

BCP 8803
Leadership and Organizational Change
Course Syllabus
Fall 2026

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Course Description and Objectives:

The purpose of the course is to provide students with the opportunity to develop an advanced understanding of exercising leadership given consideration of the unique and compelling challenges associated with change management.

Organizations are going through a period of constant change driven by new information technologies, globalization, human resource management challenges and shifting workforce demographics. These developments are changing the nature of organizations and work, the characteristics of work groups, the relationships between organizations and their employees, the types of demands placed on organizational members, and the relationships between organizations and society. They are also necessitating organizational change and adaptation on an ongoing basis. This course focuses on developing an understanding of the challenges posed by the changes taking place in the business and non-profit environment, as well as on the frameworks and skills that are critical to leading and managing organizational change, and co-creating a world we want to live in.

A variety of change situations and conditions will be discussed. Some will be from the perspective of those in positions of authority for change while others will entail the exercise of leadership without formal authority or adequate resources. Leading and experiencing change is considered from personal/individual, organizational and societal change perspectives.

This course has been developed for students in the Professional Master's in Occupational Safety and Health program. While elements of occupational safety and health have been incorporated into the course, the primary emphasis is on leading organizational change.

Learning Objectives

The content and process aspects of this course are designed to achieve several learning objectives. Specifically, the course seeks to develop/sharpen participants' abilities to:

- Understand and analyze current issues in exercising leadership and managing organizational change.
- Establish and run organizations that can adapt to changing conditions in the environment.
- Develop methods to address organizational goals of performance with creating a safe and healthy work environment
- Effectively manage organizational change.
- Demonstrate leadership, teamwork, and communication skills across a diverse set of circumstances.
- Explore the concepts of foresight and systems thinking and how they can enhance one's ability to adapt to change
- Work effectively and creatively in diverse groups.
- Think critically about current problems in organizational and societal change and use suitable concepts and frameworks in decision making.
- Identify and solve problems, pursue opportunities for organizational growth or improvement, and implement problem solving activities with a commitment to quality improvement.
- Understand technical and adaptive challenges and exercise adaptive leadership skills.
- Listen, speak, and write effectively, present information professionally, and give and take criticism in a constructive manner.

Readings:

All of the readings and videos have been selected carefully to form a package for learning. It is expected that the readings be completed before the session for which they are assigned.

Books

- *The Heart of Change Field Guide: Tools and Tactics for Leading Change in Your Organization*, Kotter & Cohen
- *The Heart of Change: Real-Life Stories of How People Change their Organizations*, John P. Kotter and Dan S. Cohen

Articles/Cases

The following articles are included in the course packet which can be purchased from Harvard Business School Publishing. I have made all the articles OPTIONAL on the HBSP website. You may be able to locate many of these articles through the Georgia Tech library. You will need to purchase those you are not able to find. You are expected

to read all the articles. The link to the course packet is:

<https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/1270500>

- *The Theory Behind the Practice: A Brief Introduction to the Adaptive Leadership Framework*, Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow & Marty Linsky, Harvard Business School Publishing, 2009.
- *The Real Reason People Won't Change*, Kegan & Lahey, Harvard Business Review, November 2001.
- *Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail*, Kotter, Harvard Business Review, January 2007.
- *Is Your Organization Surviving Change – or Thriving in It?* John Kotter, Vanessa Akhtar & Gaurav Gupta, Harvard Business Review, 2021.
- *Choosing Strategies for Change*, Kotter & Schlesinger, Harvard Business Review, July 2008.
- *Accelerate: How the most innovative companies capitalize on today's rapid-fire strategic challenges – and still make their numbers*, Kotter, Harvard Business Review, November 2012.
- *What Everyone Gets Wrong About Change Management*, N. Anand & Jean-Louis Barsoux, Harvard Business Review, December 2017.
- *Change Through Persuasion*, David A. Garvin & Michael A. Roberto, Harvard Business Review, February 2005.
- *Managers Can't Do It All*, Diane Gherson & Linda Gratton, Harvard Business Review, March 2022.
- *Get the Boss to Buy In*, Susan J. Ashford & James R. Detert, Harvard Business Review, January 2015.
- *Leading and Managing Change*, Raffaelli, Harvard Business School, May 2016.
- *In Praise of Middle Managers*, Quy Nguyen Huy, Harvard Business Review, September 2001.
- *Operational System Thinking*, Landel & Soderquist, Harvard Business Review, 2010.
- *Workplace Safety at Alcoa (A)*, Harvard Business School, January 2000.
- *Safety Should be a Performance Driver*, Mittal, Piazza & Singh, Harvard Business Review, September 2024.
- *Why Kindness Isn't A Nice to Have*, Macklin, Lee and Edmondson, Harvard Business Review, July 2025.
- *“Both/And Leadership*, Smith, Lewis & Tushman, Harvard Business Review, May 2016.
- *How Workplace Safety Improves Performance*, Michaels, MIT Sloan Management Review, 2024.

