People Management Practices and Tools
MNGT-E1006

SYLLABUS

Please note that this syllabus is still subject to change.

Instructor's contact information	Course information
Hertta Vuorenmaa E-mail: hertta.vuorenmaa@aalto.fi	People Management and Organizational Development Masters Program Academic Year 2024-25, Period III Language of instruction: English
Office hours: Meeting upon request	The course will be held in class. All course material in MyCourses: https://mycourses.aalto.fi/user/index.php?id=37316

1. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course focuses on people management practices, tools and approaches on a strategic level, where the aim is at adding value for both individuals and organizations, creating a more sustainable working life and supporting the strategy of the given organization. The course exposes the participants to the contemporary practices, tools and approaches in people management building on the background they have gained from the pre-requisite courses. It combines theoretical understanding of people management practices with hands on learning. The course adopts a human centric approach and combines design thinking with human in the center, applying design thinking approach into strategically building better people management practices and tools. The course offers a deep dive into some central practices whilst all the time connecting them with the strategic goals of the given organization.

Learning goals
Upon completion of the course, students should:

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- know and be able to apply relevant theories, frameworks and practical tools within people management
- understand key ethical issues in people management
- have the aptitude and skills to design effective, ethical and sustainable people management processes – basic understanding of human centric design thinking
- understand the immediate and secondary organizational and societal consequences of our people management related decisions and actions

In addition to these broad learning goals relating to SHRM, the students will have a chance to practice their project and time management skills, and develop their teamwork/communication/client management skills, feedback giving and receiving skills as well as their academic writing and presentations skills.

Course book

Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management

2. PREREQUISITES

The 'Human and Organizational Behaviour' and 'Strategic Management' courses.

3. CONTENT

The course starts with an introduction to the course and its requirements. The structure of the course is such that the lectures, group and individual assignments are designed to both provide the students with solid knowledge on people management and its various practices, tools and dimensions. The course also fosters analytical and critical reflection individually, in group, and in class. Furthermore, the group assignment (conducted in groups of four) together with the cases and visitor lectures will provide the students a way to explore aspects of people management and the applicability of academic people management concepts to real organizational life.

4. ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

1. Group assignment. Graded (0-25), accounts for 25 points of the final grade.
2. Individual assignment. Graded (0-25), accounts for 25 points of the final grade.
3. Take home assignment. Graded (0-50), accounts for 50 points of the final grade. Note that the lectures and assignments also prepare for the take home assigment.

In order to pass the course, you have to pass all the individual elements. Students are encouraged to actively participate in class.

Grading scale 1-5 will be used.

> 0-49 points = 0 (fail)
>
> 50-59 points = 1
>
> 60-69 points = 2
>
> 70-79 points = 3
>
> 80-89 points = 4
>
> 90-100 points = 5

5. ASSIGNMENTS

A.   *Group assignment (25 points)*

The group assignment focuses on strategic challenges and choices of tools and practices when it comes to people management, and is loosely based on the principles of problem based learning (PBL). ***The group meets for the first time during the first lecture and drafts a concrete plan on how it will work on the assignment.*** The group members are expected to first familiarize themselves with the course literature (pre-selected chapters below) and then meet to discuss, reflect on, and summarize the learnings. The group selects a theme or a question that intrigues it, under the broader heading of **"*People management in practice. Choices of practices and tools and the consequent challenges and possibilities.*"** It then meets with a People management expert/director in an organization of its choice and conducts an interview, or a discussion based on its selected theme(s) and questions. Finally, the group writes an essay (8-10 pages, Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing, justified alignment) that is anchored to the course literature but also presents the findings from the interview analytically. The group also prepares a short presentation (10 minutes) and ***presents its work on 12.2.24, or 13.2. 2024*** (a detailed schedule will be announced in class). The presentation follows a 5-min. discussion during which students are encouraged to ask questions. All groups turn in a paper version of their essay at ***the latest on 16.2.2024 at 18:00***. **The group work is conducted in groups of four which are formed during the first session**. More detailed instructions will be provided when the course starts.

