

COM362 – Concepts of Leadership

Instructor: Susan Alexander
Quarter: Summer 2009
Susan's Email: Susa2@att.net

Day/Time: Wed. 6:15 – 9:30pm
Campus: Main Arts/Comm 112
Susan's Phone: 614-306-8196

Course Background:

There is no one, true way to relate to an organization. However, it is likely that the way we choose to construct our notions about what an organization is, shapes our experience and our behavior and tells us how to relate to others and to our work. Our "concept" of organization shapes how we communicate, how we lead, manage, and participate. It gives us how we feel about our work and often dictates the results we produce. It shapes our sense of vision and purpose. In other words, whatever you say the organization *is* gives you your whole experience of working. This is true for every person in the organization – including its leaders.

The focus of **COM362 – Concepts of Leadership** is on the discovery of multiple ways of relating to organizations, organizational life, and leadership. As we discover different approaches to conceptualizing organizations, our perception broadens about what it is possible to experience and who it is possible to be in organizations.

Agreements for the Course:

This course is about extraordinary leadership in extraordinary organizations. Expect it to be more than academic. As an independent study, it will be more challenging and more imperative that you really examine your own "way of being" at work. Even though we are examining theories and concepts, you will be expected to practice what you learn. Following is a checklist that outlines the agreements you will be asked to make as a participant in this course:

1. I will be a committed stand to get extraordinary value from this course. I will bring a sense of adventure and play to this learning process. We are inventing a possibility for organizations and for leadership – "making it up" – and that process is exciting. I will participate inside of that excitement.
2. I will be at every session. I will be on time for every session. I will be back from breaks at the designated times. I will stay until the session is done. I will designate someone I trust to act on my behalf while I am engaged in this course so that I will not be distracted by other matters that are equally important to my life. I will arrange for someone to handle any breakdowns or outside time commitments (like picking up children from childcare or school) so that nothing will have me leave while we are in session. Barring a serious emergency, you can count on me to be there every working moment of every session.
3. I will do all readings and assignments so that I can fully participate because I know that completing all readings and assignments is preparation for doing my best work during the course. Because I am committed to contributing to the experience of others in the course, I commit to being prepared for each session.

4. I will maintain confidentiality regarding what people share in this course so that there is an environment in which people feel free to share about themselves, their lives, and their workplace. Anything disclosed during this course will not be taken outside of the course.
5. I will not gossip about others. If I have something to say about a person, I will say it to the person.
6. I agree to handle any complaints that I may have by communicating them only to someone who can do something about the situation. I agree not to criticize or complain to someone who cannot do anything about it. I agree not to receive from anyone, complaints that I cannot do anything about, but to redirect the person to someone who can do something about it.
7. I will be authentic in my speaking. I will speak honestly and openly regardless of who is in the room with me. I will not be stopped by "being less important than others", nor will I stop others because "I am more important". I will be in partnership with all others in the room. My values, opinions, beliefs, and experience are important to the quality of this course. I will share myself willingly.
8. I will be fully present for every conversation. During the discussion, I will listen to each and every person. I will make sure I understand what others are saying, and will find value in their contributions, before I express alternate points of view.
9. I will honor myself as my word. I will keep all agreements I make during the duration of this course. This includes agreements I make outside of this course. I will bring integrity into all aspects of my life for 10 weeks so that I can experience what it is to "be my word" in life. This means I will accept phone calls from those calling me to support me in keeping my promises, although I may not want to at the time.
10. I will support other classmates in keeping their promises and in living inside of integrity.
11. I will be coachable. I will listen to the feedback of others so that I can develop a sense of how I am perceived in the world. I will listen to what people say about me and regard it as valuable input. I will be coached by anyone who offers it so that I may grow and develop in areas I may not see as important today.
12. I will be 100% responsible for who I am – how I act and interact with others – and not be a reaction to circumstances or others' actions both inside and outside the course. For ten weeks I will choose who I am and be that regardless of what happens around me.

Agreement from the Instructor: I will maintain confidentiality regarding what you share in this course so that there is an environment in which you feel free to share about yourself, your life, and your workplace.

About The Books:

Mastery: The Keys to Success and Long-Term Fulfillment, by George Leonard focuses on how the process of mastery can help us attain a higher level of excellence and a deeper sense of satisfactions and fulfillment in our daily lives. He discusses the many paths to learning and how some lead to frustration and quitting while others lead to building mastery in any undertaking.

In her book The Last Word on Power, Tracy Goss discusses the transformational technology that allows leaders to redesign themselves and the way they think as the demands of the organization require them to keep stepping out to ever greater challenges. We will use her model and practices to inquire into our own formula for success and determine what holds us back, keeps us small, or keeps out thinking “inside the box” as we work each day answering the questions: Who am I as a leader? What am I committed to? What stops me from fulfilling on my commitments? How do I break through those limits?

