Course: Coaching and Leading the Human Side of Organizational Change

Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to assist students to:

- evaluate the multi-dimensional nature of organizational change,

- explain political, economic, technological, and sociocultural influences on organizational change,

- appraise the influence of overt and covert aspects of organizational life on change,

- apply hard and soft systems models of organizational change to real-life case situations,

- summarize key trends that may prompt micro and macro level organizational change in the future, and

- debate the influence of ethics on organizational change.

Content

Change within organizations has become the norm. Heraclitus, an ancient Greek philosopher, said, "You can't step twice into the same river." Sometimes as the changes bombard you from all sides it feels as if you will be swept away in that very river! Think of your own organization. How many changes did you deal with today?

The answer to that question probably surprised you! We are confronted daily with changes in our organization. Many times we juggle planning for a change, initiating a second change, facilitating a third, while we "cement in" yet another change. At the same time we are coaching, leading, and guiding those who have been traumatized by one or all of these changes, calming the fearful, reassuring the confused and disheartened, and "unsticking" the resistant.

As organizational leaders we set off to work each day with the vision of transforming the "swamps" in our organization to a virtual "oasis"! No wonder we often go home with our heads spinning! How do we take care of ourselves in this world of chaos and confusion while helping those in our organizations to thrive? Throughout this course and hopefully together, we will uncover some answers to these questions.

Teaching

This is an **asynchronous** online course. This means that there is no established time when students must log on; however, the instructor will expect to "hear" from each person at least 2 times during each week of the course. Each Monday, the instructor makes an online presentation relating to the topic of the week. This presentation sets an outline for the online discussion. The activities each week are organized in three parts, a "warm-up," a "work-out," and a "cool-down" section. The warm-up will be an activity or story that will get students thinking about the topic. The work-out is

the main learning activities which could include any of the e-evaluation activities described below - a case to discuss, a debate topic to consider, a game to play, etc.. The cool-down is a summary or thought-evoking statement about the topic of the week.

The assignments and learning activities in this course will give students the opportunity to:

- describe a case from their own experience where an organizational change was attempted or implemented,
- analyze their own change case using both additional references and the knowledge and skills gained during the course,
- collaborate with others in the class to study a particular area of organizational change in depth and present this to their classmates, and to
- participate in meaningful discussions with other class members around the topics outlined in the course postings and course readings.

Evaluation

In this course a combination of diagnostic, formative and summative e-assessment methods and practices were used. We focus first on the formative and diagnostic e-assessment methods (non-graded) in this discussion as they are more unique and perhaps useful to other educators. Each unit of the course includes 4 to 7 of these formative assessment strategies and students choose two that are most in line with their learning goals personalizing the assessment. Here are some examples of e-assessment strategies.

Conceptual Quilting Exercise

Students are invited to become conceptual quilt-makers. They review their course materials and decide which major concepts, theories, ideas, and metaphors in this course made an impression on them and are worth holding onto and incorporating into their practice. Students then arrange these into a quilt pattern. Students design their own conceptual quilt and share it with their classmates by posting the virtual quilt in an online discussion forum we call a quilt gallery. All members of the class then can "walk" through the gallery and view the quilts.

Students use whatever program they like to develop their quilts. Students who are more comfortable with words that images and graphics design word quilts. Teachers reviewing the quilts can assess what content of the course has had the most impact on learners and can determine in students have made links and associations among theories and concepts presented.

Art 101 - Developing a Rich Picture of Changes in an Organization
Rich pictures are described in the course textbook as a tool for helping people to depict how they perceive a situation they are in that needs to change. Students are invited to try their hands at constructing rich pictures about such change situations they are familiar with. Students then post their pictures for the class to view. Class members review the rich pictures and attempt to comprehend the thoughts and feelings that are presented in each image and they share their

interpretations with the class. The artist responds to these posts and discussion of change concepts results. As an e-assessment tool the images posted and the discussion that follows both provide insight into the level of understanding of change theory and concepts.

Photovoice

Students are provided with an image as asked to answer a reflection question related to the image. In this example, the focus the unit was on how organizational culture influences organizational change processes. Students are invited to view the image and answer the following question in the class discussion forum. Students are reminded that there are no right or wrong answers to a photovoice question.

