

## **Leadership Challenge (BU5584) – Preparation Briefing Note for Participants Starting the MBA, MBA HRM, Energy MBA and International Business MSc in January 2015**

Dear participant,

Welcome to the Leadership Challenge (BU5584). The field of Leadership is an engaging and challenging area of study with different perspectives on not only what leadership is but also what constitutes effective leadership.

To help you prepare for the course we have provided you with a summary of the guidance provided on the e-learning portal MyAberdeen (<https://abdn.blackboard.com/>).

You will be given full access to this portal once you have completed the formal registration for your programme.

The required textbook for this course is:

- Northouse, Peter G. Leadership: Theory and practice. Sage Publications, 2012.
- The current edition is the 6th edition - but the earlier 5th edition is acceptable.
- A Kindle version is available.
- There are several copies available in the University Library.

The course is structured around 5 main themes:

- Understanding My Leadership
- Leadership and Culture
- Leadership Theory and Frameworks
- Leadership in Practice
- Tools and Techniques for Supporting Leadership

There are three main parts to the course.

**The Preparation Week (Wkc 19th January)** - during this week you will be expected to complete material in advance of the on campus week. It is essential that you complete these preparatory assignments to ensure everyone benefits from a sharing of our collective knowledge during the week.

**The Teaching Week (Wkc 26th January)** - during this week class activities will take place on campus between 9:00 and 16:00.

**The Assessment Week (Wkc 1st February)** - During this week you will be required to complete the individual assessments for the course and guidance sessions will be provided.

Copies of the Course Guide and Course Timetable are attached to this email.

### **Preparation Week (Times and Venues)**

These are optional briefing and guidance sessions:

- Tuesday 20th Jan: 10.00 - 12.00 Venue MT4 (Meston Building)
- Thursday 22nd Jan: 14.00 - 16.00 Venue KCG8 (King's College)

### **Workshop Week (Times and Venues)**

- Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 30<sup>th</sup> January
- See the attached timetable
- Attendance is compulsory

### **Assessment Week**

These are optional guidance sessions:

- Monday 2nd Feb 14.00 - 16.00 KQG5 (King's College)
- Thursday 5th Feb 14.00 - 16.00 KQG5 (King's College)

### **Preparation Activities**

**Preparation activities should be completed before the start of the workshop week**

**Day 1: (Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January) Understanding My Leadership.**

#### ***Preparation task 1a***

#### **Register for 'The Everest Challenge:**

One of the challenges associated with exploring leadership behaviour on a postgraduate programme of study is that each of you will have different levels and experiences of leadership. Therefore, to give us a common framework for discussion, on day one of the course everyone will be involved in participating in the Everest Leadership Challenge. This is a web-based simulation in which you and your fellow team members will attempt to undertake a successful ascent of Mount Everest. The simulation story line involves a challenging expedition toward the summit of Mt. Everest. You will begin your journey by being allocated to a

team which will comprise of five other course participants. You will be given a role in the team and specific individual and team tasks to complete.

Before coming to the first class on Monday the 26th of January. You need to ensure that you have:

- Registered with the simulation. This must be done by **Wednesday the 21st January at 5pm**. This will then allow us to allocate you to a team and give you a team role.
- Read the background material on the simulation and your role (this will only be available to you after you have joined the simulation and been allocated to a role).

### **How to join the simulation**

Please note that the link to join the simulation will be provided at the start of the wkc 19th Jan and will be available on the e-learning portal for the course (<https://abdn.blackboard.com/>).

### ***Preparation task 1b***

We all have different personality traits and understanding your own personality can be helpful in developing your approach to leadership. Personality profiling tools are now used by many organisations to help them evaluate how an individual matches to a specific role in the business, or will fit in with the culture of the organisation. To help you explore your own personality in a little more detail we have provided access to two of these tests. To complete the tests follow the instructions below.

**Please complete both these tests by Wednesday 5pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January and complete the short assignment**

### **Test 1: Myers-Briggs**

The first personality profile we would like you to complete is based on the **Myers-Briggs** test. To find out more on the background to this profiling approach click [here](#).

