TOP MANAGEMENT PROCESS (TMP) - DRAFT

MGMT B7515-001, summer 2015

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Office Hours: By appointment. I endeavor to be available when you need a person-to-person session on weekends. Call or email me to make an appointment or to discuss whatever is on your mind.

Course Overview:

The goal of TMP is to help you develop your approach to leadership as you evolve in your career – from a manager of programmatic matters or as a functional manager of, say, finance, marketing or operations – to a role as a general manager (GM) or chief executive officer (CEO) – the person who has, in the private sector, P&L responsibility for an organizational unit and has at least – nominally – 3 different functions directly reporting to her or him and dotted lines to other functions (often staff activities such as HR, Finance, IT, etc.).

The TMP course is all about the job of the GM or the CEO – the leader of an organization who is ultimately responsible for all aspects of the organization: strategy, operations and results. To achieve the course’s objectives, each lesson adheres to one (or more) orientations – focused on helping you to: (1) **Experience** the considerations and conditions relevant to the responsibilities of a GM or CEO (vicariously through cases, simulations and interactive discussion); (2) **Retain** those experiences (largely through reflection) until you can put them into action; both of which will, in turn, help you to (3) **Navigate** a career progression to get from where you are now to a GM or CEO position.

The GM/CEO job is quite different from any that most, perhaps all, of you have had to this point. The GM/CEOs’ job is comprehensive in that he or she is endowed with a responsibility to ensure that all units of the organization execute towards an end that is articulated in a business strategy. The self-evident descriptor, “unity of effort” is quite helpful in articulating the GM/CEO’s role, since clearly the GM/CEO is responsible for ensuring “unity of effort.” But “unity of effort” is not enough. Top Management must be able to define the intent of the effort. GM/CEOs must think strategically and be able to define a beneficial strategy for the organization as well as coordinate and direct effort to realize the strategy.

GM/CEOs succeed or fail based upon their ability to develop and articulate strategy and on how well they are able to design organizations; lead people within the organization; influence parties outside of the organization; and make effective business decisions to operationalize strategy. The challenges are daunting – until they are studied and understood – when they are recognized merely as being difficult, but also potentially rewarding. This course is one in which you will
have a chance to study the challenges that confront GM/CEOs and to formulate approaches to those challenges so that you will not be daunted when you face them. Indeed, you will enhance the likelihood that you will succeed in meeting every challenge.

Because the GM/CEO’s job is comprehensive, the TMP course provides – necessarily – that students further develop their systems and process-oriented mindset. When we refer to “systems” we mean that everything is connected to, and affects everything else. By “process,” we reference the complex ways in which people, events, issues and situations evolve and interrelate over time. We study three kinds of processes: leadership, organizational and group. The Venn diagram below represents the interaction.

**Leadership Process:** We view leadership as a process because it is a series of actions, including decision making, which shapes the organizational context in which people work. *It is about how GM/CEOs influence people to align their effort* in support of an organization’s strategy.

We pay particular attention to the relationship between a GM/CEO and team members because they are connected in a reciprocal way; they influence each other’s emotions, thoughts and actions. The complexities of organizations; the uncertainties of the environment in which organizations operate; and the cognitive limitations of the workforce’s artisans and leaders can conspire to create a context that detracts from an organization’s ability to build and execute a viable and advantageous strategy. If leaders are lethargic or foolish, such a context can seduce artisans and leadership into reactivity and impulsiveness which then reinforce each other’s regression.
A hallmark of leadership process is the ability of GM/CEOs to resist regressive forces and stay in a catalytic mode, building trustworthiness, participation, and collaboration, and maintaining good relationships that helps their organization succeed in the face of such a context... and even change the context! We call this hallmark “Self Leadership,” and we will discuss this concept more fully in the course.

**Organizational Processes:** Much of a GM/CEOs decision-making is accomplished through organizational processes such as strategic planning, performance reviews, business development, programming of operations and budgeting. Organizational processes are sequential and simultaneous activities and tasks that constantly interact with each other and with other on-going events. Every company uses these organizational processes to plan activity that underscores unity of effort. They are the principle ways through which organizations do their work.

**Group Process:** The GM/CEOs’ top team needs to be involved in these organizational processes. The more complex and dynamic the markets and organization, the more GM/CEOs will need to work with and through their top team, as no one person can singularly possess the experience and expertise needed to build strategy, lead people and coordinate operations. When their team works well, GM/CEOs gain diversity of perspective. Realizing these benefits, though, is not easy. With diversity comes conflict. Leaders and members can regress into unproductive discussions. Group process is about the multitude of ways in which people interact with each other and the quality of their working relationships when they are working.

Getting these three processes right is quite difficult, and the difficulty is not just because markets are sometimes opaque or unpredictable. Organizations operate in markets but are also comprised of people, making leadership challenges doubly or triply difficult... but again, very rewarding. We need only consider, for example, human emotion, frailties and strengths. Take anxiety for example. Anxiety is more commonplace in our organizations than we typically like to think. While anxiety can motivate people, it can lead to stress and impaired functioning, which break down work relationships break down. Intra and inter group conflict breaks out. Information does not get to the right people. Functional stove pipes, business silos and country fiefdoms develop and impede discussion and coordination. Decision making deteriorates. Unity of effort dissipates. A good leader will recognize and channel human psychology to the workforces’ and organizations’ benefit.

