ADVANCED COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR HIGH POTENTIALS:
Accelerating your promotion schedule post graduation

MIDSEMESTER MODULE – Spring 2016

Dates TBD, 1:00 – 5:00 PM

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Description:

This course equips you to maximize your impact in your job within the first year post MBA. Whether it is defining expectations with your manager, creating and managing “your brand” or requesting and receiving constructive feedback from your manager, this course will equip you with the essential communication skills you must possess in order to be recognized as a high potential in your first year post graduation. You will learn the precise methods, tactics and strategies critical to communicating to key decision-makers and navigating organizational politics in ways that maximize understanding and facilitate action. We will explore what managers expect, how to most efficiently utilize their time, and how to constructively say “no” when the time comes.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand and apply techniques to clarify and manage expectations with managers
- Assess and synthesize the culture present in any given organization and incorporate that knowledge into your communication strategy
- Practice and apply interpersonal communication techniques related to negotiating salary, setting performance expectations, seeking feedback, effective executive questioning, and setting boundaries
- Applying the concept of “pre-wiring” strategically to multiple settings, organizations and industries
- Understand and plan for the life pressures that accompany high potentials and how those vary based on gender
- Devise a High Potential growth plan for your first 5 years post graduation
How This Course Fits Into Your Communication Development As A Professional:

Corporate Communication Influence Model

This course provides you with the fundamental communication skills necessary to maximize your impact and accelerate your promotion schedule within your organization.

Required Text

1.  *Study.net* – necessary for all HBR articles and cases

Assignment

Manager Interview – What Does It Take To Be a High Potential? The focus of this assignment is to learn first-hand how a manager of your choice identifies High Potentials. Consider the following questions in your interview:

- What do you look for in a High Potential?
  - What are the particular behaviors you look for?
o What are the particular values you look for?
• What is unique about High Potentials in your company / industry that may differ from other environments?
• What are the top 3 things I should do in my first year post graduation to excel and position myself as a high potential?
• What are the top 3 things I should NOT do in my first year post graduation? What are the common derailleurs you see?
• What were some of the best decisions you made in your career that you might be willing to share with me?
• Any missteps you made along the way that you might want to share as well?

Be aware of what he / she consciously communicates… and what he / she does not consciously communicate. Beyond how he / she answers the questions, you can tell what is valued in a place based on what is said and not said as well as “how” it is said.

You will be expected to:

Part 1 - Conduct an interview with a manager (over the phone is preferred but e-mail would be acceptable with approval of the instructor) with a manager of your choice. Choose your interviewee wisely! This is a great opportunity to network and getting to know a potential stakeholder by framing it as a class assignment.

Part 2 - Devise takeaways and actionable steps for Year 1. Based on his / her responses, what are your takeaways? Put those takeaways into a plan format in which you outline what you plan on doing, when, and how you plan on assessing the impact of those tactics.

Your report should be 2-4 pages double spaced and include your interview in a separate appendix.
### Preliminary Class Schedule (subject to change based on our discussions):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class #</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings For Class</th>
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| TBD  | 1       | Welcome, policy, and objectives  
       |         | Introductions and expectations  
       |         | Getting Recognized in a New Organization: Challenges and Opportunities  
       |         | Analyzing the context you are in: assessing your supervisor, corporate culture, values and business context  
       |         | Defining Your Brand  
       |         | Determining your leadership brand in your first year  
       |         | Telling your story  
       |         | **Read:** WSJ – “Why Learn and Grow On the Job? It’s Easier To Feign Infallibility” (To be distributed during class)  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “Five Questions About Interviewing Your Prospective Supervisor”  
       |         | **Read:** HBR CASE – “Jack Thomas”  
       |         | **Read:** Harvard Management Update – “Five Steps to Building Your Personal Leadership Brand” |
| TBD  | 2       | **Industry Panelists**  
       |         | “What does it take to be seen as a High Potential?” |
| TBD  | 3       | Managing Expectations and Managing Your Boss  
       |         | Effective questioning techniques: seeking clarity and specificity  
       |         | Managing expectations  
       |         | Recognizing and stating assumptions  
       |         | Frequency of communication and content  
       |         | **Guest Speaker:** Randy Hain, Serviam Partners  
       |         | Current state of the job market today  
       |         | Best practices for High Potentials  
       |         | Common missteps in your first year  
       |         | Creating a High Potential plan  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “Managing Your Boss”  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “How Can I Do a Better Job of Managing Up?” |
| TBD  | 4       | Managing Life Demands as a High Potential  
       |         | Gender differences and tradeoffs – what it means to be a high potential female / male  
       |         | Leveraging your gender / ethnicity as a high potential  
       |         | Acknowledging mistakes – when, how, and to whom?  
       |         | What are the benefits of apologizing? What are the risks?  
       |         | Saying “No”  
       |         | **Difficult Conversations Practicum**  
       |         | Acknowledging mistakes / Apologizing  
       |         | Saying “No”  
       |         | Ending relationships  
       |         | **Read:** WSJ - “Deloitte Tries a Different Sales Pitch for Women” (To be distributed)  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “The Power of Talk: Who Gets Heard and Why”  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “The Art of the Apology”  
       |         | **Read:** HBR – “Staying with No”  
       |         | **ASSIGNMENT DUE** |
About the Instructor

