



Management 740: Leading Effective Teams

Fall 2013

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Class Meetings: Tue + Thu, 1:30-2:50
105 SH-DH
Office Hours: Fridays 1:00-4:00
and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

This course develops your knowledge and skills for designing, leading, and consulting with teams in organizations. The goals are to provide both the conceptual understanding and the behavioral skills required to improve team effectiveness. This course emphasizes class participation and experiential learning. It makes use of a variety of approaches to teaching and learning, including readings, analytic and reflective writing, assessments, peer coaching, lectures, simulations, and an intensive field project with a real team.

There are four kinds of teams that are the focus of your study: teams of which you've been a member in the past; your 740 Team, with three or four other classmates; a team outside of 740 that your 740 Team will observe, analyze, and report on – your Host Team; and a team that you expect to be on in the future. The primary case material for learning and applying course concepts will be these teams that you know from direct observation and experience.

You should expect to leave this course with new knowledge of how to diagnose and intervene – as leader, member, or consultant – to improve the performance, sustainability, and impact on the members of any team in any setting.

Readings

There is one required text, available at the Penn Bookstore. Other readings and course materials are available via Study.net, free online, and in occasional in-class handouts. The required text:

Hackman, J. R. (2002). *Leading Teams*. Boston: Harvard Business Press.

Recommended is Hackman, J. R. (1990). *Groups That Work (and Those That Don't)*. Jossey-Bass. This edited collection analyzes 27 groups using the course's main theoretical framework.

In order to gain full value from this course, the assigned readings must be done carefully and completely before class. Best practice tip: Take notes on the readings and follow up with me via email or during office hours about anything we don't cover in class that is of interest to you.

| Assignments and Grading (details in Schedule) | % Contribution | Due |
|--|----------------|--------------|
| 1. Background and Goals (Individual) | 10 | September 3 |
| 2. Team Project Goals and Plan (Team) | 10 | September 17 |
| 3. Team Project Report and Presentation (Team) | 30 | November 19 |
| 4. Synthesis and Future Application (Individual) | 20 | December 10 |
| 5. Participation (Individual) | 30 | |

All written assignments (**highlighted on Schedule, below**) are due by class time on the date assigned. Format: Double-space in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1" margins around. Assignments must be on time to earn full credit; there is a 25% reduction in credit for each day late. Criteria for performance on written work: application of concepts in readings and lectures to data, depth and clarity of analysis, creativity and insight, and organization and structure. Best practice tip: Optimal performance results from multiple drafts.

Positive participation involves being fully prepared, curious, and compassionate in all interactions with others in our class. Participation is not limited to the classroom, for there is opportunity to contribute online (mainly via Canvas) and in your field work with your 740 Team. In addition, you will be asked to post notes before and after some class sessions and your performance in producing these notes is part of how your participation will be assessed.

Classroom Expectations

Please be on time, so that we can all start at the scheduled hour; do not leave in the middle of class except for emergency; turn off phones, laptops and other electronic devices; be prepared to fully engage in discussing the topics of the day; and express curiosity about what others say.

Schedule

August 29 **Introduction**

September 3 **The Challenge**

Goal: Understand the five conditions that foster team effectiveness: be a real team, have a compelling direction, have an enabling team structure, be in a supportive organizational context, and use expert coaching.

Read: Hackman, Ch. 1

Assignment: **Background and Goals (about two pages total) – Individual**

This assignment will be shared with other members of your 740 Team.

1. *Describe a team of which you were a member at some point in your past and about which you can remember a lot of detail. What were the best and the worst things about this team? What did you learn from your experience in this team?*

2. *Describe your goals for this course. What are you hoping to learn and why is this important to you? About what aspect of your behavior and performance would you like feedback from others in this class?*

September 10

A Real Team

Goal: Start observing and thinking at the group level of analysis; team task, boundaries, authority, and stability over time.

Read:

Hackman, Ch. 2; Background and Goals of Your 740 Teammates

September 12

Building Your Reputation as a Team Player

Goal: Learn what you can do to develop a reputation as someone who others can count on to create value.

