

SELECTED PROBLEMS: HR Consulting Skills: The Role of the Strategic HR Business Partner

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Course Overview

Dramatic changes in the business environment (e.g., increased competition, new technology) have provided the opportunity for HR Professionals to have a significant impact on their company's ability to compete successfully. To capitalize on this opportunity, HR professionals must move from a tactical, specialist or generalist role to become a **Strategic HR Business Partner**. This class covers the competencies needed by HR professionals to become more strategically focused and learn to "partner" with their internal clients to become value-added contributors and trusted advisors. These competencies include:

- ❑ **Partnering Skills.** Build effective client relations, prioritize multiple stakeholders, conduct client meetings, develop trust with clients, deal with difficult clients, and develop more effective, contracting, sales and negotiating skills.
- ❑ **Diagnosis & Measurement.** Learn to use a structured diagnostic process to define the problem, collect and analyze data, and develop a feasible action plan linking project results to organizational strategic goals, use appropriate tools and models (e.g., balanced scorecard, fishbone, benchmarking) to strengthen your business case
- ❑ **Facilitation Skills/Consulting Tools.** Learn to influence without authority, develop executive coaching/mentoring skills, facilitate interpersonal processes: conflict resolution/mediation, communication, problem-solving, and decision making
- ❑ **Facilitating Change/Project Management.** Develop, staff and manage organizational improvement project teams, overcome resistance and build commitment to projects, create and facilitate effective team structures and employ agile project management processes

Course Objective

The first half of the class focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to interact with a client, diagnose the problem and propose and sell an action plan that will have a positive business impact. The focus is on the actions necessary to help execute strategy and improve the effectiveness of the organization while developing positive relations with clients.

The second half of the class focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary for the SHRBP to facilitate interpersonal processes: communication, conflict resolution, problem-solving, & decision making and learn to influence without authority. Creating and facilitating project improvement teams will be emphasized.

Two assessments (Social Styles and Conflict Resolution Styles) will be conducted to provide students with a framework to better understand how they relate to others and suggest ways to adapt to different situations or types of clients.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
9/5	Consulting Model Business consulting Organizational consulting The SHRBP consulting model The 7 essential meetings Consulting objectives (value & relationship)	Schein - <i>Process Consulting</i>
9/12	Consulting Model Why consulting efforts fail Measuring consulting success Consulting guidelines The contracting process	Ulrich- <i>Why HR</i> Ulrich- <i>HR Effectiveness</i>
9/19	Client Relations Dealing with difficult clients Qualifying the client Determining feasibility Building a relationship Conducting the Exploratory meeting	Schneider - <i>Customer Needs</i>
9/26	The Value of Corporate HR The threat to corporate HR Defining HR's value proposition Determining HR's brand PDF as model for corporate staff Transforming the HR Department	Ulrich - <i>Strategic Partner</i>
10/3	Organizational Diagnosis & Sales Data collection & analysis Diagnostic models & tools Tactical vs strategic diagnosis Creating a project model & objective Making a business case Conducting the sales meeting	Weisbord - <i>Diagnosis</i>
10/10	Contracting Skills: Negotiation Skills Defining success Barriers to negotiations Planning for the negotiation Interests, positions & tactics Conducting a negotiation	Ury - <i>Barriers to Cooperation</i>
10/17	EXAM I	
10/24	Facilitation Skills: Influence without Authority Basic vs development facilitation The facilitation process Depth of intervention Sources/Increasing personal power Influence tactics	Cialdini – <i>Instant Influence</i> Cialdini – <i>Weapons of Influences</i>

10/31	Facilitation Skills: Advising Skills/Executive Coaching Communication errors Social Styles Assessment Improving the communication process Advising goals & process Giving feedback to a client The role of the executive coach	Schwartz - Facilitator Role
11/7	Facilitation Skills: Problem Solving & Decision Making Barriers to problem solving Problem-solving models & tools Common decision errors Improving decision making Facilitating a problem-solving meeting	Nature of Judgment
11/14	Facilitation Skills: Conflict Resolution Barriers to conflict resolution The Thomas Process Model Conflict Resolution Styles Mediation process Inter-group conflict resolution techniques	
11/21	NO CLASS	
11/28	Facilitation Skills: Team Building The challenge of teams Requirements for effective team Champion, leader & facilitator roles Creating a project team Facilitating a new team start-up meeting	Schwartz - Team Edmondson – Psychological Safety
12/5	Facilitation Skills: Project Management Project Planning Contract, Schedule, Responsibilities Project implementation Project management tools Waterfall vs. Agile	Work Breakdown Structure
12/12	EXAM II	
12/19	PRESENTATION	