The following article will be posted on Canvas:

- *Introduction to System Thinking*, Daniel Kim, Pegasus Communications, 1999.
- *Foresight as The Central Ethic of Leadership*, Daniel Kim, Pegasus Communication,
- *The Polarity Map*, The Leading Teacher, Summer 2013.
- *Leveraging Polarities*, Center for Creative Leadership

Videos

- Yves Morieux – As Work Gets More Complex – 6 Rules to Simplify
http://www.ted.com/talks/yves_morieux_as_work_gets_more_complex_6_rules_to_simplify
- Dan Pink – On Motivation
http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation#t-1070450
- David Logan: Tribal Leadership (TEDxUSC)
https://www.ted.com/talks/david_logan_on_tribal_leadership
- Stanley McChrystal: Listen, Learn...the Lead (TED)
https://www.ted.com/talks/stanley_mcchrystal
- Itay Talgam – Lead Like A Great Conductor
https://www.ted.com/talks/itay_talgam_lead_like_the_great_conductors?language=en
- Leading Change Through Managing Polarities -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACTKKF75r04>
- The Power of Polarities - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jqd4-emoAw&t=3s>

*The instructor reserves the right to substitute cases & articles prior to the beginning of the course.

Instructional Format

This course includes traditional face-to-face time with the instructor, individual assignments and interaction with other students via the Leadership Development Groups. The first portion of the course will be on-site at Georgia Tech. This will take place over a period of three (3) days. The remainder of the course is organized into six (6) one-week segments. The students will complete the assigned readings, view the online content, and submit a weekly Learning Materials Review & Reflection (LMRR) on the assigned articles and videos. The student will participate in the weekly LDG meetings. The instructor will schedule a sixty (60) -minute live session each week utilizing video conferencing technology. These sessions are intended to address issues that arise from the assignments and LDG meetings. While the geographic diversity and work demands

of the students may present challenges, it is expected that the student will make themselves available for these weekly sessions.

Grading:

Engagement (ATL, Forum, Office Hours)	10%
Individual Deliverables	15%
LDG – participation and FFF	25%
Learning Materials Review & Reflections (LMRR)	25%
Final Project	25%

Engagement & Participation

Student participation and engagement is a critical ingredient of this program. Each student is expected to keep current with the assignments and to submit their LMRRs on a timely basis. The program is designed to help the student discover new lenses to view their managerial and leadership responsibilities and guide them in adapting these to their career. During the remote portion of the course, students will explore how these tools and concepts can be applied to their current work environment and how they might integrate these into their leadership styles. The weekly LMRR becomes the basis for further discussion within the Leadership Development Group. Students are expected to fully engage with the members of their LDG and to raise questions and concerns with the group and, if appropriate, the instructor.

To further expand student participation and engagement, students are expected to post comments and questions in the Discussion tab on Canvas. The Discussion tab allows each student to communicate with other students and to share insights and questions that may arise from the readings. Students should at a minimum post the two questions or comments that are included in their LMRR. It is my hope that the Discussion tab becomes a valuable learning platform for the entire class.

Individual Deliverables

Leadership Challenge

You will be exposed to the concept of adaptive leadership during the initial part of the course. This will be supplemented by the assigned readings. You will need to identify an adaptive leadership opportunity or challenge that you face that you want to work on as a change agent over the next 12 months. Describe the challenge, your role, your vision and the role of other stakeholders. In describing your challenge, please be sure to integrate the reading in this section, and be sure to describe why it is an adaptive challenge. This write up should be around 500-750 words, or no longer than 3 double-spaced typed pages. The page limit does not count title page (if you choose to have one), references, illustrations, appendices, etc. You will use the Adaptive Leadership Model to discuss your leadership challenge with your LDG.

Module Two – Draft Plan Based on Kotter’s Model

Students will prepare and submit a DRAFT report on their change initiative using Kotter’s change model described in *Heart of Change* and *The Heart of Change Fieldbook*. The report will include how the student addresses the eight key element of a change process as outlined by Kotter.

Learning Materials Review & Reflection (LMRR)

Each week the student shall submit a completed Learning Materials Review & Reflection (LMRR) that captures their take-aways from the assigned readings/video. These should demonstrate an understanding of the basic concepts and models outlined in the readings/video. The LMRR includes a short background of the reading and videos, the student’s insights and at least 2 questions or issues that the student would like to explore further in their LDG or with the instructor. Students may post their two (2) questions/comment to the Discussion tab on Canvas. Students may combine all of the weekly assigned readings and videos into one comprehensive LMRR.

Final Project

The final project is based on the student’s development of an action plan that addresses a leadership challenge or change initiative in their organization. The student should integrate one of more models of organizational change into a comprehensive plan that they are willing to share with their leadership team. The plan should reference the aspects of the organizational change models that are included and articulate why other approaches were not selected.

Leadership Development Groups

The Leadership Development Groups (LDG) is essential to the learning process. Each group will follow the guidelines outlined in the LDG process (see LDG Guidelines). Each member will assume the role of facilitator at least once during the course. It is expected that the LDG will utilize video conferencing to conduct the weekly meeting (except during the on-site portion of the course). The LDG should schedule at least 2 hours for their weekly meetings. The primary topics for discussion will be posted by the instructor each week but will generally focus on the assigned readings/cases & videos.

A note on teamwork. For each activity that includes a substantial team component, each student will be required to assess the contributions of each of their team members to the team’s work in the course. Based on the feedback, individuals’ grades for the team components of the total grade may be adjusted by an amount determined by the instructor, to ensure equity. During the course, if you feel that one or more of your team’s members is/are not contributing sufficiently to the team’s work, please provide

this feedback to them, along with the changes that you would like to see. If the person's behavior does not change, please inform the instructor.

Academic Honesty / Academic Integrity Statement

All students are expected to comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or cheating, will be handled in accordance with Institute policies.

Acceptable Student Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the Student–Faculty Expectations Agreement. Professional, respectful conduct is required in all course interactions, including email, Canvas discussions, team meetings, and live sessions.

Disability Services Statement

Georgia Tech provides reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services and notify the instructional team as early as possible to ensure appropriate arrangements.