COURSE PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

The focus of this course will be on careers and how they evolve over time. The course is designed for doctoral students and advanced masters students, most of whom are planning careers in academe, in consulting, and in organizational human resource management. We will be examining major theories and concepts in careers, key research studies, and major approaches to career practice.

The course design is based on the following assumptions:

1. Careers develop over time, with the course of the career determined by a sequence of the person’s decisions and actions.

2. People are capable of developing themselves in their careers; they are also influenced by other people with whom they have important relationships (family, peers, respected seniors, etc.) Careers are also influenced by forces in the larger environment, such as the state of the economy, social trends, technology, international relations, and changing markets.

3. In addition to increasing our conceptual understanding about careers, it is also relevant and important for each of us to become more aware of ourselves and our own careers. Therefore, we will be doing some career-related self-assessment and reflection work in this course.

4. Knowing (from theory and research) about what other people have done in their careers, how they did it, can provide concrete material for applying career concepts.

5. Conducting periodic small research assignments can also be a useful way to apply career theory and to promote the development of your own conceptual notions.
6. A basic assumption of this course is that **theory** and **practice** can be mutually enhancing. Consequently, you will be encouraged to relate your own career experience to the content this course. Our goal is to use your career experience to enhance your understanding of career theory and research, and vice versa. You should utilize this opportunity to test the concepts and theories we will be covering and to develop your own "conceptual map" of career processes.

**PURPOSES OF THE COURSE**

Some of the major purposes of this seminar are:

1. To provide a knowledge base of theory and research in the major topic area of careers.
2. To develop an ability to discuss this topic area in a scholarly and professional way.
3. To develop an ability to critique research, theory, and practice in the careers field.
4. To provide an opportunity for you to engage in self-assessment and career/life planning.

**READINGS AND CLASS PARTICIPATION**

All class members will be expected to critically read articles and/or book chapters each week. The success of the seminar depends on each of us coming to class well prepared and contributing to the process and substance of the discussion.

**CLASS DISCUSSION LEADERS**

Each class member will serve as a discussion leader for two or three classes during the semester, depending on the size of the seminar. We will try to meet your preferences, to the extent possible, in assignment of people to topics. For each reading for that week, we would like the discussion leader to:

- Share what he or she feels was the contribution of the reading,
- Mention key points made in the reading,
- Offer thoughtful questions to stimulate good discussion,
- Discuss strengths and weaknesses of the research or theory,
- Indicate directions for future research or theorizing,
- Explore links and integrate readings for the week, and
- Lead and facilitate the discussion, so that everyone is encouraged to participate and share their ideas.

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**


Readings packet (P). There will be a folder of readings that are not on Blackboard or in the texts that I will make available for students to copy.

Course packet of self-assessment exercises Available from the Boston University School of Management Copy Center (CC).

**SATURDAY CAREER SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP (SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 9 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.)**

We will have a Saturday workshop for leadership self-assessment on February 12, from 9 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. To compensate for this weekend time, we will not hold meetings on two of our regular weekday meeting times (at the end of the semester in April). This workshop is the equivalent of two regular class sessions, and the workshop activities will play a key role in the self-assessment component of the course. This workshop is a required activity of the course. You should not register for the course if you know at the outset that you will be unable to attend this workshop.

**WRITTEN AND TEAM ASSIGNMENTS**

1. **Career Change Information Interview Analysis Paper**

   There are many things we do not know about careers; but one thing we do know is that career changes can be difficult to make and that they usually require a lot of self-confidence to make. We will examine how people make an important career change and where they get the self-confidence to do it.

   We also know that role models are an important way that we develop our own images of what kind of work we aspire to do in the future. Therefore, as part of the career planning process, it is helpful to conduct an "Information Interview" with an
admired person who is doing work that you would like to explore further, as a possible career option for yourself in the future.

To gather information for your own career exploration and to examine the role of self-confidence in a person's career, you will be asked to conduct an interview with a person of your choice reviewing the nature of that person's work and how she or he developed self-confidence. The person you select to interview should be someone who is a) doing work that you might be interested in doing yourself in the future, and b) has made some kind of career change that you would be interested in learning more about. (You can define the term “career change” in your own way, but please be explicit in your paper about how you are defining the term. This can also be an opportunity to examine how work/life balance issues influence career decisions.)

