Harvard University

Summer School 2018

**Creative Thinking and Organizational Success**

**MGMT S-4310**

**Course Syllabus**

**DRAFT**

**(It’s creative thinking: expect some unexpected-ness.)**

***Day, Time, Format***

Summer School Session 2, July 14 – August 1

M - Th, 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Location: TBD

4 credits

***Instructors:***

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About the Course

Creative thinking is foundational to finding new solutions to complex challenges—both professional and personal. Deliberate creative thinking is mandatory for any individual or organization that values innovation. It is also critical to finding new and useful solutions to vexing challenges, particularly as they relate to entrepreneurship, change management, leadership, marketing, research, and communications.

In a recent global research study, Adobe found that 80% of adults felt that unlocking creativity is critical to economic growth, while only 25% believe they are living up to their creative potential.

You can learn how to be an effective creative thinker! In this highly experiential course, you will learn and practice the mind-set, skill set and tool set associated with creative problem solving. You will learn a lot about how your brain works when problem solving and learn about more effective teamwork.

You will apply your learning to a series of challenges that have increasing stakes, ranging from classroom exercises, to a team competition, to a client project. The goals are to learn how to:

* incorporate intentional creative thinking when solving big and complex challenges,
* build a climate conducive to creative thinking and innovation,
* maximize the work of teams charged with developing and activating new ideas,
* recognize and nurture the important links between leadership, creativity, and innovation.

What to Expect

This course is predicated on experiential learning. You will be introduced to – and asked to experiment with - the mind-set, skill-set and tool-set associated with creative thinking and innovation. The goal is to learn how to produce innovative solutions to important challenges. Come prepared for a journey of discovery that will stretch you, inspire you, frustrate you, make you laugh, make you tear your hair out and, finally, help you accomplish your goals.

**Class Participation:** Expect a **strong** bias toward experimentation and action. Class time consists of discussions, exercises and work on team projects. You are expected to show up prepared to contribute to the class in a thoughtful and meaningful way. That said, life intervenes so each student will be allowed one formally excused absence during the course. Use it wisely!

**Team Projects:** Team projects are inherently wonderful and frustrating; they are also an inherent part of almost every innovation initiative. In this class we will work on a variety of team projects.

**Key Assignments and Grading:**

* ***Daily Participation – 30%*** of final grade. It includes:
	+ Daily participation. You are expected to show up, ready and willing to go to work every day. We are looking for you to engage in class discussions and activities, to participate in projects, to share your ideas and insights openly and authentically, and to take appropriate risks. 20 points.
	+ Daily Journal. You are expected to maintain a journal about what you are learning in this class, including what strikes you as important, your frustrations/questions and your ideas for applying what you are learning in your life. The journal is not a note-taking activity; it is your interpretation about what you are learning and how you will apply it. You will find the journal integral to your ability to write papers, complete project work, and use what you learn in your real life (which is the goal, after all). We ask you to show us the journal the last day of class. There is no grade; it is simply 10 points for doing it thoughtfully; 0 for not doing it or doing it in what is clearly a lazy way.
* ***Project Work (in teams): 40%*** of final grade

The goal of the project work is to learn how to build and contribute to a creative climate while focusing on a task that requires you to think creatively. Grading is based on process as well as outcome. There are three projects:

* + Initial Reinvention assignment. This project requires you to work in a team to reinvent a common item. 5 points.
	+ Weekend challenge. This challenge requires you to leverage the tools you have learned in week 1. You’ll have to figure out how to get the project done and then present results to the class. You receive the project on the first Thursday of class; presentations are the following Monday. 10 points.
	+ Client challenge. We ask real life clients to come in and share an important challenge with you; your job is to find them a new and useful solution. You’ll have to figure out how to use your tools and skills to solve the challenge in a real way and then present the results. 25 points.
* ***Written work – 30%.***

The purpose of the written work is to articulate what you are learning and how you are and/or will apply what you are learning in your organizational and/or personal life. Grading criteria includes the depth of your reflection, how authentic your perspective is, how well you link what we are doing in class to what you want to do in your life, the originality of your approach and the quality of your written expression. There are two papers due:

* “**Adopt-an-Expert”** paper is due the second day of class. Find a writer who focuses in some way on creative thinking. The writer/speaker can be an academic, a practitioner and/or someone from the popular press. The main criteria is that the ***individual has a body of work on the process of creative thinking. (***Do NOT select a famous person who is artistic or creative – like a movie director. We want you to get an inside look at process – not just results!) Here are some names to get you started: Chip and Dan Heath, Tim Hurson, Edward DeBono, Tom/David Kelly, Mihaly Czikszentmihalyi, Gordon MacKenzie, Jamie Holmes.