The Art of Possibility, by Benjamin Zander and Rosamund Stone Zander, offers a set of breakthrough practices for creativity in all human enterprises. The notion of possibility can play a powerful role in every aspect of our lives. We will look at “cases” about how the technology of transformation can open whole new worlds for real people and inquire into how you, as a leader in your family, community, and work can use this technology for producing breakthroughs in every domain of your life and powerfully impact the lives of others.

Course Outline and Assignments:

| Week | Topics To Be Discussed: | Readings/Assignments |
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| 6/18 | <p><i>Course Introduction/Overview of Assignments and Expectations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Blocks to learning ◆ The relationship between Transformation and Leadership. ◆ Go over agreements/ expectations for the course. | <p>Readings Due: None</p> |
| 6/25 | <p><i>Mastery</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Master’s Journey ◆ The Five Master Keys ◆ Tools for Mastery | <p>Readings Due: Leonard: Entire book</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due: Do you identify yourself with any of the characters presented and if so, what advantages and disadvantages has this pattern had in your life in different domains? (Work, relationships, career etc.) Regarding the five keys, Which of the “five keys” are your strongest? Your weakest? What practices might you put in place to address your “weak” keys?</p> |

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| <p>7/2</p> | <p>Introduction to Transformation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What is power? ◆ How can one “re-invent” the self to be more powerful as a leader? ◆ What is your Winning Strategy and where is it bankrupt? | <p>Readings Due: Goss: Chapters 1 and 2</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due: What did you learn about yourself from reading Mastery? Where would you locate yourself as a learner? Where are you stopped in mastering what is important to you in your life?</p> |
| <p>7/9</p> | <p>Living a Meaningless Life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Distinguishing the Universal Human Paradigm. ◆ Inquiring into what the UHP looks like in your life and your organization. ◆ Dying before going into battle – the Samurai approach. | <p>Readings Due: Goss: Chapters 3 and 4</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due: What is your winning strategy? Where has it supported your success and where is it bankrupt?</p> |
| <p>7/16</p> | <p>The Future as an Invention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Creating the re-invention paradigm. ◆ Inventing an impossible future and generating a “clearing” for yourself as a leader. ◆ How do “requests” and “promises” give power to my actions and the actions of others? ◆ What are the “practices” that will transform your ability to lead? | <p>Readings Due: Goss: Chapters 5 and 6</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due: What is the overriding voice that tells your story of the world? Distinguish your own version of the UHP.</p> |
| <p>7/23</p> | <p>Implementing Your Possible Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Processes and distinctions for causing your future to exist today. ◆ Creating “practices” to live your life as your possibility. ◆ Movie – <i>To be determined (Freedom Writers, Hotel Rwanda, We are Marshall)</i> | <p>Readings Due: Goss: Chapters 7 and 8</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due: Invent yourself as a possibility. Who are you? How do you want to be known in the world? What are you committed to? How and where can you start being that in the world? What do you have to give up to be that possibility? What practices could you adopt to create a structure of fulfilling on your future?</p> |

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| 7/30 | <i>Creativity and Possibility</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Its all invented ◆ Stepping into a universe of possibility ◆ Giving an A ◆ Being a contribution ◆ Leading from any chair ◆ Rule number six | Readings Due: Zander/Zander: Chapters 1 through 6 Reaction Paper Due: Each night for the next week, declare where you will make a difference in someone else's life the next day. Then fulfill on that declaration each day. Write about your experience. |
| 8/6 | <i>"Being" Transformation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The way things are ◆ Giving way to passion ◆ Lighting a Spark ◆ Being the Board ◆ Creating Frameworks for Possibility ◆ Telling the "We Story" ◆ Coda | Readings Due: Zander/Zander: Chapters 7 - through CODA Reaction Paper Due: Determine one area in your life where you do not like the way things are right now. (1) Write a complete description of the way things are (no story). (2) Write how you feel (emotionally) about things being the way that they are. (3) Create a clearing for you to generate freedom for yourself in being with the way things are. (4) Write about the experience of completing this assignment. |
| 8/13 | <i>Discuss: Personal Transformational Leadership Plan</i> | Final Paper: Present Personal Transformation Leadership Plan and Presentations |

Reaction Papers:

You will turn in 7 reaction papers during the course, each one from 2 to 3 typed pages. Each paper will be a reflection on what you learned from the prior session and an application to your life or the organization in which you work. We will discuss and clarify this assignment each week before you leave the classroom.

Personal Transformational Leadership Plan:

Write an 8 to 10 page paper that answers the following questions:

- ◆ What have you learned from this course that has made a difference?
- ◆ Who are you as a leader?
- ◆ What are you committed to achieving?
- ◆ Where are you stopped? What can you do to get past what is stopping you?
- ◆ What are you willing to give up to be the leader you are committed to being?
- ◆ How will you cause people to relate to you as the leader you are?

We will further discuss and clarify this assignment during the course.

Grading Practices for the Course:

| Assignment | % of Grade |
|--|-------------------|
| Fulfillment of the Agreements you made at the beginning of the course. | 20% |
| Reaction Papers | 50% |
| Leadership Plan – Including the presentation | 30% |