

**Georgia Institute of Technology**  
**Course Number: MGT 8803EMD, 3 credits**  
**Personal Development for Leading Change**  
**Summer 2026**

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**Office Hours: XXXX**

**Course Description:**

This course examines the complexity of leading organizational change through the lens of leadership, self-awareness, and strength-based methodologies. While organizations often develop sound strategies for growth, they frequently underestimate the most critical factor for success—engaging the hearts and minds of the people who lead and experience change. We will explore how effective leaders leverage deep self-knowledge to inspire clarity, unity, collaboration, innovation, and forward momentum. Emphasis is placed on understanding your personal leadership style and intentionally using it to influence change at the individual, team, and organizational levels. Through case studies, reflection, and applied frameworks, you will learn to identify and harness team strengths, navigate group dynamics, and employ change management practices that build on an organization's inherent capabilities to drive sustainable transformation.

**Course Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. **Develop and deepen self-awareness** by examining your core values, beliefs, leadership strengths and gaps, and development aspirations.
2. **Strengthen your leadership effectiveness** by intentionally applying personal capabilities to guide individual, team, and organizational change.
3. **Apply evidence-based frameworks** to identify and leverage existing strengths and opportunities that drive positive, sustainable transformation.
4. **Analyze and create change management models** that can be used within a professional organizational context.

**Required Materials for Purchase**

1. [The Science of Change](#), R. Boyatzis (2024), Oxford University Press (Purchase at Campus Bookstore)
2. Kolb Experiential Learning Profile (You will receive a link to complete this from the Experiential Learning Institute)

**Other Required Materials that you will be given access to**

3. [Adaptive Leadership: Thriving in Times of Uncertainty](#), N. Chaudhry (2025), Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Lahore.
4. [A Positive Revolution in Change](#). D. Cooperrider, D. Whitney (2025).
5. [Using Tipping Points of Emotional Intelligence and Cognitive Competencies to Predict Financial Performance of Leaders](#), R. Boyatzis (2006), *Psicothema*, 18: 124-131
6. [Be Mindful: Perceived Stress Scale](#) at <https://www.bemindfulonline.com/test-your-stress/>
7. [Experiential Learning in Teams](#), A. Kayes, D. Kayes, and D. Kolb (2005), *Simulation and Gaming Journal*
8. Ted Talk, [Power of Listening](#). [The power of listening | William Ury | TEDxSanDiego](#)

## Suggested Reading Materials:

1. Immunity to Change. R. Kegan, L. Laskow Lahey (2009), Harvard Business School Press.
2. Podcast: <https://coachingforleaders.com/> (this website has a variety of free resources related to leadership and leadership development).
3. Who Moved My Cheese? S. Johson, M.D. (1998). G.P. Putnam's Sons Publishers.
4. Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter. L. Wiseman (2010), HarperCollins Publishers.

## Main Course Expectations and Assignments:

1. **All required readings**
2. **Attendance and participation**

The class will be conducted largely through discussion and exercises, including small group work/breakouts and presentations. It is important that you come to class **on time** and prepared by reading all the assigned readings/supplemental materials and actively participate in classroom and breakout discussions. Importantly, the quality of the class itself is largely dependent on the quality of our collective discussion. Be prepared to contribute and interact with your fellow students!

3. ***Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay (35% of grade)***

The purpose of this assignment is to help you explore and articulate your unique leadership identity through self-analysis, reflection, and visioning. You will examine your personal values, beliefs, and inherent leadership strengths and liabilities, and develop a forward-looking plan to leverage your strengths while addressing or minimizing obstacles to effectiveness.

Your essay should culminate into a **personal leadership development plan** that outlines your vision for your growth as a resonant leader. Throughout the term, you will discuss your primary developmental goal—and your progress toward it each week—with your assigned cohort during class sessions.

### Format Requirements:

- Minimum of **five (5) double-spaced pages**
- **12-point font, 1-inch margins, with page numbers**

4. ***Leading Organizational Change and Leadership Insight Essay (30% of grade)***

This essay is designed to help you understand and reflect upon your personal learning style as well as the learning styles of others. The insights you gain, and your ability to apply this understanding to adapt your behavior, are critical for success as a business leader.

Recognizing when you are interacting with someone whose learning style differs from your own—and intentionally adjusting your language, communication approach, and behavior—can accelerate information sharing, enhance decision-making, and strengthen trust. Demonstrating flexibility, even under pressure, allows you to build stronger relationships and more effective collaboration across diverse teams.