Bring in a 600 – 1000 word paper explaining the writer’s insights relative to creative thinking and organizational success and how he/she motivates or inspires you. **Be prepared to do a one minute creative summary or presentation of your paper to the class**. 10 points.

* **The final paper is due August 1, the last day of class, by 11:59PM:** The assignment is to produce a 1500 – 2000 word paper summarizing your key learnings from the class and your plan for applying what you learned in your real life.

These papers will be peer reviewed. That is, in addition to being read by the instructor(s), they will be reviewed by two other class mates. You will be assigned other students’ papers to peer review. ***Peer reviews are due Sunday night after class ends, by 11:59 p.m.*** 20 points, which includes completing your assigned peer reviews.

**Helpful hint:** Per Harvard policy, English fluency is a part of all written assignments. We encourage you to visit to the Writing Center if you need support organizing and/or communicating your ideas effectively.

What to prepare before arriving on day 1

**Adopt-an-Expert”:** the paper described above.

***The Foursight(R) Assessment.***

Prior to class, you need to take the FourSight® assessment. FourSight is a multi-question assessment that reveals where your energies lie in the innovation process. Every profile contributes in some way to the innovation process.

 You will need to pay for the assessment, with a credit card, before filling in your responses. The cost is $26.00 USD.

Please read the directions and answer all the questions. Once you submit all your answers, you are finished. Your answers will automatically go to a secure database and your results will be given to you during class.

Follow the link below to take FourSight online. It takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete:

<https://i.foursightonline.com/assessments/f9104fa32b7fdac0a92d040a76f1358b>.

***Recommended Reading:***

“**Creativity**”: InGenius: A Crash Course on Creativity, by Tina Seelig

ISBN-13: 978-0062020703

ISBN-10: 0062020706

The book can be purchased from many bookstores, including the Harvard Coop and online booksellers. We will not spend time in class discussing the book but it will be an invaluable tool for you to use during class and in your library post-class.

The Fine Print

*Accessibility Services.* If you need to request accommodations, please get in touch with the Accessibility Services office: [http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources-policies/accessibility-services](http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources-policies/accessibility-services%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

*Common sense warning.* Ethics and integrity are everything. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the Harvard’s policies on academic integrity, which can be found at Resources to Support Academic Integrity:  [http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources-support-academic-integrity](http://www.summer.harvard.edu/resources-policies/resources-support-academic-integrity%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

*Workload.* The value you receive from this course will be commensurate with the thought, effort and reflection that you put into the endeavor. Expect to spend 1 - 3 hours daily outside of each class to read and reflect upon the assigned materials, complete assignments, and prepare for the next class session.

*Timeliness*. Timeliness counts in grading. Students are expected to arrive to class on time and stay for the duration of the class session. If you expect to be late or absent from class – or need to leave early – let the instructor know prior to the start of class.

*Deadlines*. All assignments must be submitted at the specified day and time and ***late submissions will not be accepted***. ***We are serious about this***. If you are absent the day an assignment is due, the assignment is still due at the specified day and time. True medical or family emergencies will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

*Professional Conduct*. Professional behavior is expected throughout the class. This means respectful communication both inside and outside of class. During discussions, civil discourse should be maintained at all times and comments should be aimed at moving the discussion forward. This does not mean that students must always agree with others since reasoned, respectful dissension may be part of the discovery process and lead to previously unconsidered options. Please stay present and focused on the class presentation and discussion and refrain from texting, emailing, or web surfing during class.

