

# SMO 500 Managing People<sup>1</sup>

Fall 2008

## Class Information

Section:	Day:	Room:	Time:
A1	Wednesday	BUS 3-05	2:00pm – 4:50pm
X1	Thursday	BUS 3-05	6:30pm – 9:30pm

## Contact Information

Instructor:	Andrew Luchak
Office:	Business 4-30C
Telephone:	780 492-4304 (office) or 780 433-4393 (home)
Fax:	780 492-3325
Email:	<a href="mailto:andrew.luchak@ualberta.ca">andrew.luchak@ualberta.ca</a>
Course website:	<a href="https://ulearn.ualberta.ca/webapps/login">https://ulearn.ualberta.ca/webapps/login</a>
Office hours:	By appointment or just drop-in

---

## Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to principles in the effective management of people at work, with emphasis on the application of theory via “real world” problem scenarios. The course emphasizes that people can be an organization’s greatest asset and an important source of competitive advantage if managed properly. This is most likely to happen when employees clearly understand what role behaviours are required of them by an organization’s culture and strategy and when they are equipped with the skills, motivation and opportunity to behave as such. This course will help students develop a base of knowledge and skills that are relevant for leading and managing people within organizations. Specific core competencies that will be developed throughout the course include, *communications skills* (e.g., oral and written communication, presentation skills), *leadership skills* (e.g., decision-making, strategic thinking), *knowledge management skills* (e.g., creativity and innovativeness, critical thinking), *interpersonal skills* (e.g., teamwork), *management skills* (e.g., change management, implementation skills), and *organizational awareness and understanding* (e.g., understanding the realities of organization life, power and politics).

## Course Materials

1. SMO 500 Casebook (2008). Toronto: Pearson Custom Publishing.
2. Other assigned readings, including materials presented in class discussions, cases, videos, in-class exercises, guest speakers, class presentations, etc.

---

<sup>1</sup> Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

## Instructional Format

Since the topics covered in this course span a variety of traditionally distinct disciplines (e.g., organizational behaviour, human resource management and organizational theory), several different pedagogical techniques will be used to achieve the course objectives. For some topics, it is desirable to enrich our understanding and perspective to invite recognized experts to class to share their views on the world of work (via video lectures); in other cases we will follow a more “grounded” approach by making sense of research evidence and recommendations through presentations and class discussion. In addition to knowledge acquisition, each week we will attempt to develop management skills by applying knowledge to “real world” management issues through discussion of current research, case analyses and exercises. Preparation for and attendance in class is crucial to understanding, applying and getting the most out of the course content.

## Method of Evaluation<sup>2</sup>

This course offers students several opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of course material. Performance in the course will be evaluated on the following basis:

Contribution	10%
Group Presentation	10%
Individual Case Write-Up	10%
Group Take-Home (Midterm) Case Analysis (A1: Oct 8 & X1: Oct 9)	30%
Individual Take-Home (Final) Case Analysis (A1: Dec 3 & X1: Dec 4)	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Contribution:** Contribution is worth 10% of the course mark and may be defined as active involvement in and promotion of learning in class. Each week, students are expected to carefully read the assigned readings, case or exercise prior to class and have given some thoughtful consideration to some preliminary questions listed on the course website (further questions may be presented for in-group discussion and analysis during the class). To facilitate this part of the course, students will be arranged in 4-5 person discussion groups. Groups will be expected to thoughtfully answer questions, present solutions and typically hand in written work at the end of each class. There will be a variety of ways for students to contribute to the group process, including facilitating within-group discussion, contributing ideas, problem-solving, recording answers, and acting as group spokesperson. At the end of each class, each group’s contribution will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. It is every student’s responsibility to attend class and contribute. Only students in attendance may receive credit for the group’s contribution in any given class. Students absent from class without a reasonable explanation will not receive credit for contribution in that class. Where students are able to provide a reasonable explanation for missing class, a written solution to the case questions may be submitted for credit in lieu of in-class participation. It is expected this option will be used sparingly, and except in emergencies, *approval prior to class* is needed to avail of this

---

<sup>2</sup> The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at [www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm](http://www.ualberta.ca/secretariat/appeals.htm)) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in expulsion from the University.

option. At the end of the semester, the percentage of all classes for which contribution credit was received will be used to assess a mark out of 10 for each student.

