

CMGT 508: Communicating Strategy and Change

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Course description

We live in an era of Wikipedia, YouTube and Facebook. According to *TIME* magazine, these technologies are changing not only the world but also the way the world changes. Change is rapid and continuous. Communication managers, armed with state-of-the art tools and techniques are called upon every day to communicate changes in strategy, focus and intent. This course will prepare you for that challenge.

Course readings, discussions, and lives sessions will provide content, and field projects will provide you experience in communicating strategy and change.

Week 00: Introduction to Course

Week 01: Introduction to Course, continued

Week 02: Contracting and a Flawless Consulting Process

Week 03: Resistance

Week 04: Strategy I: Overview

Week 05: Strategy II: Case

Week 06: Midterm

Week 07: Ad-Free Brands

Week 08: Change Models I

Week 09: Change Models II: Congruence and Process Models

Week 10: Organizational Learning and Mental Models

Week 11: Power and Leadership I: Power and You

Week 12: Power and Leadership II: Adaptive Leadership

Week 13: Final Paper

Week 14: Conclusion

Learning objectives

1. Examine the critical role communication plays in the development and implementation of business strategy.
2. Distinguish among frameworks for managing and communicating change.
3. Apply change communication tools and techniques to real business cases.

Textbooks and materials

Required Textbooks:

- Block, P. (2011). *Flawless consulting: A guide to getting your expertise used* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer Publishing. ISBN-13: 860-1400125373
- Grams, C. (2011). *The ad-free brand: Secrets to building successful brands in a digital world*. Indianapolis, IN: Que Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0789748027
- Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2010). *Switch: How to change things when change is hard*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0385528757
- Kotter, J.P., & Rathgeber, H. (2006). *Our iceberg is melting: Changing and succeeding under any conditions*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press. ISBN-13: 978-0312361983
- Pfeffer, J. (2010). *Power: Why some people have it and others don't*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers. ISBN-13: 978-0061789083
- Worley, C., Williams, T., & Lawler, E. (2014). *Assessing Organization Agility: Creating Diagnostic Profiles to Guide Transformation*. Jossey- Bass. (e-book)*

Optional, but recommend textbooks:

- Senge, P. M. (2006). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Currency/Doubleday. ISBN- 978-0385517256
- Worley, C., Williams, T., & Lawler, E. (2014). *The Agility Factor: Building Adaptable Organizations for Superior Performance*. Jossey- Bass. ISBN-13: 978-1-118-84705-3 *(Note: The required e-book is a companion to this book; you will greatly benefit from using this material to give context to the e-book).
- **Required Articles:** There are required Harvard Business School articles for this course. They can be purchased as a course pack at HBS.com: <http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/72566114>
- **Other Materials:**
 - Webcam and microphone for recording presentation

Sessions and days of the week

The course is divided into **fifteen weeks, starting with Week 0 and ending with Week 14**. Due dates for assignments and discussions are stated in day numbers. Day 1 is Wednesday, the first day of the beginning of each weekly session.

Day 1	Wednesday
Day 2	Thursday
Day 3	Friday
Day 4	Saturday
Day 5	Sunday
Day 6	Monday
Day 7	Tuesday

Assignments are due no later than **11:55 p.m. in the Pacific Time zone** on the day that is stated in the assignments section.

Grading policy

Components	Points Available
1. Discussion (Discussion grade calculated at semester end. 20 at 5 pts each)	100 points
2. Assignments (2 at 50 pts each)	100 points
3. Organizational Change Checkpoints (Group) (4 at 50 pts each)	200 points
4. Midterm: lululemon Case Application (Group)	200 points
5. Final: Organizational Change Case and Presentation (Individual)	300 points
6. Feedback (Two course evaluations at 25 pts each and two peer evaluations at 25 pts each)	100 points
Total Points	1000

Final: Organizational Change Case and Presentation (300 total points possible)

Refer to the [Final Paper and Presentation assignment guidelines](#) for full assignment instructions.

The final project (paper and presentation) will be graded using the following criteria:

Final: Organizational Change Case and Presentation	
Criteria	Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student submits accurate, thought-provoking analysis grounded in specific theoretical framework(s) discussed in class and based on data collected about the organization. • Student synthesizes critical information from checkpoints. • Student formulates innovative, sound conclusions and recommendations bolstered by empirical evidence. • Student optimally structures and organizes content. • Student accurately cites all source material in accordance with a standardized method. If appropriate, use APA style. • Presentation is innovative, informative and engaging. • Presentation does not exceed seven minutes. 	300-265
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student submits accurate, interesting analysis grounded in specific theoretical framework(s) discussed in class and based on some data collected about the organization. • Student synthesizes information from checkpoints. • Student formulates sound conclusions bolstered by empirical evidence. • Student effectively structures and organizes content. • Student accurately cites all source material in accordance with a standardized method. If appropriate, use APA style. • Presentation is informative and engaging. • Presentation does not exceed seven minutes 	264.9-230

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student submits analysis grounded in some theoretical framework(s) discussed in class. • Student formulates clear conclusions—most of which are bolstered by empirical evidence. • Student adequately structures and organizes content. • Student accurately cites most source material in accordance with APA style standards. • Presentation is informative. • Presentation exceeds seven minutes. 	229.9-195
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Midterm: lululemon Case Application (200 total points possible)

Refer to the [Midterm Instructions](#) for full assignment directions.