Your essay should articulate your reflections, the lessons learned, and practical strategies for applying this knowledge in professional contexts.

**Format Requirements:**

- Minimum of **five (5) double-spaced pages**
- **12-point font, 1-inch margins, with page numbers**

**5. Organizational Change Essay (35% of grade)**

As current and future leaders, it is critical to understand how to guide and support others through organizational change. In this assignment, you will look inside your own organization to identify, study, and create a change management approach to accelerate and sustain change.

You will have the opportunity to submit a current transformational change initiative from your organization (if you are currently employed). I will review your initiative and provide feedback to ensure the topic aligns with the course objectives and learning outcomes.

The description of your organization's transformational change opportunity should be **no more than one (1) double-spaced page** and is due by the **third week of class**. Examples of potential projects include, but are not limited to:

- Delivering an exceptional customer experience
- Creating a powerful learning environment
- Successfully merging two company cultures
- Building shared ownership across the organization
- Driving extraordinary quality and service
- Accelerating trust and fostering transparent communication
- Enhancing cross-department collaboration

Additional guidance on selecting transformational change opportunities will be provided during the first week of class.

The purpose of this essay is to demonstrate your ability to apply course concepts to a real organizational challenge. You will analyze your change topic using specific change management methodologies (e.g., Appreciative Inquiry) and showcase your understanding of effective leadership, strength-based analysis, and holistic strategies that drive positive and sustainable organizational change outcomes.

**Format Requirements:**

- Minimum of **five (5) double-spaced pages**
- **12-point font, 1-inch margins, with page numbers**

**Course Schedule and Preparation:**

Date	Classroom Format	Classroom Topics	Assignment for Next Class
<b>Class 1</b>  <b>Date</b>	In-person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Overview and Expectations</li> <li>• Organizational Challenges and Goals</li> <li>• Criticality of a Strong Leadership Culture</li> <li>• Historic and Current Views on Leadership and Change</li> <li>• Self-Reflection Workbook</li> <li>• Cohort Introductions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin drafting 1-page description of transformational organizational change opportunity within your company</li> <li>• Select and begin scheduling 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Read <i>The Science of Change</i>, R. Boyatzis, Chapters 1 and 2</li> </ul>
<b>Class 2</b>  <b>Date</b>	<b>COULD BE REMOTE!</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-Awareness and Intentional Change</li> <li>• Ideal vs Real Self</li> <li>• Strength-Based Leadership</li> <li>• Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize and submit your 1-page transformational organizational change opportunity</li> <li>• Finish scheduling and begin 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Read <i>The Science of Change</i>, R. Boyatzis, Chapter 3 and 4</li> <li>• Read <i>A Positive Revolution in Change</i>, D. Cooperrider, D. Whitney article</li> </ul>
<b>Class 3</b>  <b>Date</b>	Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive and Negative Emotive Attractors</li> <li>• Appreciative Inquiry, continued</li> <li>• Topic Choice and Reframing</li> <li>• International Case Study Approach</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Read <i>Using Tipping Points of Emotional Intelligence and Cognitive Competencies to Predict Financial Performance of Leaders</i>, R. Boyatzis article</li> <li>• Read <i>Adaptive Leadership: Thriving in Times of Uncertainty</i>, N. Chaudhry</li> </ul>
<b>Class 4</b>  <b>Date</b>	Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest Speaker: TBA</li> <li>• Kotter's 8-Eight Step Change Model</li> <li>• Appreciative Inquiry, continued</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Read <i>The Science of Change</i>, R. Boyatzis, Chapter 5</li> <li>• Complete Kolb Learning Style assessment and bring report to class</li> <li>• Begin scheduling Appreciative Inquiry interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Class 5</b>  <b>Date</b>	In-Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Kolb Learning Styles (LS)</li> <li>• Leadership Flexibility</li> <li>• Appreciative Inquiry: International Case Study</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue/complete 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Conduct Appreciative Inquiry interviews</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read <i>Experiential Learning in Team</i>, A. Kayes, D. Kayes, and D. Kolb article</li> <li>• Read <i>The Science of Change</i>, R. Boyatzis, Chapter 6 and 7</li> <li>• Watch Ted Talk, Power of Listening <a href="#">The power of listening   William Ury   TEDxSanDiego</a></li> </ul>
<b>Class 6 Date</b>	Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kolb Learning Styles, continued</li> <li>• Mini-Team Project/Vignette</li> <li>• Appreciative Inquiry, continued</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete 360 assessment interviews</li> <li>• Conduct Appreciative Inquiry interviews</li> <li>• Draft Personal Development Plan (which will be included in the <i>Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Class 7 Date</b>	In-Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini-Project/Vignette Team Discussions and Presentations</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete and submit <i>Leading Organizational Change and Leadership Insight Essay</i></li> <li>• Finalize Personal Development Plan (which will be included in the <i>Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay</i>)</li> <li>• Conduct Appreciative Inquiry interviews</li> <li>• Read <i>The Science of Change</i>, R. Boyatzis, Chapter 8</li> </ul>
<b>Class 8 Date</b>	In-Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciative Inquiry, continued</li> <li>• International Case Study, continued</li> <li>• Transformational Change Project (dedicated class time)</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft <i>Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay (include your Workbook and Personal Development Plan)</i></li> <li>• Complete Appreciative Inquiry interviews</li> </ul>
<b>Class 9 Date</b>	Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest Speaker: TBA</li> <li>• Finding Your Own Voice</li> <li>• Immunity to Change</li> <li>• Vision of Ideal Self</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize and submit <i>Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay (include your Workbook and Personal Development Plan)</i></li> <li>• Analyze and synthesize organizational change project data, identify key findings and design opportunities; create recommendations and sustainability strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Class 10 Date</b>	Remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key Learnings from Resonant Leadership Essay</li> <li>• Dyad Transformational Change Discussions</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin drafting <i>Organizational Change Essay</i></li> </ul>

