



## **B8513: Personal Leadership & Success**

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### **FOR BIDDING PURPOSES ONLY**

Time:

Classroom:

**Attendance in all class sessions/retreat is mandatory**

#### **Introduction**

Leadership is frequently thought of in terms of our ability to understand and direct our *external* environment — people, organizations and events. This course takes the view that to succeed in professional life we need to develop another dimension of leadership — personal leadership. Personal leadership consists of our ability to understand and direct our *internal* environment — our moods, perceptions, mindsets and motivations.

Some of the most crucial skills in life have to do with how well we can manage this internal environment under ever-changing external circumstances. How quickly can we rebound from setbacks to execute our roles with renewed enthusiasm? Can we stay calm and focused in the face of intense work pressure? How effective are we at eliminating feelings of anger or anxiety that grip us from time to time? How can we cultivate a winner's mindset that will allow us to perform at our optimum all the time? How can we effectively harness our intuitive and creative faculties to aid us in tackling complex issues?

Very little attention has traditionally been given in management education – or even in earlier stages of school and college education – to building this set of personal competencies. So where can we search for wisdom on this topic? This course will tap three sources of insight and learning in order to help students develop a better understanding of their internal environment and to learn and implement techniques for improving their personal competencies:

#### **(a) Psychology (and related scientific disciplines)**

In recent decades, psychologists have been accumulating a growing body of evidence about the critical role these skills play in determining one's success in professional life and in shaping one's sense of well-being. New fields of research and practice, such as Social Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Positive Psychology and Cognitive Therapy, have been spawned, and the following assertions have gained increasing validation even as they have conflicted with conventional wisdom:

- *The brain is plastic.* The brain is capable of eliminating old habits and mindsets and acquiring new ones not just during childhood but even through the course of one's adult life.
- *Practice makes perfect.* It is not through occasional practice, but through focused, repeated efforts that one can effect a lasting change in one's thought patterns or behavior. Through such repetitions, the brain gets to -re-wire itself as old ways of thinking and behaving are dissolved and new ones are formed.

- *EQ is more important than IQ.* Social/Emotional Intelligence is a major determinant of one's success and well-being in life – much more so than raw intellect.

### **(b) Philosophers and Prophets**

Philosophers and prophets from both Western and Eastern cultures have, for centuries, reflected on the human condition and sought to experiment with and develop techniques for gaining mastery over the internal environment as a pathway to success. Several of the modern discoveries about the mind's role in shaping behavior have antecedents in the teachings of these historical figures.

### **(c) Practitioners**

The lives and words of great achievers over the course of history provide additional insight on how personal competencies play a role in shaping success, and how they can be developed. While we are often able to witness only the outer behavior of these individuals, there are many illuminating examples that reveal the inner workings of their feelings and minds as they marched onward toward their goals.

This course will integrate these three sources of insight to provide students with learnings on the following questions:

1. What impact does our internal environment have on our success?
2. What are the areas of personal competency that we need to develop in order to achieve a mastery over the internal environment?
3. What techniques can one use to develop these personal competencies?

### **Teaching approach**

The course will emphasize a practical, hands-on skill-building orientation. Lectures will be richly supplemented by exercises involving introspection, self-analysis/evaluation, and practical applications of techniques. It is the intent of the course to help students begin the journey toward greater self-awareness and mastery over their internal environments.

The course will strike a unique balance between the interest some students may have for maintaining privacy in pursuing their growth goals with the benefits the class can get from engaging in shared learning (across the class):

- A number of the exercises will entail a rich and intimate journey into our internal environments – the mental models that are limiting our growth, the challenges we face in managing our emotions, and the life challenges that we are grappling with. The course will encourage students to reflect on these in very candid ways in their own private context – by engaging in the exercises, and learning from them, on their own. Students will not be required to directly share their personal challenges or issues in the class setting.
- Even as we protect our privacy in this manner, there is a lot of value in sharing and observing others' approaches, challenges and learnings. To facilitate this community learning, students will occasionally be asked to share their evaluations, analyses and introspections in an anonymous manner with the class. By reviewing these responses across the class, we will be able to gain insights from each other even as no individual is specifically identified in these submissions.

## **Course Structure**

The course consists of three modules: Beliefs, Behaviors and Tools.

### **1. Beliefs**

In this module, we will explore the validity and application of the following (provocative!) beliefs:

- Our state of happiness and well-being is only partially affected by our outer circumstances – and it is substantially shaped by our internal environment – our patterns of thought. By changing these patterns of thought, we can gain significant control over our state of happiness and well-being independent of outer circumstances.
- We have unlimited potential to develop our capabilities in any area we choose to. However, we are often limited by what we perceive as our fixed level of talent (or lack thereof) in that area.
- To effect significant change in our personal competencies – our ability to direct our internal environment – we need to focus on one or a few new forms of thinking and behavior, and then engage in disciplined, regular practice over a period of time with constant feedback.

