**Course Overview**

This is a course on the foundations for achieving success in work and life by leveraging personal strengths and relationship resources. The course is designed to promote self-awareness and an understanding of the foundations of personal effectiveness, develop an appreciation of the complexity and importance of interpersonal and team relationships, and anticipate the practical work and life challenges that can influence job effectiveness, career trajectories, and personal well-being.

**Learning Objectives:**

Learning outcomes for this course are focused around understanding how to leverage personal strengths and relational resources in addressing organizational and work-life challenges.

- **Personal Strengths:** Understanding the personal factors and behavior patterns predicting personal and career success. Emphasis placed on building patterns of thinking and action that enhance learning/growth and satisfaction, and in so doing promote effectiveness.
- **Relationship Resources:** Understanding the strategic role of high quality relationships and how to build, maintain, and leverage them. Emphasis placed on dynamics of trust and collaboration.
- **Organizational Challenges:** Developing strategies for leveraging personal strengths and relationship resources within modern work/organizational settings. Emphasis placed on meeting requirements for effectiveness in diverse, cross-cultural, geographically distributed, and high-reliability work settings.
- **Work-Life Blend and Balance:** Understanding how to make work personally rewarding, manage the interface between work and family, and balance work and health.

**Required Textbooks:**


[Additional required readings made available online through IVLE. Please consult the detailed course outline when finalized.]

**Course Requirements and Grading**

- "Streetwise" Team Project: 30%
- "Reflection" Projects (3 in total): 45%
- One-page case write-ups: 5%
- Class Contribution: 20%
Team Assignment

Streetwise Team Project (STP)

Description: The Streetwise Team Project (STP) provides you and two colleagues with the opportunity to explore topics at the intersection between the realities of the organizational life (e.g., new technologies, emerging environmental realities, cross-cultural issues, changes in societal values, new forms of diversity) and what matters most to people in the workforce (e.g., pursuing personal and career objectives, managing impressions and key relationships, finding meaning in work, dealing with dysfunctional work relationships, managing the interface between home and work, being ethical).

Research topics will be self-selected by project teams. The main constraint on topic choice is that there should be no direct duplication of research topics across teams within the same class section. Topics are “assigned” on a first-come first-served basis, so communicate your preference in topics to the professor as soon as possible.

Deliverables: As an integrative team assignment, your team will 1) systematically review published work related to your chosen topic, 2) conduct your own independent research on the topic through some combination of in-depth personal interviews, participant observation, case studies, or surveys, 3) prepare a report of your research findings and their practical implications for people at work [12 pages in length, 12-point Times Roman font, double-spaced, single-sided], 4) prepare an Executive Brief (2-pages) for distribution in class, and 5) present the findings of your work to the class in a 10-15 minute presentation.

Individual Assignments

The Reflected Best Self (RBS) Assignment (Reflection Project #1)

The goal of this activity is to gather input from people who know you well to help you understand yourself when you are at your best, and understand how you can better leverage your strengths. Roberts and colleagues (2005) provide a good overview of the project and what you can hope to accomplish by completing it. This article is included in your assigned readings for the first session of the class.

Further guidelines for completing this project and preparing your report will be distributed in class. I will be grading this assignment based on three criteria, equally weighed: 1) level of your engagement in the exercise, 2) thoroughness and coherence of your reflections, and 3) clarity of your writing.

Proven Positive Practices (PPP) Assignment (Reflection Project #2)

In this assignment you will be putting into practice one or more of the twelve “happiness activities” introduced in Lyubomirsky (2008). Your assignment is to select one or more happiness activities (ones that you do not already consciously practice), commit yourself to engagement in the activities on a daily basis for a period of three weeks, follow through on your commitment, and prepare a report that details your learning from the experience. Lyubomirsky provides a framework for identifying activities that fit your interests, values and needs in Chapter 3—complete your reading of the first three chapters, and the ‘relevant’ chapter that follows, before you begin the assignment. Once you have selected your activity for this assignment, send me an email that outlines your commitment, and then proceed. Given the emphasis on reflective learning, I recommend that you maintain a daily diary/record of your experiences for later reference.

Your final 5-page report (12-point font, double-spaced, single-sided) will describe the activities undertaken, your experiences with the activities and the changes that took place over the three weeks. The report will also detail the lessons you have learned from your experience, the activity’s benefits as well as any unintended negative consequences.
Integrative Reflection Analysis (IRA) Assignment (Reflection Project #3)

The final reflection essay assignment is designed to encourage integrative thinking on what you have learned through the semester. This assignment will be completed during the final week of the semester.

One-Page Case Write-Ups

I will provide you with a set of questions for each Case covered during the class. Your task is to write up your own responses to these questions, and to submit them at the beginning of class on the day that the assigned case is discussed. I encourage you to discuss cases with peers, but the answers you submit must be authored by you alone. While seven (7) cases are covered over the course of the semester, you need only submit five (5) reports. Also note that I do not accept late submissions of case write-ups.

Class Contribution

I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss all assigned materials—journal articles and chapters as well as cases. As you bring your own ideas and insights to the class you contribute to the learning of your peers, and this is a signal of effective class participation.

McAllister's Criteria for Evaluating Written and Presented Work

My expectation is that you will communicate your ideas in a way that is clear, precise, and informative. Be convincing—organize your thoughts and making your points with logic and supporting rationale. I look for similar elements when evaluating the written work you submit:

- **Discipline**: Make sure written work is organized and readable. Convey main points clearly to readers and in a logical manner. Do not gloss over the foundations—spell words correctly and adhere to rules for grammar and usage.

- **Justified Arguments**: Support assertions with evidence from relevant sources (e.g., text, reading, interviews). Be sure to acknowledge sources.

- **Specificity and Accuracy**: Make specific rather than vague assertions. You will have greater difficulty in justifying general observations/statements. Also, be careful with your use of technical terms—it is better to use an everyday word you do understand appropriately than to use a nice-sounding technical term inappropriately.

- **Wisdom**: Think through the implications of your recommendations (well beyond the obvious). Recognize potential unintended consequences and inherent trade-offs that must be considered.

- **Originality**: The quality of your ideas is important. Show creative, independent thinking as much as possible. Other things being equal, I reward attempts at creativity and thinking “outside-the-box.”

- **Integrity**: Signing your name to a report, exam or quiz signifies that the work is your own. In written reports, give credit where credit is due, acknowledging sources for both ideas and direct quotations. Follow accepted standards for citing and referencing sources (e.g., APA or MLA format).
Course Outline

Beginnings
14 Aug   Course Introduction: Positive Perspective on Effectiveness

Personal Strengths
21 Aug   Driving: Motivational Foundations for Thriving
28 Aug   Sustaining: Resources for Persistence
4 Sept   Orienting: Your Reflected Best Self

Relational Resources
11 Sept  Anchoring: Sources of Safety and Security
18 Sept  Connecting: Social Networks and Relational Capital
25 Sept  No Class: Recess Week
2 Oct    Confiding: Trust and Distrust

Organizational Challenges
9 Oct    Aligning: Personal Change and Having Impact
16 Oct   Feeling: Empathy and Perspective Taking
23 Oct   Bridging: Managing Differences and Distance
30 Oct   Streetwise: Practical Perspective for Effectiveness (extended session)
6 Nov    The Good Life: Thriving at home and at work
13 Nov   No Class: Deepavali