I believe that the interactions of the aforementioned processes juxtaposed with the challenges that human psychology presents makes leading a complex organization is among the most challenging of callings. Leading an organization is less like rocket science, I like to say, than like neuroscience. And to extend the medical metaphor further, I like to suggest that the term “organization” is a misnomer. The entities we are learning how to lead are more like organisms. And I welcome you to our leadership laboratory!
Thus, the goal of TMP is to improve our capabilities in designing and leading these three kinds of processes so that good decisions result. The course is organized into five modules, of which the first two introduce General Management and the next three modules each study a specific general management responsibility.

Module I: Making the Transition to General Management  
Module II: Introduction to Systems Thinking and the Process Mindset  
Module III: Making the Team  
Module IV: Structure and Strategy  
Module V: The Leader in Focus

In each of these modules, we will study the leadership process, the organizational process and the group process. Our discussions will illustrate, however, that organizational processes and group process can only be as effective as the leadership process and the resulting work environment that the GM/CEO has created. In other words, leadership process is primary.

In Module I we discuss the challenges in making the transition from an individual producer to a general manager. Almost one in two GM/CEOs fail, usually within the first 18 months. The major ‘derailers’ are poor working relationships; inability to build and lead organizations; and difficulty in adapting to the broad scope of the job.

In Module II, we will introduce systems-thinking and the process mindset and explore how they can help new GM/CEOs handle the challenges of their job. Systems-thinking helps GM/CEOs start with the total situation and learn all the many factors at work and how they might be influencing each other. It lessens the tendency to focus only in an individual or a single department to understand poor performance. Systems-thinking also helps GM/CEOs move from a largely technical orientation to a leadership orientation.

The process mindset facilitates systems thinking. Process is inherently dynamic and comprehensive; it helps identify interactions; points to how situations evolve; and informs a broad scope of action needed for effective operations.

In Module III, we study the processes behind team dynamics and team decisions. These processes deal with how GM/CEOs and their top team: handle conflict, build upon different viewpoints; create and consider alternatives; and decide upon an alternative. Usually, decisions at the level of a GM/CEO, particularly decisions involving strategy, human capital and real capital choices are important and controversial. Members can get over-invested in their opinions. Anxiety may lead members into protective behavior. Power struggles can emerge. Top teams often become polarized. “Win-lose” behavior erupts. Alternatively, particularly if the GM/CEOs approach to leadership is unilateral, members get intimidated, refrain from speaking-up and go into a state known as “group think.”
Either way, GM/CEOs and members might not recognize that their working relationships have failed. Their communication with each other is not open, honest and trusting. Their differences are not explored. They don’t actually understand the situation intimately or comprehensively enough to make a good decision. What’s worse is that GM/CEOs and members are often unaware (or unwilling to admit to themselves) that their relationships have declined and subsequently impaired organizational decision-making.

We will discuss how GM/CEOs can design and lead decision-making processes so that relationships within their top team enable open, honest, candid discussion. Topics include how GM/CEOs can access the talent in their top team; help surface latent conflict productively; help members build on mutual experiences; and change attitudes and behaviors, including their own, to improve group process.

In Module IV we focus on the GM/CEO’s responsibility to lead the processes behind formulating strategy and to create the structures that implement strategy. It’s through these processes that the decisions are made on the company’s future direction and goals, how it will satisfy customers better than competitors, how all the functions, geographic units and levels will be aligned to implement the strategy and how progress will be monitored. We will discuss the design and leadership of strategic planning processes. We will experience the challenges in strategic processes through a role play of a company’s multi-functional team charged with choosing a new Internet strategy.

In Module V, a module that we will touch upon throughout the semester, we’ll think about the GM/CEO as a person. Our goal here is to prepare you to navigate the path from where you are now to the leader you aspire to become. We’ll receive the perspective of seasoned GM/CEOs. This will be a great opportunity to ask about how they prepared and positioned themselves, and what they know now that they wish they knew when they were at an earlier career stage.

**Course Pedagogy**

Effective top management is not the sum total of effective practices below the GM/CEO. There is no spreadsheet, equation, or list of rules that will lead to success. What you need is expert intuition, and you get that through experience and reflection. The course is designed to give you a jump start on experience. Our goal is to help you to move to the “top management learning curve.” If the course does that, and if you retain your experience, you’ll enhance your likelihood of success as a top manager. Most of our class sessions represent opportunities to gain experience with top management processes. In the session list below, these are noted with an “E” for Experience after the session title. Some session are designed to help you get “from here to there” in terms of your career, and these are denoted with an “N” for Navigation.

**Classroom discussion is the primary pedagogy.** The research on adult learning is quite clear: adults learn best through discussion and reflection. This finding is especially true for learning about general management.
Your learning rests upon your thorough preparation of the cases and frequent and high quality participation in class discussion. Always be ready to share your reasoning so that we can see how you are reaching your insights. Engage in dialog with your peers. We want you to learn to discuss complex topics in a spirit of respect for others’ views and a willingness to change your mind if you see merit in others’ reasoning.

Prepare for class as if it were a business meeting. I assume you will be well prepared. Questions are provided for each case or reading to help you prepare for class discussion. You would be well advised to have your thoughts on all these questions written down to aid you in following and contributing to the conversation. Sometimes, the cases may seem short. Don’t be fooled. It’s important that you thoroughly understand the system (the context), the protagonist and the other executives in the case, what might be going on above and below the surface and what would you do about the challenges facing the GM/CEO.

I think you will typically need two hours to prepare a case. Some cases, such as the “movies cases” and the multi-media cases, may require three or more hours. Along with the E/N for Experience/Navigation in the course detail below, I provide a number which is my estimate of how much time you should budget to be prepared for the session. You’ll see that sometimes the preparation is particularly heavy (5 hours) and occasionally it is much lighter. I have designed the course to recognize that you have full lives – with multiple responsibilities extra to the responsibilities of being a business graduate student. In other words, I have allocated the time requirement as judiciously as I can and thus, insist that you meet your responsibility is to come to every class prepared. Your preparation – the effort and forethought you put into preparing for each class will determine the values you extract from it.

