Information Technology Strategy (Executive)
Winter 2008/2009
Location: 5114
Time: 8:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Course Leader
Professor Jason Kuruzovich
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Office Hours: Wednesday 10-12, by appointment.

Starting/Ending Date of Course: The course will take place during December 5/6, and Jan 2/3.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In a netcentric world, information technology (IT) and corporate strategy are intertwined; IT makes possible new strategies, and the execution of the firm's strategy often depends on its ability to implement and manage IT. While IT is a ubiquitous part of the most organizational processes, management of the IT function is typically departmentalized and requires specialized technical knowledge. This course will examine these and other challenges to the strategic management of IT.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
The objective of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the key strategic issues faced by managers. This includes four fundamental concepts:

1. *Strategy and Transformation.*
2. *Governance and Risk*
3. *Implementation and Process Change*
4. *Enterprise Infrastructure and Electronic Commerce*

REQUIRED MATERIALS
You will be provided a folder with all necessary cases and readings. All cases and readings are required.

SESSION PREPARATION
This course uses case studies as its primary pedagogical approach. Students are expected to read all cases and assignments, come prepared to every class, and participate fully to the learning environment. Class participation and contribution make up a significant part of your final grade. Therefore, it is expected that you attend every class and participate fully.

Discussion-based learning relies upon a partnership – a collegial sharing of power, accountability and tasks–between you and us. Our role is to be planner, host, moderator, devil's advocate, and

judge. Yours is to be profoundly and actively involved in your own learning in order to discover for yourself, rather to accept our pronouncements.

Our discussions will put you "in the shoes" of the key decision maker(s) in the case(s). Standing there, you will be asked to deal with critical issues related to growing an entrepreneurial venture and leading the strategic renewal in a mature firm. You will be asked to propose and defend, in the low risk environment of our classroom, answers to two bottom-line questions: **"As the principal in the case, what would you do? Why?"**

CASE QUESTIONS
Prior to each class, you will be asked to answer 2 questions regarding the topics for that week. The questions write-up should be no more than 3 pages double spaced. Responses will be count as part of the final grade for the class.

As part of your write-up, make a clear argument/point and then support your answer using logical arguments and the details the case. **DO NOT** just summarize the case.

Questions for each week's class have been attached to the bottom of this syllabus.

FINAL PAPER
For the final paper, which is due Jan 20 (two weeks after our last session), I'd like you to access the IT function within an organization that you are familiar with, paying particular attention to one (or at most 2 if related) of the IT focused topics from the course (i.e., strategy, transformation, governance, risk, implementation, process change, enterprise infrastructure, or electronic commerce).

The paper should be no more that 10 pages (double spaced) and should have the following sections:

1. *Overview*. Brief company, industry, competitor overview.
2. *IT Overview*. Discuss strategic role of IT in the management of the organization.
3. *Special Topic (from course objectives)*. Select one (or at most 2 if related) of the special topics listed under course objectives for deep analysis within your selected organization. Integrate relevant frameworks/theory from related readings and your own research.
4. *Summary*.

GRADING
Class Participation: 30%
Case Questions: 30%
Final Paper: 40 %

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Cheating and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All students should provide an honest effort in solving the assigned problem by his/herself and group partners (if applicable). Each student is encouraged to discuss course material and problems with other students, but the student/group's solution must be its own with no copying or sharing of software code, written materials, etc. If a student is inspired by another's work, or if a student is extending an existing approach, the student should explicitly cite this work.

Any student found to have participated in academic dishonesty will receive an "F" and may be subject to further disciplinary action. The university code of Academic Integrity prohibits a

student from committing the following acts of academic dishonesty: academic fraud (i.e. changing solutions to appeal a grade), copying from others or allowing one's work to be copied, collaboration except as permitted on team assignments (including reusing previous project reports), fabrication/falsification, plagiarism, sabotage of others' works, or substitution. For more details see the Student Handbook.

GRADE INTEGRITY AND GRADE NEGOTIATION
Students have the right to clarify expectations about graded material, the process used for grading, and any mathematical errors. The Lally School of Management and Technology does, however, strictly forbid grade negotiation between students and professors. Please see the note below from the Lally MBA Student Handbook:

> *The MBA program is a highly competitive program and students work very hard to be successful. It is not uncommon for a student to be disappointed with an assessment at some point in the two years of the program… If a grading error has been made, a change of grade can be submitted. However, it is __not__ appropriate for a student to petition a faculty member for a higher grade which they did not earn.*

READING LIST (WILL BE PROVIDED IN YOUR COURSE PACKET)

Class	Topic	Readings
12/5	Strategy and Transformation	"Investing in the IT that Makes a Competitive Difference" (HBR, July-August 2008); "Charles Schwab in 2002" (HBS Case 9-803-070); "Zara: IT for Fast Fashion" (HBS Case 9-604-081).
12/6	Governance and Risk	"A Matrixed Approach to Designing IT Governance," (SMR, Winter 2005); "CareGroup" (HBS Case 9-303-097); "Richter: Information Technology at Hungary's Largest Pharma" (RISB Case 907E21).
1/2	Implementation and Process Change	"Avoiding the Alignment Trap in Information Technology" (SMR, Fall 2007); "Otis Elevator" (HBS Case 9-305-048); "Rich-Con Steel" (HBS Case 9-699-133).
1/3	Enterprise Infrastructure and Electronic Commerce	"The Next Revolution in Productivity" (HBR, June 2008); "The Trouble With Enterprise Software" (SMR, Fall 2007); "Digital China Holdings Limited: ERP as a Platform for Building New Capabilities" (HBS Case 9-302-080); "Amazon.com—2002" (HBS Case 9-803-098).

HBS = Harvard Business School
HBR = Harvard Business Review
SMR =Sloan Management Review
RISB = Richard Ivey School of Business

CASE QUESTIONS (RESPONSES ARE DUE BEFORE EACH CLASS)

Class	Topic	Questions
12/5	Strategy and Transformation	1. What situation is facing David Pottruch and Charles Schwab (co-CEOs of Charles Schwab) in 2002? Do you agree with the strategy the company is pursuing? If not, what alternate strategy would you propose? 2. In your opinion, what are the most important aspects of Zara's approach to information technology? Are they applicable anywhere? If not, where would they not work well?
12/6	Governance and Risk	1. What was the underlying cause of the collapse of the system at Caregroup? 2. In examining Richter's current IT function, would you argue for more or less centralization? Why?
1/2	Implementation and Process Change	1. The IT tools being used by Otis in 2004 are simple—databases, workflow software, intranets and extranets, email—but the benefits appear to be extraordinary. How can this be? 2. Describe two key factors you think accounted for Rich-Con's difficulties in implementing its new information systems?
1/3	Enterprise Infrastructure and Electronic Commerce	1. Describe the relationship between the ERP system and Digial China's electronic commerce strategy? 2. Consider Amazon's potential entry into the apparel industry in 2002 (discussed in detail on p.11-12 of the case.) What strategy would you recommend Amazon pursue and why?