More Detailed Course Outline, Readings and Assignments

**Week 1: Foundations of Creative Thinking**

Week 1 focuses on the fundamental concepts of intentional creative thinking. You will learn basic definitions, concepts, and tools, as well as how to build and lead teams prepared for breakthrough thinking. You will tackle an in-class “re-engineering” exercise and, over the 1st weekend, a competitive team challenge. Be prepared to do group work over the weekend.

**Monday: Basic tools of creative thinking**

* Introductions
* Basic Tools: divergent/convergent thinking; wishes; assumption busting; GPS
* Work on reinvention project

Homework due Tuesday:

* Reinvented item due
* One minute presentations on your expert
* “Adopt an Expert” paper due in Canvas

**Tuesday:** **Reinvention presentation + Introducing your experts**

* Morning exercise
* Invention presentations and debrief
* Expert presentations
* Convergence: what it is and how to do it well

Homework due Wednesday:

* Chapters 1, 2 and 3 Ingenius
* Movie night! Organize a movie night with other class members and watch the [The Pixar Story](https://www.amazon.com/Pixar-Story-Leslie-Iwerks/dp/B006RZZOCQ/ref%3Dsr_1_1/ref%3Dsr_1_1?_encoding=UTF8&keywords=the%20pixar%20story&qid=1445795149&sr=8-1) (video). Available for viewing (or purchase) through itunes and other places.
* Individually, bring in 3 observations about creative thinking, based on the movie.

**Wednesday: Intro to Creative Problem Solving; deep dive on framing the challenge**

* Taking on a creative challenge
* Intro to Creative Process: Team Exercise and Foursight® Results.
* Discussion: Focus on framing and writing a challenge question

Homework due Thursday:

* Bring in challenge reframe
* Chapters 4, 5, 6 Ingenius

**Thursday**: **Negativity Bias; Intro to Design Thinking methodology**

* Morning exercise
* Discussion: Negativity bias and what to do about it
* Review/debrief reframing exercise
* Intro to Design Thinking
* Team formation for weekend challenge

Homework due Monday:

* Team challenge results
* Complete KAI questionnaire

**Week 2: Preparing for the Client Challenge**

Week 2 focuses on producing a real innovation for a real client organization. You will form teams, meet with client for initial briefing, and get to work. You will also learn additional tools and techniques

**Monday:** **Prepping for the client challenge; types of innovation and innovators; team formation and preparation**

* Morning exercise
* Team challenge presentations and debrief on process
* KAI/creative thinking style exercise and debrief
* Prepping for client challenge
	+ Challenge overviews
	+ Team formation
	+ Prepping for client briefing sessions: Wishes; client interview tools and techniques

Homework for Tuesday:

* Prepare client interview guide
* Research on client organization
* Finish Ingenius

**Tuesday:** **How to brainstorm effectively + Client briefing**

* Brainstorm tools and techniques
* Meet your clients!

Homework for Wednesday:

* Team huddle: plan research and next steps
* Conduct customer research
* First pass at insight statement

**Wednesday:**

* Guest speaker
* Debrief/discussion of research and insight statement

**Thursday:** **Insight statement and challenge question finalized**

* Review/discuss/iterate your needs/challenge statements
* Begin brainstorming solutions.

Homework for Monday:

* Additional customer research as needed
* Finish brainstorm
* Decide on direction for solution
* Prepare prototypes for class review

**Week 3: Bringing it all home**

**Monday:** **Iterating the prototypes**

* Morning exercise
* Share early prototype; class provides feedback

Homework for Tuesday:

* Customer feedback on prototype
* Prepare final prototype
* Prepare final presentation

**Tuesday:** **Final preparations**

* Morning exercise
* Dress rehearsal of prototypes and/or presentations
* Opportunity to get class/instructor feedback and ideas

Homework for Wednesday:

* Be ready for tomorrow

**Wednesday:** **Client Day!**

* Present your solutions to your clients.

**Thursday:** **Taking it home**

* Journal reviews
* Final morning exercise
* Discussion of what we learned, what it means for our organizations, and our plans for applying it at home.
* Create a plan for applying learning in real lives
* Closing Celebration!

Homework: Write final paper; submit peer reviews.