Brandon Smith

Brandon Smith is the Founder of The Worksmiths, LLC, an executive coaching and advisory firm that specializes in leadership development, culture consulting and effective executive communication. In addition to working closely with individuals and organizations as an executive coach, consultant and facilitator, Brandon combats workplace dysfunction weekly on Georgia Public Broadcasting where Brandon serves as the resident “workplace therapist” and assists listeners providing career and work-related advice. Brandon also currently serves as an adjunct instructor at Emory University’s Goizueta Business School where he teaches on and researches healthy workplace dynamics, leadership and communication.

With extensive experience in both individual growth and workplace health, Brandon’s expertise lies in the following domains:

- Leadership development
- Management and leadership communication
- Managing stakeholder relationships
- Navigating organizational politics and influence
- Executive team alignment
- Creating and leading healthy workplace cultures
Brandon has worked with organizations across a broad spectrum from for-profit corporations to non-profit institutions. Many of Brandon’s clients include numerous Fortune 100 “Best Companies To Work For.” Clients represent the following notable organizations:

- American Express
- AT&T
- Bank of America
- Booz Allen Hamilton
- Boston Consulting Group
- CARE
- Chick-fil-A
- Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta
- Deloitte Consulting
- Delta Air Lines
- Emory University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport
- IBM
- ING
- InterContinental Hotels Group
- Lexis Nexis
- MailChimp
- Mitsubishi
- NAPA Auto Parts
- National Public Radio
- Regions Bank
- Saks Fifth Avenue
- SunTrust Bank
- St. Joseph’s Hospital
- The City of Atlanta
- The Coca-Cola Company
- The Home Depot

COACHING EXPERIENCE
Brandon Smith has spent nearly 20 years working with thousands of individuals in an executive coaching and counseling capacity. Brandon’s clinical experience includes work at Ridgeview Institute, a world-renown inpatient mental health facility, where Brandon worked with individuals suffering from any of life’s curveballs – from mental illness to depression. Brandon transitioned to executive coaching and has had a thriving executive coaching client base where he works with individuals ranging from newly minted managers to senior leaders.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE
Brandon teaches courses in leadership communications, advanced management communication, team communication, and strategic corporate culture management in the Full-Time MBA program, Evening MBA program, Weekend Executive MBA program, Modular Executive MBA program and Executive Education at Emory University’s Goizueta Business School. He has won numerous teaching awards for his work in the classroom.

PUBLICATIONS
Brandon’s work has frequently appeared in numerous national publications as well as academic journals including The WallStreet Journal, Fox News, NPR Marketplace, FastCompany, US News, Huffington Post Business, The Today Show, Glamour, The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, the University of Michigan’s Center for Positive Organizational Scholarship, and Knowledge@Emory. He is regularly quoted as an expert on effective communication and leadership.
In addition, Brandon is the founder of “The Workplace Therapist,” a resource dedicated to helping managers and leaders eliminate dysfunction in the workplace. His weekly blog can be read at: www.theworkplacetherapist.com

**EDUCATION**
M.B.A., Goizueta Business School - Emory University
M.S., Professional Counseling, Georgia State University
B.A., Communications and Team Dynamics, Vanderbilt University