Read:

Grant, A. [Givers take all: The hidden dimension of corporate culture.](#)

September 17

Compelling Direction / Team Project Clinic I: Goals and Plan

Goal: Grasp the benefits of a good direction (it energizes, it orients, and it engages) and choices about clarity and completeness of goals, degree of challenge, and alignment with organizational purposes. Use these concepts to inform your 740 Team's goals and plan.

Read:

Hackman, Ch. 3

Assignment: Team Project Goals and Plan (about four pages total) – Team

Your 740 Team is charged with finding a Host Team – a real one – that will allow you to gather data about it through observations, interviews, surveys, records, and unobtrusive measures. The data you will gather is for your 740 Team to use in composing a written analysis and set of useful recommendations for your Host Team. Hackman's concepts provide the framework for the data collection, analysis, and recommendations. The team can be a part of Penn but cannot be a Wharton student team.

The results of this project should create value for your Host Team. However, this is not a consultation in which your 740 Team is expected to intervene in the life of your Host Team other than by collecting data and providing a version of your Team Project Report to your Host Team.

For the Goals and Plan assignment, describe the following:

- *Your Host Team's name, membership, and purpose.*
- *The name and email address of a primary contact person for the team.*
- *A statement of your 740 Team's initial direction for this project. Describe specifically how it is challenging, clear, and consequential*

and, in addition, how you expect it to be motivating, orienting, and engaging of your team's knowledge and skills.

- *An explanation of whether and how your team is a real team (with a team task, bounded and stable membership, and delimited authority) and what this implies for your team's effectiveness.*
- *Plan for data collection and write-up, including milestones and roles and responsibilities for the members of your team.*
- *Assets and liabilities your 740 Team has as you undertake this project.*
- *Questions and concerns about this project, to address to the class.*

September 19

Enabling Structure

Goal: Understand the main elements of team structure: work design, norms that guide and constrain team behavior, and team composition.

Read: Hackman, Ch. 4

September 24

Culture's Consequences for Team Norms

Goal: Learn how national and regional cultures influence team dynamics and what you can do to.

Read: Hofstede, G. [Dimensions of national cultures](#).

September 26

Team Project Clinic II: Data Collection Strategies

Team Prep: *Your 740 Team should bring to class the three most pressing questions you have about your data collection strategy.*

October 1

Supportive Context I

Goal: Explore the organizational conditions that support teamwork: the reward system, the information system, and the educational system.

Read: Hackman, Ch. 5

October 3

Supportive Context II

Prep: *What support from its context does your 740 Team need?*

October 15

Expert Coaching

Goal: Understand coaching as interaction with a team that is intended to help members use their collective resources well; their effort, performance strategies, and knowledge and skill.

Read: Hackman, Ch. 6

- October 17 **10K-Mile Checkup**
Goal: Conduct a mid-point review of your 740 Team.
- Prep: *Do Step One of 10-K Mile Checkup for 740 Teams.*
- October 22 **Imperatives for Leaders / Thinking Differently about Teams**
Goals: Learn what effective leaders can do to enhance the five basic conditions that promote team effectiveness. Understand the obstacles to creating the conditions for team effectiveness and what must be done to overcome them.
- Read: Hackman, Chs. 7 and 8
- Prep: *Thinking back to a team about which you know from direct experience, identify an opportunity for action that you now see, in retrospect, in which leadership might have improved the performance situation of that team. Using your knowledge gained from Leading Teams, prepare to teach your classmates a lesson about how leadership can improve team effectiveness.*
- October 24 **Team Project Clinic III: Opportunities + Challenges with Host Teams**
- Team Prep: *Your 740 Team should bring to class the most interesting opportunity and the most difficult challenge you are now facing in pursuing your direction in your work with your Host Team.*
- October 29 **The Skilled Facilitator Approach to Improving Team Effectiveness**
Goal: Understand the core values and assumptions of Schwarz's approach and the eight behaviors for smarter teams.
- Read: Schwarz, R. Eight behaviors for smarter teams.
- October 31 **Diagnose and Intervention**
Goals: Understand and practice applying Schwarz' six-step method for diagnosing and intervening in a group's process.
- Read: Schwarz, R., The Diagnosis-Intervention Cycle.
- November 5 **Schwarz Smorgasbord**
Goal: Understand whether, how and why to intervene and especially how to use the ground rules as a basis for useful intervention.
- Prep: *Visit [Roger Schwarz's website](#) and read one or two articles of your choice. Prepare a five-minute lesson to teach your classmates about the key concepts and how they can be applied to improve team effectiveness, using an example from your own experience.*