To provide some ideas for conducting this interview, I have provided an interview guide with some suggested questions that you might use to conduct the interview. However, please feel free to add and delete questions to make the interview most useful for your specific purposes.

You will also find helpful information in the Appendix (“Studying career transitions”) to Ibarra’s Working Identity, one of our course texts.

You will be asked to write a paper containing your analysis of your interview. In your paper based on the self-confidence interview you should report your analysis of and learnings from the interview. Do not report all of the interviewee’s responses in the paper. (You can summarize the responses in a separate Appendix to the paper, if you wish.) Use the paper to focus on the main lessons you took away from the interview, discussing how the person got to where he or she is now, what are the rewards and challenges of this work, where his or her self-confidence comes from and what impact it has on the evolution of the career. Consider how these lessons relate to the career and self-confidence concepts covered in the readings, in other assignments, in class, in your self-assessment work, etc. Also include conclusions and implications for your own career development that you take away from this interview analysis. These self-confidence information papers will be graded with the criteria for written assignments found later in this course syllabus.

The assignment should be no more than 8 double-spaced pages and is due at noon on Monday, February 28. It should be e-mailed to the instructor and all members of the class at that time, so that everyone can read all of the papers before class on March 1.

2. Reflection Papers (total of 8) and Learning Logs.

Reflection is a key tool in the career development process. Research has found that when people reflect on what has happened, their learning from experience increases dramatically. For 8 of our weekly class sessions (you choose which weeks) you will be asked to e-mail to me and the other members of the class, the day before class, a 1-2
page Reflection Paper, based on that week’s reading and events that you have experienced -- what happened, what you took from the readings, what you learned, and what actions you can take to use this learning. These Reflection Papers will serve as a method of capturing your own learning, and also as the basis for reflective discussion in class each week. We will discuss these papers in that week's class. I will make comments on the papers, but I will not grade them individually.

Some weeks I will make a specific brief assignment, and you will have the choice of incorporating this assignment into a Reflective Paper or handing it in separately. (If your are not doing a Reflective Paper that week, you would hand in the notes separately.) In other weeks there will be no specific written assignment. Sometimes for the brief assignment I will ask you to gather a small amount of data, perhaps by talking to someone about the topic of that week's class.

When I return these weekly thought papers to you, I will ask you to keep these papers together in the form of a Learning Log for the course. You will turn in your Learning Log with your term project paper at the end of the semester. I will grade your overall Learning Log, using the criteria for written assignments found in the back of this syllabus. Another purpose of your using this reflective tool is for you to learn more about reflection as a process.

Some guidelines for keeping a Learning Log are shown in Appendix B to this syllabus.

3. Term Project

A term project is required for this class. It will be turned in at the end of the semester. I would encourage you to use this project assignment in whatever way would be most useful for furthering your own work. To stimulate your thinking, here are several options that you might think about.

Option 1: Prepare a conceptual paper on a topic or issues in the careers field of a quality that would be appropriate as an early draft of a future publication in the Academy of Management Review or the Academy of Management Executive. This type of paper makes a contribution to conceptual development in the area, by providing reviews, syntheses, applications, and critiques to advance theory development and research practice. Your paper, for example, could consist of the development of a model and some propositions for an area of inquiry.

Option 2: Prepare an empirical paper reporting results from your own research study on a topic or issues in the careers field of a quality that would be appropriate as an early draft of a future publication in the Academy of Management Journal or the Journal of Vocational Behavior.
**Option 3:** Prepare a proposal for an empirical research study (such as a dissertation) to test significant hypotheses or to investigate important issues or questions about careers. This could be a way to explore tentative ideas related to your dissertation. The proposal should be presented in a format comparable to that used for submission to a major foundation (such as the Sloan Foundation) or agency (such as the National Science Foundation.) (Please be sure to include your human subjects review information.)