The midterm project will be graded according to the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team submits accurate, thought-provoking analysis grounded in specific theoretical framework(s) discussed in class and based on data collected about the organization • Team formulates innovative, sound conclusions and recommendations bolstered by empirical evidence. • Team optimally structures and organizes content. • Team accurately cites all source material in accordance with a standardized method. If appropriate, use APA style. 	200-180
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team submits accurate, interesting analysis grounded in specific theoretical framework(s) discussed in class and based on some data collected about the organization. • Team formulates sound conclusions bolstered by empirical evidence. • Team effectively structures and organizes content. • Team accurately cites all source material in accordance with a standardized method. If appropriate, use APA style. 	179.9-160
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team submits analysis grounded in some theoretical framework(s) discussed in class. • Team formulates clear conclusions—most of which are bolstered by empirical evidence. • Team adequately structures and organizes content. • Team accurately cites most source material in accordance with APA style standards. 	159.9-140

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team submits superficial analysis grounded in some theoretical framework(s) discussed in class. • Team formulates conclusions—some of which are bolstered by empirical evidence. • Team ineffectively structures and organizes content such that readers will likely have a hard time tracking the flow of ideas • Team cites some source material 	<p>139.9-120</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team submits incomplete analysis with no clear connection to specific theoretical framework(s) discussed in class. • Team formulates vague conclusions—none of which are bolstered by empirical evidence. • Team ineffectively structures and organizes content such that readers will have a hard time tracking the flow of ideas • Team omits or incorrectly cites source material. 	<p>119.9 points or lower</p>

Group Checkpoints (200 total points possible)

Think of your group as a consulting firm with several clients. Each member of the group is the lead consultant on his or her individual project. The task of the group is to deliver a quality product to each of its clients. You will do this by providing constructive feedback to your colleagues' checkpoints.

See the [Final Change Case Presentation Guidelines](#) for a detailed breakdown of the group checkpoints.

Discussion (100 total points possible)

Class discussion, both synchronous and asynchronous, is a critical part of the success of this course. This is a seminar course, where we collectively grapple with issues and challenges to effective organizational change management. Each individual is expected to be actively involved in class discussion every week. The primary assessment will be the quality of those contributions to the group effort.

Good contributions are:

- thoughtful
- analytical
- constructive to the group effort
- topically relevant
- linked to the readings assigned for that week

Poor contributions:

- simply restate what someone else has already said
- take the discussion on a tangent
- refer to issues we have already left behind as the discussion moves forward
- do not respect the other participants
- show that the individual has not done the assigned readings

Discussion Grading Rubric			
<i>Criterion</i>	<i>EXEMPLARY</i> 5	<i>SATISFACTORY</i> 2-4	<i>UNACCEPTABLE</i> 0-1
Relevance	The posting directly addresses key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity. The posting applies course concepts well, connecting them to actual activity.	The posting addresses key issues, questions, or problems related to the text and the discussion activity, but in some cases only indirectly or obliquely. It does not always apply course concepts fully.	The posting does not directly address the question or problem posed by the discussion activity.
Insight	The posting offers original or thoughtful insight, analysis, or observation that demonstrates a strong grasp of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topic.	The posting does offer some insight, analysis, or observation to the topic but may not demonstrate a full understanding or knowledge of concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topic.	The posting does not offer any significant insight, analysis, or observation related to the topic. No knowledge or understanding is demonstrated regarding concepts and ideas pertaining to the discussion topic.
Support	The posting supports all claims and opinions with either rational argument or	The posting generally supports claims and opinions with evidence or argument, but may leave some gaps	The posting does not support its claims with either evidence or argument. The posting contains largely

	evidence.	where unsupported opinions still appear.	unsupported opinion.
Number of Responses	The responses exceed the requirement for the discussion activity.	The responses fulfill the minimum required number for the discussion activity.	The responses do not meet the number required for the discussion activity.
Substance of Responses	The responses offer either an extension or elaboration on the original posting or a clearly alternate point of view that fosters further thinking, reflection, or response on the discussion topic.	The responses generally offer some insight by either extending the point of the original post or offering an alternate point of view, but they may not encourage further thought or reflection on the discussion topic as much as they possibly could.	The responses do not offer any new insight by either extending the position of the original post or providing an alternate point of view.

Assignments (100 total points possible)

There are two individual assignments worth 50 points each - one in Week 03 and one in Week 11. These are designed to help you understand and integrate the course content. These assignments are to be completed individually.

Feedback Reports (100 total points possible)

Because two-way communication is critical to the effective functioning of any learning organization, written feedback reports are required. You will submit two course feedback reports and two peer evaluation feedback reports. These are worth 25 points each.

