

## LEADING CHANGE

**Teacher: Michael TOPOLNYTSKY**

**Academic Year: 2017/2018 : Fall Semester (INTRO SCPO)**

## BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Title: Consultant, Leadership & Organization.

Affiliations: Spark Leadership, AlixPartners

Short biography:

Michael Topolnytsky is a learning and development expert who advises private and public sector organizations globally on creating custom learning programs for executives. He understands learning as a tool for effecting organizational change and improving the performance of organizations, and designs and delivers highly bespoke programs that leverage global faculty and digital technologies to embed new behaviours in operational life. His finance, M&A and consulting experience help him articulate the value impact of learning initiatives.

He began his professional career with Droege & Comp. AG, a management consultancy in Germany, where he worked with clients in heavily regulated industries like energy, rail transportation and postal services. He joined Mercer's/Oliver Wyman's Organizational Change and Leadership Development practice in New York and Munich, working to expand the practice into Canada, France, the UK and Germany through acquisitions and organic growth. He later led the build out of a global leadership development consultancy for Manfred Kets de Vries, considered one of the most influential contributors to human resource management worldwide, where he worked with clients like the Skolkovo School of Management in Moscow, the Malaysian civil service, the New Zealand civil service, and leading private sector clients in management consulting, banking, energy, mining and engineering.

Michael is currently affiliated with Spark Leadership (London and Mumbai) and AlixPartners (global). His advisory work combines expertise in strategy and finance with an understanding of organizational effectiveness rooted in the behavioral sciences, and he delivers content in innovation, entrepreneurship, and strategic influencing. He also works with social entrepreneurs in India and humanitarian aid organizations in Ukraine.

Michael earned his BA (Hon) in Political Science at McGill University in Montréal, Canada with specializations in Political Philosophy, International Relations and Economics. He is published in journals of philosophy and multi-disciplinary studies and conducted research urban social geography research for the Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS) of Québec. He also holds an MBA from INSEAD in Fontainebleau and Singapore. Michael is a Canadian from Toronto who splits his time between Munich and Paris. His mother tongue is English, he is fluent in German, French and Ukrainian, and speaks some Czech and Russian.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course aims to equip students with the skills to responsibly lead change in whatever community they operate. It takes an agnostic position on political objectives and focuses on advancing a change agenda, taking the organization as its central analytical unit before placing the organizational view in a broader social perspective. The cross-disciplinary material combines material from organizational behavior, leadership,

human capital management, finance, project management, political theory, sociology, and anthropology, to propose a practical tool kit for public leaders.

In the first part of the course, reliable frameworks for understanding organizations are introduced and we do an in-class simulation on strategic influencing before moving to understanding the dynamics organizational change. Attention is paid throughout to the requirements of responsible leadership.

The second part is co-created with the participations. Over four sessions, class time is split equally between taught material on student-selected topics and class discussion applying the material to examples from students' other class work, experience to date, and future objective.

The course concludes with a critical discussion of the strengths and limitations of the organizational view in understanding broader social change and suggests linkages to other international affairs approaches and emerging developments in business, politics and society.

### **Textbooks:**

None. The focus is on linking in-class material to work in other courses or outside experiences. Various journal articles and talks will be provided, as per session descriptions. A bibliography of suggested reading for additional depth will be provided at the conclusion of the course.

### **Evaluation:**

70% 10-page Briefing Note diagnosing a situation requiring change, articulating risks and opportunities and recommending a course of action, testing accurate application of material covered in Part I

30% Participation.

#### **Pre-Reading**

- Ross, Alec "The Industries of the Future", 2016

### **Session 1: Introduction**

Description of the strategic landscape in which PSIA graduates will operate. The case for taking an organizational perspective with a taxonomy of change imperatives. Discussion of major drivers of change in international affairs. Elaboration of course objectives, grading and student co-creation.

## **PART I**

### **Session 2: Organizational Diagnostics**

The first step in planning any kind of change is understanding how organizations work and diagnosing the current state of an organization's effectiveness. David Nadler and Michael Tushman's classic Congruence Model is introduced as a reliable framework for understanding organizations, combining both "hard" and "soft" factors in a coherent, dynamic model. This model provides a common language for describing organizations and change dynamics for the rest of the course.

Required readings:

- Kets de Vries, Manfred "Organizations on the Couch: A Clinical Perspective on Organizational Dynamics" European Management Journal Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 183–200, 2004
- Nadler, David A., Tushman, Michael L. "A model for diagnosing organizational behavior" Organizational Dynamics, 1980, Vol.9 (2), pp.35-51

### **Session 3: Political Savvy, Part I**

Although organizational politics are a fact of life, many people who work in organizations denigrate politics and attempt to avoid 'playing' them. A research-based case is made that organizational politics can be

successfully and ethically navigated, before student teams participate in an in-class simulation based on the Political Savvy approach developed by Joel DeLuca.

#### **Session 4: Political Savvy, Part II**

Simulation debrief, discussion of blockers to engaging in organizational politics, and Politically Savvy strategies for advancing a change agenda.

#### **Session 5: Human Capital Management**

Introduces current practice in human capital management relevant to change initiatives: organization design, talent management, compensation and incentives, the strategic workforce planning framework. Application of strategies from human capital management for influencing change in international affairs settings. Beginning of nomination period for Part II topics.

#### **Session 6: Leadership & Culture**

In settings where formal organizational structures are effectively fixed over the short and medium terms, leadership and culture offer considerable opportunities for effecting change. Leadership basics, understanding diagnosing organizational culture, and strategies for influencing organizational culture.

Required readings:

- Kegan, Robert and Lisa Lahey, "The Real Reason People Won't Change" Harvard Business Review, November 2001
- Katzenbach, Jon R.; Ilona Steffen and Caroline Kronley "Cultural Change that Sticks" Harvard Business Review, July-August 2002

#### **Session 7: The Dynamics of Change**

Presentation of the operational and behavioral components of change dynamics in organizations. Typical sources of resistance to change and strategies for overcoming them. Adding an understanding of change dynamics to project management.

Required readings:

- Bridges, William "Managing Organizational Transitions" Organizational Dynamics, Vol 15(1), Summer 1986, pp.24-33
- Kets de Vries, Manfred; Laura Guillén Ramo and Konstantin Korotov "Organizational Culture, Leadership, Change and Stress." INSEAD Working Papers Collection. 2009, Issue 10, preceding p2-26. 27p.

## **PART II**

#### **Sessions 8-11: Co-Designed Topics**

Each session is split between 1h of taught content and 1h of class discussion, applying the taught material and concepts from Part I to in-class discussion. Students nominate issues to cover, drawing from other classes, past experiences, or career aspirations.

#### **Session 12: Leading Change**

Review of key elements from the course. Challenges and opportunities arising from accelerating social change. Critical discussion of the applicability of an organizational view to social change beyond organizational boundaries, with references to models of social change from sociology, political theory, and economics.