**Option 4:** Develop a career system that a Human Resources practitioner (H. R. executive or consultant) could use as a developmental tool for human resource development in an organization. The tool that you develop could be focused on a particular topic area in the careers field. Examples of systems that might be developed include: a mentoring program, a succession planning program, a leadership development process, a career development program, a networking program, etc.

**Option 5:** Write a thorough analysis of your self-assessment explorations (using data you collected in this course, as well as from other sources), identify your major strengths that you want to leverage or develop further, and write a career development plan for your next steps. This plan would integrate life and career choices in a way that would produce a satisfying life balance for you.

**Other options:** If there is some other way of doing this semester-long project, I would be happy to discuss it with you. I would encourage you to use this assignment to further other work (e.g., dissertation, professional work) that you are engaged in at this time.

On or before class on **March 1**, you should submit a one-page description of your proposed term project. In your proposal, identify:

1. Your topic
2. The gap that this work will fill or the need it will address
3. Your planned approach
4. Tentative ideas on presentation method

**4. Term Project Presentation**

You will be asked to make a presentation to the class on your term project. The presentation involves preparing and leading the class discussion about your major findings and learnings from your project.

**You should include class participation and a 1- or 2-page handout for the class, to support your presentation.**
You will have a time limit of 15 minutes for your presentation. (Discussion will come after your presentation.) (This will be like the format for a symposium at the Academy of Management or SIOP or some other professional society.)

You will receive specific feedback from me and the class as a whole. The presentation will be evaluated using the form included with this syllabus, both by me and the class members. I will derive a grade for each presentation, after all class members have made their presentations.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WRITTEN WORK

A leader's success and failure is a product of the unique circumstances of the situation, the needs and values of the people in the situation, and what the leader brings to the situation in terms of his or her experience, wisdom and skills. Thus, in your assignments, please give adequate attention to the context within which the leader operates.

Below are the criteria I will use in evaluating written work and classroom participation:

- **Quality of Ideas**: Originality, creativity, and completeness of your ideas.
- **Use of Course Concepts**: Appropriate use of key concepts and frameworks to support your analysis and discussion.
- **Quality of Research on the Topic**: Completeness and range of supporting information provided; clear evidence of thorough research.
- **Specificity, Concreteness, and Credibility**: Avoidance of generalizations and jargon; use of specific examples to support points; conclusions/recommendations/implications are reasonable, realistic, specific, and well supported.
- **Organization and Writing**: Overall clarity and logical organization of your thoughts.

Ground rules for the course:

At the risk of appearing overly bureaucratic, I have found that confusion can be avoided later in the course if I am clear about my expectations at the beginning.
1. **Attendance:** This course meets only once a week, and since we only have 14 weeks of class, it is important that you attend every class. Since we have so few meetings, your course grade will directly reflect absences beyond one session missed, except for religious and exceptional circumstances. In addition, because this course moves quickly and the issues are interrelated, falling behind is not a viable approach.

2. **Punctuality:** Classes will begin on time, and I shall make every effort to end them on time. If I expect that we shall go over time, I'll try to tell you in advance.

3. **Class Preparation and Participation:** Thorough preparation and participation in class discussions are vital to your and everyone's learning. When you speak in class, your emphasis should be on quality as opposed to quantity.

4. **Written Assignments:** Written work is due on the assigned date. If you have a problem, please contact me in advance to request an extension. If you have an extension, there will be no grade reduction. If you do not have an extension, late papers will be penalized by a reduction of one grade (e.g., from B to C) for each day of lateness.

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**The Grading Process**

Your overall grade for the course will reflect your participation in the learning community and the quality and timeliness of your work. The weights for various activities will be as follows:

- 20% Career Change Interview paper
- 20% Contribution to class discussion and peer learning
- 20% Learning Log (made up of weekly Reflection Papers and assignment notes)
- 10% Presentation of term research project paper
- 30% Final term project paper
Assignment Schedule

(Note: AIP = Arthur, Inkson, & Pringle; H = Hall; I = Ibarra; P = Packet; R = Reserve; Ha = Handout; B = in Blackboard, under Course Documents; CC = self-assessment packet from the SMG Copy Center)

Week 1. January 18. Introduction
AIP: Chapter 1, "Careers, employment, and economies in transition", 1-21.
CC: Complete and score the Learning Tactics Inventory. Analyze and interpret your scores using the information on pp. 7 – 12 of the LTI Participant Workbook. Complete the Personal Development Plan on pp. 13 – 14. Bring the completed Participant Workbook to class on January 18.