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|-------------|---|
| November 7 | <p>Finding Agreement as a Team <i>Goal: Learn tips for improving communication in teams to increase the likelihood of identifying and working toward common goals.</i></p> <p>Read: Schwarz, R. Dealing with emotions.</p> |
| November 14 | <p>Leading a Team of Rivals <i>Goal: Learn from an important episode in U.S. history how a great president led his team to victory.</i></p> <p>Prep: Watch Lincoln and prepare to discuss these questions: What is it about the Gettysburg Address that makes it a useful leadership vision? What does this film demonstrate about what a leader must do to overcome resistance? What principles from Leading Teams did you see in this case?</p> |
| November 19 | <p>Team Project Presentations (first set of teams)</p> <p>Assignment: Team Project Report and Presentation – Team</p> <p><i>Your 740 Team will produce both a written report and an in-class presentation that covers the following topics:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Description and analysis of team's effectiveness.</i> • <i>Description and analysis on your team according to Hackman's five enabling conditions.</i> • <i>Recommendations to team for improving its effectiveness.</i> • <i>Three main lessons your 740 Team learned about team effectiveness from what you discovered about your Host Team.</i> <p><i>The written report should be between 10 and 15 pages and the in-class presentation (20 minutes, including Q&A) should have up to 10 slides.</i></p> |
| November 21 | Team Project Presentations (second set of teams) |
| November 26 | <p>Possibilities for Change I</p> <p>Read: Schwarz, R. Contracting.</p> <p>Prep: Post your comments about next steps for three other 740 Teams; 2-3 specific ideas to help each of the other 740 Teams think through (a) hypothetical next steps each 740 Team would take in contracting with its Host Team if it were to consult to its Host Team and (b) what each 740 Team should actually do to close its relationship with the Host Team.</p> |

December 3

Possibilities for Change II

Goal: Learn about the key issues involved in contracting to work with a team as an external agent of change and plan for closure with Host Team.

Team Prep: *Read the comments written to your team from your classmates. As a team, prepare to present to class your action plan for closing your relationship with your Host Team. This plan should include a clear statement of your understanding of who is the primary client, your goals for how you will try to serve the primary client's interests, and specific steps you plan to take.*

December 5

Intra-Team Feedback

Indiv. Prep: *Write up to one page for each of the other members of your 740 Team with feedback for each one of them. Identify both strengths and areas for improvement, and give examples. Address the specific issues each member raised in his or her Background and Goals assignment. Bring to class a hard copy, on a separate sheet of paper, for each team member.*

December 10

Synthesis and Future Applications

Assignment: *Synthesis and Future Applications (about 5 to 7 pages total) – Individual*

- 1. Describe the three most important lessons you learned about team effectiveness from your work as a member of your 740 Team. Provide evidence and use concepts from our readings to explain your thinking.*
- 2. Think ahead to a team that you expect to be working on as a member or leader sometime in the future. What do you want to make sure you do to increase the chances that this team will be effective? Provide at least three specific actions you plan to take. Explain your reasoning.*
- 3. Prepare a 2-minute presentation about this content for our class. The goal is to share your main lessons in a way that helps your classmates learn them too. Slides are not necessary, but do whatever you can to make your big idea come alive in a memorable way.*