Remember that besides Experience and Navigation, we have a goal of Learning Retention. In that regard, we have individual and group reflection assignments that are described below. You will use the Learning Journal you have used in previous classes (or a new Journal if necessary) as your key repository of TMP learning.

Course Assignments

The graded assignments for the class are as follows:

- Class Participation - 40%
- Individual Assignment #1 – 15%
- Individual Assignment #2 – 10%
- Individual Assignment #3 – 15%
- Learning Journal Check #1 - 5%
- Learning Journal Check #2 - 5%
- Group Presentation 10%

Class Participation
The success of this course depends on your engagement. Thus, the largest singular determinant of your grade will reflect the quality of your participation – in class – during class. You therefore will be at a disadvantage regarding your grade, if you miss any class sessions. **I will evaluate your participation in every class session on a 0-3 scale.** One point comes from attending and being fully present, which means: avoiding all electronic distractions (I will enter a zero for your class participation for a day should I notice you interacting with an electronic device.); participating with enthusiasm in simulations and exercises; and avoiding any comments or behaviors that detract from the learning environment. **You can go from one to two or three points by saying something that helps the class’s learning.** Keen participation is evidenced less by the number of comments or observations you make than by their quality. One really keen observation every class will earn a high grade, while a number of dull observations (especially restatements of classmates’ comments) will earn a lower grade. **Of course, missing a class means that you will receive 0 points for that class.**

*Individual Assignments*

Three individual assignments represent a combined total 40% of your course grade – which means that the individual assignments in aggregate determine your grade as much as your class participation does. **Individual assignments are opportunities for you to reflect, and so in completing these assignments, you should draw heavily from the reflections – the thoughts – that you will have recorded in your learning journal.**

While I do not grade for grammar or style per se, the grade that you earn for each assignment is dependent upon how well you develop and present an argument (position). **And since developing an argument depends upon writing well, you will need to make your best effort to write in a way that abides by the rules of grammar while avoiding flowery styles and industry-specific jargon that the reader might not comprehend.**

The emphasis on communicating – on clarity of writing is completely appropriate for a course such as this for at the very least, a singular reason – a reason that may at first seem counterintuitive. As leaders ascend to the highest levels of corporate governance, especially when the organization is complex, the leader loses her of his span of control.

Why? The organization is just too complex for the top level manager (better yet, top level leader) to have the tools to understand all aspects of the business. The top level manager must delegate control to her or his lieutenants. And so, coincident with a manager’s ascendency as well as increased accountability and responsibility, the loss of control presents a sort of dilemma, a dilemma that can be resolved by loss of control with enhanced influence. Enhancing influence, in turn, depends upon excellent capacity to communicate. And one of the most relevant ways for a leader to communicate is for the leader to provide the relevant stakeholders with clear narrative that contains a compelling vision or sensible and understandable direction (often in the form of
corporate policy or in defining roles and responsibilities or in describing implementation processes).

I will use the same grading convention that I use to measure class participation. A grade of <1 reflects substandard work. A grade of 1 reflects an acceptably level of work. Grades above 2 reflect superior work. I reserve the right to utilize decimals to indicate gradations of quality.

For each assignment, I provide guidance regarding the length of the assignment. The guidance I provide, though, is also an indication of expectation. In other words, if I suggest a limitation of approximately 1500 words, you should interpret that to mean that the assignment probably requires anywhere between, say, 1200 and 1800 words to satisfy. Naturally, the number of words you use will depend upon, among many factors, your capacity to write well. The very best writers are often able to convey sophisticated thoughts in relatively few words.

Please submit your individual assignments by using CANVAS no later than the deadline noted.

- Individual Assignment #1 – “My Leadership Philosophy,” due May 31, 11:59 pm. This assignment is worth 15% of your course grade. The recommended length of the assignment is approximately 1500 words. Your paper must also include a pictorial representation of your values hierarchy (i.e. your value tree – using a minimum of three levels – four or more levels are recommended if indeed that number of levels are required to represent the measurable attributes that define your values fully).

To help you envision and frame your paper, you might imagine yourself to be considering a change in your career, one that compels you to apply for a position that, should your application succeed, would place you into the rarified world of being a GM or CEO of a complex organization. You are excited about the prospect of being in charge. Up to the present time in your career, you have enjoyed considerable success as a functional area manager, where you’ve had no shortage of responsibilities. The challenges and the rewards have been considerable, and you consider the possibility of ascending to a position as a GM or CEO to be a continuation, or “natural progression” of a career path that you have imagined. But rather than blindly expending time and effort to apply for the new position, you wisely decide to take at least a couple of days to review and perhaps update your values hierarchy. After all, you don’t want to commit to such a demanding position unless your heart and soul is aligned and unless both point to wanting to take-on such a role.

You realize that your values haven’t changed over the course of the last several years, after all, you know that most of your values were formed in your youth. Yet you also know that you didn’t have enough time to think deeply about your values when you first etched your hierarchy onto a piece of paper some months ago. For this assignment, you are to record your (updated and more fully extended) value tree and then explain it – in the context of how you would apply those values in the workplace. The explanation is, in
essence, your leadership philosophy. In writing your philosophy, you should keep in mind that the audience for it is you. I will read it and grade it, of course, but ultimately, this assignment is intended for you to learn about yourself. Articulating your leadership philosophy forces you to come to grips with the realities of your stated values. It is easy to articulate values in the abstract, but much harder when you are forced to explain precisely what applying those values will likely mean in the workplace. Writing this philosophy, then, will help you to sort out your own principles as much as they are a kind of communiqué about the way you will lead.

