Problem-solving, Decision-Making & Creativity
LEAD6255

Course Outline (online)

Description:
Engaging and inspiring others to develop and exercise innovation and creativity in problem-solving is essential in today’s fast-paced and complex world. Unfortunately, biases and uncertainty can, and do, affect our decisions every day. To become an effective Problem-Solver and Decision-Maker, you must try and understand why people make the decisions they do, and what the key drivers are in order to begin to develop strategies that will uncover the innovation and creativity within your organization. This 4-week online course will help you develop an understanding of Problem-Solving and Decision-Making processes and identify key barriers to creativity and innovation.

Course Goals: This interactive online course is designed to allow participants the opportunity to reflect on their important role in developing creative approaches to Problem-Solving and Decision-Making, and to share this knowledge with others. Of importance is the ability for students to identify 2 to 3 concepts or tools to implement in their personal and/or professional context as a current or future leader.

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, students will be able to:
- Define decision-making, problem-solving & creativity
- Explore how to select and use different problem-solving and decision-making models
- Describe, choose, and use a variety of decision making, problem-solving and creativity tools appropriate to the situation and context
- Make choices as to when to involve others in decision making and problem solving
- Describe barriers to good decision making and problem solving

Required Materials:
- Readings and articles are distributed during classroom hours; and,
- Knowledge held and generated by participants will be an important resource.

Evaluation: This is a graded course where a complete or incomplete will be issued. In order to receive a completion for this course, a student must:
  1. Complete the following assignments:
    - Develop a Problem Statement
    - Development 3 questions they would use related to their individual problem statement
    - Reflect on one of the Decision-Making Tools (how they might use it, and identify the pros/cons of the tool)
  2. Participate in online discussions with members of their learning squad/teams
  3. Complete a short quiz at the end of each week

Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct:
Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on “Scholastic Offences” in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for

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credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University’s code of conduct.

**Code of Student Conduct**

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct: [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf)

**Plagiarism:**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com ([http://www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

**How often will the instructor communicate with me?**

The instructor will respond to individual emails within two business days. Questions that have general application should be posted to the General Questions Forum so that all students can receive the same information.

**Policy on Late Assignments:**

Online discussions are to be completed in the week they are assigned. This is to allow everyone in your group the opportunity to contribute to the conversation. The online week will run from Monday to Sunday.

All other assessments (quizzes, assignments and reflections) have “soft” (suggested) deadlines. Every effort should be made to submit by the deadline, however they will be accepted and assessed without penalty until the end of the course date.

**When will I receive my grades?**

Final grades will be available 2 weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

**How do I hand in assignments?**

All assignments will be submitted electronically through OWL using the assignment tool. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor’s written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all assignments forwarded to the instructor arrive before the due date. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor and arranging an alternate method of delivery (e.g. e-mail attachment) for the assignment.

**Course Schedule:** Four consecutive weeks

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You should expect to engage in 3-5 hours of required and optional activities each week. Required activities may include any of the following: Zoom meetings, quizzes, online discussion, assignments, listening to pre-recorded lectures, polls, case study, and readings.

It is highly recommended that you attend these sessions live, but if you are not able to attend a recording of the session will be provided approximately 24-48 hours after the session.

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<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Topics Covered</th>
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| Week 1: Becoming a Problem-Solving Explorer | • Defining Problem-Solving  
• Exploring our Assumptions and Perspectives  
• Problem Identification |
| Week 2: Unfolding the Problem-Solving Treasure Map | • Problem Statements  
• The 3 Ps of Problems  
• A Problem-Solving Model |
| Week 3: Decisions, Decisions – The Power of Engagement | • Defining Decision-making  
• Maximizing Engagement  
• Power of Strategic Questions |
| Week 4: Linking Planning and Action for Creative Results | • Creative Decision-Making Tools  
• Sources of Creativity  
• Group Decision-Making Activity |

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