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# Course calendar

## Session 1, 2016

### Managing People & Organisations (Intensive)
* MBA (Executive)

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<thead>
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<th>Week no.</th>
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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Assessments due (% weighting)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8 February</td>
<td>Intro</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>15 February</td>
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<td>7 March</td>
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<td><strong>Intensive Workshop 1</strong></td>
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<td>Saturday 12 March (9am-5pm)</td>
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<td>Assessment 1 due 9:30am EST Tuesday 22 March (20%)</td>
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<td><strong>Intensive Workshop 2</strong></td>
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<td>Saturday 16 April (9am-5pm)</td>
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<td>Assessment 2 due 9:30am EST Tuesday 26 April (40%)</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>25 April</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Assessment 2 due 9:30am EST Tuesday 26 April (40%)</td>
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**Final Exam (Saturday, 7 May) 40%**
Course outline

The organisations we work in are rich and complex organisms in which many interactions, relationships and processes are played out daily. The complexity of these interactions, relationships and processes often makes them difficult to understand. Our challenge in this course is to develop the analytical skills which will assist you to obtain valuable insights into organisational life. By doing this you can better understand the organisations you work in and the behaviour of the people with whom you interact.

Managing People & Organisations is designed to help you understand the effect your behaviour at work, and the behaviour of those around you, has on work performance. To do that we will introduce you to theories about human behaviour and interpersonal relationships. We will consider ideas about common organisational features such as job roles, working groups, power structures and job design. We will discuss ideas about the overall design of organisations. Each unit in this course covers a topic that contributes to your understanding of how people and organisations function so that you can become a better manager of yourself, other people, and organisations.

During the course, we give you the tools to understand behaviour in organisations, and to consider the consequences of that behaviour for individual and organisational performance.

The aims of Managing People & Organisations are for you to:

• learn about frameworks and models that describe organisational life;
• reflect on your experiences at work;
• apply the frameworks in analysing your experiences;
• develop critical analytical skills in using the frameworks; and
• develop strategies for more effective managerial behaviour.

Throughout the course material, the classes and the assignments, we will help you achieve these aims. As you read, participate and prepare your assignments, you should keep these aims in mind and let them drive your learning experiences.

In this course we will ask you to test your understanding of the concepts we introduce by examining your working life.

This could involve analysing your actions, the actions of others, processes that occur within your organisation, and key organisational events. You can use these exercises to evaluate the concepts.

That is, you should ask yourself

• how useful is this idea for me?
• how can I modify this idea in light of my own experiences?
• which theories do I think are most valid in my organisation?
• which do I think are most valid across a range of organisations?

We have chosen the ideas and concepts from a large literature on people and organisations. These ideas address questions such as:
• what is my role as a manager and leader?
• how can I become a more effective manager?
• what motivates people to work?
• what are the main features of my organisation which influence my motivation at work?
• how do you organise people for high productivity and creativity?
• what hinders individual and organisational performance?
• how does my working group function and how can it be more effective?
• what holds the organisation together?

By the end of this course you should be able to answer these questions for yourself and your organisation. We hope that you will find it stimulating, insightful and enjoyable.

MBA Program Learning Goals

The Course Learning Outcomes are what you should be able to DO by the end of this course if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

The Learning Outcomes in this course also help you to achieve some of the overall Program Learning Goals and Outcomes for all postgraduate coursework students in the UNSW Business School. Program Learning Goals are what we want you to BE or HAVE by the time you successfully complete your degree (e.g. ‘be an effective team player’). You demonstrate this by achieving specific Program Learning Outcomes – what you are able to DO by the end of your degree (e.g. ‘participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams’).
MBA Program Learning Goals and Outcomes

**Learning Goal 1: Business Management Knowledge**
Students should be able to identify and apply current knowledge of disciplinary and interdisciplinary theory and professional practice to general management and business within diverse situations.

**Learning Goal 2: Critical Thinking**
Students should understand and be able to identify, research and analyse complex issues and problems in business and develop appropriate solutions.

**Learning Goal 3: Communication**
Students should be able to produce written documents and oral presentations that communicate effectively complex disciplinary ideas and information for the intended audience and purpose.

**Learning Goal 4: Teamwork**
Students should be able to participate collaboratively and responsibly in teams and to reflect upon their own contribution to the team and on the necessary processes and knowledge within the team to achieve specified outcomes.

**Learning Goal 5: Responsible Business**
Students should be able to appraise ethical, environmental and sustainability considerations in decision making and in practice in business.

Students should be able to consider the social and cultural implications of management practices and of business activities.

**Learning Goal 6: Leadership**
Students should be able to reflect upon their own personal leadership style and the leadership needs of business and of teams.

**Learning Goal 7: International Perspective**
Students should understand the needs of undertaking business within a global context.
Students should be able to apply business management knowledge to business situations within global markets with due recognition for differences in cultural, legal, commercial and other issues.

**Learning Goal 8: Risk Management**
Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the limits in precision and the risks associated with business models.
Students should be able to appraise risk and to develop risk mitigation strategies applicable to business undertaken within uncertain and volatile environments.
Course structure

The course is divided into three sections. Each section focuses on a different level of analysis:

- individual;
- group; and
- organisation.

These three levels reflect the levels at which researchers analyse organisations, and at which you will analyse your organisation. To be comprehensive any study of organisational life should include each of these levels.

Section 1: Individuals at work

This section establishes the foundations of human behaviour and applies them to the work context. You will learn about individual characteristics such as personality, intelligence, values and cultural influences. You will also learn about individual dynamic processes like motivation, self-efficacy, and perception. Using these concepts you will consider your role as a manager and the behaviours you use, with a strong focus on how you can become a more effective manager.