Question - What does this image teach us about external forces that influence change?

Photovoice provides teachers to assessment the students' prior knowledge about a topic if the activity occurs early in a unit. It also facilitates insight into the depth of understanding and analysis students have achieved about course themes, concepts and theory as they must apply these to their analyses of the photo.

One Minute Self-Debate

The activity begins with this sentence - Let's start with a one-minute do-it-yourself debate (this may be a perfect example of our "hurry up" society!).

Students are then given the following steps to follow to engage in the one minute debate with self.

Here are the steps to follow...

- Choose one of the following propositions - a) "In times of change, conflict between individuals and groups is inevitable" or b) "If managed well, conflict can add substantial value to change processes."

- Agree with the proposition you choose and write down one point for your side (the affirmative).

- Disagree with the proposition and write down one point for your other side (the negative).
- Rebut yourself a few times, and then share your best point with the class in the **forum.**

The self-debate postings provide teachers with insight into the level of analysis of course content achieved.

Buzz Group on Organizational Development (OD)

Students are asked to contact one another through the course mail feature and **f**orm a small buzz group by connecting with 2 or 3 of their classmates. Students agree to meet and chat about the OD approach to change. They use any meeting program them all agree to. As a group they compose a brief one paragraph description of their most poignant or brilliant group insight and share this in the class e-forum. Full class discussion often results from these postings. Instructors gain insight in the student understanding of the OD approach to change and also some information regarding collaboration and leadership skills.

Summative E-Assessment Methods

In addition to the formative assessment strategies this course also includes the following graded summative e-assessment methods. Grading marking criteria are provided to students for each of these assignments.

Assignment 1: Case Study Document | 20% | Due: Week 4 |

Students select a real case from an organization they are familiar with. This case should focus on the planning and implementation (or attempted implementation) of an organizational change. Using a narrative format students write the events of the case including the key players involved. This case is then analyzed by the student in assignment 2.

Assignment 2: Case Study Analysis | 40% | Due: Week 13 |

Students use concepts and models discussed in class, and in the readings, and apply these to their case. This analysis should be detailed enough to be useful to an administrator reviewing the case. Your document should help the person reading the analysis to determine what happened, what went well, and what could or should have been done differently to improve the outcome. There should also be informed discussion included in the case analysis related to why the change process unfolded the way it did. The major points in the analysis should be referenced to class readings/discussion or to additional research from outside of the course requirements. A minimum of 5 references should be used, some of which are beyond those provided in class.

Assignment 3: Group Presentation | 30% | Due: Week -variable - negotiated with instructor early in course |

Working in small groups students select one aspect of organizational change that they would like to investigate in more detail than is included in the course. After setting specific objectives for the

presentation, group members collaborate to post a presentation that assists their colleagues to achieve these learning objectives. Materials are presented in a format and medium that captures the interest of classmates and results in informed dialogue and discussion. The presentation should include specific activities for classmates (questions to be answered, cases for discussion, debate topics etc.). Those who are presenting are responsible for following up their classmates' responses, summarizing these, and encouraging further discussion. Evidence of group collaboration through a variety of voices and perspectives is highly regarded.

Participation | 10% | Due: throughout |

Class participation is an essential component of this course. To score full marks on class participation, students are asked to activity engage in the learning activities making related postings least twice per week. Comments most highly evaluated are those relevant to the topic and presented in a way that expands our understanding. You may accomplish this by challenging a statement (in a humanizing way!); by posing thought-evoking questions; providing examples of a concept being discussed; or by providing additional references or resources that will assist classmates in deepening their understanding of a concept under discussion. Participation that has a positive tone and is shared in a supportive and respectful way is most desired.

TALOE specific information

> a) Identify what was the purpose of the assessment: diagnostic, formative, summative (**Selection Criteria 2**).

A combination of formative, diagnostic and summative assessment strategies were used in this class. The first group of activities described were used of formative and diagnostic evaluation purposes. The second group of strategies described are the summative assessment strategies used.