I recommend that you refer to your learning journal and to think through the values workshop you participated in if you were a student in Dr. Ingram’s Leadership and Organizational Change class. And remember also that a leadership philosophy applies to any position for which you might apply; it is not a tailor-fitted prescription.

- Individual Assignment #2 – “The GM/CEO Interview,” due June 28, 11:59 pm. This assignment is worth 10% of your course grade. The recommended length of the assignment is approximately 1500 words.

The GM/CEO interview assignment requires that you: identify a GM/CEO, usually one who leads your business organization; interview the selected GM/CEO; provide a summary of the interview; and provide a narrative of your reflections from the interview.

The summary of the interview is fairly straightforward. It should, of course, reflect the conversation you have. My estimate is that the summary may indeed occupy about one-half of the length of your paper. The other half of your paper should include your reflections – of the value that you derived from the interviews. This narrative is not so straightforward.

Here, I am asking you to think of the implications of – what you were able to derive from the interview. For some of you, the interview might provide more understanding of what strategic thinking is. For some, the interview might give you some insight about the values of the leader, or about the leader’s leadership philosophy (whether or not the leader even is cognizant of having a philosophy). Maybe the values or aspects of the philosophy that you learned about will help you to refine your own leadership philosophy – the one that you articulated for individual assignment #1. For still others, the interview might alert you to the difficulties or rewards of the transition from a functional leadership position to a general leadership position in a complex organization in a way that our discussion of Napoli did not. Many of you will find the interview valuable in ways that I have not imagined. All of you are asked to reflect and convey those reflections using thoughtful, carefully constructed and presented narrative.

Please endeavor to ensure that the person you interview conforms to the definition of GM/CEO, as discussed in the course overview of this syllabus. Avoid interviewing
heads of functions (such as CFOs, Sales, Operations, HR, IT, R&D etc.). Those personnel, however superb their leadership practices may be, generally do not face the same complex challenges and responsibilities that a GM/CEO does.

The process you use to interview is dependent upon your personality, the personality of the interviewee and the relationship you have with the GM/CEO. I present a possible, introduction to the interview, however, for you to consider:

“I am a participant in a course about making the transition to general management—the leader of an organizational unit with P&L responsibility. The leader of the course, Professor Matt Feely, has asked each of us to interview a GM or a CEO – in other words, a top level manager – to learn about some of the challenges, opportunities, and potential pitfalls of making the transition from a functional or specialist’s job to a general manager or chief executive position. I’m interested in learning how you coped with the transition and what makes a top level manager’s job different from previous jobs – particularly if you perceived the intellectual and emotional challenges to be different.”

As a general rule, you might want to anticipate crafting an interview that will require no more than about 30-45 minutes.

You are also advised to ensure that the GM/CEO knows that you will maintain the GM/CEO’s anonymity. You might want to explain the following. Neither you nor Professor Feely will identify the name of the interviewee in the body of the class assignment or while discussing the interview. The professor will review the interviews merely to identify trends and to grade the student on how well he or she presented the material derived from the interview.

Some recommended questions:

1. At what point in your career did you move from a functional or specialist’s job to a GM/CEO position?
2. Are you still in transition? How long does the transition process take?
3. Did you – explicitly or implicitly – take into account your values when you were making the decision to transition to a top level management position?
4. How would you describe, briefly, the context in which you first became a general manager? Prompt with questions regarding: (1) How competitive was the market? (2) Were customer requirements changing? (3) Was technology changing? (4) Was the performance of the organization improving or declining? (5) What was the state of morale of the various stakeholders? (6) Was the organization healthy?
5. What did the people who appointed you reveal to you with regards to the challenges or goals of the organization? How accurate do you feel their revelations?
6. What qualities do you possess which made you an attractive GM/CEO candidate?
You should be able to see the value in my asking you to execute this assignment. I can think of three potential benefits. First, the assignment provides you “an excuse” (if you needed one) to touch base with a top level manager. The exposure can be good for your career by enhancing your visibility in the organization. Second, your discussion with the top level manager will provide for yet another source that will reinforce some of the lessons that I am determined to transmit to you during this semester. I am indeed so confident in the fundamental lessons that the course provides, that I am certain that the best leaders will indeed essentially repeat some of the ideas we will convey in the class. Third, the interview may help you to reconsider some of your ambitions as well as give you some food for thought that will help you to revise or “fine-tune” your values tree. As I have already indicated, your value tree should reflect your values – values that were likely to have been fundamentally formed while you were a child. Thus, your value tree – once it is indeed representative of your true values – should not need to be fine-tuned. The point is that while our values have long been formed, most of us are not intimately aware of our own values. Even with the work that you have done on understanding your values in this course up to this point and in Dr. Ingram’s class, it is unlikely that any – and certainly most – have documented your value tree precisely. Thinking about the leader’s values, given his or her comments made during the interview, will likely help you to contextualize portions of your value tree more accurately. Thus, this assignment will help you refine your value tree – which leads to better understanding of your values – which will help as you respond to Individual Assignment #3.

- Individual Assignment #3,”Reflections of a Consultative Decision Process and Decision,” due August 2, 1159 pm. This assignment is worth 15% of your course grade. The recommended length of the assignment is approximately 1500 words.