Section 2: Working with others

This section takes a more outward look at your workplace behaviours. We consider the dynamics of the groups you work in and how you relate to and work with others in those groups. Two important elements of your interpersonal relationships are power and leadership. We will use frameworks of power and leadership to understand how you manage others, and how others manage you. In this section we will also consider how your work is influenced by the characteristics of your job, that is, your work design.

Section 3: Designing work and organisations

The third section takes a higher level view of organisational life. We look how jobs and organisations are designed. By doing this we can see how well or poorly all the individual and interpersonal elements of the organisation fit together. We can also then see the context in which you manage others and in which you are managed. Using the concepts that we present we will ask you to analyse the design of jobs within your organisation, as well as the architecture, systems and culture of the organisation itself. The final unit of this course is a review unit. We will take an integrative look at all the material that has been covered.
A framework for the study of organisations, people and their behaviour

One of the most prolific fields of research within management education is the Organisational Behaviour (OB) field. OB is an ‘interdisciplinary field dedicated to better understanding and managing people at work’ (Kreitner & Kinicki 2007). The course Managing People & Organisations is firmly rooted in the OB literature. That is, most of what you will read and learn about reflects the findings of decades of OB research.

Using this definition of OB, the framework depicted in Figure 1 is one that we will use to guide our learning. Early units focus on human behaviour with a specific focus on behaviour within organisations. Later units consider the individual–organisation interface, for example how we as individuals behave in organisational working groups. Our behaviour is best understood within the organisational context because this influences who we work with, how we work with them, and our degree of influence over the people on whom we depend to do our job.

In the last unit we will explore organisational and work characteristics, looking at their design and the different forms in which jobs and organisations are commonly designed. This unit will help you explore the context in which you behave and work in your organisation.

You will also notice that the framework in Figure 1 includes the influence of the environment on both individual and organisational behaviour. One example of an environmental factor that we will consider throughout this course is the cultural context.
Approaches to the study of organisations, people and their behaviour

To improve your study of Managing People & Organisations it is perhaps useful to put this course in a broader context. We will do this in two ways:

The historical developments in OB. Here we give you some background to the field of OB in order for you to better understand how the theories that we will study have developed over time, and how they contribute to (and emanate from) different schools of thought in OB.

Analytical frameworks. In the final section we describe frameworks that social scientists and scholars of organisational behaviour use to model and analyse the world. Understanding these frameworks will help you to understand the models and theories you will read about, and also to structure your own thinking about your organisation.

Historical developments in OB

Classical management theory. Early management studies proposed forms of bureaucratic governance of people in organisations in order to rationalise their activities. Frederick Taylor's ideas, which were a key part of the 'scientific management' movement, focused on systematising work to improve production efficiency. His aim for management was to 'secure the maximum prosperity for the employer, coupled with the maximum prosperity for each employee' (Taylor 1947). By carefully analysing job...
requirements and worker capabilities, principally via time and motion studies, managers can measure productivity and design work according to scientific principles. He viewed organisations as machines, logically constructed and centrally directed by managers. Managers are easily distinguishable from workers: managers design and monitor task activity, workers execute commands.

**Human relations movement.** Following scientific management, this major school of OB rejected Taylor’s assumptions of the rational, economic man. Instead, human relations theorists proposed that in order to maximise productivity, managers must be concerned with the social aspects of organisation. The kind of work that Taylor suggested, which was narrowly defined and repetitive, was seen as alienating, boring, tiring and instilled apathy in workers. McGregor (1960) contrasted this type of management theory (Theory X) with a more human and socially oriented approach (Theory Y). Along with other prominent human relations theorists (Maslow, Herzberg, Lewin, Lippit, Mayo) it was shown how informal social processes significantly influenced productivity. The implication for management of this Theory Y approach is that workers do not need to be monitored and coerced into activity (as they are under Theory X assumptions), rather managers should assume that all workers want to produce, achieve and develop.

Management’s role is to create the conditions for personal development by enriching jobs, using teams and counselling/mentoring workers with strong and sensitive interpersonal skills.

Although some aspects of this human relations approach are somewhat dated, it still guides much thinking today. Modern forms of Human Resources Management (which we will discuss in Unit 10) draw on the human relations philosophy, and the power of human and social capital for organisational performance is a topic that is currently alive in management discourse (e.g. Shaw et al. 2005). Out of the human relations school have emerged other powerful forces in management studies, for example Organisation Development (OD). The OD movement is unashamedly people-centred, understanding that people have emotional and social needs that have to be realistically addressed. The ideal favoured by OD practitioners is a harmonious organisation where people feel fulfilled by their work, are highly motivated, belong to fully functioning work teams with high morale and meaningful work and are led by humanistic supervisors who transmit the needs and aspirations of group members upwards. Changes are accomplished by mutual influence and negotiated compromise, and information is openly shared.

Both the scientific management and human relations approaches to organisational behaviour have been subjected to major critical review. For example, scientific management ignores human nature and the management practices prescribed by Taylor would not enable quick change. Tasks have to be re-evaluated, re-measured and re-designed
before change can occur. Human relations has traditionally naively ignored organisational power structures and the need for managers to design and implement a business strategy. Of course, neither theory is perfect, indeed no theory is. Throughout this course you will be presented with a set of ideas about how organisations and people behave and how organisations and managers should behave. None of them are ‘correct’ to the exclusion of others. It is up to you to look for their value and their limitations and decide how and when you can fruitfully use them in your managerial life.