**Group Presentation:** Each group will lead one 20 minute presentation (this includes a 10 minute interactive class discussion) on one of the “reflection” articles listed on the course outline. To do this, we will have 1-2 presentations per week starting in week 3 of the course. This assignment represents 10% of the course mark. Assessment will be equally weighted for presentation content and presentation style. Presentations should deal with the following content areas: (i) *Summary* of main points of the article; (ii) *Critique* of the information presented in the article (e.g., What your group does or does not find particularly compelling, novel, or insightful about this research and the conclusions being drawn by the author); (iii) *Lessons* you draw from the article about the effective management of people at work; and (iv) *Questions* raised for discussion. Presentation style will be assessed on the basis of *professionalism* (i.e., organization of presentation, presentation skills, staying within time limits) and *generating interest* (i.e., stimulating and maintaining class discussion, responding to questions). This assignment does not require outside sources but efforts to link your analysis of the reflection article to course content will be an important determinant of group success. Groups are expected to make a PowerPoint of their presentation that will be posted to the course website. All PowerPoint presentations should be prepared using Microsoft Office 2003 and be emailed to the instructor not less than 12 hours prior to the class in which the presentation is to be made.

**Individual Case Write-Up:** Each student will submit one written solution to any one of the cases found in the SMO 500 Casebook (2008) except for the IBM case assigned in week 6 and the Continental case assigned in week 14. (Note that cases under the same organization name but divided into different parts [e.g., A, B, C] are treated as one case for the purposes of this exercise). The written argument of the individual case write-up (excluding cover page, references and any tables) shall not be more than 3 double spaced pages of typed text using 12 point font and one inch margins on the sides, top and bottom of each page. In this assignment, students will use the VRIO framework set out by Barney & Wright (1998) to analyze the extent to which they feel the particular organization’s people management practices are valuable, rare, inimitable, and supported by the organization. Having done this, students will then assess the extent to which the competitive position and performance “implications” of their analyses are in agreement or not with the “actual” competitive position and performance of the organization in the case at the time it was written. Students are expected to use specific examples from the case to support all conclusions made and draw some conclusions (with reasons) about the usefulness or lack of usefulness of the VRIO framework for understanding how organizations can achieve competitive advantage through the effective management of people at work. The individual case write-up is worth 10% of the course mark and must be submitted to the instructor before the actual case is taken up in class. Students can submit more than one write-up of a different case with a view to improving their mark in this category. (Write-ups should be submitted at the start of the class in which the case is scheduled for discussion; if submitted electronically, write-ups should be prepared using Microsoft Office Word 2003.)

**Group (Mid-term) & Individual (Final) Take-home Case Analyses:** There are two take-home case analyses scheduled in this course. The group take-home (mid-term) case analysis is worth 30% of the course mark and is due at 5:00pm on Wednesday October 8, 2008 (A1) or 9:30pm on Thursday October 9, 2008 (X1) as applicable. The individual take-home (final) case analysis is worth 40% and is due at 5pm on Wednesday December 3, 2008 (A1) or at 9:30pm on Thursday December 4, 2008 (X1) as applicable. Questions for each case analysis will be distributed approximately one week prior to its due date. Case analyses will be submitted electronically by the

group or individual as the case may be as there will be no class in weeks 6 or 14 of the course. In theory, the individual take-home (final) case analysis will cover the entire course but in practice, the emphasis will be on material covered in the second half of the course. The specific format of each case analysis (e.g., page length, number of questions, etc.) will be discussed in detail in a subsequent note. In general, the group take-home (mid-term) case analysis will revolve importantly around the application of course concepts and principles to the case, IBM's Decade of Transformation, while the individual take-home (final) case analysis will revolve around the case, Gordon Bethune at Continental Airlines.

### Meeting Schedule, Readings and Topics

Aside from the casebook, all reading materials in this course can be obtained online through the U of A library system. For convenience, links to these readings are posted on the course website. Please make copies of the readings or otherwise access them in order to have them when we meet. All readings noted below are required to be read by all students.