> b) For each assessment practice identified in 5. please describe what was the learning outcome (from 2.) that was intended to be assessed. (**Selection Criteria 1**)

The formative and diagnostic assessment practices identified are a sampling of the total strategies used in the course. Each of these help propel students toward greater insight and understanding of course concepts that is fundamental to achieving the course learning outcomes. In addition most of the strategies in the first grouping require students to engage in self-reflection related to course content and analysis of course content in order to participate fully in the assessment exercise. This also moves students systematically toward achieving the course learning outcomes.

The summative evaluation strategies described are more clearly linked to assessing achievement of the learning outcomes. For example, the case study analysis requires students to demonstrate to some extent all of the following in their analysis:

- evaluate the multi-dimensional nature of organizational change,
- explain political, economic, technological, and sociocultural influences on organizational

change,

- appraise the influence of overt and covert aspects of organizational life on change,
- apply hard and soft systems models of organizational change to real-life case situations,
- summarize key trends that may prompt micro and macro level organizational change in the future, and
- debate the influence of ethics on organizational change.

In the group presentations and class participation student further demonstration of their achievement of the learning outcomes.

> c) Please identify and describe what were the criteria used to mark the results of each e-assessment practice (**Selection Criteria 3/8**)

The formative and diagnostic e-assessment activities were not graded. Part of the teaching philosophy behind the course is that student should be encouraged to take risks and be creative in their participation in the course. Making activities such as photovoice and conceptual quilting non-graded provides a learning environment where students feel more comfortable participating in assessment strategies that are different from what they are familiar with.

Students are provided with general grading criteria for each of the summative evaluation approaches as well as clear expectations regarding element of each assignment (eg. length, format, etc.).

General Grading Criteria for Assignments

Content and Writing Style

Written assignments will be evaluated on the basis of two characteristics:

- Is the content of the paper complete and accurate?
- Is the writing style of the paper scholarly, to a level expected of a graduate program?

Content

The expectations for content are explained in detail in each of the assignments. You must address the requirements of the assignment completely and accurately in order to receive marks for your assignment.

Scholarly Writing

- The expectations for scholarly writing are as follows:
- The paper is structured according to APA format, with a title page, abstract, untitled introduction, body organized by appropriate headings, conclusion, references, and appendices if needed (see below for more information on APA format).

- Spelling and grammar are correct.

- Ideas are clearly articulated with effective communication of interpretations and conclusions.

- Information is well organized, such that logical links are evident within paragraphs, within sections, and among sections of the paper.

- Relevant evidence is used to support statements and is accurately cited and referenced (see below for more information on adequate referencing).

- The paper shows evidence of:
    - critical thinking, including analysis and synthesis
    - integration of theory and personal experiences
    - original thinking

Adequate Referencing

The above criteria for a scholarly paper indicate that you are required to support statements with relevant evidence. Referring to evidence shows that you understand what authorities have said about the topic; you will then build on that to develop your own thoughts and analysis. In order to use evidence to a level expected of a graduate program, you are required to synthesize material from various perspectives and integrate this into your paper as you discuss you own original and creative position.

There is no definitive answer about how many and what types of sources of evidence must be synthesized and integrated into your assignment. A general rule of thumb might be "ten references for ten pages." However, to determine if you are referring to adequate evidence, you should ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I supported each of the major points in my paper with relevant evidence or have I put forward only personal opinions that are not substantiated with evidence?

- Have I used a variety of sources that present different perspectives of the evidence to support my position?

- Have I used evidence that is current and relevant to the discussion? If a source is not current, then is it a "classic" source that is still referred to by authorities in the field?

- Have I used both sources included in the course and other sources that allow me to personalize the assignment?

Your instructor will consider these same questions to evaluate the adequacy of the evidence used to support your statements.

Intellectual Honesty and Plagiarism

Students registered in an Athabasca University course are considered to be responsible scholars, and are therefore expected to adhere rigorously to the principles of intellectual honesty. Please read the university's Intellectual Ownership and Honesty policy related to this.

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty in which another person's work is presented as one's own. Be certain that whenever you use a primary or secondary source in your assignments you cite and reference your source using APA format (see below). All direct quotes (quotations of any number of words from the original) and indirect quotes (paraphrased ideas) must be acknowledged appropriately. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and as with any form of academic misconduct, it will be penalized. Penalties may take the form of rejection of the submitted work; expulsion from the examination, the course or the program; or legal action, depending on the specific nature of the infraction. For more information, read the university's Student Code of Conduct and Right to Appeal policy.

