# Leading people and creativity

## Prof. Nora Madjar; Prof. Francesca Mochi

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

Creativity is a key competence at the workplace: creative and innovative outcomes are desired at different levels within an organization (individual and teams) and across industries. The ‘Leading People and Creativity’ course aims at illustrating the logics and the management tools to lead individuals at work towards the achievement of creative behaviours and innovative output. First, the course will provide the basic principles of leadership, team management, and collective learning, analyzing examples from both traditional and creative settings. Different leadership styles, their antecedents and outcomes will be investigated. Then, the contents will dive into the nature of creativity, its individual and team-level expression, and its relationship with different kind of organizations. The main purpose of this course is to increase students’ ability to understand and implement creativity and innovation, and to help them come up with new ideas about products, processes or solutions.

At the end of the course, students:

– Will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the principles of leading people at the workplace.

– Will be able to understand the relationship between leading people and team management.

– Will be able to apply the principles of leadership, team management and creativity management to problems and examples related to people management in creative industries or other industries.

– Will learn frameworks and tools to improve individual, team and organizational creativity.

– Will be able to apply creative thinking methods and concepts to diagnose and solve problems or pursue opportunities for improvement and innovation.

– Will be able to evaluate the potential and impact of ideas and solutions and compare alternatives in a socially and environmentally responsible way.

***COURSE CONTENT***

In the first part, the course will devote space to the illustration and discussion of leadership theories, team management and people management approaches for creativity and their implication for innovative behaviours and outcomes at the workplace. In the second part, these approaches will be applied to creative and innovative outputs and processes and enriched with other perspectives and implications (e.g. the influence of biases during the creation and evaluation of innovative ideas).

In particular, the topics that will be developed during the course are the following:

– The principles of leading people.

– The principles of team management.

– The nature of creativity at the workplace.

– Creative behaviours and Creative industries.

– Leadership and team management to support creativity and innovative behaviours.

– The issue of the creative process and of the creative outcomes (e.g incubation process, improvisation, evaluation biases).

* The importance of the context for creativity
* Skills and mechanisms for fostering creativity

– Key issues in creativity management: gender equality, leaders’ status, leader-follower relationship.

***READING LIST***

Attending students: papers, slides, cases and guest speakers’ materials, all made available by the instructors on Blackboard and shared in class.

Not attending students: M. Mumford and S. Hemlin, Handbook of Research on Leadership and Creativity, 2017, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited..

***TEACHING METHOD***

The teaching method is based on an interactive and involving approach. The instructors will adopt different tools, (e.g. role-playing and simulations, self-tests, brief and long case studies, incidents driven from real businesses) so that students can be autonomous in grasping the main contents from the proposed learning experiences. All these stimuli will be followed by guided debriefing and a sharing of the theoretical models to enable students to summarize the main theoretical and practical ‘takeaways’ of each class.

Lectures will be integrated with case studies, incidents, and surveys in order to enhance students’ active participation and learning. Students will be also given complex and/or loosely defined open-ended problems and challenged to think critically. Those activities will be both individually and in team.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

For attending students the course evaluation will be based on:

Final exam (60%): the exam will be closed-books with open questions and based on the topics covered in class with the instructors.

Team assignment (40%): the team project provides an opportunity for students to practice group dynamics and learn from their experience. Students will be required to carry out one assignment in teams, which will give them the opportunity to reason more deeply on the meaning of the theoretical approaches covered in class and their managerial implications.

Moreover, it allows students to write on topics that are relevant to them and provide them with a framework they can use throughout their career when they face challenging situations.

Students have to think about a favorite or interesting creative brand and gather information about how this organization promotes its creative idea generation and evaluation by searching information online (e.g. corporate website, social networks pages, online private groups, social events). Primary data (interviews of creativity and innovation officers, high-level leaders, HR managers, creative employees, and creative teams) are also required.

Students who choose not to attend classes need to be prepared on the following book:

M. Mumford and S. Hemlin, Handbook of Research on Leadership and Creativity, 2017, Edward Elgar Publishing Limited.

The exam will be composed of open questions on the assigned book

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

Classes and exams will be held in presence (unless different guidelines will be provided with Rector’s decree).

*Office hours*

Prof. Nora Madjar holds her office hours once a week. To schedule their appointment, students are expected to write an email in advance.

Prof. Francesca Mochi holds her office hours once a week both in presence and online. To schedule their appointment, students are expected to write an email in advance.