

## Executive Leadership B7550-100 – Fall 2023

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### Overview

This course is designed to help students with their current and future leadership challenges, with a special focus on executive leadership. The major themes of the course are: 1) personal foundations for leadership, 2) strategic leadership, and 3) leadership of change and innovation. The learning in this course will utilize, build on and extend concepts covered in the following core course:

Core Course	Connection with Core
Leadership Development	1) Ethics 2) Decision making 3) Influence & Persuasion 4) Teams 5) Negotiations

**Columbia Core Culture**  
**Promoting a consistent classroom environment of mutual respect, preparation and engagement**

### Students are expected to be:

#### Present:

On time and present for every session (In Class or Online)  
Attendance tracked

#### Prepared:

Complete pre-work needed, expect cold calling  
Bring nameplates

#### Participating:

Constructive participation expected and part of grade  
Only electronic devices explicitly called for by the instructor

### I. Personal Foundations for leadership

We will examine the key personal skills required for leading. Researchers have identified a set of personal skills that are important for executive success, including self awareness, self-management under pressure and stress, empathy, and influencing skills. Some of these skills can be described collectively as emotional intelligence competencies. This course is

designed to strengthen students' skills in these areas and prepare students to develop these skills in others. Students will increase their self awareness via a variety of assessment tools and exercises. We will relate these personal skills to the specific challenges of negotiations and leading organizational change. We also will examine the dynamics of derailment – the patterns and factors associated with executive careers that stall or fail.

## **II. Strategic Leadership**

Executive leaders must set the direction of their organization and determine how to best deploy their limited resources to create the most value. While the focus of this course is not business strategy, students will obtain a practical framework for strategic leadership that addresses strategy creation and implementation. This course will also examine a variety of issues related to strategic leadership, including decision-making, leadership communication, and the cognitive and emotional “traps” that can imperil effective decision processes.

## **III. Leadership of Change & Innovation**

How do effective leaders influence organizations, groups and individuals to move in a particular direction? What are the specific “levers” that managers have at their disposal to mobilize organizations and shape individual behavior? We will study the key activities and skills required for successful leadership of change. We will examine influence strategies from multiple levels – ranging from the interpersonal to organizational and cultural dimensions of change.

### **Leadership Development Activities**

A critical component of this course is personal assessment utilizing a variety of tools, including self-assessment of your behavioral style and leadership practices. Each student will use these tools and data to generate insights and develop a leadership credo.

The tools for this course include:

- 1) Social Styles (paper and pencil self assessment)
- 2) Leadership Practices Inventory (paper and pencil self assessment)

Detailed instructions will be provided for each of these tools.

### **Course Format**

This is an interactive, “hands on” course emphasizing learning via self-study and personal assessment, small and large group discussion and debate, and personal application projects. One of the risks of a case-based approach is to draw prescriptive conclusions regarding a particular style, approach or strategy based upon a single case example. We will use cases to illustrate leadership principles that have been supported by research and scholarship. Sessions will be grounded in theory and research findings while providing students with practical frameworks and tools.

### **Grading & Attendance Policy**

**Leadership Credo.** (50%) You will be given an assignment to create your Leadership Credo which answers the questions:

1. **What do I stand for as a leader?**
2. **What is our organization's vision and how will we win?**
3. **What do we stand for as an organization?**

During the last session on the topic of **Values Based Leadership**, the assignment is due.

The 4-5:30 p.m. period (Sunday through Wednesday) is provided for small groups to work on their Leadership Credos (B - group/individual). You must be ready to "stand and deliver" your Leadership Credo in 5 minutes or less on Thursday's final session.

You are expected to visit Canvas each day to offer your group's answers to the following questions.

Day 1: Do the principles that define who you are and guide your approach to leadership come more from the lows or highs of your lifeline story? Why?

Day 2: Does your vision for your organization serve as a unifying goal that engages the hearts and minds of your followers? How?

Day 3: Do the strategic priorities for your organization define those few things your organization will do better or differently than your competitors? How?

Day 4: Do the target values and behaviors that define your organization's culture form the foundation to drive success? How?

**Final Exam.** (30%) The final exam will be closed-book. It will stress the in-class and reading material to a roughly equal degree. The exam is scheduled for Thursday from 2:00 to 4:00 PM, November 18th; final details on time and room are forthcoming.