Recollect your professional experience and select a situation whereby your firm (or an organization with which you have some – preferably intimate – familiarity) had to make a critical decision that involved deliberation of group members (or some type of consultative decision-making process). Describe the context (size of firm, culture of the firm, leadership proclivities etc.) and the stakes of the decision (i.e. what was to be potentially gained or lost based on the decision). Explain also: the method the firm used to make the decision; the outcome, whether and why you believe the mechanism was excellent, or if not, how you would improve upon it. You must explain – in detail - whether the process and decisions made paralleled or was contrary to your values (Hint: Refer to your first and second individual assignments prior to and while drafting this third assignment. Remember, assignments #1 and #2 were intended to help you to “get into touch” with your values and your leadership philosophy.).
I am continuing the tradition that Dr. Ingram started in his class by requiring that you maintain a learning journal, a tool that, if you maintain it with alacrity, will help you in two ways. First, it will help you to reflect upon what you have read and what you have heard in the class – as well as perhaps what you can consider from your out-of-classroom experience. Reflection, in turn, will help you to recognize the significance of the lessons you have learned – and to learn them more deeply! Second, the journal can serve as a reference book for you in the future, when you might benefit from reminding yourself of some important leadership concepts. So, the question may become, “What do I mean by “maintaining” your journal “with alacrity?” In essence, if you were to spend 5-10 minutes jotting down some key thoughts for each class (but also for the assigned readings and any associated observation or thoughts that may apply), your journal will impress. You may use any method to record in your journal: stickers, drawings, colors, glued in slides, written notes, etc. A couple of key points as you build and maintain your journal:

- Capture key learning points – and apply them in a way that is abstract from the case/exercise we discussed. In other words, record insights about leadership and top management, not about Silvio Napoli, UPS, JFK, or the specifics of any case we studied;
- You should translate your learning into a form that works for you; make them your own so they stick with you. For example, you could translate how the learning from a case would translate into the specific industry or type of firm that you plan to join.

I will check your learning journals on two dates (June 12 and July 31). For each check, the grades you earn will depend upon how much effort you have put into the learning journal to help you to (1) reflect and (2) build a reference journal for the future. I will utilize the same grading convention for the journal checks as I do for your individual papers. You will receive a grade from 0 to 3. The journal checks are worth 10% in total of your class grade. I will conduct the journal checks immediately after class and return them in time for the beginning of the next class.

Group Presentation

10% of your grade will depend upon your group’s in-class presentation on August 1. I will provide several speeches for students to select and analyze. Groups are formed according to the selected speeches. Each group will present a values tree that the group believes reflects the values of the speechmaker. All students are to have sketched an individual values tree based upon having listened to the speech made available to them. During a 30 minute period in class, the students will join their group members (three – five students per group) to agree upon a single tree that the group agrees accurately portrays the values of the speech giver. Each group will present the values tree - explaining the composition - to the class. Each presentation will last a maximum of approximately 10 minutes. I will grade the presentations, using the consistent 0-3 grading convention and apply it to each group member. (Speech transcripts are available under the "Files for Students to Read" under TMP 11.).
Session Guide: (E=Experiential, N=Navigation, #=estimated preparation time in hours)

**Module I: Making the Transition to General Management**

Session 1, May 15 (8:30-11:30 am): Leadership Success: Responsibility, Authority, and Accountability (E, N, 5)

**Key Concepts:** values - credo; responsibility, authority and accountability

**Reading:**
- Feely, Matthew S. “Using Values to Navigate to Leadership Success,” 2011 (A Commanding Officer’s Leadership Philosophy)

**Preparation:** Preparation includes two separate efforts: (1) reading two articles and thinking about them in the context of your own experiences and in the context of classes you have had at Columbia (to include – especially – Professor Paul Ingram’s class, Leadership and Organizational Change); (2) review/scan the Operation Tomodachi case and recollect the discussion that Professor Feely (as guest lecturer for Professor Ingram) facilitated.

Here follow details of the preparation efforts:

First, **read the assigned articles**, consider the following questions/suggestions, and be ready to discuss in class: How might the Bach article have influenced Captain Feely’s command (leadership) philosophy (i.e. What is the link between the two articles?). Think also as to whether, and if so how, Bach’s advice applies to modernity and to the private sector, profit seeking firms. Is his advice ageless or hopelessly dates, a sign of his time? Might Bach’s advice be applicable only to military organizations? To organizations that have a singular, explicit and rather “extreme” missions or goals? Is it realistic to think that a GM/CEO could or should understand his or her job in the way that Major Bach suggests? Why or why not? How might a modern day GM, working within the complexities of a modern organizations, live by the spirit of the article with respect to “knowing your business?”

Second, **review/scan and consider the Operation Tomodachi case**. Recollect the in-class simulations (i.e. the mock consulting forms and the mock “Commanding Officer’s speeches) and the discussion from Dr. Ingram’s class where Professor Feely (previously, Captain Feely) was the guest lecturer. The class will spend some amount of time explicitly recalling the event, but the focus of the discussion will support the concepts that the two assigned readings emphasize. Essentially, the discussion will show how (then) Captain Feely operationalized his command
(leadership) philosophy. Students should be prepared to discuss their own leadership philosophies – particularly in the context of their values structure.

Session 2, May 16 (8:30-11:30 am): GM/CEO Presentation and Discussion#1 and Values Tree Workshop

Session 3, May 29 (12:30-3:30 pm): Silvio Napoli at Schindler India (A) (E, 2)

Key concepts: strategic and organizational challenges, leading senior groups; taking up your role as GM and meeting the challenges

Reading: Silvio Napoli (A)

Preparation: Read the Napoli Case and be prepared to discuss these questions about the case.

1. What personal and professional experiences in Silvio’s earlier life might help or hinder his successful transition to general management?