<b>Class 11</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational Change Presentations (optional)</li> <li>• Key Course Learnings, Insights, and Takeaways</li> <li>• Cohort Round Robins/Appreciation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize and submit <i>Organizational Change Essay</i></li> </ul>
<b>Date</b>			
<b>Final Week</b>			

**Grading:**

<i>Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay</i> -Due Date: XXX	35%
<i>Leading Organizational Change and Leadership Insight Essay</i> -Due Date: XXXX	30%
Organizational Change Project Essay - Due Date: XXXX	35%

***Unless prior permission is granted to submit an essay beyond the due date, you will receive a zero ("0") for assignments submitted late. There will be no exceptions.***

**Academy Integrity and Use of AI Tools (e.g., ChatGPT):**

You are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in accordance with university policy. For information on GT's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18b.php> and <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/genregulations/honorcode.ph>. Any student suspected of cheating will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Plagiarism, including the presentation of another person's ideas, writing, or data as one's own without appropriate citation, is a serious violation of these standards and will result in disciplinary action. This course may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of your submitted work.

Because this course is highly experiential and focused primarily on your own ***highly unique and personal leadership style and insights*** gained from various exercises and self-reflections, generative artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, or others) may be used **only** within the boundaries set by me. There may be times when I will encourage you to leverage generative artificial intelligence, but it will be very limited. When use of such tools is permitted, students must:

- Acknowledge their use clearly in all submitted work (e.g., "Portions of this text were generated with assistance from ChatGPT and were reviewed and edited by the author for accuracy and originality.").
- Take full responsibility for verifying the accuracy, originality, and appropriateness of any AI-assisted content.
- Understand that undisclosed or excessive reliance on AI tools may constitute academic misconduct, similar to plagiarism.

When use of AI tools is not expressly permitted, their use for generating written content, analysis, or citations will be considered a breach of academic integrity.

## **Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At GT we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the students. Simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions with myself and each of the other students in the class will help build the environment that we seek.

## **Accommodation for Individuals with Disabilities**

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (often referred to as ADAPTS) at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodation letter. Please also email me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

## Appendix ~ Assignment Details

### Assignment #1: *Leading Organizational Change and Leadership Insight Essay*

**Due Date: XXXX by 11:59 p.m. ET**

#### Key Components

- Personal **Kolb Learning Style Report**
  - Insights from *Becoming a Resonant Leader* exercises
  - Observations of **team dynamics** during the assigned team project
  - Analysis of **team strengths and areas for development**
  - **Personal reflections** on your behavior and interactions with team members
  - Exploration of **why cognitive and learning diversity enhances team performance**
  - **Application of one or more specific change approaches**
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#### Assignment Overview

During class, you will be assigned to a team and given a topic to complete collaboratively under a tight deadline. The goal of this experience is to work together to deliver a comprehensive, professional, and well-thought-out submission—one that reflects the collective contributions and perspectives of all team members.