Analytical frameworks

We would finally like to introduce you to a common way of describing the dynamic processes that occur within organisations. Much research in the social sciences is concerned with causality, that is, what are the causes and consequences of particular behaviours on events. For example, if we were to study absenteeism in your company, we would look for the causes of absenteeism (e.g. low morale, poor working conditions and work design) and the consequences of absenteeism (e.g. low productivity and financial loss). Researchers build models that describe the relationship between variables. The absenteeism model we have just described is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 Analytical framework 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low morale</td>
<td>Absenteeism</td>
<td>Low productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor working conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Financial loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work design</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The arrows refer to the causality; A causes B which in turn causes C. This type of model may also be referred to as an input–output model. The inputs in the first half of this example are morale, working conditions and job design, and the outputs are low productivity and financial loss.

But we all know that organisational life is not as simple as this. One common reason is that relationships like this do not always hold, it depends on the circumstances. A common way of depicting this kind of ‘it depends’ statement is to introduce a moderator variable. A moderator variable determines when a relationship holds, that is, it may hold in one setting but not in another. In our absenteeism example, the relationship between causes and absenteeism may hold only in certain cultures. In other cultures, for example some Asian cultures, it may be that absenteeism goes against the cultural norm, that is, it is unacceptable. However poor the morale, working conditions and work design are, employees don’t take time off. So we would say that national culture is a moderator variable. This may be depicted as in Figure 3.
A moderator that influences relationships is also called a **contingency variable**. The effect that A has on B is contingent on X. In our example the effect that morale has on absenteeism is contingent on the cultural context. Contingency theories of organisational life are common. One major example that you will read about in Unit 7 is the contingency theory of leadership. This theory states that effective leadership style is contingent on contextual factors. It is argued that a particular style (e.g. democratic leadership) is appropriate only under certain conditions, that is, its effectiveness is contingent on those conditions prevailing.
Assessment

Summary of requirements

The progressive assessments, are designed to test mastery of, and competency with, certain concepts and techniques. In general, you can expect to perform well in these assessments. The final exam tests, among other things, your ability to apply these concepts and techniques to real-world examples or situations under time constraints. Accordingly, students typically perform at a lower level in this part of the assessment. Your final grade is a weighted average of your grades on the three individual pieces of assessment.

To pass the course, students must attain a passing grade across all assessments.

| Assessment 1 – Action Learning Review (ALR) | Due: Tuesday, 22 March, 9.30AM (Sydney)(lodged via eLearning) | Weight: 20% | Maximum Length: 5 pages |
| Assessment 2 – Organisation Analysis | Due: Tuesday, 26 April, 9.30AM (Sydney)(lodged via eLearning) | Weight: 40% | Maximum Length: 10 pages |
| Assessment 3 – Final exam | Date: Saturday, 7 May 2016 | Weight: 40% | Duration: 2 hours (plus 10 minutes reading time) |

This is an open book exam covering the entire course, Units 1 to 11. It will test your conceptual understanding of the content and your ability to apply it in order to develop your managerial effectiveness.
Assessment policy

The assessment process plays two roles: it provides feedback to you on your progress, and is a means of testing and grading your performance. All information on assessment is provided in the Assessments & examinations section of the AGSM website.

https://www.business.unsw.edu.au/agsm/students/resources/assessments-and-examinations

Most importantly, all assessments should be double spaced and in 12 point Times New Roman font with 2.54cm top and bottom margins and 3.17cm left and right margins. To help with clarifying the relationship between the different concepts, always write coherent paragraphs; do not use bullet points, tables, footnotes, or endnotes.

Given the serious nature of academic integrity, such as not basing any of your work on that submitted by another student or by yourself in a previous course, be aware that your assignments will be scanned by plagiarism detection software.

Referencing is important so the reader knows the original source of the ideas and concepts that you cite.
Assessment 1 – Action Learning Review (ALR)

Due: Tuesday, 22 March, 9.30AM (Sydney) (lodged via eLearning)

Weight: 20%

Maximum length: 5 pages

The purpose of the Action Learning Review (ALR) is to apply course concepts from units 1–4:

- analyse a specific incident that you could have handled more effectively
- logically derive from your analysis specific actions you will take to improve your management practice next time you encounter a similar event.

Your ALR will provide you with the opportunity to consider and articulate ways of integrating course concepts into your daily managerial behaviour.

Aim to draw on concepts from several units (about 2-3 is typical) in your Action Learning Reviews.

Please present each ALR under the following three headings:

**Specific incident:** Provide a very brief description of a specific incident that you could have handled more effectively. Be clear about what you said and did, but don’t get lost in the detail of the event. Include only as much detail as is necessary to create a platform for the analysis in the next section of your ALR.

**Suggested length:** Approximately 5% (i.e. 2–3 sentences)

**Analysis:** Explicitly draw upon relevant course concepts to illuminate why you did not think and act as effectively as you might have. Print concept names in bold font and do not provide definitions. Instead, demonstrate your understanding of relevant concepts by the way you apply them to analyse how you handled the event.

**Suggested length:** Approximately 45%

**Improvement planning:** Logically derive from your analysis some specific, conceptually-driven actions that you will take to manage similar situations more effectively.

State how you would evaluate your effectiveness at applying the steps or initiatives you identify.

Describe any obstacles that are likely to occur (e.g. emotions, lack of time, insufficient resources, unsupportive colleagues) and how you will address them.

**Suggested length:** Approximately 50%
Guidelines:

The best ALRs are produced in accordance with the following guidelines:

- **Focus on a specific incident.** Without a clearly focused beginning, it’s virtually impossible to produce an adequately focused analysis and improvement planning section. ALRs with incidents described in any more than 4–5 lines rarely, if ever, have sufficient focus to be of high quality.

- **Focus on concepts.** Demonstrate your understanding of every concept you use by showing: (i) in your analysis section, exactly what the concept reveals about why you did not act as effectively as you might have; and (ii) in your improvement planning section, precisely what you will do (not just remember or keep in mind) to apply the concept to act more effectively in future.