The assignment combines academic insights with those of practitioners. Furthermore, it enables the learners to utilize one another's learning on the key contents of the literature, allows the group to select a theme of its own interest, and as a by-product prepares everyone for the take home assignment.

B.   *Individual assignment (altogether 25 points)*

The individual assignment engages the student to think about a practice or tool that may guide or influence their future work with people management. Students are expected to write a reflection essay (max. 1400 words, Times New Roman, 12pt, 1.5 spacing, justified alignment) based on articles (select 1-2 of a list which will be provided to you when the course starts), other

course literature, and the lectures under a broad heading of "*What would be the most important tool/practice for me to sustainably manage people?".*

Read first, reflect upon the content, and then select a theme, which may be generic or specific. Write an academic essay that utilizes the concepts and ideas you find in the literature. Reflect upon how these ideas might guide your work and your behavior, and what the challenges might be. Focus on some area of interest, e.g. organizational justice, work engagement or motivation, etc. Title as you wish but operate under the broader heading provided. More detailed instructions will be provided when the course starts.

As a part of your individual assignment you will also conduct a **peer and self-assessment** during the course. As the development of reflection and constructive feedback skills are part of the group work skills, self- and peer-review of group work is carried out twice during the course as an electronic Webropol survey:

• **After the session on 16.1.24**

• **After the final session on 13.2.24**

In the evaluation, each member of the group gives themselves and the other members of the group a grade (on a scale of 1-5) based on the the person's activities and activity in the study group. The assessment is given to teachers confidentially. Teachers compile a summary of the peer reviews received by the individual, which is given to them for the development of teamwork skills.

For this reason, peer and self-evaluation must be constructive; Unsubstantiated or inappropriate feedback will not be accepted or processed. We review all feedback and, if necessary, ask for justifications for feedback that deviates strongly from the group's general policy. Similarly, any unsubstantiated negative or offensive feedback will be discussed with the giver (however, this has not been given in the history of this course). I recommend familiarizing yourself with the practices of constructive feedback, e.g. with the writings of [Daniel Dennett](#).

In peer and self-assessment, attention is paid to both the result of your group work (quality of discussion in study group meetings, presentation & your written report) and the group work process (group formation, equal distribution of responsibilities, consideration of other opinions, solving challenges, etc.).

Peer and self-assessment are carried out according to [Aalto's teamwork rubric](#) grading scale.

Peer review affects a student's grade in the following ways:

• Assessment received from study group members (5 points of individual grade)

• Quality of self-assessment and self-assessment (5 points of individual grade)

See more [detailed instructions](#) for peer and self-assessment in my courses.

C. *Take home assignment (50 points)*

Take home assignment is based on the lectures and the required assigned readings of each session (see Table on detailed schedule below). Both assignments are designed to also prepare you for the take home assignment. Take home assignment consists of one short case study and two essay questions that you answer by selecting them out of three questions provided.

Please note that the take home assignment will be returned via the MyCourses platform. You will be given two weeks to work on it and can return it between 19.2. 2024-5.3.2024. More information will be provided on the first session.

6. SCHEDULE

Please note that readings of some sessions are still to be added in the detailed schedule. Those will be announced at the start of the course. **All assigned readings will be available on MyCourses under the Materials section when the course starts.** Please also note that the case studies are mandatory readings for participating in the respective sessions.

Time	Topic area	Teachers
Monday 8.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 U006	**Introduction to course and course requirements** **Group work kickoff! Please make sure you attend the first session as the work for the group assignment starts today!** **Required readings (can be read after the session):** Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management: Third Edition. Chapter 1 *"The goals of human resource management*, pp. 1-36. Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management: Third Edition. Chapter 3 "*Strategic HRM: 'best fit' or 'best practice'?"*, pp. 63-96. **Further optional readings:** Collings, D.G. & Wood, G. (2009): *Human Resource Management: A Critical Approach*. Chapter 3. Strategic HRM: a critical review (38-54) Evans, P. A. (1999). HRM on the edge: A duality perspective. *Organization*, *6*(2), 325-338.	Hertta Vuorenmaa

Ulrich, D., Younger, J., Brockbank, W., & Ulrich, M. D. (2013). The state of the HR profession. *Human Resource Management*, 52(3), 457-471.

