**Course Title:**

**Business Strategic Leadership**

**Course Number: 098795**

**Number of credit points: 2**

**Academic Year: 2020**

**Time:** Thursdays 18:00 – 22:00

**NOTE**: Class will be via Zoom. Students are expected to attend and participate with cameras on and microphones off as default.

**Course Instructor: Dr. Barak Ben-Avinoam**

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Office hours for students: By appointment only.

**Teaching Assistant: Shay Mamo**

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Office hours for students: By appointment only.

**Syllabus**

**Course Objectives:**

* To provide the student a unique insight on the decision-making process and the dilemmas that CEO’s face.
* To familiarize the students with the specific characteristics of managing firms in various stages of the business life cycle in various industries.

**Course Content & Scope:**

Each session will be devoted to discuss a specific challenge relevant to leaders of companies, ranging from seed to mature global firms. We will engage in a hands-on team discussion using real-life case studies. We will also have the opportunity to occasionally have a guest speaker, in the form of a prerecorded fireside chat, who is a CEO/Board member/Executive and get their personal perspective of the subject matter.

The first section of each session will be devoted to a theoretical discussion of a specific aspect in managing a firm, emphasizing differences across industries and life cycle stages.

The second part of the session will be devoted to a team discussion and class assignment that will allow the students to apply the theoretical material of the session.

During the third part of the session – a pre-assigned group of students will be asked to present to the class an analysis of a topic that was pre-assigned to them. The 15-20 minutes presentation will be followed by an in-class discussion on the analysis and recommendations.

**Teaching Methods:**

* Lecture given by the Course Instructor / Teaching Assistant
* Lectures by the Guest CEO’s
* Video testimonials

**Teaching Materials:**

* Articles, case studies and reports for the Stock Exchange will be distributed as needed or retrieved.
* For team and individual assignments students will be expected to research public data*.*

**Recommended Readings:**

* **Chan, Kim & Mauborgne**, "Blue Ocean Strategy", HBS Press, 2005.
* **Finkelstein Sydney**, “Why Smart Executives Fail”, Penguin Group, 2003.
* [**Gulati**](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/search/Ranjay+Gulati/0/author) **Ranjay, "**How CEOs Manage Growth Agendas"**, HBR,** [July–August 2004](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/archive-toc/BR0407)**.**
* [**Heifetz**](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/search/Ronald+Heifetz/0/author) **Ronald, [Grashow](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/search/Alexander+Grashow/0/author) Alexander &**[**Marty Linsky**](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/search/Marty+Linsky/0/author)**,**“Leadership in a (Permanent) Crisis”, HBR**,** [July–August 2009](http://hbr.harvardbusiness.org/archive-toc/BR0907)**.**
* **Kawasaki Guy,** "The Art of the Start: The Time-Tested, Battle-Hardened Guide for Anyone Starting Anything", Penguin Group, 2004.
* **Porter Michael**, "On Competition", Ch. 15, “The Seven Surprises for New CEOs”, HBR, October 20, 2008.
* **Ries Eric,** "The Lean Startup: How Today's Entrepreneurs Use Continuous Innovation to Create Radically Successful Businesses", Crown Publishing, 2011.
* **Ronald Heifetz, Alexander Grashow & Marty Linsky,** “the practice of Adaptive Leadership", Harvard Business Press, 2009.
* [**Sinek**](http://www.amazon.com/Simon-Sinek/e/B002CB2SDC/ref=ntt_athr_dp_pel_1) **Simon**, "Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action", Penguin Group, 2011.