After you receive your final course grade, you are welcome to view your exam in our office. However, the exams themselves will not be returned but will be kept for a full year after the course is over, during which time they will be available for viewing and discussion. Final exams serve multiple goals. First and foremost, they are a means of evaluating how well students have mastered the course material. Second, they can be used as a basis of learning. Of these two goals, it is our department's view that for final exams, the former is more important than the latter. The construction of reliable, discriminating, and valid exams is a very difficult task. Returning exams precludes the use of those test questions in subsequent exams for many years and thus hinders the evaluation of future students. Given the primary goal of exams – to *evaluate* students' knowledge – returning exams would make it more difficult for that goal to be achieved.

**Class Participation.** (20%) We expect you to contribute to the learning of your classmates, both through class discussion and feedback during the breakout sessions. Expect cold calling. Good participation is defined as:

- On time and present in each class

- Actively participate in class discussions, pulling in insights from readings.

- When guests are in the room/online, be respectful and prepared with thoughtful questions

- Device usage (phones, laptops) will take away from your participation grade

We look for participation that contributes to the flow of the discussion both in class and in virtual interactions with your EMBA Executive Leadership classmates on LinkedIn. In a perfect world, students will use examples from their work experience ("In my company, we did it this way...") which illustrate the principles under discussion. It doesn't hurt to show that you did the reading. You probably want to avoid being the person who causes the other students to roll their eyes when you begin speaking.

### **Note on Class Participation**

Participation is an important part of the learning process in this course. The emphasis is on quality participation, as opposed to your quantity of airtime. Your class participation will

be evaluated using several criteria, including: 1) offering a unique insight in a class discussion or debate, 2) relating theory to practice by sharing personal experiences that help illuminate the ideas being discussed and 3) demonstrating insights related to assigned readings and cases. In order to participate meaningfully, it's critical to be prepared via timely completion of readings. Finally, monitor your level of participation to ensure you are contributing and using your "fair" amount of air-time. We're happy to provide feedback at any time about your level and quality of participation.

This course is tightly designed and students are expected to attend all sessions. If you cannot attend for any reason, please notify the course TA.

### **Grading & Attendance Policy, continued**

To be in the class/online, you must be present, on time, and arrive prepared. Students are permitted one absence from the course, and attendance at all other class sessions (barring a medical or religious conflict) is required for a grade of "H." Attendance at nine of the ten class meetings is therefore necessary, but not sufficient, to receive a grade of "H."

A "late penalty" will be applied to a paper that is turned in after the due date by which the late paper will be reduced by one grade (except for medical reasons). For example, if a paper of "H" quality is turned in late, it will be assigned a grade of "HP."

### **Text and Readings**

Reading assignments are listed under the class session in which they are due. Reading can be found in the course reading book or in the text, *The CEO's Boss: Tough Love in the Boardroom* (Columbia Business School Publishing, 2019). Some readings are designated as required for completion before class while others are reference readings whose materials will be covered in the class sessions. In addition, some readings and materials may be handed out in class.

### **Office Hours with Professor**

Please contact us directly to schedule an appointment. We are happy to discuss any aspect of your learning in the course. Also feel free to contact the TA for a meeting or consultation.

### **Feedback**

We welcome dialogue and feedback about any aspect of the course experience.

## **Class Schedule**

### **Session One**

**Date/Time:** Sunday, November 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 AM -- Noon

**Topics:** **Course overview**  
**Leadership vs. management**  
**Key personal skills for leadership**

**Synopsis:** Knowing what you stand for as a leader opens the door to leadership for others. Leadership is about coping with change and strategic leadership is about those

few things that make the biggest difference. Knowing your behavioral style is an important first step in knowing yourself.

**Required reading:** Kotter, John, P., What Leaders Really Do.  
Klepper, W. M. & Nakamura, Y. T., Corporate Leadership and the Personal Leadership Credo.

**Reference reading:** Text: Chapter 1, The Social Contract

**Tools:** Social Styles self-assessment inventory  
Leadership lifeline and Credo Assignment

### **Session Two**

**Date/Time:** Sunday, November 12th  
1:00 – 4:00 PM

**Topic:** **Negotiation Skills – Part 1**

**Synopsis:** You don't get what you deserve, you get what you negotiate.

Leaders are constantly confronted with the need to negotiate and resolve conflicts. In this session, we'll consider the dynamics of "enlarging the pie" and claiming as much as possible from it. We'll highlight common distortions that lead negotiators to leave value on the table and discuss principles for negotiating effectively. This session will draw upon results of the Rio Copa exercise.

**Required reading:** Thompson, L. Preparation: What to do before negotiation. The mind and heart of the negotiator, 2005.

