BUEC601 Online – Winter 2018
Developing Emotional Intelligence and Critical Thinking:
A Course in Effective Decision Making

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Online Office Hours: Weekly Zoom Video Conferencing or by appointment

Course Description
(This is a one-credit course that only meets for four weeks.)

BUEC601 centers on decision making as a critical life and leadership competency.

We make dozens of daily decisions from the mundane (“Should I have a cup of coffee?”) to the highly complex (“Do I invest in a new product; how much of the company should I bet on this investment; or should we acquire a new company?”) While we are good at making the first type of decision, we are generally not as good at making complex decisions.

When we make decisions, we tend to overlook complexity, which enables us to make the quick decisions (fight or flight) that were essential to our survival in our prehistoric environments. The need for complex decision making was rare in our prehistoric environment. It appears that our brain systems and ways of thinking are often not optimized for making good decisions in our modern complex environments.

A major problem is that our preference for quick and approximate decisions inhibits us from reflecting on our choices, hindering our learning, and limiting our ability to recognize when and how our choices should be modified. This may condemn us to repeat the same errors over and over again. By studying how effective decision makers use both emotional intelligence and critical thinking as techniques for managing these biases, we will improve our own reflective ability, our decision making, and our overall performance as leaders.

A second problem is that our early life experiences shapes our personality and can pre-program us to experience situations and react to them in a way that may no longer be accurate. To explore this, we will use a powerful self-assessment tool called the Predictive Index (PI) to discover our work-related default behavioral and decision-making preferences, including how we view the world, our tolerance for ambiguity and risk, and ultimately how we make decisions. The PI, validated according to EEOC guidelines, is used by thousands of organizations for recruiting, hiring and performance coaching.

The tools and strategies presented in this course will allow us to examine and proactively manage how our preferences, biases and reflective ability enable or impede us in our leadership journey. Our overarching goal is to develop strong decision-making processes that will help us improve our decision making in complex situations.
Readings to be purchased:

All of the * readings are available for purchase from the Harvard website: http://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/72677479

The other readings can be purchased from the bookstore or Amazon

Week One:


**“Beyond Bias: How to Shift Ingrained Thinking", Halvorson and Rock, Rotman Management, Spring 2016

Week Two:


I would suggest you start reading The Emotional Life of Your Brain for next week (Available from Amazon or the UD bookstore)

Week Three:


The Emotional Life of Your Brain, Davidson and Begley, 2012. Chapters 1, 3, 10 and 11. (Available from Amazon or the UD bookstore)

Week Four:

Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools – Mini Guide, Paula and Elder. (You can purchase this from Amazon or the bookstore.)


Please Note: there may be additional readings provided during the class
Assignments and Grading Policy

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four short open book and open note quizzes** (7% each)</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>(10 items - True/False, Multiple Choice)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI Self Scoring Sheet</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning journal consisting of four entries (13% each) based on each week's</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>materials – due at the end of the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four discussion boards (4% each)</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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This class moves very quickly and as such no late assignments will be accepted without prior approval.

** I will provide a study guide to assist you with the quizzes. The quizzes help me determine how well you understood the concepts in that week’s class. They will each be 25 minutes long and will be administered online. The quiz is due at the end of the week (by Sunday) at 11:59pm. They will be open book / open notes, but you may not get or give help to another person once you or they have taken the quiz. Academic dishonesty is subject to disciplinary action and possible expulsion from the program.

Course Schedule & Topics

Week One: Introduction

- Decision-making as a key competency
- Even senior leaders have difficulty and make career ending decisions
- Socrates - Critical Thinking and Emotional Intelligence
- We have evolved two systems in our brain for thinking and decision making (System I and II)
- The Theory of Constructed Emotions
- System I - Decision Heuristics – pros and cons
- System I - Common cognitive biases
- Managing the major cognitive biases
- System I - Emotional Tagging and Pattern Recognition
- System II – Math Lazy?
- Sensory and memory limitations
Week Two: The Predictive Index and Your Baseline Preferences

- Self-Awareness as a key leadership competency
- The PI and self-awareness
- Debrief of the predictive index results
- The PI results and your decision-making preferences
- Using the PI to improve your leadership, teamwork and decision-making

Week Three: Emotional Intelligence

- What is Emotional Intelligence (EI)
- Why does EI matter
- How the PI and EI relate
- A bit of anatomy
- Emotion and Thinking – the evolutionary artifact
- Identifying the emotions of others
- Emotion and Decision Making – the Pros and Cons
- Decision Making, Stress, and Chronic Stress
- New Ways to Understand/Measure Emotion and Performance (an example of how stress impacts performance)
- Emotional Styles and the Brain
- Mindfulness Meditation
- Modifying your Emotional Style and Building EI

Week Four: Critical Thinking and Tools to Improve Decision Making

- Improving our analytical decision processes
- Critical Thinking and the elements of thought
- How critical thinking improves reflection
- Twelve questions to determine if cognitive bias is at play within a team
- An expanded dual-process model - improving both our algorithmic and reflective thinking
- The Cognitive Reflection test
- Improving our reflective abilities – helping system II win so you win

This syllabus is subject to change per the instructor but advance notice will be provided.

The due dates for all assignments can be found in Canvas by clicking on the syllabus tab once I open the course.

The initial post to the discussion boards are due on Saturday by 11:59pm.
All 4 quizzes must be completed by Sunday at midnight. The quiz grades will be made available on Monday afternoon.

The final learning journal must be handed in by the Sunday of the final week of class.