Tuesday 9.1.24 09:15-12:00 V001	**Future of Work & sustainable work - the necessary practices and tools?** **Required readings:** Cappelli, P. (2015) Why We Love to Hate HR… and What HR Can Do About It. Harvard Business Review, July-August 2015. James W. Westerman, Madasu Bhaskara Rao, Sita Vanka, Manish Gupta. (2020) Sustainable human resource management and the triple bottom line: Multi-stakeholder strategies, concepts, and engagement, Human Resource Management Review, Volume 30, Issue 3, 2020. HRMJ, Vol 27, no 1, 2017, pages 22–38 David G. Collings, Anthony J. Nyberg, Patrick M. Wright, John McMackin (2021) Leading through paradox in a COVID-19 world: Human resources comes of age, HRMJ 2021.	Hertta Vuorenmaa
Monday 15.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 U006	**Digital People Management - tools?** **Required readings:** Anderson, Bjarnadóttir, & Gaddis Ross (2022) Using People Analytics to Build an Equitable Workplace. Harvard Business Review, https://hbr.org/2022/01/using-people-analytics-to-build-an-equitable-workplace Charlwood, A., & Guenole, N. (2022). Can HR adapt to the paradoxes of artificial intelligence? Human Resource Management Journal, 32(4), 729– 742. https://doi-org.libproxy.aalto.fi/10.1111/1748-8583.12433 Fu, N., Keegan, A., & McCartney, S. (2022). The duality of HR analysts' storytelling: Showcasing and curbing. Human Resource Management	Kalliopi Platanou

	Journal, 1– 26. https://doi-org.libproxy.aalto.fi/10.1111/1748-8583.12466	
Tuesday 16.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 V001	**Design Thinking for your Group work – A workshop** **Required readings:** Brown (2008). Design thinking. Harvard Business Review. Gruber et al (2015). Managing by design. Academy of Management Journal.	Professor Tua Björklund
Monday 22.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 U006	**Strategic thinking: culture and recruitment?** **Required readings:** Case Southwest Airlines (available on MyCourses). **Please make sure that you have read the case before class for an effective groupwork.**	**Outi Sivonen CHRO Solita**
Tuesday 23.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 V001	**Sustainable People Management and D&I** **Required readings:** Ely, R. J., & Thomas, D. A. (2020). Getting Serious About Diversity. *Harvard Business Review*, *98*(6), 114-122. Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management: Third Edition. Chapter 7 "*Managing individual employment relationships",* pp. 188 -227. Guest, D. E. (2017). Human resource management and employee well-being: Towards a new analytic framework. *Human resource management journal*, *27*(1), 22-38.	Hertta Vuorenmaa

Monday 29.1.24 9:15-12:00 U006	**Hybrid work and people management - practices and tools?** **Required readings:** Makarius, E. E., & Larson, B. Z. (2017). Changing the perspective of virtual work: Building virtual intelligence at the individual level. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *31*(2), 159-178. Bell, B. S., McAlpine, K. L., & Hill, N. S. (2023). Leading Virtually. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *10*.	Niina Nurmi
Tuesday 30.1.24 9:15 – 12:00 V001	**Organizational design in practice** **Working on your group work, Juha facilitates** **Required readings:** Future of work online course, Chapter 3 "Organizational perspective". **Please note that you do not need to register to the course. The material can be found on MyCourses.**	Juha Äkräs Executive-in- Residence, Aalto University, Co- Founder, Executive Chairman of the Board at Hintsa Performance
Monday 5.2.24 9:15 – 12:00 U006	**Case Futurice** **Required readings:** Futurice case (available on MyCourses). **Please make sure that you have read the case before class.** Pisano, G. P. (2019). The hard truth about innovative cultures. *Harvard Business Review*, *97*(1), 62-71.	**Tuomas Syrjänen** Co-founder, AI Officer, Board Member at Futurice