However, dutiful citation of quotes and paraphrased materials does not mean that you can write an essay assignment by stringing together a series of quotes. You should always try to summarize or describe someone else's ideas in your own words. When you present your own ideas or opinions in a paper, provide evidence or arguments to substantiate your position.

Grade Scale

The following scale will be used in evaluating your conference participation and your written assignments:

Mark	Percentage	Characteristics
A+ A A-	95-100% 90-94% 85-89%	The student evidences a critical orientation to the material, incorporating an extensive knowledge base, reflection, discovery of tacit meanings, highly original thinking, and critical analysis and synthesis; consistent ability to integrate theory and practical experiences to the discussion.
B+ B B-	80-84% 75-79% 70-74%	The student evidences an interpretive orientation to the material, incorporating a sound knowledge base, identification of underlying principles or themes, examples of situations or experiences, original thinking, and some critical capacity and analytic ability; some ability to integrate theory and practical experience.
C+ C C-	66-69% 63-65% 60-62%	The student evidences a descriptive orientation to the material, incorporating a satisfactory knowledge base, some ability to analyze and evaluate critically, and some original thinking.

| F | 59-0% | The student evidences an unsatisfactory knowledge base, concrete problem-solving with limited critical evaluation, and negligible original thinking. |

d) Please identify who were the assessors: single teacher, multiple teachers, peers, self. (**Selection Criteria 4**)

There are multiple assessors for the diagnostic and formative assessment strategies. The course teacher provides responses to the student postings. These can be one to one responses and/or open responses that can be read by class members. Fellow students also provide feedback to their course colleagues as they respond to the postings, ask questions and provide evaluative comments. Finally, the students themselves are required to reflect on their own learning in order to participate fully in these assessment strategies making them evaluators of their own learning.

For the summative evaluation assignments the primary assessor is the course instructor with the possibility of a second opinion for a colleague. Students can appeal their grades on these assessments and in these cases the second grader is another instructor who is blinded to the original grade.

e) Please describe what type of skills and competences were intended to be assessed by each method/practice (**Selection Criteria 5**)

The formative and diagnostic assessment strategies are intended to evaluate knowledge related to key course content (theory and concepts related to organizational change) but also they are intended to assess higher order cognitive skills such critical thinking, evaluation, analysis, and judgment. For example, engaging in debate (even a one minute self-debate) requires knowledge of the content but also the ability to create a logical and rational argument.

These assessment strategies also assess group and interpersonal skills as students often participate in group discussion and dialogue as part of the activities. Finally, these e-assessment strategies allow instructors, peers and students themselves insight into their affective domain accomplishments as they often share personal insights, opinions and attitudes through what they say in their postings. The photovoice activity is particularly effective in eliciting altitudinal insights and in providing students a venue to share these in a safe classroom environment where they can learn from the attitudes of self and others and where instructors and fellow students can help guide attitude development.

The summative strategies evaluate knowledge related to course content and writing skills.

f) Starting from each learning outcome identified in 2., please identify which e-assessment methods/practices were used to evaluate the real achievement (**Selection Criteria 6**)

It depends how you define real achievement – in our view they all evaluate real achievement.

However, in terms of quantifiable measurement of achievement the summative strategies provide a grade.

> g) Please describe how the learning outcomes identified in 2., the teaching practices described in 4. and the e-assessment strategies described in 5. are connected and promote the autonomy of the learner (**Selection Criteria 7**).

This course was created based on the invitational theory (Purkey, 1997) and fundamental design principles congruent with this approach. Utilizing a variety of e-assessment strategies (formative, diagnostic, and summative) that are rooted in respect, trust, optimism and intentionality helped create an engaging online learning experience. Learners where challenged academically and creatively and achieved learning outcomes from cognitive and affective domains. We believe that to be successful there needs to be a strong link between teaching practices and assessment strategies with the learner as the center of the processes. This alignment is depicted in the figure below.