

SEMINAR: SPIRITUALITY of BUSINESS LEADERSHIP
Topical Outline MGMT 546

Fall 09

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Saturday September 26

MODULE 1. Course Introduction

Course organization

Personal introductions
Course norms
Assignments and Grading

Approaching a "soul-filled" topic with sensitivity and respect through appreciative inquiry

Reasons for contemporary business leader interest in spirituality

Definitions of spirituality

The call to transcendence and a complete human life

Participants will have read from one of several books on comparative religion and spirituality, and from one of several books of personal spirituality relating the personal journeys of leaders across religious traditions.

This is a prelude to appreciative inquiry and respectful listening.

MODULE 2. Integrating Business Leadership as a Calling into the Spiritual Journey

The pivotal role of business as a societal institution at the turn of the century

Contributions for which North American business leadership can take just pride and areas of concern

Connecting the calling to business leadership and the spiritual journey

The sense that those called to leadership for important societal institutions find their greatest fulfillment by understanding :

that their career is itself a form of prayer, and that work and spiritual life can be integrated.

servant leadership can be an invitation to spiritual deepening and a route to self fulfillment

MODULE 3. Listening to the Voices of Elders and Future Generations in the Midst of Turbulent Business Environments

Lakota Sioux Living Circle: listening to the living voices that speak to our personal history

Sharing experiences which draw business leaders to explore spiritual insight

Discovering the power of listening to our the voices of elders and future generations

Realizing that "we must have a strong appreciation for our unique gifts in order to live fully within our own self as a precondition to giving to others.

Saturday October 10

MODULE 4. Business Leadership Challenges and the Need for Self Integration

Studies of effective leaders

Models of self integration in the life of historical leaders

Spirituality and self integration as an important component for leadership maturity

Exploring the rich literature on transformational leadership that shows the complexity and special challenges for such leadership. By studying the psychological /sociological /historical biographies of leaders the need for the integration of self in life will become apparent. But also an understanding of the special challenges leaders face requiring inner strength.

MODULE 5. Discernment and Senior Business Leadership

Problems of focusing on the issues which matter in the noisy environment of contemporary business

The discernment process in the spiritual traditions juxtaposed with strategic decision making models.

Discovering how discernment through prayer and meditation is shown by spiritual masters to lead to true liberty allowing the leader to make difficult choices without anxiety. Discernment increases the capacity to do the right thing not by accident or as a burden , but in true freedom. Examining how lack of freedom derails strategic decisions.

MODULE 6. Approaches to Spiritual disciplines and Leadership: prayer/meditation/reflection and the Leadership journey

The centrality prayer/meditation/reflection to the spiritual journey

Approaching "inner work" with confidence

Practical guidelines from spiritual masters

Learning the rhythms and joys of these central practices in all spiritual traditions, and developing an approach true to our individuality and the life style requirements of leaders.

Saturday October 24

MODULE 7. The Special Challenges of Leadership Power

The need to fill the leadership role with the "gravitas" required for transformational change

Hubris as the often reported Achilles' Heel of charismatic leaders

Seductions toward arrogance associated with position power

Humility as a central virtue in the spiritual journey of leaders

Learning what the wisdom literature tells us about recognizing the truth of one's role and gifts and leading with the fullness of individual potential but without undue self-serving ego.

MODULE 8. The Spiritual Challenges of Wealth vs. Poverty of Spirit in the Business Leader's Life

The valued charisma of wealth creating leadership.

The paradox of wealth as a force for good and a spiritual challenge

Wealth and its impact on the leader's family

A much discussed topic in executive circles

Appropriate asceticism and detachment as aspects of a spirituality for leadership

Developing wisdom regarding philanthropy

Learning that wealth consists not in having much but in having few wants. Some wonderful exemplars of poverty of spirit and stewardship among contemporary executives

MODULE 9. Contemplative Practice in the Hectic Space of a Business Leader's Life

The superficial paradox of contemplation versus action

The universal call to mysticism in the spiritual traditions

Contemplative/meditative practices and the contemporary enrichment from Eastern Spiritual traditions

Understanding how all spiritual traditions invite us into mysticism. as part of the journey, and that each of us are capable of cultivating this capacity.

Saturday November 7

MODULES 10. – 11 Group Retreat: a time for prayer/meditation/reflection on the lessons learned regarding spirituality and the call to leadership

Bringing reflections and future direction into perspective in meditation and silence

MODULE 12. Field Experience Involving Segments of Society Outside Contemporary Business Life: An Encounter With Voices Sometimes Not Heard

A field experience to learn from the poor and suffering outside contemporary business participation

Love, compassion, and a concern with social justice as essential fruits of the spiritual journey

An opportunity to stand outside the role of philanthropist or expert and enter into the I-Thou encounter. Learning how to let the individual into our heart as a prelude to compassionate action.

Saturday November 21

MODULE 13. The significant Trials of Transformational Leaders: Exploring the Mystery of Suffering

The significant sufferings and trials that transformational leaders bear

The potential for growth and learning within the mystery of suffering

Perspectives on suffering from the Spiritual Masters.

Making sense of suffering within the interpretation of spiritual traditions. Anticipating the very special sufferings of the transformational leader role.; e.g. stepping down, seeing your work diminished or dismantled, courageous new starts, hyper-criticism directed toward leaders, the special loneliness experienced by the inwardly motivated leader, etc.

MODULE 14. Individual study reports of a spiritual master and insights for the leadership journey

Sharing the experiences of your master's spiritual journey.

Reflections on the lessons most pertinent to business leadership

Being with a master of choice for the entire seminar.

Asking how that master speaks to your leadership in your individuality.

MODULE 15. Bringing it all together and celebration of the business leader's spiritual journey

Summarizing from our personal journals those insights most helpful to our leadership journey and celebrating the gift of sharing which has occurred.