- **Focus on you!** Strong ALRs focus on events that you, rather than other people, could have handled better. While it may be relevant to analyse the actions and reactions of others in the situation, focus as much as possible on how you contributed to the challenges you encountered (including ways you might not have brought out the best in others). Also provide concrete plans about how you will act more constructively next time you encounter a similar predicament.

- Make your improvement planning section SMART+. That is:
  - **Specific** about what you will do to address the issues identified in your analysis
  - **Measurable**, by having clear indicators of the effectiveness of your initiative(s)
  - **Achievable**, given your available resources, constraints, and other priorities
  - **Relevant** to your goals, values, and priorities
  - **Time-bound**, by stating precisely when you intend to take your initiative(s)
  - **Challenging**, given your current skills, habits, and situational constraints

  **Positively framed** in terms of what you plan to do, rather than what you plan to stop doing.

- In ensuring that your improvement plan is SMART+, avoid indicating this in the form: “My plan is specific because …” Your plan will be SMART+ if it makes explicit precisely what you plan to do, when, etc.

- Be coherent, succinct, and logical. Your review should have a coherent argument or set of points presented within the length limit.
• Be sure the recommendations in your improvement planning section logically follow from your analysis. Similarly, the issues raised in your analysis should all be addressed by specific steps in your improvement plan.

• Thus:
  – Avoid detailed descriptions and narratives that contain minimal application of relevant concepts.
  – Avoid using the Action Learning Review as a place to explore your feelings about work. This kind of exploration is a useful exercise that you can do at another time.
  – Whenever you use a course concept to make a point, provide enough descriptive detail or concrete evidence to show that you understand the concept and that it applies in the way you claim.
  – Avoid listing multiple concepts within a sentence. Only use a concept when applying it to make an analytical point about the event or about an improvement step. If concepts are presented adjacently, they are typically just being listed rather than applied in an adequately evidence-based manner (Pfeffer & Sutton 2006).

**Grading criteria:**

Your ALR will be graded according to the criteria detailed in Appendix 1.

An overarching principle to keep in mind is that because good management is evidence-based (Pfeffer & Sutton 2006), it is important to provide evidence for the statements you make in all assignments.
Assessment 2 – Organisation Analysis

Due: Tuesday, 26 April, 9.30AM (Sydney) (lodged via eLearning)

Weight: 40%

Maximum length: 10 pages

Purpose:
This assignment provides the opportunity to demonstrate your ability to integrate the course concepts and skills.

The purpose of this assignment is to analyse an organisation’s problem or challenge using frameworks and concepts from the Managing People and Organisations course materials. This assignment will allow you to draw on all the units covered in the course and will help you develop skills in applying the course content in an organisational analysis.

Task:

Step 1: Identify an appropriate organisation for your analysis. This may be the organisation you currently work in or have worked in the past, or an organisation you are otherwise familiar with, either through personal experience or through the popular press. If you choose a large organisation, you may decide to focus your analysis on an identifiable work unit (e.g., branch, division, large department) within the organisation.

Step 2: Your task is to identify and briefly describe a current organisational problem or challenge faced by the organisation. Relevant problems or challenges may include high turnover, low engagement among workers, the need to implement a change within the organisation, etc. Note that these are only examples and you are free to focus on other problems that have practical relevance to the specific organisation.

Next, critically analyse the problem or challenge you have identified drawing on relevant frameworks and concepts from Managing People and Organisations. Then, based on your analysis, make specific recommendations on how to resolve the problem or challenge and how to improve the organisation’s effectiveness in dealing with the issue. The recommendation section should be as thorough as the analysis section and it is suggested that the two sections are roughly equal in length.
The assessment should be presented in essay style in that it has a coherent argument or set of points that you develop throughout the essay. Avoid long and detailed descriptions of the problem or challenge you have identified, a short description with the necessary details is sufficient so that you can spend most of your time on your analysis and the recommendations.

Grading criteria.
The Organisation Analysis will be graded according to the criteria detailed in Appendix 2.

Assessment 3 – Final exam

Date: Saturday, 7 May 2016
Weight: 40%
Duration: 2 hours (plus 10 minutes reading time)

The final examination is open book. In the exam you will be allowed to use electronic devices for the purpose of referring to digital course materials and notes only. These devices must not be connected to the internet, Wi–Fi must be disabled and tablets must be in flight mode. They must not be used to type your exam responses. You may also bring in printed materials and handwritten notes.

The final examination will cover the entire course. As with all assessments, you will be assessed based on the criteria for assessment listed earlier in this overview section. The examination will consist of two sections. The first section will contain one essay question, the second section will contain a short case study, followed by two questions specific to the case study. Thus, there will be a total of three questions, all of which are weighted equally.

A sample exam is included as Appendix 4 to this course overview to assist in your preparation for the final examination. In addition, in Unit 11 you will find a section on final exam preparation.
Learning technology

You have three major resources to help you learn:

- The course materials and the effort you will put into them.

  The Program design assumes that an instructor reproducing a textbook on a blackboard in front of a class is the least efficient and least effective learning technology. You will do much of your learning at home or at work by working through the learning materials, and by active discussions with the instructor and other students. You are expected to have read the course materials indicated before each class, and come prepared to discuss your learning as well as answers to all exercises.

  All the readings for this course have been carefully chosen to highlight and supplement the key learning in each unit. While some readings are fairly recent, a few are some years old and may at a first glance seem dated. Be assured that is not the case. Often, principles and frameworks about general human behaviour we encounter in this course are ‘timeless.’ At times we have purposely chosen ‘classic’ readings which are still as true today as they were at the time of writing.

- The class meeting with your instructor.

  The instructor’s job is to facilitate your learning by conducting class discussions, answering questions that might arise for you after you have done the work in preparation for the classes, providing insights from his/her own practical experience and understanding of theory, providing you with extensive feedback on your assignments and directing traffic in the inevitable arguments and disagreements that will occur between you and your co-participants in the classroom.

