

**MGT 70450**  
**HR in High Performing Organizations**  
Spring 2008 – Module 3  
Tuesday and Thursday 3:00 – 4:50 P.M.

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**Course Description:**

Research on organizational effectiveness makes it increasingly clear that “the people make the place”. This course is designed to increase your understanding of how high performing organizations acquire, develop, and maintain effective employees. We will examine many systems and processes that historically have been considered “HR” topics. Our focus, however, will be *managerial* in nature and is intended to help you become “informed consumers and users” of these organizational practices, rather than experts in their design and implementation. In particular, we will focus on these issues: (a) identifying potential and current high performers, (b) identifying performance deficiencies, (c) implementing performance enhancement interventions, and (d) understanding how compensation systems affect performance – all within existing legal, ethical, and labor and economic contexts. Our approach to the topics will be balanced between theoretical understanding of the underlying principles and practical applications of techniques. Our discussions will be informed by the research that has addressed these topics, as well as by examples of what has worked in a variety of organizational settings.

**Course Objectives:**

This course is designed to increase your understanding of human resource systems and your ability to use them to maximize individual and unit performance. After completing this course you should:

- ◆ Possess frameworks for assessing how organizational practices that are ethical, legal, and smart can significantly improve the human condition at work.
- ◆ Have a better understanding of how *jobs* influence the performance of the *job-holder*.
- ◆ Have a better understanding of how *legal and regulatory processes* influence performance at work.
- ◆ Be able to evaluate the quality of existing *selection systems* in regard to their validity and utility.
- ◆ Be able to critique existing *performance assessment systems* and modify them to return more useful performance information.
- ◆ Understand how *compensation systems* are designed and used to influence individual and unit performance.
- ◆ Better understand the circumstances under which performance deficiencies at the organizational or individual level can be improved through *individual development*.
- ◆ Be able to evaluate the effectiveness of *performance enhancement* programs.

## General Class Format:

The degree to which you will be successful obtaining this new knowledge will depend upon the degree to which you systematically prepare for and actively participate in our discussions of these topics as a class and in small groups. Therefore, a high level of consistent and informed student participation is expected.

## Philosophy on Honesty and Professional Behavior:

All class members are expected to abide by the *MBA Academic Honor Code* and the *MBA Code of Conduct*. Departures from the codes will result in significant grade reductions.

## Class Values

Like all groups, every class has a culture, a set of norms, implicit and explicit, that guides the behavior of class members and affects the learning environment. Unlike most classes where culture is something that develops on its own, I am going to be purposeful about the culture of our class and I expect you to be mindful of this culture and to be active participants within this culture. The following are the values that are of essence to our class culture.

***Thoughtfulness.*** Represents commitment and fairness to expressed ideas and to individuals. Thoughtful people think deeply about others' comments while honoring their dignity and worth.

***Enlightened learning.*** Involves a search for truth and a willingness to consistently and critically examine one's own knowledge and beliefs. The enlightened learner is open and willing to explore new points of view, even when the new views contrast sharply with their own. A key objective of enlightened learning is to advance the search for real truth. In this respect, enlightened learners are toughest on themselves and their own thoughts and ideas. Finally, and often most importantly, enlightened learning involves humility. Humility in this educational environment is being willing to change one's own point of view. Humility means offering your ideas with conviction but without aggression.

*Note: Constructive criticism is an important part of both thoughtfulness and enlightened learning*

For scientific evidence that these values matter for learning, performance, and life, here are a few articles to which you can refer:

1. Meece, Anderman, & Anderman. (2006). Classroom goal structure, student motivation, and academic achievement. *Annual Review of Psychology, 57*, 487-503.
2. Eccles & Wigfield. (2002) Motivational beliefs, values, and goals. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53(1)*, 109-132.
3. Isen. (2002). Missing in action in the AIM: Positive affect's facilitation of cognitive flexibility, innovation, and problem solving. *Psychological Inquiry, 13(1)*, 57-65 (Scroll through the commentaries until you find Alice Isen's).