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The feedback report will be graded credit/no credit. To receive credit you need to turn the feedback report in on time and show a good faith effort to produce a feedback report which helps us create a learning organization.

Grade ranges

Grade	Range
A	93.0% or higher
A-	90.0%-92.9%
B+	87.0%-89.9%
B	83.0%-86.9%
B-	80.0%-82.9%
C+	77.0%-79.9%
C	73.0%-76.9%
C-	70.0%-72.9%
D	60.0%-69.9%
F	59.9% or lower

Formatting guidelines for all written work

- All documents should be in Microsoft Word format.
- Please ensure that each paper follows the individual guidelines as laid out in the assignment instructions.
- Make sure you keep a copy of all submitted papers.
- Finally, typos and spelling errors are unforgivable at this level and reflect poorly on you.

Lateness

Any assignment submitted after the deadline but within 24 hours will receive no more than half-credit. Students submitting assignment more than 24 hours late should contact the instructor for grading on a case by case basis.

Live Sessions

See the “Live Session” discussion forum for Live Session dates and times.

Live sessions are an essential component of this course. A few live sessions will be conducted by Dr. Shipley and the rest will be conducted by your section instructor.

These sessions are not required, but they are strongly encouraged as there will be examples, discussions, and activities that will help to bring the course materials into focus. Each group is required to have at least one representative member for each live session.

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The goal of these live sessions is to enable students and faculty to enter into extemporaneous inquiry regarding pertinent course topics.

If you are unable to attend, please view the archive of the session to catch up on the discussion. You are encouraged to post any further thoughts you may have after this viewing on the general discussion board.

Please refer to the guide on how to attend a Live Session in the Live Session area under General in your course.

Group work

This course has weekly group work. Your groups will be randomly assigned before the semester begins. All your group and pair work is conducted with the members of this group. Group work is divided into three areas: Consulting, Feedback, and Discussions.

Consulting

The final project will be a summary and analysis of your "live change case" and recommendations for improving the change process. While this is an individual assignment, you will be working with your consulting group. The purpose of these groups is two-fold:

- Provide an opportunity to improve your analysis.
- Provide an opportunity to observe the application of course material in the context of multiple organizations.

You will be graded individually and on your performance as a group member. You will receive credit for your assignments and your participation. Each member of your group will also be completing a Final Peer Evaluation at the end of this course that will further help your instructor evaluate your performance.

This weekly group work will require efficient coordination and collaboration. As such, as soon as you learn the members of your assigned group, you should:

1. Decide when your group will meet.
2. Designate one member of the group to set up and share a Google Docs collection for use throughout the course.
3. Create a schedule that designates one member of the group who will be responsible for posting to class discussion forums on behalf of the group each week. Keep in mind that this person does not decide how to respond independent of the group, but is simply the one who reports on the group's conclusions.

Feedback

You are required to submit two peer evaluations (weeks 07 and 14) and two course feedback reports (weeks 05 and 10) throughout the course.

Discussions

These items appear throughout the course and you will see the words (Pair) or (Group) to know which ones can only be completed with your group.

Your group will remain consistent throughout the course.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/b/11-00-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://annenbergs.usc.edu/current-students/academic-advisement-and-services/advisement-blog/center-women-and-men-0> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations.

If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.

Library access

As a USC student, you have access to all the library resources and the Annenberg Librarian, Chimene Tucker (cetucker@usc.edu), is available to assist you with any inquiry you may have. <https://libraries.usc.edu/research/instructional-services/remote-access-electronic-resources>

Course Director Information



Teaching in the Communication Management program, Dr. Brad Shipley aspires to provide a learning experience that will result in practical application of Communication Theory and Research by exposing students to a variety of pedagogical approaches. An advocate for Experiential Learning, Brad has designed many learning simulations and has had articles published in leading Experiential Learning Journals. He currently teaches classes on topics such as Research Methods, Leadership, Group Communication, Persuasion, and Crisis Communication. Brad earned his PhD from USC Annenberg in Organizational Communication. His current research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to better understand Organizational Justice in the workplace. Brad has also provided training and development consulting for such organizations as The United States Peace Corp, Edwards Pharmaceuticals, and Westinghouse. Brad is married to his high school sweetheart Anne and they have three children: Chandler, Jessica, and Sophie

Technical Support and Technical Requirements

A full description of the technical requirements for this course can be found on our [technical support page](#).

Assistance to resolve technical problems is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year. This service is provided by Pearson Education, and it is restricted primarily to problems associated with the functionality of the course delivery platform.

Pearson Education Group's Help Desk staff for assistance to resolve problems you believe are not associated with the computer hardware and software you have purchased from a vendor.

Examples of problems that fall within this category are:

- Unable to view multimedia files.
- Unable to view responses to comments you have posted in the Discussion area.

If you are not sure whether the problem is due to your computer system, contact Pearson's Help Desk for guidance; otherwise, contact the vendor.

To talk to a live technical support agent, please call the following number:

Toll-free	877-646-1885
Support Center	http://usc.echelp.org