H: Preface, xi-xiii; Chapter 1, "The study of careers", 3-16.
B: Shepard, H. A., "On the realization of human potential: A path with a heart."
I: Chapter 2, “Possible selves,” 23-43.

Guest: Professor Candida Brush. Question: What career concepts or issues would you want to measure if you were starting a new annual survey of Boston University School of Management graduates?

Assignment: Interview a parent or other family member about his or her career. Design your own questions for this interview, but read Week 2's readings first before you write out your questions. Think about messages that you have received early in your life from this parent (or other family member) about careers. Discuss this interview and these messages in one or two pages of notes, to be turned in. Bring 1 or 2 pages of notes from your interview to class, to be turned in. Or, if you prefer, these notes could be incorporated into your Reflection Paper, whichever would be more helpful to you.

Week 3. February 1. Contemporary models of careers

Assignment: Complete and score "Career Orientation Index." Bring completed instrument to class and one page of notes based on your results, to be turned in, and be
prepared to discuss. (If you prefer, these notes could be incorporated into your Reflection Paper.)

**Week 4. February 8. Managing career and life roles**

**Assignment:** Interview a person (someone of the opposite gender from you) in a dual-career couple about their experiences with work/life balance. Write a page or two of notes from the interview and bring to class, to hand in. (If you prefer, these notes could be incorporated into your Reflection Paper.)

**Weeks 5 and 6 (Double session). Saturday, February 12. Self-Assessment Workshop**
I: Chapter 5, “Crafting experiments,” 91-111.
S: Read the book, *Career Anchors*, and complete the self-assessment of your career anchors. Bring these materials to the workshop.

**CC: Assignment:** Complete and analyze the following instruments in your Copy Center self-assessment packet:

- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)
- Career Values Card Sort
- Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

In addition, please complete the following for the workshop:
- Career Survey (to be distributed by instructor in advance)

Bring results and notes to the Workshop.

**Week 7. February 15. Adult and career development stages**
H: Chapter 4, "Life, career, and learning stages," 89-130.
R: Levinson, D. J., and Associates, *The Seasons of a Woman's Life* or *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (take your choice!)

**Assignment:** Using either Levinson's or Kegan's model, interview a person who is in the next stage beyond where you currently see yourself. Ask the person about a) his or her
experiences with the *transition* into that stage, b) their current experiences being in this stage, and c) what they anticipate might trigger a move to their next stage. Bring one or two pages of notes from the interview or incorporate into your Reflection Paper.

**NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON FEBRUARY 22 (PARTIAL COMPENSATION FOR SATURDAY DOUBLE-SESSION WORKSHOP)**

Monday, February 28, 12 Noon: Career Change Interview Papers due to be e-mailed to instructor and all class participants.

**Week 8. March 1. Academic careers**

P and B: Special Issue of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* on "Careers in academe" (Volume 64, Number 2, April 2004). *Read any two articles in the Special Issue that are of most interest to you, and identify an issue that you see as critical to the future of academic careers. Come to class prepared to discuss two opposing perspectives on that issue.*

**Assignments:**
1) E-mail Self-confidence Information Paper to instructor and other members of the class by 12:00 noon on February 28.

2) Term project proposal due in class on March 1.

**March 8. Spring Break: No Class.**

**Weeks 9 and 10. March 15, March 22. Mentoring, networks, and other developmental relationships (2 weeks)**


**Assignment:** Complete "Network Planning Worksheet" (see Appendix C to this syllabus.)

**Week 11. March 29. Career metacompetencies: Adaptability and Identity**

H: Chapter 6, "The protean career identity and attitudes," 169-204.
   Chapter 7, "Career adaptability," 205-234.


**Assignment:** Complete and score Emotional Competence Inventory (ECI) and Adaptability Scale (to be distributed by instructor in advance). Bring workbook and notes to class (or incorporate into Reflection Paper.)