- Your co-participants.

  Your colleagues in the classes are an invaluable potential source of learning for you. Their experience in similar and different jobs and industries and their willingness to question and argue with the course materials, the instructor and your own views, represent a great learning opportunity.

Learning materials

The learning materials for this course comprise this course overview and 11 units. Each unit has a number of associated readings. The link to these readings are included in the learning materials.
Other resources

BusinessThink is UNSW’s free, online business publication. It is a platform for business research, analysis and opinion. If you would like to subscribe to BusinessThink, and receive the free monthly e-newsletter with the latest in research, opinion and business, go to http://www.businessthink.unsw.edu.au.

Web based support

In Managing People & Organisations we are using an online environment called eLearning. By providing you with this online environment we hope to stimulate the sharing of ideas and understandings around the content of this course.

The MBA (Executive) current students’ website also provides administrative information relating to workshop times and venues.

Your course materials are provided as PDF (Portable Document Format) files. The materials can be accessed via the Managing & Organising People Moodle site.

eLearning

To access eLearning@AGSM MBA, go to http://telt.unsw.edu.au and select Login to UNSW Moodle.

Login to the web Single Sign On (wSSO) using these details:

Username: zNumber
Password: zPass

eLearning support

Should you have any difficulties accessing your course online, please contact the eLearning support below:

For login issues

UNSW IT Service Centre

Hours: Monday to Friday: 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday: 11.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m.

Email: ITServiceCentre@unsw.edu.au
Phone: Internal – x51333
External – +61 2 9385 1333
For assistance in using Moodle, including how to upload assessments.

**The AGSM eLearning Coordinator**

Hours:  Monday to Friday: 9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Email:  elearning@agsm.edu.au

Phone:
- Internal – x19541
- External – 02 9931 9541
- International – +61 2 9931 9541

For help with technical issues and problems.

**External TELT Service Centre.**

Hours:  Monday to Friday: 7.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Email:  externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au

Phone:
- Internal – x53331
- External – 02 9385 3331
- International – +61 2 9385 3331

**AGSM MBA Programs contact details**

**Student Experience**

If you have any administrative queries, they should be addressed to Student Experience.

Student Experience
AGSM MBA Programs
UNSW Business School
UNSW Australia
SYDNEY NSW 2052

Tel:  +61 2 9931 9400
Fax:  +61 2 9931 9205
Email:  studentexperience@agsm.edu.au
Additional student resources and support

The University and the UNSW Business School provide a wide range of support services for students, including:

  
  Academic writing, study skills and maths support specifically for UNSW Business School, AGSM and MBT students. Services include workshops, online and printed resources, and individual consultations. 
  
  EDU Office: Level 1, Quadrangle Building; Ph: 9385 5584; Email: edu@unsw.edu.au

- **UNSW Learning Centre** ([www.lc.unsw.edu.au](http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au))
  
  Academic skills support services, including workshops and resources, for all UNSW students. See website for details.

- **Library training and search support services** ([http://info.library.unsw.edu.au](http://info.library.unsw.edu.au))

- **UNSW IT Service Desk**
  
  Technical support for problems logging in to websites, downloading documents etc. Library, Level 2; Ph: 9385 1333. Website [www.its.unsw.edu.au/support/support_home.html](http://www.its.unsw.edu.au/support/support_home.html)

- **UNSW Counselling Service** ([www.counselling.unsw.edu.au](http://www.counselling.unsw.edu.au))
  
  Free, confidential service for problems of a personal or academic nature; and workshops on study issues such as ‘Coping With Stress’ and ‘Procrastination’.
  
  Office: Level 2, Quadrangle East Wing; Ph: 9385 5418.

- **Student Equity & Disabilities Unit** ([http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au](http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au))
  
  Advice regarding equity and diversity issues, and support for students who have a disability or disadvantage that interferes with their learning. Office: Ground Floor, John Goodsell Building; Ph: 9385 4734.
Acknowledgements

Course coordinator

Markus Groth PhD, BA(Magna Cum Laude)

Professor, School of Management,
UNSW Business School

Markus Groth received his PhD in Management from the University of Arizona in 2001. His teaching experience spans a variety of business courses taught to undergraduate and MBA students, including courses on Organisational Behaviour, Human Resource Management, Statistical Inference, Management Policies, Human Resource Policies, and Conflict Management and Negotiation. His research focuses on service management, interactions between customers and employees, and the role of emotions at work. He has continuously published articles on these topics in respected academic journals. In addition, he has an extensive work and consulting background, having lived and worked in Europe and the United States. He has received numerous awards for his teaching and research excellence.