<p>Wk 1 Sep 03/04</p>	<p><b>Introduction &amp; Course Overview. Competing Strategically through People.</b>  <u>Read:</u>          Ulrich (1998) A new mandate for human resources, <i>HBR</i> (pp. 124-134); Barney &amp; Wright (1998) On becoming a strategic partner: The role of human resources in gaining competitive advantage, <i>HRM</i> (pp 31-46).  <u>Video:</u> How Great Companies Achieve Extraordinary Results with Ordinary People (Charles O'Reilly III)</p>
<p>Wk 2 Sep 10/11</p>	<p><b>Implementing Strategy through People: The Role of Organizational Culture.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Chatman &amp; Cha (2003) Leading by leveraging culture, <i>CMR</i> (pp. 20-34); Barney (1986) Organizational culture: Can it be a source of sustained competitive advantage? <i>AMR</i> (pp 656-665).  <u>Video:</u> Implementing Strategy (Jennifer Chatman)  <u>Case:</u> West Jet Airlines (A) (B)</p>
<p>Wk 3 Sep 17/18</p>	<p><b>Pitfalls of a Successful Strategy and/or Strong Culture.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Sull (1999) Why good companies go bad, <i>HBR</i> (pp 42-52); Sull &amp; Spinosa (2007) Promise-based management: The essence of execution, <i>HBR</i> (pp 79-86)  <u>Reflection #1:</u> Zuckerman (2002) Strong corporate cultures and firm performance: Are there tradeoffs? <i>AME</i> (pp 158-160)  <u>Video:</u> The Knowing-Doing Gap (Robert Sutton)  <u>Case:</u> Blinds to Go (A) (B)</p>
<p>Wk 4 Sep 24/25</p>	<p><b>Attracting &amp; Retaining Talent that Makes a Difference.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Mitchell, Holtom &amp; Lee (2001) How to keep your best employees: Developing an effective retention policy <i>AME</i> (pp 96-108); Pfeffer (2005) Producing sustainable competitive advantage through the effective management of people, <i>AME</i> (pp 95-106); Rousseau (2004) Psychological contracts in the workplace: Understanding the ties that motivate, <i>AME</i> (pp 120-127)  <u>Reflection #2:</u> McFarlin (2006) Hard day's work: A boon for performance but a bane for satisfaction? <i>AME</i> (pp. 115-16)  <u>Video:</u> Trust Travels: The Starbucks Story (SHRM Foundation)  <u>Case:</u> Lucent Technologies: Halting Information Technology Employee Turnover</p>