Tuesday 6.2.24 9:15 – 12:00 V001	**Training, Development and Engagement** **Required Readings:** Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management: Third Edition. Chapter 6 *"Managing employee voice"* Boxall, P. & Purcell, J. (2011): Strategy and Human Resource Management: Third Edition. Chapter 7 *"Managing individual employment relationships"*. **Additional readings:** Bakker, A.B. (2011). An Evidence-Based Model of Work Engagement. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 20 (4) 265-269	Hertta Vuorenmaa
Monday 12.2.24 9:15-12:00 U006	**Group presentations** Please check MyCourses for the detailed schedule of group presentations	Hertta Vuorenmaa
Tuesday 13.2.24 9.15-12.00 V001	**Group presentations** Please check MyCourses for the detailed schedule of group presentations **Also: course wrap-up!**	Hertta Vuorenmaa
Friday 16.2.24	**Please submit your Group assignment and Individual assignment to MyCourses assignment boxes.**	Hertta Vuorenmaa
TBC	**Take home assignment**. TO BE CONFIRMED Digital assigment on MyCourses	

7. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The same general criteria which can be found on the table below apply to the assignments and the take home assignment. The nature of the assignment will be taken into account. The assessment is based on **an overall assessment** of the structure, content, perspective, use of sources and style of the text, and this assessment is guided by the ideas in the matrix below.

Fail	Below average	Good	Excellent
No coherent structure, the discussion does not proceed in a logical manner. Not of required length.	The structure of the text is patchy and inadequate.	The structure of the text is fairly clear and the arguments are mostly presented in a logical, consistent and factual manner.	There is a very clear and coherent structure in the text. The discussion proceeds in a logical and insightful manner.
The text does not correspond to the title/topic and does not demonstrate that source texts have been studied. Relevant issues are not distinguished from irrelevant. Factual errors.	The text corresponds to the title but demonstrates only superficial knowledge of the literature. Some factual errors and/or it dwells too much on irrelevant points.	The text corresponds to the topic, relevant points are discerned from irrelevant ones and there are attempts to understand relations between different issues. As a rule, the text does not contain factual errors, even though some misunderstandings may be present.	The text corresponds to the title and does not contain factual errors. All assertions are well argued, and relations between different issues have been understood in an insightful manner. Relevant is distinguished from irrelevant.
The text does not present any thoughts or reflections by the student.	There is some independent reflection and thought by the student. Issues are approached from different perspectives, but presentation of the arguments is superficial and remains on the level of an opinion.	The text contains critical thought by the student. Reflection by the student is present throughout, and issues are analyzed from a variety of viewpoints.	The text contains relevant and well-argued points by the student. Original and new perspectives are well connected to the sources. The text contains insightful arguments and good examples. The student's own analytical thought is evident throughout.
The text is plagiarized or the text does not demonstrate	The text demonstrates superficial knowledge of the sources. Lots of	The text demonstrates good understanding of the source literature. There may be some	The text demonstrates very good knowledge of the sources. There are no

knowledge of the literature.	errors and misunderstandings.	small misunderstandings.	misunderstandings. Sources have been applied in a versatile, insightful and critical manner.
The text contains lots of grammatical errors and poor spelling. It is impossible or very difficult to read the text and the language is very imprecise.	It is difficult to read the text. The language is imprecise and contains grammatical and spelling mistakes.	The language used is presentable and good, and there are no major spelling or grammatical mistakes.	The text is fluid, finished, precise and a good example of scientific writing.

8. COURSE WORKLOAD

Classroom hours	33
Class preparation	23
Assignments	100
Take home assigment	4
Total	160h (6 ECTS)

9. ETHICAL RULES

Aalto University Code of Academic Integrity and Handling Thereof>