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References


Appendices

Appendix 1  Action Learning Review (ALR) Grading Template
Appendix 2  Organisation Analysis Grading Template
Appendix 3  Sample action learning review
Appendix 4  Sample exam paper
Appendix 1
Action Learning Review (ALR) Grading Template
## Appendix 1: Action Learning Review (ALR) Grading Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Criteria</th>
<th>High Distinction</th>
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<th>Credit</th>
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<td><strong>(i) Rigorous concept application – Weight = 45%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Concrete – by providing specific evidence of how each concept applies (15%)</td>
<td>Rich specific evidence provided regarding the application of all concepts mentioned. e.g. a particularly comprehensive and compelling version of the Distinction example</td>
<td>SMART+ evidence provided regarding how concepts apply e.g. “My SMART+ goal is to improve my reflective listening by 30 May …”</td>
<td>Some specificity regarding concept application e.g. “My SMART+ goal is to improve my reflective listening”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accurate – regarding the precise nature of each concept mentioned (10%)</td>
<td>Concepts consistently applied with exemplary accuracy</td>
<td>Almost all concepts applied accurately</td>
<td>Most concepts applied accurately e.g. “I will improve my delegation, though have a competing commitment to not lose my ability to ensure everything is done right”</td>
<td>Includes instances of inaccurate concept usage e.g. “I had competing commitments because I had a lot of things going on at the same time”</td>
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<td>Insightfully applied and integrated a suitable and nuanced range of relevant course concepts</td>
<td>Applied and coherently integrated a suitable range of relevant course concepts</td>
<td>Applied a suitable range of relevant course concepts</td>
<td>Limited application of a few relevant course concepts</td>
<td>Few (if any) relevant course concepts applied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherent – well structured &amp; tight logical flow between the elements (10%)</td>
<td>Exemplary structure and coherence throughout</td>
<td>Well-structured and logically connected, i.e. elements of the action plan are well-connected and mutually reinforcing</td>
<td>Reasonable structure and coherence, i.e. the elements of the action plan are somewhat connected and mutually reinforcing</td>
<td>Minimal structure and coherence</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(ii) Thoroughly addressing the assignment requirements – Weight = 45%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific incident – succinct description of the specific incident you could have handled more effectively (5%)</td>
<td>Extremely succinct and clear about your specific action(s) and outcome(s) in the focal incident</td>
<td>Very succinct and clear about your action(s) and outcome(s) in the focal incident</td>
<td>Reasonably succinct and clear about your action(s) and outcome(s) in the focal incident</td>
<td>Verbose in alluding to the incident(s) that you (and/or others) might have handled more effectively and/or what resulted from your actions</td>
<td>Discussion of an issue, aspiration, predicament, habit, or saga (i.e. chain of events), rather than a specific incident</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis – tight logic regarding cause and effect in your analysis of the incident (20%)</td>
<td>Outstandingly tight logic about a range of interrelated cause and effect relationships</td>
<td>Tight logic about a range of cause and effect relationships</td>
<td>Reasonably tight logic about cause and effect relationships</td>
<td>Description only. Unsupported assertions, limited or no use of course concepts to analyse cause, effect, and outcomes</td>
<td>Minimal to no clarity about how relevant course concepts illuminate cause and effect relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement planning – SMART+ logically-derived personal action plans, obstacles, and evaluation criteria (20%)</td>
<td>Exemplary logically-derived SMART+ personal action plans, obstacles, and evaluation criteria</td>
<td>Logically-derived SMART+ personal action plans, obstacles, and evaluation criteria, including how to overcome obstacles and refine the plan in light of feedback</td>
<td>Reasonably logically-derived SMART+ personal action plans, obstacles, and/or evaluation criteria (potentially missing one of these elements)</td>
<td>Minimally logically-derived SMART+ personal action plans, obstacles, and/or evaluation criteria (potentially missing one or two of these elements)</td>
<td>Few or no specific personal improvement initiatives</td>
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<td><strong>(iii) Presentation – Weight = 10%</strong></td>
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Appendix 2

Organisation Analysis Grading Template
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<td>SMART+ evidence provided regarding how concepts apply e.g. “My SMART+ goal is to improve my reflective listening by 30 May ... (initiatives inserted here). My success will be indicated by ... (indicators inserted here)”</td>
<td>Some specificity regarding concept application e.g. “My SMART+ goal is to improve my reflective listening”</td>
<td>Little concept application or specificity about how concepts will be applied e.g. “I will set a SMART+ goal of improving my performance”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specific incident – succinct description of the current organizational problem or challenge (5%)</td>
<td>Extremely succinct and clear about the specific organisational problem or challenge</td>
<td>Very succinct and clear about the specific organisational problem or challenge</td>
<td>Reasonably succinct and clear about the specific organisational problem or challenge</td>
<td>Verbos in alluding to the specific organisational problem or challenge</td>
<td>Discussion of an issue, aspiration, predilection, habit, or saga (i.e. chain of events), rather than a specific organisational problem or challenge</td>
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<td>Analysis – tight logic regarding cause and effect in your analysis of the specific organisational problem or challenge (20%)</td>
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<td>Specific Recommendations – logically-derived specific recommendations on how to resolve problem or challenge (20%)</td>
<td>Exemplary logically-derived specific recommendations on how to resolve problem or challenge</td>
<td>Logically-derived specific recommendations on how to resolve problem or challenge</td>
<td>Reasonably logically-derived specific recommendations on how to resolve problem or challenge (potentially missing one key elements)</td>
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Appendix 3

Sample action learning review

Note: Please be advised that this Sample Action Learning Review is for illustrative purposes only. For correct formatting and length requirements, please refer to the AGSM website.
Sample action learning review

Specific Incident
While engaged in selling to customers at a recent pharmaceutical trade display, my colleague Jane repeatedly interrupted by talking over the top of me and diverting the focus of the conversation with flippant, irrelevant comments. I found this to be very off-putting, and observed that customers were also distracted by her manner. At an appropriate moment I took Jane aside and gave her this feedback. She acknowledged this, and said she would be careful to avoid interrupting in the future. However, the next time I saw Jane she seemed somewhat distant towards me.

Analysis
Much of the organisational literature suggests that effective managers require more than superior competence in a specific function, and must have the ability to manage the enormous variety of people, processes and perspectives inherent in organisational life. Goleman argues that having emotional intelligence (EI) – the capacity to perceive and manage both one’s own and others’ emotions in the workplace – is essential to good management and is what distinguishes superior leaders. Goleman identifies five components of EI: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill. Considering that there were a number of emotions at play when I gave feedback to Jane, EI is an appropriate concept to help me gain a further understanding of the situation, and to examine how I may manage similar issues more effectively in the future.