2. What metaphor sums up for you the entire situation he is in? What, if anything, do you hypothesize, might be going on 'below-the-surface'?

3. What is your assessment of Silvio Napoli’s attempts to date to transition from a staff position to his first time as a general manager? Be ready to cite examples to illustrate your assessment.

4. What do you see in the group process involving Silvio Napoli and his senior managers as they worked on creating this new company that you find helpful and what do you see that troubles you?

5. Put yourselves in Silvio Napoli's place, as Silvio Napoli how would you handle the situation that has arisen over the order for a nonstandard glass rear wall elevator?

6. Again, as Silvio Napoli, how would you deal with the issues of the revised transfer prices and limited technical cooperation from the European plants?

7. What does Mr. Schindler mean, "The emotions start when you have to build what you have written." (page 11)? What emotions, if any, is Silvio Napoli experiencing? If you think he is experiencing them, what is your assessment of how he's handling them?

Individual Assignment #1, (Due May 31, 11:59 pm): “My Leadership Philosophy,”
Module II: Introduction to Systems Thinking and the Process Mindset

Session 4, June 12 (3:45-6:45 pm): Paul Levy Taking Charge (E, 5)

Key concepts: turnarounds, communication, decision making culture, developing others

Reading: Paul Levy Takes Charge (A) case and the associated multi-media case.

Preparation: Please be sure to read the (A) case – this sets the scene. Then go to the multi-media case. You need to allocate about three hours of more to watch, listening to, and reflect upon the multi-media case.

You will see that the multi-media case has multiple story lines that are organized in three different ways: chronologically via a “calendar of events”; “activity threads” which group the same data into activities that involve a common challenge; and “themes” which organizes the data into aspects of Levy’s leadership approach.

Based on feedback from previous students, we recommend that you first concentrate your preparation on the “CALENDAR OF EVENTS.” The calendar covers the entire nine-month time period, allowing you to see what he was doing month by month. Critical activities are listed on individual, monthly calendars according to the day that they occurred; each is further hot-linked to the relevant video clips, emails, reports, and press articles.

After getting the timeline of his actions in your mind, then select according to your interest from the topics listed under “activity threads” and “themes.”

Preparation questions for the (A) case and the multi-media case:

1. How would you describe the situation Levy inherited at the BIDMC? What challenges did he face? What led previous turnaround efforts to fail?

2. How did Levy get started in his new job? In particular, what were his objectives and what did he accomplish?
   • prior to his first day at work?
   • on his first day?
   • during his first week?

3. What, if anything, was distinctive about the way Levy went about formulating, announcing, and implementing the recovery plan? How did he overcome resistance?

4. How did Levy tackle the problem of the BIDMC’s “curious inability to decide?”
5. In describing his approach to organizational leadership, Levy speaks of the “CEO as teacher.” What is your view of defining the CEO’s job in this way? How do you compare his approach to organizational leadership with that of other GMs we have studied?

Again, don’t shortchange your learning; I think you will need three or more hours to extract the learning from this case and the multi-media case.

**Session 5, June 13 (12:30-3:30 pm): GM/CEO Round Table #1 and Friendly Fire (E, 3.5)**

[**Learning Journal Check #1 – Turn in Learning Journals at the end of class – to be returned the next day.**]

*Key concepts:* systems thinking, inter-group conflict and relationships

*Reading:* Friendly Fire case

*Preparation:* For the GM Roundtable, prepare one or two questions that you want to ask the panel. “Extra credit” if the questions are derived directly from the ideas we have discussed in class.

For Friendly Fire, watch the Friendly Fire video and read the case. Be ready to discuss these questions about the case:

1. How did this tragedy occur?

2. How would you describe the Operation Provide Comfort-Combined Task Force system? What metaphor occurs to you to describe Operation Provide Comfort-Combined Task Force?

3. What is the organizational process by which the OPC-Combined Task Force is coordinated and integrated?

4. How would you assess inter-group relations in the OPC-Combined Task Force?

5. How did Brigadier General Pilkington perceive his job as Commander, Combined Task Force? What metaphor do you think he was accessing to guide his approach to leading the OPC-Combined Task Force? How does it differ from your metaphor in question 2?

6. Brigadier General Pilkington has concluded that “This kind of thing [the shoot-down] could not be permitted to happen again.” He has resolved to write “tighter regulations, lots of them.” (case, page 12), Is he on the right track?

*Module III: Creating the Team*
Session 6, June 26 (8:30-11:30 am): Thousand Days & Thirteen Days (E, 5)

**Key concepts:** leading groups, group process-two groups compared, decision making in ambiguity, choosing your role in leading groups, and micro-behaviors of leaders

**Readings:** Thousand Days (excerpts), Thirteen Days (excerpts), and a “short briefing” on the movie timeline in the course package

**Viewing:** Thirteen Days Movie (Professor Feely has a limited number of copies of the CD ROM)

**Preparation:**

1. Using these first hand reports of two major crises faced by the Kennedy Administration; please compare the way that the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crisis task forces operated. In particular, what distinguishes:
   
   i. the two task forces' procedures for decision-making (especially their approaches to problem solving, exchanging information, and handling conflict)?
   
   ii. 'below-the-surface' issues in the two task forces?
   
   iii. Kennedy's leadership of the Bay of Pigs group and the Cuban Missile Crisis ExCom group? What parts of JFK do we see in action in the Bay of Pigs group and the Cuban Missile group?
   
   iv. systemic forces such as in the two contexts, the predispositions and values of the members of the two groups and how they might have influenced the group process?

2. Can you think of a metaphor that describes for you the Bay of Pigs group and their approach to decision making and the Cuban Missile group and their approach to decision making?