## **Grades:**

### **Contribution to the class learning environment: 50%**

It is difficult to affect any environment if you are not physically and mentally engaged. Thus, attendance and informed participation (quality above quantity) are expected and are prerequisites for a passing grade. The things we discuss in class will complement the readings – so, you must commit to systematic preparation and attendance in order to benefit from taking the course.

### **Exams: 50%** (25% Midterm Exam and 25% Final Exam)

Throughout the module you will not only demonstrate the learning you acquired over the course of the class through your participation, but also through your answers to a midterm and a final exam. Each exam will be composed of a series of short-answer and essay-type questions. Short answer questions will be definitional in nature. Essay-type questions will make up the bulk of each exam.

## **Office Hours:**

2 P.M. to 4 P.M. Wednesdays. If you are unable to come during this time, please E-mail or call me and I'll be happy to schedule an appointment for a different time with you.

## **Textbooks:**

100 Things You Need To Know: Best Practices for Managers & HR  
R.W. Eichinger, M.M. Lombardo & D. Ulrich; Lominger Limited: 2004  
*Available at the ND Bookstore or on-line.*

Human Resource Management: An Experiential Approach (Fourth Edition)  
H. John Bernardin; McGraw-Hill: 2007  
*Available at the ND Bookstore or on-line.*

## **General Note:**

I need to hear from anyone who has a disability, condition, or situation that may require some modification of seating, assessment, or other class requirements so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Please see me outside of class at your earliest convenience – but before you need the accommodation. Strict confidentiality will be maintained.

## Tentative Schedule

January 15 - 17

### Introduction

Characteristics of high performing organizations

Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 1
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 10, 40, 54, 60, 80, 95

January 22

### Labor Relations, Managing the Employment Relationship, and Employee wellbeing

Issues in Collective Bargaining  
The Employer's Power in Collective Bargaining  
Employment handbooks

Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 13 & 12

January 24

### The Legal Environment of Employee Selection and Assessment

Employment at will doctrine  
Competing definitions of "fairness"  
Application of EEO laws and regulations

Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 3
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 5, 15, 32, 41, 44, 52, 65, 68, 71, 79, 85, 88

January 29

### Job Design and Employee Motivation

Jobs as foundations for organizational decision making  
Emerging work design  
Role of job analysis in decisions that are legal, moral, and smart

Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 4
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 3, 12, 23, 30, 42, 49, 50, 61, 74, 77

January 31

### Planning, recruiting, and job choice

When, where, how, and whom to recruit  
Evaluation of recruiting method effectiveness  
Multi-dimensional signal exchange

Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 5
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 2, 26, 55, 63

*January 31 Continued*

## **Selection system design and implementation**

Developing a selection process

Validity and Utility

Selection tools and techniques to identify high performers

### Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 6
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 1, 8, 9, 24, 25, 33, 35, 39, 43, 46, 47, 51, 57, 58, 62, 73, 78, 83, 86, 91, 93, 100

**February 5**

## **Midterm Exam**

**February 7**

## **Issues in Adult Training, Development, and Learning**

Adult Learning Issues

Training Needs Assessment

Training Evaluation Design and Methods

### Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 8
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 4, 7, 14, 16, 20, 28, 36, 37, 45, 53, 59, 67, 69, 72, 81, 87, 89, 92, 96, 98, 99

**February 12 – 14**

## **Performance Appraisal and Feedback**

Sampling Processes

Cognitive Processes

Role of Learning

Scaling and Measurement Issues

### Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapter 7
2. E, L, & U: Numbers 6, 11, 17, 19, 22, 27, 34, 38, 48, 56, 64, 66, 70, 76, 82

**February 19 – 21**

## **Compensation Systems**

Determining Pay Structures

Job Evaluation

Justice and Fairness

Determining Individual Pay

### Reading:

1. Bernardin Chapters 10 & 11
2. E, L, & U: Number 31

**February 26**

## **Wrap-up**

**February 29**

## **Final Exam**