An awareness of my own emotions and drives reveals that I felt uncomfortable about approaching Jane, because I have limited experience in offering constructive criticism to colleagues or subordinates and have no formal authority over Jane. I was, however, motivated to give Jane feedback, as she seemed unaware of the impact of her behaviour. In terms of self-regulation, I thought before acting and waited for an appropriate moment to talk to her. I was less able to regulate my nervousness, so that Jane may have perceived the delivery as abrupt or dictatorial. This may explain Jane’s apparent distance when I saw her the following day.

Exercising empathy leads me to query the reason for Jane’s behaviour, in the context of a busy trade display. Other members in our team have previously commented on Jane’s highly energetic and at times ‘over-the-top’ manner. It appears that the pressure to perform in front of colleagues, coupled with a lack of confidence in communicating in a group setting, exacerbates this. I interpret Jane’s distance after the event as a sign that she may respond better to constructive criticism from her manager rather than a colleague, or that my social skill in being persuasive yet encouraging may need development.
Applying Goleman’s components of EI encourages a deeper awareness of the emotional dynamics in the situation with Jane. I can now diagnose a need to improve my own social skills and empathy in offering constructive criticism, and for Jane to develop group communication skills and confidence at trade displays. EI is limited, though, by the subjectivity involved with analysing both my own and Jane’s emotions and motivations. For example, I perceive that Jane felt nervous at the trade display due to lack of confidence, when in fact she may have been feeling anxious due to pressing personal issues.

**Improvement planning**

Considering how to improve my constructive criticism using Goleman’s model prompts the question of whether I can actually learn to become more emotionally intelligent: was I born empathic or am I not at all? To date there is limited research to support that EI can be learned. However, Goleman argues that personal feedback and coaching will enable improvement in the five key components of EI. To be more empathic in future situations, I will first ask Jane if she minds receiving some feedback from me. This would clarify her preference for receiving feedback directly from a colleague or via her manager. To increase my own confidence and assertiveness, I will take time to prepare before the event, using headings suggested in Goleman’s model. Enlightened by clarifying my own emotions and outcomes sought, I will be able to adopt more constructive wording. For example, ‘I really admire your energy and enthusiasm, however, in this particular case I found it hard to keep my train of thought’, may frame the criticism in a more positive light. Using the concept of EI encouraged me to consider the actual cause of Jane’s disruptive behaviour. I could take initiatives to increase Jane’s social skills in a trade display setting by developing guidelines for distribution to all team members and asking my manager to provide coaching in this area.

To measure the effectiveness of these initiatives, I will observe any changes in Jane’s behaviour at future trade displays. An improvement may signal that she has listened to and learned from my comments. I will also monitor her emotional reaction, such as level of ‘distance’, after receiving feedback from me. However, the subjectivity in appraising another person’s emotions implies that success here is difficult to measure. I could overcome this by making a commitment to obtain personal feedback on my approach from Jane, as well as from a trusted senior colleague or my manager. Finally, more practice at giving constructive criticism will refine my social skills and confidence in this area. That I have limited experience to date suggests that I have previously avoided such challenges, and should from now on use emotional intelligence to identify and manage future situations.
Instructor’s comments

The following comments identify some positive issues of Louise’s ALR as well as some ways in which the ALR could have been improved substantially.

The comments also highlight some important issues in writing an effective ALR.

Choice of event

The choice of event is appropriate in two ways:

• Louise has focused on an episode in her own practice. While it not one in which she is in a managerial role, it is one in which she is doing something i.e. giving feedback that is a central ingredient of a manager’s role.

• The event is of appropriate scope for this assignment. It is best not to choose an event or episode where a great deal of contextual detail needs to be given, or where the issues are too complex to be dealt with adequately within the page limit.

Focus of the ALR

Louise had focused on a clearly defined central issue about her effectiveness in giving feedback.

Description section

Louise’s description of the event in question is concise and to the point. It does not provide any unnecessary detail e.g. about the organisation’s background, size, turnover etc.

Analysis section

The analysis section demonstrates a clear understanding of emotional intelligence and self-regulation. Not only has Louise effectively drawn on these ideas and theories, she has continually linked her analytical points to the course concepts.

However, the opening paragraph of the Analysis section is quite general and does not add much value to the analysis of this specific event. Long descriptions and definitions of concepts are not necessary. It would be better to use the scarce words to use course concepts in analyzing the specific event.

Also, the range of ideas used in the ALR is relatively narrow. By and large, it is good to use a wider range of relevant ideas from the course, ideally integrating the ideas. It is obviously not a competition to see how
many course concepts you can name! On the other hand, it is important to demonstrate that you have understood the relevant ideas and theories in the course, and can apply them to a real situation.

Also, Louise has made a remark or two about the limitations of the concepts being used in the analysis. This is a further strength of her Analysis section.

**Balance between the sections**

The recommendation in the assessment instructions is that the Analysis and the Improvement Planning section are roughly equal in page count, i.e. about 45% and 50%, respectively, of the total page limit. Louise’s Analysis is about 100 words longer than her Improvement Planning section.

It is a common tendency for student to write an analysis that is too long and this can sometimes prevent them from giving adequate attention to all the prescribed topics for the improvement plan.

**Improvement plan**

Louise has drawn on the literature and used some suggestions from the readings in the development of her improvement plan.

**Identifying particular improvement steps/actions**

The opening sentences of this section are again marginal in value and perhaps Louise could have got straight to the point of the improvement plan, which is to identify different actions that could be taken. When Louise does this, her improvement plan is specific and she has even noted some exact phrases that will be used in the future. This is not always necessary, but adds depth to her plan.

The improvement plan should be developed with the benefit of hindsight and should list the actions that could have been taken or will be undertaken in the future – so that you can continuously improve, and hence engage in lifelong learning!

