Course Overview

This course will focus on effective strategies for leading and managing start-up, early stage, and high growth ventures. Emphasis will be on leading and managing organizations from idea phase through planning, implementation, and operating stages. The course will include strategies and tools applicable for managers at all organizational levels. Coursework will incorporate business case studies, class discussion, and individual written analysis of case solutions. Topics will include:

- Leadership strategies and organizational evolution.
- Beyond the business plan: developing effective implementation, operating plans and organizational plans for leading new ventures.
- Building and maintaining an effective culture/start-up environment.
- Building an effective organization; building a team.
- Marketing and competitive strategies for new products.
- Managing start-ups and new ventures within larger organizations (intrapreneurship).
- New venture challenges: managing change, high growth, failure.
- Leadership challenges and ethics.

Objectives

The objectives of this course are:

- Expose students to the unique challenges of leading start-ups or early venture organizations.
- Involve students in the art of leadership planning for new ventures.
- Develop a sense of the “do’s and don’t’s” of new venture leadership through analysis and discussion of actual business cases.
**Requirements**

This will be an interactive course. In addition to individual case preparation, students will be expected to participate in class discussions. Class attendance and participation are required. Other course requirements include:

- **Required reading:**
  - Selected Harvard Business School case studies and articles.

- **Optional reading:** Optional reading and class discussion will be from the following book. This book is highly recommended for any student contemplating a career in entrepreneurial or corporate new ventures:

- **Five individual written case analyses.** Maximum 2 pages each:
  - April 14: “Heather Evans.”
  - April 24: “TiVo.”
  - May 5: “Taran Swan at Nickelodeon Latin America.”
  - May 12: “Alison Brown of Compass Records.”
  - May 26: “Roy Disney Resignation Letter.”

**Guest Speakers**

Guest speakers will be invited to share their experiences in leading new or high-growth ventures in a variety of consumer-oriented businesses. Guests will include executives from venture capital firms and industry.

**Grading**

- Class participation (attendance and class participation are mandatory) 25%
- 5 individual written case analyses (15% each) 75%
Course Content and Schedule

Session 1: April 7, 2004

Topic: What is Leadership?

Course Overview

- **Read:**
  - "A Perspective on Entrepreneurship" by Howard Stevenson, Harvard Business School Case Note #9-384-131.
  - Leading Quietly pages 1-32.

- **Optional reading:** The Venture Imperative pages 1-24 and 45-67.

- **Discussion preparation.** Be prepared to discuss the following:
  - What is leadership?
  - What is entrepreneurship?
  - How is leadership different in start-ups/new ventures versus traditional established organizations?
  - What types of individuals make good venture leaders?
  - What specific skills are necessary in venture teams?
  - Is “venturing” for everyone?

Session 2: April 14, 2004

Topic: From Idea to Reality

New Venture Planning
Beyond The Business Plan

- **Read:**

- **Optional reading:** The Venture Imperative pages 109-143.

- **Individual case preparation:** “Heather Evans” Harvard Business School case # 9-384-079. Prepare written case analysis (max 2 pages typed) and be prepared to discuss. Written analysis should be in bullet point/power point presentation format and should answer the following (You are Ms. Evans):
  - Is your business proposition (“a new style of clothing for conservative businesswomen”) a good idea? Why or why not?
  - How can you validate your business proposition?
  - What is your 30-60 day action plan?

**Session 3: April 21, 2004**

**Topic:** Organization and Culture

- **Read:**
  - “Are You Picking the Right Leaders?” Harvard Business Review OnPoint Collection # 892X.
  - Leading Quietly pages 33-110.

- **Optional reading:** The Venture Imperative pages 145-184.

- **Individual case preparation:** “Rob Waldron at Score Educational Centers” Harvard Business School case #9-401-018. Be prepared to discuss the following:
  - What has been the impact of Score’s initial culture, organization, and employee profile on the success of Score to date?
  - What are Score’s key organizational success factors for future growth and expansion?
  - Is Score picking the right leaders?