Wk 5 Oct 01/02	<p><b>Growth, Succession &amp; Continuous Improvement through Innovation.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Conger &amp; Fulmer (2003) Developing your leadership pipeline <i>HBR</i> (pp 76-84); Kanter (2006) Innovation: The classic traps <i>HBR</i> (pp 72-83)  <u>Reflection #3:</u> Santora (2004) Passing the baton: Does CEO relay succession work best? <i>AME</i> (pp 157-159)  <u>Video:</u> Innovation Management and Incentives Design (Antonio Davita)  <u>Case:</u> Microsoft: Competing on Talent (A) (B)</p>
Wk 6 Oct 08/09	<p><b>No Class. Group Take-Home (Mid-term) Case Analysis is due (5:00pm for A1; 9:30pm for X1).</b> Groups e-submit solution to instructor. This assignment revolves importantly around the case, IBM's Decade of Transformation.</p>
Wk 7 Oct 15/16	<p><b>Career Planning and Mentorship.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Waterman et al (1994) Toward a career-resilient workforce, <i>HBR</i> (pp 87-95); de Janasz et al (2003) Mentor networks and career success: Lessons for turbulent times <i>AME</i> (pp.78-91); Bunker et al (2002) The young and the clueless <i>HBR</i> (pp 80-87).  <u>Reflection #4:</u> McCarthy (2002) Does having a proactive personality lead to career success? <i>AME</i> (pp 168-169)  <u>Video:</u> Really Achieving Your Childhood Dreams (Randy Pausch)</p>
Wk 8 Oct 22/23	<p><b>Learning &amp; Development.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Garvin et al (2008) Is yours a learning organization? <i>HBR</i> (pp 109-116); Edmondson et al (2001) Speeding up team learning <i>HBR</i> (pp 125-132).  <u>Reflection #5:</u> Santora (2007) Managing "open" employees: Do resources and leadership style matter? <i>AME</i> (pp 83-84)  <u>Reflection #6:</u> Porath (1999) Examining HR options: Does investment in employees' payoff? <i>Academy of Management Executive</i> (pp. 110-111)  <u>Case:</u> Art and Practice of Learning at Oak Valley Inc</p>
Wk 9 Oct 29/30	<p><b>Rewarding Employees.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Rynes et al (2002) Seven common misconceptions about human resource practices <i>AME</i> (pp 98-99); Campbell et al (1998) Merit pay, performance appraisal, and individual motivation: An analysis and alternatives, <i>HRM</i> (pp 131-146); Rynes et al (2004) The importance of pay in employee motivation: Discrepancies between what people say and what they do <i>HRM</i> (pp 381-394).  <u>Reflection #7:</u> Gardner (1999) When pay for performance works too well: The negative impact of pay dispersion <i>AME</i> (pp 101-103)  <u>Case:</u> Merck &amp; Co., Inc (A) (B) (C)</p>
Wk 10 Nov 05/06	<p><b>Performance Management.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Latham (2004) The motivational benefits of goal-setting, <i>AME</i> (pp 126-129); Moss &amp; Sanchez (2004) Are your employees avoiding you? Managerial strategies for closing the feedback gap, <i>AME</i> (pp 32-44).  <u>Reflection #8:</u> Locke (2004) Linking goals to monetary incentives. <i>AME</i> (pp 130-133)  <u>Video:</u> Performance Appraisals: Getting Results (Toastmasters)  <u>Case:</u> Elise Smart</p>

<p>Wk 11 Nov 12/13</p>	<p><b>Ethical Issues.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Cropanzano et al (2007) The management of organizational justice, <i>AMP</i> (pp 34-48); Cascio (2006) Decency means more than “always low process”: A comparison of Costco to Wal-Mart’s Sam’s Club, <i>AMP</i> (pp 26-37)  <u>Reflection #9:</u> Brennan (2007) Working around the family: Is there a gender divide? <i>AME</i> (pp. 81-82)  <u>Video:</u> Ethics: The Fabric of Business (SHRM Foundation)  <u>Case:</u> Staffing Wal-Mart Stores, Inc (A) (B)</p>
<p>Wk 12 Nov 19/20</p>	<p><b>Change Management.</b>  <u>Read:</u> Kotter (1995) Leading change: Why transformation efforts fail, <i>HBR</i> (pp 59-67); Strebel (1996) Why do employees resist change? <i>HBR</i> (pp 86-92)  <u>Reflection #10:</u> Sidle (2003) Best laid plans: Establishing fairness early can smooth organizational change <i>AME</i> (pp.127-28)  <u>Video:</u> Change Management and Strategic Planning (Roberta Katz)  <u>Case:</u> Opening the Books for Change at Norwest Labs (A) (B) (C)</p>
<p>Wk 13 Nov 26/27</p>	<p><b>HRM Outsourcing: Make or Buy?</b>  <u>Read:</u> Greer et al. (1999) Human resource management outsourcing: The make or buy decision, <i>AME</i> (pp. 85-96)  <u>Reflection #11:</u> Romero (2004) Are the great places to work also great performers? <i>AME</i> (pp. 150-152)  <u>Reflection #12:</u> Weaver (2004) Ethics and employees: Making the connection <i>AME</i> (pp 121-125)  <u>Case:</u> CIBC Outsourcing the Human Resources Department (A) (B)</p>
<p>Wk 14 Dec 03/04</p>	<p><b>No Class. Individual Take-Home (Final) Case Analysis is due (5:00pm for A1; 9:30pm for X1).</b> Individuals e-submit solution to instructor. This assignment revolves importantly around the case, Gordon Bethune at Continental Airlines.</p>