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Module synopsis

This multi-disciplinary module invites students to examine, from different perspectives, major themes pertaining to the management of human capital in a knowledge-intensive and changing world.

The module targets students who wish to seek foundational knowledge of the principles of human interactions in the workplace. Departing from the more conventional approaches, students will examine the dynamics of and constraints to individual and organisational behaviours in the context of the challenges posed by an increasingly competitive global landscape.

Besides looking into the structure and culture of organisations, this module also explores individual behaviours, thoughts and feelings of organisational members with reference to social processes. The themes covered in the module would provide students with a range of concepts with which to make sense of the human resource challenges arising out of companies' needs to strategically adapt themselves to the forces of change in order to remain competitive.

Learning outcomes

This module seeks to re-orientate students' perceptions and thinking in an era of new business paradigms. Thus, the module is designed to:

- examine how organisations and individuals respond to global forces that fundamentally impact an organisation's environment;
- provide a framework for understanding the structure and culture of organisations and how the interactions of different components of an organisation impact one's performance;
- develop an understanding and appreciation of the issues that arise when working with diverse individuals;
- gain insight into the importance of one's leadership and team roles in negotiating through the web of organisational life; and
- rethink one's mental models, performances and contributions in the organisations of today with a view to achieving career objectives

Modes of teaching and learning

The teaching format of this module is via lectures and tutorials. The lectures cover key concepts and their applications through organizational examples. The discussion-based tutorials are designed to be flexible, interactive and supportive of active and creative learning. Students are urged to make the best use of this mode of teaching to cultivate an active learning mindset, and to be involved and participative.

Syllabus

1. Globalisation and Its Effects on the Workplace

In the globalised workplace, everyone must respond to a rapidly changing society and constantly shifting demands and opportunities. Far-reaching changes in information and technology are transforming organisations, bringing added emphasis on knowledge management. This segment explores globalisation and its impact on organisations, the work environment and individuals.

2. Organisation Structure, Culture and Strategy

This segment explores how organisations respond to the demands of the globalised environment in order to thrive and survive by aligning their structure, culture and strategy. Students will look at various ways by which organisations structure their processes to create value. The critical role of culture in the success of an organisation is also examined.

3. People and Processes in Organisations

An important part of organisational life involves working with and through diverse people. In the context of changing business paradigms, the ability to negotiate organisational hierarchies and complexities becomes paramount to success at work. Hence, this segment focuses on people and their interactions with one another at the workplace. It explores the range of social and emotional competencies required by individuals to perform and contribute effectively in the role of a leader or a team member. Central to the discussion would be emphases on theories and concepts that would enable students to find new perspectives and approaches in managing relationships in organisations. An amalgamation of the know-how to manage one's emotions, an ability to negotiate role-identities and build effective work relationships with diverse individuals would be vital to creating synergy at work and achieving a satisfactory level of work performance.

4. The Self in Organisations

This segment examines the multifaceted tasks and challenges encountered by individuals in an organisational setting. As organisations strive to become more competitive in the global business environment, individuals are expected to manage new forms of pressures and relationships. Hence, the ability to be aware of, make sense of and develop one's capabilities is of utmost importance to perform effectively in the highly competitive work place of today. Change is inevitable, and the premium is on the adaptability of the individual to these changes. In the light of these unprecedented demands on students whose entry to the workplace is imminent, this segment of the module focuses on the individual's role in managing change; on the imperative and ability to learn; and on making strategic plans and choices to manage career development.

Readings

Will be made available at the start of the course.

Assessment

Students will be assessed on the basis of both individual and group work. Continuous assessments account for 50% of the final grade, while the final open-book examination makes up the other 50%.

I. Continuous Assessments (50%)

There will be 2 continuous assessments as follows:

CA1	Learning Contribution	15%
CA2	Group Project	35%
	Part 1. Presentation	15%
	Part 2. Report	20%

CA1 Learning Contribution (15%)

For learning contribution, marks will be awarded based on active and quality contribution to class discussion as well as for demonstrating a good learning attitude.

CA2 Group Project (35%)

This is a group assessment. The size of each group depends on the class size. Please check with your tutor for more details on groupings for the project. This project comprises two parts:

Part 1 Presentation (15%)

Each group will be assigned a project topic by your tutor. Starting from about Session 7, there will be one group presentation every week. Your tutor will do the scheduling of presentations. Each group will make a 20-minute presentation followed by a 10-minute Q&A. All group members must be present on the day of the presentation.

The presentation will be assessed on the following:

- Relevance and quality of information presented;
- Depth of critical analyses and discussion;
- Adding value to audience learning and understanding of the topic;
- Effectiveness of the delivery

Part 2 Report (20%)

In addition to the presentation, groups will work on the assigned topic to prepare a written report. The report should not exceed 3000 words, excluding references and be submitted no later than Session 12 in class. Submissions made after the deadline may not be granted credit.

The report will be assessed on the following:

- a. Introduction of new perspectives and insights pertaining to the topic;
- b. Application and evaluation of your experiences, personal and/or organisational, in the context of the topic; and
- c. Synthesis of information collected through primary and secondary research so as to add value to the discussion of the topic.

For primary research, the methodologies that can be used for collecting data include field studies, company visits, in-depth interviews, surveys and focus group discussions.

For secondary research, the following journals and periodicals provide a wealth of information that students could use in their further reading and research:

Academy of Management Journal, Academy of Management Review, Administrative Science Quarterly, Human Relations, Harvard Business Review, Journal of Applied Psychology and Journal of Organisational Behaviour.

Mere regurgitation of lecture materials or reproduction from reference sources is actively discouraged. Students should seek to add value via primary research, new insights, critical opinions, and applications of concepts learned.

II. Final Exam (50%)

This is an open-book examination. Students are required to answer 2 out of 3 questions (25% each). The total time allotted for the exam is 1½ hours. Details of the date, time and venue for the exam will be announced later.

Schedule

Lecture: LT17. Every Tuesday. 09:00-10:00 or 13:00-14:00.

Tutorial: Every week. 2 hours. Various day/time slots.

Pre-requisite

For Engineering students only.

Academic Honesty & Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty is essential for the pursuit and acquisition of knowledge. The University and School expect every student to uphold academic integrity & honesty at all times. Academic dishonesty is any misrepresentation with the intent to deceive, or failure to acknowledge the source, or falsification of information, or inaccuracy of statements, or cheating at examinations/tests, or inappropriate use of resources.

Plagiarism is 'the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own' (The New Oxford Dictionary of English). The University and School will not condone plagiarism. Students should adopt this rule - You have the obligation to make clear to the assessor which is your own work, and which is the work of others. Otherwise, your assessor is entitled to assume that everything being presented for assessment is being presented as entirely your own work. This is a minimum standard. In case of any doubts, you should consult your instructor.

Additional guidance is available at:

<http://www.nus.edu.sg/registrar/adminpolicy/acceptance.html#NUSCodeofStudentConduct>

Online Module on Plagiarism: <http://emodule.nus.edu.sg/ac/>