**Evaluating effectiveness**

An important part of the ALR is stating precisely how you would evaluate the effectiveness of applying the steps or initiatives suggested in the improvement plan. This is one of the two most neglected components of ALR assignments. Louise has done this well, by suggesting a number of ways of measuring the effectiveness of the initiatives she has recommended.
Obstacles to implementing improvements

A significant omission from Louise’s Improvement Planning section is the absence of any discussion of obstacles to implementing the steps in the plan. This is the other most frequently neglected component of an ALR. Louise looks at obstacles to measuring success, but not at obstacles to implementing the improved ways of giving feedback.

Focus of the improvement plan

Louise has not reflected on Monica’s deficiencies in receiving feedback, but has used the situation to reflect on herself.

It would have been quite easy to analyze this same event from an external perspective. Such a position allows one to be objective and develop a comprehensive improvement plan for another person (e.g. Monica). Some students even go so far as to suggest an improvement plan for an organization or another manager that allows them to rectify a deficiency. What is more difficult and often differentiates between grades given is to use the ALR as an opportunity to reflect on yourself and your behaviour in the workplace.

Flow between sections

A well-organized and integrated ALR flows well from section to section. That means the issues raised in the Analysis section are also dealt with in the Improvement Plan.

In this example Louise has introduced some new ideas about giving feedback (constructive wording) in the Improvement Plan that have not been referred to in the preceding analysis. The ALR would be more internally consistent if she had raised this issue about how the feedback was given in the Analysis section, and then described ways to use constructive wording more effectively in the Improvement Plan.

Style

Some students need to carefully check their grammar before handing in an assignment. Perhaps asking a colleague or friend to proof read materials before submission will help. Alternatively, reading written work out loud can identify problems.
Managing People & Organisations
Sample final examination

Instructions:

1. Time allowed: **2 hours**.

   It is suggested that you spend time planning your answers. Marks are awarded for demonstration of breadth and depth of understanding and applications of concepts and ideas in your course materials. Ensure that the examiner can see clearly that you know the course materials and can use them. Marks are awarded for well planned, insightful statements.

2. The exam consists two sections with a total of three questions. You must answer **all** of the questions.

3. This exam is worth 40% of total marks for the course.

4. **ANSWER EACH SECTION IN A SEPARATE ANSWER BOOKLET.** Ensure your name and the section are clearly marked on the front of each booklet that you use.

5. This is an open book examination. You may bring your course materials and your summary notes into the exam session. Your materials may be annotated and the use of Post-it™ Notes is permitted. Your own study notes are also permitted. However, you are strongly cautioned against copying the work of others. This is plagiarism and a breach of discipline.

   Calculators with alpha keypads, laptop computers and other electronic devices are prohibited. If you inadvertently enter the exam session with prohibited material or equipment, surrender it immediately to the examination supervisor.

6. Please return the question paper with your **2 ANSWER BOOKLETS** (one for each section) before leaving the exam room.
Section 1: Essay Question

Question 1:

Please answer the following question:

“A manager with high emotional intelligence will be more effective than a manager with high cognitive intelligence.”

Critically evaluate this statement, drawing on specific course concepts and examples from your experience to support your answer.

(Weight: 34% of total marks)

Section 2: Case Study

Please read the following case and answer the two questions below:

Paul was delighted when Ancol Pty Ltd offered him the job of manager at its plant near Melbourne. Paul was happy enough managing a small metal stamping plant with another company, but the executive recruiter’s invitation to apply for the job of plant manager at a leading metal fabrication company was irresistible. Although the plant was the smallest of Ancol’s fifteen operations across the Asia Pacific region, the plant manager position was a valuable first step in a promising career.

One of Paul’s first observations at Ancol’s Melbourne plant was that the relations between employees and management were strained. Taking a page from his Managing People and Organisations course he had completed in university, Paul ordered the removal of all time clocks from the plant. Instead, the plant would assume that employees had put in their full shift. This symbolic gesture, he believed, would establish a new level of credibility and strengthen relations between management and employees at the site.

Initially, the 250 production employees at the Melbourne plant appreciated their new freedom. They felt respected and saw this gesture as a sign of positive change from the new plant manager. Two months later, however, problems started to appear. A few people began showing up late, leaving early, or taking extended lunch breaks. Although this represented only 5 per cent of the employees, others found the situation unfair. Moreover, the increased absenteeism levels were beginning to have a noticeable effect on plant productivity. The problem had to be managed.
Paul asked supervisors to observe and record when the employees came or went and to discuss attendance problems with those abusing their privileges. But the supervisors had no previous experience with keeping attendance records and many lacked the necessary interpersonal skills to discuss the matter with subordinates. Employees resented the reprimands, so relations with supervisors deteriorated. The additional responsibility of keeping track of attendance also added to the supervisors’ already heavy workload. After just a few months, Ancol found it necessary to add another supervisor position and reduce the number of employees assigned to each supervisor.

But the problems did not end there. Without time clocks, the payroll department could not deduct pay for the amount of time that employees were late. Instead, a letter of reprimand was placed in the employee’s personnel file. However, this required yet more time and additional skills from the supervisors. Employees did not want these letters to become a permanent record, so they filed grievances with their labour union. The number of grievances doubled over six months, which required even more time for both union officials and supervisors to handle these disputes. Nine months after removing the time clocks, Paul met with union officials, who agreed that it would be better to put the time clocks back in. Employee-management relations had deteriorated below the level when Paul had started. Supervisors were overworked. Productivity had dropped due to poorer attendance records and increased administrative workloads.

Source: adopted from McShane & Travaglione 2007.

**Question 2:**
Drawing on specific course concepts and frameworks from MPO, identify and analyse the main issues and problems that have contributed to the problem that Paul is facing.

(Weight: 33% of total marks)

**Question 3:**
Based on your analysis, what should Paul do to improve the situation?

(Weight: 33% of total marks)