3. What are the implications of your analysis for leading problem solving and decision making groups?

It is important that you identify any past events, experiences, and relationships listed in the “Briefing” document or from your own or family experiences of these times (it's possible that your parents will recall school practices about what to do in the case of a nuclear attack- crouch under their school desks!) that you think could influence how President Kennedy will conduct himself in leading the Ex Com BEFORE you watch the movie. What do you think might be going on above and below the surface? What pressures are on President Kennedy?

Then think about what you want to observe in a group's micro-behavior (mode of communication within the group, relationships among the participants, body language, facial expressions, phrasing, tone, etc) and what you want to observe in JFK's behavior (his overall stance- think where he is on a continuum running from authoritative to catalyst at different points
as the movie unfolds, how he handles differences, his emotional state, to what extent is he affected by the Ex Com group and so forth).

This preparation before the movie will probably take 30 minutes depending on how comfortable you are in your ability to read groups and your familiarity with international and domestic geopolitics, US foreign policy and security policy over the last 40 years. The "Briefing" note can help you here.

**DURING the movie:**

Take notes during the movie about scenes that you think are particularly meaningful and also note your own feelings at different points in the movie. Your senses, your feelings IN-THE-MOMENT can be very good indicators of what might be going on in a group meeting.

**Questions to have in mind:**

1. What was going on systemically, inside and outside the President and his Ex Com group? You’ll have to think about history, events, characters and forces in the world from, at least, World War II onwards. In particular, did you detect any thoughts or expressions of feelings that indicated to you that there were powerful forces at work below the surface?

2. What are your speculations about the pressures on President Kennedy as he faces decisions about the USSR missiles in Cuba?

3. To what extent do you speculate that President Kennedy understood the system that he was in? How do you think President Kennedy perceived his role within that system?

4. What conclusions can you make about how President Kennedy was thinking and how this thinking guided him through the Cuban Missile experience? To what extent were his thinking and his actions influenced by events, people, and relationships in his past?

5. Focus on President Kennedy’s micro behavior:
   - What do you see him doing? - make a note of specific actions that caught your attention.
   - To what extent is he differentiated from the 'below-the-surface' issues in the ExCom and to what extent does he get hooked by them? In your opinion, is he aware of when he has been hooked or an attempt has been made to hook him?
   - How would you characterize his question asking? More specifically, please bring to class an example of a closed question and an example of an open question and please bring an example of a systems question.
   - To what extent does he listen and how would you characterize his listening?
   - How and when does he express his views? Are his statements declarative or hypothetical?
-What do you estimate is President Kennedy's balance between leadership process (focusing on how the decision will be made) and content (focusing on what the decision should be)?

6. How, if at all, was President Kennedy aware of his own behavior and his impact on the ExCom’s group process?

7. Can you think of a metaphor that describes for you the ExCom group and another metaphor that captures President Kennedy’s approach to leadership?

Here are some examples of “micro-behaviors” in the movie that may provide you with some insight on what is really going on:

- Toast: JFK “I was eating that,” Kenny O’Donnell-Political Advisor, “No you weren’t”
- JFK, Bobby Kennedy (JFK’s brother)-Attorney General and Kenny O’Donnell on the patio outside the White House setting up the group membership and process
- Bobby Kennedy to Kenny O’Donnell: “All agree, the diplomatic option won’t work.”
- JFK “…something immoral about abandoning your own judgment”
- JFK “…is this the Jt. Chief’s recommendation?”
- RFK “give it to me, no matter how crazy”
- JFK to General LeMay, “What will the Soviets do when we attack?”
- KO’D “I’ve got a bad feeling,” JFK “I’m taking charge
- JFK “Do not second guess me into WWIII”
- JFK “I’m not taking that bait”
- JFK and RFK conversation on Jupiter missiles in Turkey after asking KO’D to leave the Oval office.
- R McNamara: “new language”

Session 7, June 27 (12:30-3:30 pm): Mount Everest 1996 (E, 2.5)

Key concepts: high stakes decision making, biases in decision making, leadership process and group process

Reading: Mount Everest 1996

Recommended: View the Miramax movie, Everest, filmed during the 1996 tragedy. David Breashears, the #1 mountaineer/cinematographer in the world, directs the movie; Liam Neeson narrates... and the soundtrack is good!

Preparation: Read the case. Be prepared to answer these questions:

1. What led to this tragedy?

2. How did Fischer and Hall perceive their roles?

3. What is your evaluation of Fischer & Hall as leaders of organizations? Identify their strengths and weaknesses, in your opinion. What is their theory of being a General Manager?

4. What are the lessons from this case for general managers in businesses?

Individual Assignment #2. (Due June 28, 11:59 pm): “The GM/CEO Interview”
Module IV: Structure and Strategy

Session 8, July 10 (3:45-6:45 pm): Columbia’s Final Mission (E, 3)

Key concepts: group process and leadership, design of groups, decision making under uncertainty

Reading: Columbia Final Mission Multimedia CD ROM

Preparation: This is a multimedia case study about the 2003 Columbia Space Shuttle disaster. It is designed to help you understand how failures evolve, how to prevent failures in your own organization, and how to manage risk in a complex organization.

You’ll be given a role as one of six key NASA managers or engineers involved in the Columbia’s last mission. It will take you through the first eight days of the mission, as if you worked at NASA at the time. The case will prepare you for a key Mission Management Team meeting that took place on Flight Day 8, a meeting that we will re-enact during our class.