### **Session Three**

**Date/Time:** Monday, November 13th  
9:00 AM -- Noon

**Topic:** **Negotiation Skills – Part 2**

**Synopsis:** The stakes are high, the stress is higher, and some people not only cope but prevail.

How well you learn to negotiate has major implications for your effectiveness as a leader. In today's class, we will learn tips used by expert negotiators that relate to the circumstances under which various styles of negotiation are the most successful. We will then put ourselves in these situations and develop our own negotiation style, working to incorporate strategies that we may currently lack.

### **Session Four**

**Date/Time:** Monday, November, 13th  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Topics:**                      **Leadership Style**  
                                     **Dynamics of derailment**

**Synopsis:** Your Social Style and your Leadership Practices makeup your Executive Leadership behavior. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) overtakes IQ over time in its importance for executive success.

This session will explore derailment and the case of the Wounded Warrior Projects founding executive leadership. Yet for all the organization's successes, Nardizzi and his team believed that it was facing a significant inflection point. Epilogue: In January, the New York Times and CBS News called Wounded Warrior Project's spending on fundraising into question, and accused them of "lavish" spending in non-program areas. By combining the two spending areas, a picture of systemic over-spending and donor betrayal was painted, indicting the fundraising spending in particular. On March 10th, Wounded Warrior Project's board announced that its CEO, Steve Nardizzi is "no longer with WWP."

Your Leadership Credo will serve as a capstone assignment and learning experience for this course—the session also will feature a discussion with Edward Gormbley, EMBA '09, and former Executive Leadership student, the main character in the Corporate Leadership and the Personal Leadership Credo case study.

**Required Readings:** Goleman, Daniel, What Makes a Leader  
Hogan, Robert. Trouble at the Top: Causes and Consequences of Managerial Incompetence.  
Klepper, W.M. The Wounded Warrior Project in 2016

**Reference Readings:**Text, Chapter 2: Tough Love in the Boardroom  
Farrar, Elena & Klepper W. M., CEO Transition in Crisis  
Klepper W. M., Wounded Warrior Project: Leading from the Front

**Special Guest:**

Edward Gormbley, Managing Partner, Worforce Partners  
Edward is an entrepreneur with big-company skills and a start-up spirit. He started in the family construction business and went on to start two companies before graduating from college. He then spent a decade in the fertile training ground of General Electric as a corporate finance professional and private equity investor, from which 3i (a FTSE-100 company) recruited him to be the CFO of its North American division. His experiences span numerous industries and over ten countries.

**Tools:**                      Leadership Practices Inventory

**Session Five**

**Date/Time:**                Tuesday, November, 14th  
                                     9:00 AM – Noon

**Topic:**                      **The Right Partnership Matters: Online Executive Education at Columbia Business School.**

## **Integrated Leadership, Agility, Innovation**

**Synopsis:** As the cofounder and CEO of ExecOnline, Stephen Bailey will provide his perspective on the partnership with CBS and 11 other top-tier business schools and the successes and challenges he and his team experienced as the current executive education offerings were planned, developed, and launched. Founded in 2012 ExecOnline is considered the pioneer of online leadership development for enterprises and a major force in giving more people—especially underrepresented and minority employees—access to a high-quality training and development. Bailey took ExecOnline through the S-Curve of the business life cycle. This session will showcase how Bailey developed the seed of his idea and moved from the “trough” of early, often failed, attempts to gain academic partners to successful demos of pilot courses. It will illustrate how Bailey led the company's rise through forming a solid leadership team and acquiring top-tier business school partners and enterprise B2B customers.

### **Special Guest:**

Stephen Bailey is the cofounder and CEO of ExecOnline. In June 2022, he received the EY Entrepreneur of Year award for the New York City area. Prior to the founding of ExecOnline, Stephen served as the CEO of the Frontier Strategy Group (FSG), a venture-backed software and information services business serving Fortune 500 executives who have responsibility for emerging economies. Stephen grew the business from an early-stage start-up to a company that serves nearly half the Fortune 500 across a range of international markets and business functions. American division. His experiences span numerous industries and over ten countries.

**Required Reading:** Required Reading: ExecOnline: It Takes a Leader to Broaden Access to Leadership Development, Columbia Caseworks, 2022  
<https://www8.gsb.columbia.edu/caseworks/WilliamKlepper/3c740> on Canvas.

Online Executive Education at Columbia Business School.  
<https://www.exeonline.com/business-school-partners/columbia-business-school/>

**Reference Reading:** Text, Chapter 3: Why the Right Partnership Matters

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### **Session Six**

**Date/Time** Tuesday, November 14th  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Topics:** **Interpersonal Influence Tactics**  
**Persuasion**



**Synopsis:**

We all know that money is a huge motivator, but what happens when money is taken out of the equation? Leaders must find other ways to persuade and influence others. In this first of two class sessions, we consider various methods of influence that you can and must use to become persuasive leaders. Robert Cialdini has written extensively about six methods of social influence, including those not based on monetary incentives. Our discussion will focus on how to apply these six methods to wield greater influence.