This assignment is designed to help you deepen your understanding of **your personal leadership style, while utilizing a change management approach**, and how it influences your approach to teamwork, collaboration, and leadership. You will also examine the learning styles of others and reflect on how adapting your communication and behavior can improve team effectiveness and outcomes.

Your essay should demonstrate your ability to:

- Interpret your personal Kolb Learning Style results and connect them to real experiences during the team project
- Analyze how individual learning styles contributed to or hindered team success
- Reflect on your adaptability, communication style (include during normal times and times of stress), and leadership behaviors within the group context
- Explain why diverse thinking and learning preferences are vital to effective problem-solving and organizational performance while implementing a structured change

The essay should be a minimum of **five (5) double-spaced pages**, formatted in **12-point font** with **1-inch margins** and **page numbers**.

### Assignment #2: *Accelerating Change through Resonant Leadership Essay*

**Due Date: XXX by 11:59 p.m. ET**

#### Key Components

- “Who Helped Me the Most” exercise

- “*Inspirational Leaders*” exercise
- “*The Best Leaders in My Life*” exercise
- “*My Beliefs about Strong Leadership*” exercise
- “*Who Do I Lead*” exercise
- “*My Defense Routines*” exercise
- “*My Values*” exercise
- “*Philosophical Orientation Questionnaire*” exercise
- “*360 Strengths and Gaps*” exercise
- *Personal Development Plan*

You will complete each of the exercises individually, with the exception of the “*360 Strengths and Gaps*” exercise, which requires gathering feedback from others. For this component, you must interview a minimum of **eight (8)** individuals, including:

- Peers
- Your immediate manager (if employed)
- Direct reports (if applicable)
- Family members

## Essay Overview

After completing the exercises, you will analyze the insights gained and synthesize them into a **holistic reflection** on your leadership identity and development. Your essay should:

- Define your vision of “**ideal leadership**”
- Reflect on your **current leadership style and effectiveness**
- Assess your **capacity to influence and lead meaningful organizational change**
- Present a **personal leadership development plan** that articulates how you will:
  - Capitalize on your strengths
  - Address or minimize liabilities and obstacles
  - Continue developing as an authentic, resonant leader capable of inspiring change

The essay should be a minimum of **five (5) double-spaced pages**, formatted in **12-point font** with **1-inch margins** and **page numbers**.

## Ongoing Development Discussions

Each week, you will discuss your most important development opportunity and your progress toward that goal with your assigned cohort. These discussions are designed to help you refine your self-awareness and practice intentional leadership behaviors that support transformational change.

## Assignment #3: Organizational Change Essay

**Due Date: XXXX by 11:59 p.m. ET**

## Key Components

The research and deliverables for this project will include:

- Development of an **Appreciative Inquiry Project Plan**
  - Creation of **Appreciative Inquiry Interview Questions**
  - **Robust data collection methodology**, including:
    - A minimum of 7 interviews within your organization
    - Recorded in writing and well-documented findings
  - **Collect other information as needed to fully understand the change**
  - **Comprehensive data analysis and synthesis**
  - **Identification of key findings and design opportunities**
  - **Approach to design iteration with key stakeholders**
  - **Final recommendations and sustainability strategies** to support lasting organizational change
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## Assignment Overview

This project is designed to provide hands-on experience applying **Appreciative Inquiry (AI)** principles and methodologies to a real organizational change opportunity within your organization. You will examine your organization's culture, leadership dynamics, and existing strengths to identify opportunities for growth and transformation.

The essay will be evaluated based on the **depth and rigor** of your research, documentation, and analysis, as well as your ability to make sense of the data in a holistic and meaningful way. Your key findings, design opportunities, and recommendations should clearly demonstrate how leadership insights and strength-based analysis can drive and sustain positive organizational change.

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## Essay Outline

Your final paper should include the following sections:

- **Description of the organization**
- **Change opportunity**
- **Rationale for the change and vision for the future (ideal state)**
- **Key stakeholder analysis**
- **Strengths of the organization and leverage opportunities**
- **Design recommendations and sustainability strategies**
- **Key insights and lessons learned** about leading change