsky, Rules For Radicals, Chapters "A Word About Words," "Communication"

Deborah Meyerson, Tempered Radicals, Chapter 7, "Organizing Collective Action"

Malcom Gladwell, "How David Beat Goliath" The New Yorker, May 11, 2009

April 24

Case: Angela Merkel

Reading: George Packer, "The Quiet German, The Astonishing Rise of Angela Merkel The Most Powerful Woman In the World," The New Yorker, December 1, 2014

How did Angela Merkel rise to power? What strategies and tactics did she employ? How did she interact with her colleagues and what was her mixture of loyalty and personal ambition? Is her style of obtaining and maintaining power workable in a business organization?

Case: Tina Brown

Elizabeth Kolbert, "How Tina Brown Moves Magazines," *New York Times Magazine*, December 5, 1993. Peter Stevenson, "Tina Brown Is Still Hungry for Buzz," *New York Times*, May 6, 2011. Luisita Lopez Torregrosa, "Tina Brown Goes Global," *New York Times*, September 24, 2013.

1. Describe Tina Brown. What attributes/characteristics does she possess? What are her strengths? Her weaknesses?
2. What has made her so successful—able to obtain positions of high visibility and influence at a relatively young age and then to occupy a series of important positions in the media almost continually for more than three decades?
3. What actions and strategies has Tina Brown employed to enhance her effectiveness and influence?
4. How has Brown's approach and personal qualities fit, or not, with the particular sector in which she has worked, media and specifically, magazines?

April 26:

Case: Osterman Racing

Material to be handed out

May 1

Case: Slade Plating Department (HBS 9-496-018)

Reading: Edgar Schein, Organizational Psychology, Second Edition, pp. 80-89

Study Questions:

1. How would you describe the culture of the Sarto group? Be specific. How has it evolved? What impact has it had on the effectiveness of the group?
2. What are the determinants of social status and influence within the plating department? The Sarto group? The Clark group?
Why did management previously ignore the illegal “punch-out” system?
3. What actions would you take if you were Porter? What are the risks associated with these actions? How would you sell your strategy to the other players?

Important supplemental information: The 1996 starting salary in the Plating Department was \$8.00; Tony Sarto’s hourly wage was \$12.00. The average wage for semi-skilled workers in the U.S. was \$12.00. Firms similar to Slade in the Michigan area, such as suppliers to the auto industry, paid an average hourly wage of \$14.70. United Auto Workers working at the ‘Big Three (General Motors, Chrysler and Ford), had starting salaries around \$13.00 an hour and earned on average \$19.00 an hour. The minimum wage in 1996 was \$4.25, raised to \$4.75 on October 1, 1996.

May 3

Lincoln: Watch Before Class

MAY 8

Case: From Geek To Man

Required Reading: From Geek to Man: Excerpts from *Liar's Poker* (1-497-034)

"Do Chameleons Get Ahead?" by Martin Kilduff and David V. Day (2-497-035)

1. What was Michael Lewis' strategy for learning the ropes at Salomon? Evaluate this strategy. How well would it work in other settings?

2. How important is it to be strategic in trying to convey the "right image?"

Case: Matt Leeds (A) (HBS 9-403-111)

Study Questions:

1. How did Matt Leeds get into this situation of feeling so powerless?
2. Could he have done anything differently to help his cause?
3. What should he do now? Be specific

May 10

Case: Erik Peterson at Biometra (A), (B) (C) (D)

Reading:

John Gabarro and John Kotter, "Managing Your Boss," Harvard Business Review, 1980

Kotter, "Power, Dependency, and Effectiveness"

Study questions:

1. What are the problems facing Erik Peterson?
2. What are the underlying causes of these problems? How effective has Peterson been in taking charge of the startup, in terms of managing the new operation and of providing leadership?

May 15

Wrap Up

May 17: in class quiz