Please prepare to participate in a simulation of the key Mission Management Team meeting that took place on Flight Day 8 of this mission. The information provided in the multimedia case will assist you in assuming the role you are assigned. For class please be prepared to role-play the meeting as you believe the individuals at NASA actually conducted themselves during that meeting. In particular, consider these questions:

1. How would you characterize the culture of NASA? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
2. How has NASA treated foam strikes historically? Why has NASA treated foam strikes in this manner?
3. How did the history of the Space Shuttle Program shape people’s behavior during the first 8 days of the mission?
4. How would you characterize NASA’s response to the foam strike, in comparison with its response to the Apollo 13 incident? How does the Columbia mission compare to the Challenger accident in 1986?
5. What differences did you perceive in the behavior of managers versus engineers?
6. Putting yourself in the shoes of the manager or engineer you were assigned as a role, consider:
   a. What assumptions and beliefs shaped the way you thought and behaved during the mission?
   b. What pressures affected your behavior? Where did these pressures originate?
   c. In what ways did the culture impact your actions?
   d. If you were in that person’s shoes during the Columbia mission, would you have behaved differently? Why or why not?

Session 9, July 25 (3:45-6:45 pm): BCPC Internet Strategy Team (E, 2)
Key concepts: experience group processes and group leadership challenges

Reading: BCPC Internet Strategy Team, and your individual role description. Roles are selected randomly, and will be distributed directly to you at the end of session 7. You are asked to not share information about your role.

Preparation: Read the case as well as you individual role description which is meant to familiarize you with the views and experience of your character. There are 6 executive roles – each of whom participants in a (simulated) senior management, multi-functional group involved in developing recommendations for a new service: (1) VP Business Development and leader of the Internet Strategy Team; (2) Director of Operations Management; (3) VP Finance; (4) VP Marketing; (5) Senior Project Director of Information Systems; (6) Director of Human Resources. When teams meet, there will also be a (7) Observer. Think carefully about what your recommendation might be and how you will play your role during the classroom simulation.

Session 10, July 31 (8:30-11:30 am): Strategic Planning at UPS and Discussion of GM/CEO Interview Highlights (E, 2)

[Learning Journal Check #2 – Turn in Learning Journals at the end of class – to be returned the next day.]

Key concepts: strategy planning process, scenario planning

Readings: Strategic Planning at UPS & A Note on Scenario Planning

Preparation: Read the case and note, and be prepared to answer these questions:

1. What are the strengths and weakness of scenario planning?
2. What is your evaluation of UPS’s 1997 scenario planning exercise? The Horizon 2017 planning exercise? How do the two efforts compare?
3. What are the other key elements of UPS’s approach to strategic planning? In particular, what is your evaluation of:
   • The UPS charter?
   • The Centennial Plan?
   • The Strategy Road Map?
4. What led CEO Mike Eskew to put John McDevitt in charge of “strategic integration”? Should he remain in that role?
5. How does UPS’s strategic planning process compare with the approach at organizations you have worked for?

Module V: The Leader in Focus

Session 11, August 1 (3:45-6:45 pm): Discussion of GM/CEO Interview Highlights and Values Tree Group Presentations
Key Concepts: Strategy and the values, roles and actions of top level leaders;

Reading and listening: Project Solarium and “The Cross of Iron Speech”

Preparation: (1) Read the case... and again – until you have a solid understanding of the geopolitical context that existed in 1945 - at the end of World War Two - and into the beginning of the Eisenhower Presidency which began in 1953. (2) Listen to the 27 minute recording of President Eisenhower’s first major speech, his April 16, 1953 “Cross of Iron Speech.” Recognize that this speech not only provides further contextual understanding of the time at which Eisenhower ascended to the presidency, but it might also provide insight into what President Eisenhower’s values are – and indeed, what his leadership philosophy was. (3) Review the three presentation options listed at the end of this case – and the attendant instructions. Think about how you would approach fulfilling the requirements of the options. The more preparation you commit before class, the more likely you are to impress in class.

Expectation: Reading the case and then reading the case a second time and making appropriate notations for your understanding should require about an hour. Listening once – and maybe two times should take approximately the same amount of time – about an hour (The speech lasts for 27 minutes.)… for a total of two hour preparation time. Add to that amount of time, perhaps an additional two hours of preparation time if you are ambitious enough to execute the (recommended) effort to answer all three questions for yourself independently – before class convenes. When the class convenes on August 16, I will assign each student to a group. I will then assign each group one of the three questions. Students will have approximately 45 minutes as a group to formulate the presentation that you/your group will provide to the class when the class reconvenes. The breakout rooms that you will go to formulate your response will have an easel there so that the groups will have a medium available to them for the presentations. When the class reconvenes, I will determine the order of presentations. Each presentation should last for about fifteen minutes. I will grade your presentation, using the consistent 0-3 grading convention, and each student within the group will receive the grade assigned to the group.

Individual Assignment #3 (due August 2, 1159 pm.): “Reflections of a Consultative Decision Process and Decision,”

Session 12, August 14 (3:45-6:45 pm): GM/CEO Discussion #3 and Course Summary and Evaluation

Key Concepts: “Key course takeaways”

Reading and listening: N/A

Preparation: Review and reflect upon your learning journal, notes, assignments, and any other material you have that will help you to recollect or recognize the “key course takeaways: that the Top Management Course provided.

Professor Feely will designate breakout groups who will retreat to breakout rooms (or elsewhere). Each individual in the breakout groups will explain to other group members what he
or she found to be most beneficial or most important re: material presented throughout the semester. The group will then designate one (and only one!) spokesperson to provide a narrative to the whole class - - with no visual aids - - that encapsulates what the group thinks are the most important lessons learned from the class.