**Week 12. April 5. Developing the whole person:**


**Assignment:** Examine a peak experience in your life. Then examine a low point. Reflect on your experiences in relation to concepts of spirituality and calling (or related concepts, such as the path with a heart and psychological success.) Write a page of notes to bring to class, or incorporate this analysis in your Reflective Paper.

**Weeks 13 and 14. April 12 and April 19. Career development practice/Research project presentations**


Briscoe, J. P., and DeMuth, R., "Developing the Protean Executive"
P: McCall, M. W., Jr., *High Flyers: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders.*
Boston: Harvard Business School Press. (Selected chapters.)

**Assignment for April 19:** Review everything that you have covered so far in this course. Write down the *three most important actions* that a career practitioner or employing organization might take to help a person with his or her career development. Bring notes to class or incorporate into your Reflective Journal.
Preparation for the Interview

Even though a person may agree to be interviewed, he or she may have some real doubts about this. The interview will very likely be better if they know what is coming. If possible, before the interview send them a brief description of what the interview is about, and some of the questions/topics you want to cover. You could even send them this guide.

The interview outline has several parts. All are important, but the “meat” of the interview is the self-confidence discussion. Here are a number of questions that can be asked. Before the interview, plan which ones you want to cover--but have them with you. Interviews take unpredictable twists; you should follow your sense of where you can learn the most, not a rigid format.

1. **Establish Rapport.** Don’t forget to get a conversation going with your interviewee before you start talking about self-confidence. The weather, the work, common friends, or colleagues--all can be non-threatening topics. Unless you know this person very well (some spouses, etc.), a few minutes on small talk will pay big dividends when you get to the serious discussion.

2. **State the Purpose of the interview.** You should cover the points in this suggested statement. “As part of the MBA program at Boston University, we are studying Leadership; one of our assignments is to talk with someone, like yourself, about how they developed self-confidence. There is a lot we don’t know about leadership, but one thing we do know is that self-confidence is necessary for effective leadership. By sharing the actual experiences of people, like yourself, in developing confidence, we hope to be able to better understand how self-confidence develops, and the role it plays in performance.”

   “Our interview will be anonymous--although I will do a write-up of my notes, and I will share parts of that with the class, your name and any identifying information will not be shared. As we go, I will take some notes, simply because I have a memory like a sieve. And, before we get started, I want to thank you for doing this. I think you will find it enjoyable, and a learning experience for yourself. Are there any questions you would like to ask me before we get started?”

3. **Interview Introduction.** “Self-confidence is your judgment of whether or not you can do something. Many people confuse self-confidence with self-esteem. *Self-esteem* is how much you like yourself; how you evaluate your self as a person. Self-confidence is simply, “can I do it?” It develops over time, because we are constantly facing new

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1 Adapted from a self-confidence interview guide developed by George P. Hollenbeck, Ph. D.
challenges. And the good news from psychological research is that we can develop it in new areas. I want to talk with you about how you have developed confidence—how important you feel it is, areas where you feel you have more or less confidence; your own personal experiences that were important.”

4. Potential Interview Questions: Here some possible questions for you to pick and choose from, and which should stimulate your own thoughts for those you want to ask.

1. To get started, I’d like to ask you how you came to do the kind of work that you are doing today? Could you tell me your "story" of how you ended up where you are now?

2. Now, more specifically, could you say a bit about what kind of education, training, and previous experience that a person would need to do this kind of work?

3. Now, could we look at the role of self-confidence in your work? First, how do you view self-confidence? How important is it in your job? Your life? on your work performance?

4. Think of a major change that you have made in your career that took the most self-confidence. What enabled you to do it? Where did you get the confidence? Some people find they gained confidence from watching others, some from practice, some from having others urge them on. What things were important to you?

5. If you look back at the major experiences that built your confidence that helped you make that change, what would they be? Could you describe these for me?

6. As you were thinking about the decision to make that change, what was your alternative if you had not made that change? In other words, what was the “path not taken?” Could you tell me a bit about what that path not taken might have looked like if you had taken it?

7. What is your view of that other “path not taken” today? Do you see any relationship between the path not taken and the one you did take? Do you see any elements of the path not taken in what you are doing today?