- **Guest speaker:** Kate Mitchell, Managing Director, B of A Ventures (tentative)
Session 4: April 28, 2004

Topic: Marketing New Ventures

- **Read:**
  - “The Experience Economy”, Harvard Business Review reprint #98407
- **Optional reading:** The Venture Imperative pages 185-258.
- **Individual case preparation:** “TiVo” Harvard Business School case # 9-501-038. Prepare written case analysis (max 2 pages typed) and be prepared to discuss. Written analysis should be in bullet point/power point presentation format and should answer the following:
  - Who is the customer?
  - Product positioning.
  - Media plan.
  - “30 second pitch.”

- **Guest Speaker:** Hal Logan, Senior Vice President, Marketing and Strategy, Manheim Auctions, a Division of Cox Enterprises. Former CEO Vicinity, Pacific Bell Information Services. (tentative)

Session 5: May 5, 2003

Topic: Intrapreneurship: Corporate Venturing

- **Optional reading:** The Venture Imperative pages 261-335.
- **Individual case preparation:** “Taran Swan at Nickelodeon Latin America (A)” Harvard Business School Case #9-400-036. Prepare written case analysis (max 2 pages typed) and be prepared to discuss. Written analysis should be in bullet point/power point presentation format and should answer the following (You are Taran Swan):
  - It is June 1998, what are your leadership priorities?
What is your short-term (30-60 day) and long-term (90 days – one year) action plan to deal with external and internal leadership challenges?

- **Class Discussion:** Be prepared to discuss the following:
  - Can large, established organizations be successful at starting and managing new ventures?
  - What type of culture and organization structure is necessary for corporate venturing to work?
  - What makes corporate venturing different?
  - How are “corporate” leaders different from new venture leaders?

- **Guest Speaker:** Richard Craven, VP, BriteSmile Inc. (tentative).

### Session 6: May 12, 2004

**Topic:** Start-up Challenges: Success or Failure?

- **Read:**
  - Leading Quietly, pages 111-126.

- **Individual case preparation:** “Dragonfly Corporation” Harvard Business School case #9-393-118. Be prepared to discuss the following:
  - As the owner of the company, what is your immediate action plan to keep the venture going, or shut down?
  - How do you know when a venture is successful or not?

- **Guest Speaker:** John Reardon, Operating Partner, J.P. Morgan Partners, LLC.
Session 7: May 19, 2004

Topic: Leading thru Change and Rapid Growth

- **Read:**

- **Individual case preparation:** “Alison Brown of Compass Records” Harvard Business School case #9-801-089 . Prepare written case analysis (max 2 pages typed) and be prepared to discuss. Written analysis should be in bullet point/power point presentation format and should answer the following (You are Alison Brown):
  - What is your top priority?
  - What is your 30-60 day action plan.

Guest Speaker:

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Session 8: May 26, 2004

Topic: Leadership Strategies

- **Read:**

- **Individual case preparation:** “Text of Roy Disney Resignation Letter” Drudge Report. You may also use any public information available to prepare this case. Prepare written case analysis (max 2 pages typed) and be prepared to discuss. Written analysis should be in bullet point/power point presentation format and should answer the following (You are Michael Eisner on November 30, 2003):
  - What are you going to do?

Guest Speaker:
Session 9: Jun 2, 2004

Topic: Leadership Challenges: Culture, Ethics, Legal.

- **Read:**
  - “The Harder they Fall” by Roderick M. Kramer. Harvard Business Review Reprint # R0310C.
- **Individual case preparation:** TBD.
- **Guest Speaker:** Alan Seiffert, VP Business and Legal Affairs, NBC Enterprises.

Session 10: June 9, 2004

Topic: Lessons from a “Start-up Junkie”

Summary and Conclusions

- **Read:**
  - “Laughing All the Way to the Bank” by Fabio Sala. Harvard Business Review Reprint # F03098.