Readings: All assigned readings are listed on the syllabus by topic and posted on Sakai

Evaluation:

Exam I	35 points
Exam II	35 points
Project	30 points

Team Assignment

Select a **consulting tool** in which you are interested.

Possible examples:

- Kaizen/Toyota Production System
- Lean 6-Sigma
- IBM- JAM
- GE Work-Out
- SCRUM
- Executive Coaching
- Quality tool (e.g., Kanban)
- Appreciative Inquiry

Paper

Address the following areas:

- Describe its history and how it was created
- Provide an **overview** of the technique, how it works and how it is presumed to add value
- Provide examples of specific **companies** using the technique with evidence of its effectiveness
- Make a clear recommendation for using or not using the technique
- Cite all **references**

Team presentations

Should provide a clear recommendation for the use (or avoidance) of the tool and should include:

- brief **summary** of the history and background of the technique
- **examples** of companies using the technique
- a **definitive judgment** of the usefulness of the approach and the conditions necessary for its successful implementation
- Presentation **cannot** exceed 15 minutes

Academic Honesty and Code of Conduct

Students are expected to abide by Rutgers's Academic Integrity Policy and Code of Student Conduct. Acts of cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication or misrepresentation are not tolerated and will be dealt with according to the university policies and procedures. If you have doubts concerning committing a potential act of academic dishonesty, please contact the course instructor for advice. Moreover, you are advised to check the websites of the Office of Academic Integrity at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> and the Office of Student Conduct at: <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/>

Special Needs and Accommodation

“Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>”. For additional information, please visit the website of the Office of Disability Services at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students>.

Learning Goals

To develop conceptual understanding and skills related to: 1) building a strategic partnership with senior managers, 2) designing projects that link HR Department activities to the organization's strategic objectives and demonstrate measurable business impact, 3) developing and maintaining positive client relations, and 4) planning and managing projects to enhance the organization's capability and competitive advantage.

- Understand how to diagnose organizational problems using a structured diagnostic model
- Learn to develop and sell a proposal that will result in a measurable business impact
- Understand how to influence without authority and to develop trusting relations with clients
- Understand the application of organizational change theories, project management and facilitation skills to intervene effectively in problems facing the HR Business Partner
- understand how to design and implement HR consulting projects
- Develop skills in creating project teams and planning & implementing the project

SMLR Learning Objectives

I) Written & Oral Communication – Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry level professional.

- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English
- Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights
- Produce quality research papers with proper convention of attribution/citation
- Produce high quality executive summaries
- Make an argument using contemporary and/or historical evidence
- Present ideas and arguments in a logical and effective way

IV) Theoretical Perspectives - Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the practical perspectives, theories and concepts in their field of study
- Evaluate and apply theories from social science disciplines to workplace issues

V) Understanding Context - Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions

- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of, and perspectives on work
- Analyze a contemporary global issue in their field from a multi-disciplinary perspective
- Analyze issues related to business strategies, organizational structures, and work systems
- Analyze issues of social justice related to work across local and global contexts (LSER)
- Analyze issues related to the selection, motivation, and development of talent in a global context (HRM)

VI) Application – Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance

- Apply concepts and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work
- Understand the legal, regulatory and ethical issues related to their field
- Develop HRM functional capabilities used to select, motivate, and develop workers
- Understand the internal and external alignment and measurement of HRM practices

VII) Professional Development – Demonstrate an ability to interact with and influence others in a professional manner, and to effectively present ideas and recommendations

- Develop effective presentation skills appropriate for different settings and audiences
- Develop career management skills to navigate one's career
- Understand cultural differences and how to work in a multicultural environment
- Work productively in teams, in social networks, and on an individual basis
- Develop cultural agility competencies
- Demonstrate lifelong personal & professional development skills