We will explore these beliefs by reviewing psychological research, drawing parallels with the ideas of philosophers and prophets, studying the practices and wisdom of great achievers, and engaging in exercises involving introspection and self-analysis.

Whatever may be their state of belief on these topics prior to this module, it is the intention of the instructor to give students a rich opportunity to explore and assimilate these beliefs, or at least to gain significant appreciation for the important role they play in cultivating a winner's mindset.

### **2. Behaviors**

This module will explore specific areas of personal competency – such as handling disruptive emotions like anxiety and anger and tapping our intuition. We will introduce specific techniques for developing these personal competencies.

### **3. Tools**

This final module will introduce the use of tools that have broad application in helping to cultivate the full range of beliefs and behaviors reviewed in the course. Each of these tools can be used effectively to help develop our capabilities in any of the areas covered.

These tools – solitude, meditation, visualization and affirmation – are typically viewed as being in the domain of spirituality, and we will seek to establish an understanding of these tools in the context of their spiritual origins and use. But we will also review contemporary scientific research and practices that demonstrate the effectiveness of these tools as enablers of personal growth and mastery. For example, a number of studies show the positive impact of meditation in dealing with disruptive emotions, the discipline of solitude has been frequently cited by business leaders as a key resource in their lives, and visualization is actively in use by athletes as a tool to prepare themselves for optimal performance.

# Personal Leadership & Success

## Class Schedule

### Class 1 INTRODUCTION

- Our internal environment
- What the experts say:
  - Emotional intelligence – personal competencies
  - Philosophers, prophets and practitioners
  - Course objectives

### PART 1: BELIEFS

### Class 2 MENTAL MODELS

- Our (over)active mental environment
- Examples of mental models – and how they effect our emotions and behavior
- Changing one's mental models

### Class 3 GROWTH vs. FIXED ORIENTATION

- Growth vs. fixed mindset
- Experimental evidence
- Mindsets of Great Achievers
- In-class exercises

### Class 4 OPTIMISM

- Types of Optimism
- Why Optimism Matters
- Evaluating One's Level of Optimism
- How to Develop Optimism

### PART 2: BEHAVIORS

### Class 5 INGREDIENTS FOR GROWTH

- Self awareness
- Goal setting
- Practice
- Feedback
- Tools

### Class 6 HANDLING DISRUPTIVE EMOTIONS I (Focus on anxiety & anger)

- How disruptive emotions can effect performance
- Why it is hard to control these emotions
- Techniques for managing disruptive emotions

### Class 7 HANDLING DISRUPTIVE EMOTIONS 2 (previous session continued)

Class 8            TAPPING INTUITION

- Sources of intuition
  - Perspectives from science, spirituality and practitioners
- Benefits of intuitive thinking
- Developing intuition

**PART 3: TOOLS**

Class 9            SOLITUDE

- The benefits of solitude
- The forms of solitude
- The art and science of introspection / self-analysis
- Eliminating complexity from our work and personal lives

Class 10:           AFFIRMATION & VISUALIZATION

- What they are
- Use of affirmation and visualization in different communities – sports, business, science
  - How/why they work: scientific evidence
  - Techniques

Class 11:           MEDITATION

- What it is
- History of meditation
- Benefits of meditation – emotional, physiological
- How/why it works – scientific evidence
- Technique
- Guidelines on practicing meditation

In addition, there will be one or two guest speakers during the course of the semester.

## Reading List

The following list of books provide a flavor for the topics that will be covered in the course. Specific readings for the course, from this list and beyond, will be laid out in the final version of the syllabus before the course commences.

- Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience -- Csikszentmihalyi
- The Happiness Hypothesis -- Haidt
- Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment – Martin Seligman Learned Optimism – Martin Seligman Relaxation Response — Herbert Benson
- Beyond the Relaxation Response — Herbert Benson
- Power vs. Force: The Hidden Determinants of Human Behavior — David R. Hawkins
- Happiness – Matthieu Ricard
- The Paradox of Choice: Why More is Less — Barry Schwartz
- Intuition: Its Power and Perils — David G. Myers
- Your Maximum Mind – Herbert Benson
- Mindset – Carol Dweck
- Emotional Intelligence – Daniel Goleman
- Primal Leadership – Daniel Goleman, et al
- Working with Emotional Intelligence – Daniel Goleman
- The Emotional Intelligence Quickbook – Bradberry & Greaves
- The Training of the Human Plant – Luther Burbank Man’s Eternal Quest – Paramahansa Yogananda The Art of Possibility – Zander & Zander
- The Miracle of Mindfulness – T. N Hanh