8. Was any particular person (e.g., a boss, friend, mentor, coach) or job important to you in making this change? What did the person or the job do for you? Why was it important?

9. Can you talk a bit about the relationship between your sense of identity (how you see yourself) and the process of your making this change? How did your sense of identity influence your decision (if at all)? And how, in turn, was your sense of identity affected by the change that you made (if at all?)

10. Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions about the specifics of the kind of work that you do. Could you say a bit about the main rewards and challenges or frustrations of
your work? How much flexibility and autonomy do you have? What kinds of work/life conflicts are inherent in this work? What recommendations would you make for a person who is interested in getting started doing your type of work? Is there any other advice that you would offer?

Interview Close: “That pretty much covers everything I wanted to cover. Before we close, can you think of anything you would like to add that we haven’t covered? Thanks very much for your help. This was a terrific interview. I have really learned a lot, and it's been very helpful to me as I think about next steps in my own career.”
Appendix B

The Learning Log as a Way to Leverage Learning

Douglas T. Hall

Research has found that when executives reflect on their experiences, their learning increases dramatically. Or, as we might modify the old saying, “Experience is the best teacher – if you can learn from it!” The Learning Log is a way to help you learn from your experience.

We also know that having some structure in your reflection can help you do it more often and do it better. And you will be asked to turn in your Learning Log with your final paper. So, here are some suggestions about how to structure your reflections in a journal as part of a formal learning experience.

Format

People often ask what form the journal entries should be in – a notebook, a computer file, etc.? The answer is, there is no one right way to do a journal. The best way is whatever works best for you. If it is easier to carry a small notebook around with you, so that you can jot down quick reflections when they occur to you, do it that way. If it works better to sit down at a keyboard (if, perhaps, you type much faster than you can write by hand), do it that way. (The Learning Log that you turn in with your final paper can be typed or hand-written. If you keep your Log in longhand, you don’t need to type it before you turn in.)

Frequency

First, get in the habit of doing reflections and making entries in your journal on a regular basis. Pick a schedule that works best for you, but get into a habit of doing it at specific times. At a minimum, make a journal entry at least once a week. Some possible times for regular reflection might be:

- At the end of each class
- In the evening or the morning (whichever is more of a quiet time for you) of a day at the end of the week (e.g., Friday)
- After you meet with your study group or project team
- After significant events (such as course presentations)

Content of the entries (what to write about)

You can prompt yourself with key questions to come up with journal entries. The three most useful questions to ask after an experience are the following:

1. What happened in this experience? Write down a brief (3 or 4 sentence) description of the events that occurred.
2. What did you learn from that experience? Or, what were the lessons of that experience?
3. How can you use that learning (or those lessons) in the future? What action can you take, using those lessons?

A related question is:
4. Who can I tell about this lesson? (Whom can I teach it to? Whom can I share it with?)

Another “memory jogger” is to review all of the things that you did since your last journal entry, perhaps by looking at your daily schedule in your organizer or by looking in your course syllabi for that time period. Then ask the questions such as the following:
- Have any intriguing ideas emerged from my team meetings and informal discussions?
- What ideas from my classes stand out in my mind as being especially important?
- How would I characterize my personal involvement in classes? Did I reach out and actively participate? Did I just offer my own ideas and opinions, or did I also raise questions or provide information to others? How did other people react to my ideas?
- When did I see my energy level peak? Decline? Why?
- What made it easy or difficult for me to learn? What does that say about how I prefer to learn?
- Are there any general themes emerging?

And then, our three core questions again:
- What are the three most important things I learned?
- How will I describe my learnings to others?
- What actions do I plan to take based on what I learned?

Learning Log Guidelines

We will summarize, then, with some specific guidelines for making the most of your reflections.

1. Write in the journal regularly.
2. Choose a specific time of day or week to devote to writing in your journal.

3. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation, or complete sentences. (Just get the thoughts down.
4. Explore creative ways to record in your journal (a poem, a picture, a metaphor, mind maps, colored markers, etc., in addition to thoughtful prose.)
5. Adopt a spirit of inquiry (go with the flow, be curious, learn).
6. At regular intervals, read what you’ve written.
7. Allow contradictions to occur (then explore any apparent paradoxes – good learning here!)
8. Observe yourself as you think and learn with your journal writing.
9. Share ideas with others (provides new insights, new journal material).
10. Trust that you will discover relevant information. (If you believe this activity has value, it will!)