### **How to generate your profile**

To complete the test follow the instructions below:

- Go to <http://www.profilingforsuccess.com/main/flash.php>
- Click on the red button labeled "Start Assessment"
- Select language
- Choose the "client code + access + password" option
- Enter the client code: tflhe
- Enter the access code: uniaberdeen
- Enter the password ua080612
- Follow the on-screen instructions to register. This will allow you to receive feedback by email
- You will see four tests available. Please only complete the following test:  
Type Dynamics Indicator Form.

It should take you about 10 minutes to complete the test.

Once again please do not share the link as these tests are for Aberdeen University students only.

## **Test 2 Insights**

Details of how to complete this test will be uploaded the wkc 19th January

Please remember to complete both these Tests by Wednesday 5pm on the 21st of January and complete the short assignment below.

### ***Preparation Task 1c***

To complete this task you must first complete the Myers-Briggs (Test 1) profile above. Once complete - you will have received feedback on your personality and how that shapes your approach to different kinds of tasks and roles. To prepare for the workshop please provide the following:

- A short summary of how the test describes you (50 words).
- A statement of what you agree or disagree with in the profile generated for you (150 words) - Think about which elements of the feedback you feel reflect your self-perception of your own character and which observations you disagree with.

Please upload your short report (200 words) via the e-learning portal for the course.

## **Day 2: (Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> January) Leadership and Culture**

### ***Preparation Task 2***

To prepare for Day 2 you need to complete the following tasks:

- Read the chapter in Northouse on Culture and Leadership.
- Complete the 'Dimensions of culture' questionnaire at the end of the Chapter.
- Think about your score relative to the cultural cluster for your geography given in the chapter

Please bring a copy of your scorecard from the self-assessment to the session on day 2.

### **Day 3: (Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January) Leadership Theory and Frameworks.**

#### ***Preparation Task 3***

To prepare for the session on the Theory Challenge we would like you to complete a piece of independent research into the frameworks and theories which underpin the following:

- Transactional Leadership
- Transformational Leadership
- Authentic Leadership

As a starting point you might find Chapters 8,9 and 10 in Northouse - Leadership Theory and Practice (Editions 5/6) helpful. However, we are really more interested in what you can find out from your own independent research!

For each of the above Transactional, Transformational and Authentic leadership please identify:

- The main components of the theory/approach.
- And three strengths and three weaknesses of the theory/approach for understanding leadership behaviour.

Please upload your findings as a brief report (500 words) by 17:00 Friday 23rd January via the e-learning portal.

### **Day 4: (Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> January) Leadership in Practice**

To prepare for day 4 of the course we would like you to review, research and prepare three leadership cases. These are:

- Harriet Green - Thomas Cook
- Charlos Ghosn - Nissan
- Anne Mulcahy - Xerox

### ***Preparation Task 4a***

#### **Harriet Green – Thomas Cook**

Please start with this link regarding Harriet's recent resignation

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-30205558>

and then follow this with your own research.

The questions we would like you to think about in preparing this case are:

- What is the role of the leader in Transforming the Business?
- How does this impact business performance if they subsequently leave the organisation?

Please bring your case notes to the class on Thursday the 29th of January.

### ***Preparation Task 4b***

#### **Carlos Ghosn – Nisan**

To prepare this case please read the article attached to this email:

The questions we would like you to think about in preparing this case are:

- What was the main leadership challenge facing Ghosn?
- What is the role of the leader in driving change in a global business?
- What would you consider to be the key leadership skills and behaviours of Ghosn?
- How does Ghosn deal with the cultural diversity of the organisation?

Please bring your case notes to the class on Thursday the 29th of January.

### ***Preparation Task 4c***

#### **Anne Mulcahy - Xerox**

To prepare this case please watch the following videos.

- <http://tinyurl.com/Mulcahy-1>
- <http://tinyurl.com/Mulcahy-2>
- <http://tinyurl.com/Mulcahy-3>
- <http://tinyurl.com/Mulcahy-4>

The questions we would like you to think about in preparing this case are:

- What was the main leadership challenge facing Mulcahy?
- What steps did she take to address this challenge?
- What does this tell us about her approach to leadership?
- How do theories and frameworks help us understand her approach?

Please bring your case notes to the class on Thursday the 29th of January.

**Day 5 (Friday 30<sup>th</sup> Jan) Tools and Techniques for Supporting Leadership**

No preparation tasks are required for this theme as the day will build on work completed during the week of the workshop.