**Course Content, Scope & Requirements:**

The course will be based on the following elements:

* Compulsory one team assignment analyzing a specific topic that will be introduced and discussed in class.
  + Students will be asked to form teams of 3-4 students (no exceptions!).
  + Each team will be asked to analyze and present in class an analysis of the guiding questions that will be provided on Moodle a week prior to the presentation/submission date.
  + The presentation must include a prerecorded interview with a domain expert on the subject.
  + Each team will have 15-20 minutes to present in class its analysis. Each team member will take part in this presentation. Reasonable length of the presentation is 15-20 slides.
  + The presentation will be uploaded by the teams through Moodle, prior to class session. Make sure to list the names of all team members on the first slide of the presentation.
  + The order of presentation as well as the assigning of the groups to the different firms/industries will be determined arbitrary by the teaching team, at the beginning of the course.
* A final group assignment with a case study analysis to be submitted no later than two weeks after the last session analyzing two companies which faced an existential crisis. One that dealt with the crisis well and emerged stronger, and one that failed.
* Active participation in class discussion analyzing the firm that will be presented during that day session. All students must be well prepared for class discussion according to assignment guidelines.
* Each student will prepare and submit via moodle questions for the following week’s speaker. Details will be given in class and via moodle announcements
* Attendance in at least 6 out of the 7 sessions.
* Mandatory attendance and participation in the team assignment/ presentation.

**\* The Team Assignment will be prepared by teams of 3-4 students, depending on class size. Each of the team members will be asked to take active part in the team presentation.**

**Student Assessment:**

1 Team Assignment: 30%

Final Group Assignment: 50%

Class contribution and participation: 20%

**Final Group Assignment**

Your final assignment is a case study analysis to be submitted no later than two weeks after the last session analyzing two companies which faced an existential crisis. One company that dealt with the crisis well and emerged stronger, and one that failed to bounce back. Try to incorporate lessons covered in the course subjects and how they played out in the crisis. Elaborate in depth on at least one of the following topics which you did not present in class:

1. Venture Funding
2. Founder/Employment Issues
3. Innovation & Ideation
4. Intellectual Property
5. Product Market Fit
6. Crisis Management
7. Ethics and Leadership

**NOTES:**

* In order to keep the ideas original, the following companies are off limits: NETFLIX, BLOCKBUSTER, APPLE, NOKIA, ANDROID, BLACKBERRY
* Try to analyze companies you have a personal connection to. Perhaps you are a shareholder, were employed by this company, or know someone who was.
* The work submitted should be in your own words. Do not copy paste extended phrases or sentences from the internet.
* Please use dependable news sources and cite them in your work.

**Course Plan\***

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Session | Date | Weekday | Time |
| 1 | 22.10.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 2 | 29.10.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 3 | 5.11.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 4 | 12.11.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 5 | 19.11.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 6 | 26.11.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |
| 7 | 3.12.2020 | Thursday | 18:00 – 22:00 |

**Session 1.**  
Course Introduction and "Housekeeping".

Reviewing the various types of firms & industries that will be covered in the course.

New venture funding: This session will cover the startup funding investment landscape including seed, early stage, and venture capital (VC) investment. This session will also cover how investors valuate early stage companies.

Speaker: Dr. Barak Ben-Avinoam [](https://www.linkedin.com/in/barakbenavinoam/)

**Session 2.**

Founder and employment issues: This session will cover founder’s agreements, employee compensation and stock ownership, as well as other legal issues and agreements.

Guest Speaker: TBD

**Session 3.**

Innovation and Ideation: This session will cover tools and strategies for innovation and how many industry leaders stay ahead in technology development.

Guest Speaker: TBD

**Session 4.**

Intellectual Property (IP) Issues: This session will cover intellectual property law, and legal strategy for protecting technology and innovation in new ventures.

Guest Speaker: TBD

**Session 5.**

Product Market fit: This session will cover the importance of a new venture’s value proposition and how to analyze the key underlying assumptions that explain why a customer will use your product.

Guest Speaker: TBD

**Session 6.**

Crisis Management: This session will focus on several examples of company crises and strategy for dealing with unexpected events that can paralyze normal operations.

Guest Speaker: TBD

**Session 7.**

Ethics and Leadership: This session will focus on ethical questions, value conflicts, and leadership strategies for new ventures.

Guest Speaker: TBD

\* The plan is subject to last minutes changes in case of unexpected circumstances that are beyond the control of our distinguished speakers.