Conclusion
Here’s a final thought. You are often under great time pressure in your daily life, with time devoted to school, perhaps your job, family, and friends – in short, with life! So it often may seem as if there is just not enough time to jot down some reflections and lessons on a regular basis. Thus, you may often be tempted to replace reflection time with more task activity.

We encourage you to resist this temptation to skimp on reflection time. Each time you do it, you’ll see good value for the time invested. The action implication of this lesson from experience: Trust the power of reflection and make it a regular ritual for ending a day or a week or an important learning experience.

References for further reading on journals


Appendix C

Enhancing your Developmental Network

The purpose of this activity is to:
1) Help you assess and enhance (extend and/or strengthen) your developmental network relative to major challenges/opportunities you will face in the next 1-3 years.
2) Help you develop a networking strategy that will work for you.
3) Help you develop a specific plan to pursue over the next 6 months-1 year
4) Create an accountability mechanism

Assessing Your Network:

Research on Executive Development has demonstrated that individuals benefit from a variety of developmental relationships including short-term and long-term alliances with bosses, peers, senior executives, coaches, subordinates, and family members. The more diversity and depth in your developmental network the better. Depending on our dominant Learning Tactics, we are more or less likely to pay attention to the quality of our developmental network.

1. As you think about the major changes that are likely to take place at your place of work in the next few years, what major challenges and/or opportunities do you foresee that you will need to deal with in the next 1-3 years.

2. Given these challenges and/or opportunities, what type of help are you most likely to need?
   A. Help in getting the job done
   B. Help in advancing my career
   C. Emotional support
   D. All of the above

A. If your major challenge/opportunity is related to your work, how well positioned are you to get information, advice, and resources about new opportunities and possibilities?
   Very well
   Okay
   Need to expand my network
   Who can help?

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3 This handout was adapted by Professor Kathy E. Kram from a worksheet developed by Professor Deborah Kolb, Simmons Graduate School of Management.
B. If your major challenge/opportunity means making a move into a leadership position, do you have relationships with people who can give you advice and effectively advocate or champion you for important assignments or other developmental activities?
   Yes __________
   No __________
   Who can help?

C. If your challenge/opportunity means that you will need emotional support, to what extent do you have people who can give you support?
   I have a strong support network to help me _______
   I don’t have people who can help me through changes I will have to make _______
   Who can help?

D. If your challenge/opportunity means that you will need help in getting the job done, advancing your career, and getting emotional support, do you have people in your network that can fulfill these functions?
   Yes _______
   No _______
   Who can help?

3. What is your approach to building relationships? How are you at initiating relationships? In what settings are you most comfortable meeting people?
   Joint or shared work / projects / committees ____________
   One-on-one appointments, with specific agendas ____________
   Informal ‘no-agenda’ social settings—going for coffee, lunch, drinks, etc. ____________
   Leisure activities such as golf, tennis, theater, etc. ____________
   Other: ________________________________

4. What is your preferred style?
   Occasional phone calls or emails just to ask “how are you?” ____________
   Phone calls, email, or visits with specific requests or questions ____________
   Holiday cards / letters ____________
   Dropping in or calling when you’re in the neighborhood ____________
   Arranging in advance to get together at professional meetings like this one _______
   Relying on the chance that your paths will cross ____________
   Inviting people to join you for lunch, coffee, golf, etc. ____________
   Contacting people when you find some information, article, opportunity, etc. that might interest them _______
   Other: ________________________________
**Action Planning:**

5. What are you going to do, specifically, to get things started? Specify how you will initiate contact and/or enhance existing relationships. Where will you get the process started? What approaches will you use? Will this be part of your leadership development plan?

6. Share what you have learned in completing this exercise with your peer coach. Each of you commit to the actions you will take in the next 3-6 months to expand your network in ways that help position you to move in the direction you identified above. Set a time for follow up and check in.