**Readings:** Conger, J. The necessary art of persuasion. Harvard Business Review, 1998.

Cialdini, R. Harnessing the Science of Persuasion. Harvard Business Review, 2001.

Change the Way You Persuade. Gary Williams and Robert Miller, Harvard Business Review, 2002.

Students can access HBR content themselves through the Business Source Complete link found in this catalog record, though: <https://clio.columbia.edu/catalog/4813595>

What Shamu Taught Me About a Happy Marriage, Amy Sutherland, New York Times.

**Session Seven**

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, November 15th  
9:00 AM – Noon

**Topic:** Strategies for Improving Decision Making

**Synopsis:** A mind is a terrible thing.

Do you ever find yourself reading the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times* and wondering how politicians, respected executives, and analysts could make so many bad decisions? Managers make poor decisions for a variety of reasons. One of the most basic reasons is their reliance on simplifying mental strategies (i.e., heuristics). In this session, you will be encouraged to “think about how you think,” so that you can become more aware of your use of heuristics at the time that (1) you are using them or (2) others are using them on you. Further, we will focus on strategies by which the use of these heuristics can be avoided.

**Readings:** Roxburgh, Charles. Hidden flaws in Strategy, The McKinsey Quarterly, 2003.

Surowiecki, J. The difference difference makes: Waggle dances, the bay of pigs, and the value of diversity, The Wisdom of Crowds, 2004.

**Session Eight**



**Date/Time** Wednesday, November 15th  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

**Topic:** **Team Leadership**

**Synopsis:** Executive leaders must develop the skills and tools needed to maximize the potential of diverse teams to increase productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness of their organizations. The key to organizational success is dependent upon harnessing the power of teams.

This session will emphasize that:

1. Diverse teams managed well will outperform homogenous teams in their decision-making
2. Developing your Team's Rules-of-the-Road at the onset of your teamwork improves its process
3. Team Roles when assessed and applied at the appropriate stage advances team performance
4. Consensus decision-making is preferred in addressing strategic issues with a team
5. Team learning is optimized by valuing cultural ways-of-thinking and use of the After Action Review

Shazi Visram, the founding CEO of Happy Family, will be our special guest to discuss the Caseworks case study of Happy Family and tell her story of her executive leadership and team success—*In 2009, Visram and her team hit upon the idea to sell baby food in pouches. “This was the moment,” Visram commented, “when everything changed.”*

**Special Guest:**

Ms. Visram has always sought to create abundance and pay it forward—the question was: how? Her journey took her to Columbia Business School, where she had an “Aha! Moment” while listening with a compassionate ear to a friend's anguish about the difficulty of finding the time to make her own baby food, and the lack of healthy options in the traditional baby food aisle. In that moment in 2003, Happy Family was born.

In addition to her MBA from Columbia Business School, Ms. Visram holds a BA in history from Columbia College. In addition, she works with the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) as a mentor to young and aspiring entrepreneurs from low-income communities.

**Required Readings:**

“Happy Family: Investing for the Future” – Shazi Visram'04 founded Happy Family and is a CBS board member

**Reference Readings:** Text: Chapter 8 Effective Board Dynamics: How Directors Interact as a Team

### **Session Nine**

**Date/Time:** Thursday, November 16th  
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Topic:** **Change**

**Synopsis:** Getting the clowns to run the circus

**Readings:** Kitayama, S., & Burnstein, E. Social influence, persuasion, and group decision making, in *Persuasion: Psychological Insights and Perspectives* (Shavitt & Brock, Eds.), 1994.

### **Session Ten**

**Date/Time:** Thursday, November 16th  
12:00 PM – 2 PM

**Topics:** **Values Based Leadership**  
**Your Leadership Credos**  
**Course Integration and Summary**

**Synopsis:** You are Executive Leadership in action. Your Credos will define your executive leadership (personal, strategic and interpersonal) for your followers. You're the best of the best – make a difference!

**Readings:** Klepper, W.M., *What It Takes To Change To The New Normal*

**Reference Reading:** Text: Chapter 7, The Board's Commitment to the CEO -- Case Study in Progress: Workforce Partners

**Final Exam**

**Date/Time:** Thursday, November 16th  
2:00 PM – 4:00 PM