MIDS 409: Introduction to Management Information Systems
Fall 2005
(Saturday MBA version)

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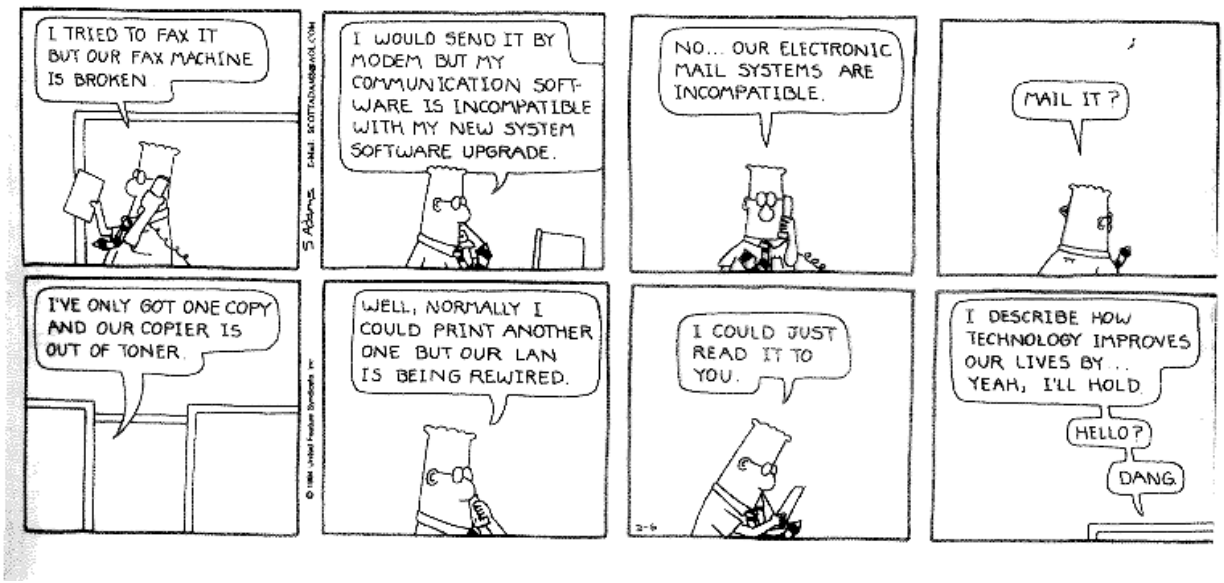
Required Reading Packet:

There is NO textbook for this course. All the readings and cases are included in the CWRU Note.

Course Overview



This course is about design and use of information technology for the organization. Information technology has changed the landscape of business competition and we are living in the "digital economy". In this course, we are focusing on *enabling* and *transforming* roles of information technology in creating a long-term vision for the organization in the digital economy. We will first examine how information technology is radically changing the way in which individuals, organizations, and industries behave, followed by a discussion on how to make information technology investment decisions. Then, we will survey several key information technologies that will play critical roles in transforming organizations over the next 3 – 5 years. This year, we will focus on Enterprise Resource Planning systems, communication and collaborative technology, database and customer relationship management systems, and knowledge management systems.

In so doing, we will develop a set of knowledge and expertise about IT that are required for *general managers* (as opposed to information technology specialists) who are responsible for the long-term welfare of the entire organization.

Course Objectives

1. Understand the basic concepts and terminology of information technology and develop the capability to assess potential strategic applications of an information technology, identify opportunities and risks associated with the use of the technology for a firm, and develop a use the technology as a source sustainable competitive advantage. The goal is to equip you with enough knowledge so that you can become an informed and active participant in IT strategic planning process as a general manager.

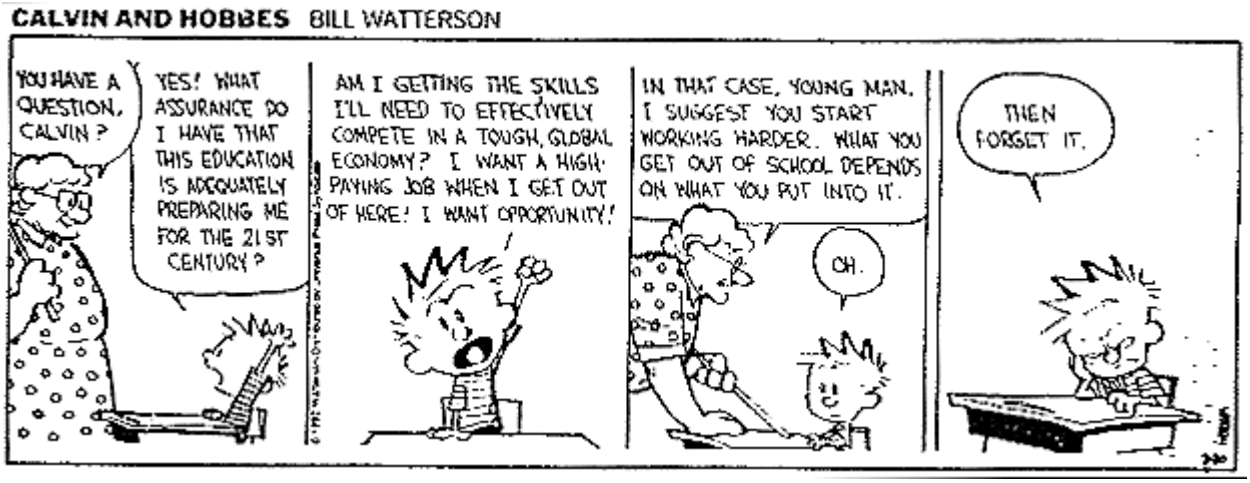
2. Develop a clear understanding of the nature of the "digital economy" and identify a set of challenges facing firms of different kinds. The goal is to equip you so that you can become an effect "change agent" of your organization to transform it to survive in the new economy.

3. Understand political, social implications of information technology so that you will become a responsible user and a thoughtful advocate of information technology. The goal is to make you an informed, learned consumer of information technology for your personal and professional life.

4. Develop a framework for information technology investment decision making for both strategic and operational purposes.

Course Conduct

"Only in education, never in the life of farmer, physician, laboratory experiment, does knowledge mean primarily a store of information aloof from doing." -- John Dewey, 1919.



This course heavily relies on class discussion around real business cases. These business cases bring the "real world" into our learning processes. These cases represent the involved companies' efforts to apply information technology to enhance their competitive advantage.

Although learning specific "technical" skills of "how to" use various computer programs and applications is important, this course focuses on the strategic and managerial applications of those tools for the following three important reasons. First, information technology changes so fast that your knowledge of a tool will be obsolete by the time you finish your MBA program. Thus, it is more important to develop your own paradigm of information technology that will allow you to analyze different information technologies as they come on your radar screen. If you already have such a paradigm, this course will challenge your existing paradigm with an aim

to expand and strengthen it. If you don't have one already, this course will help you build one. Second, this course is not intended for IT technical specialists, since it is an introduction course. Instead, this course is intended for general managers who, in most cases, would not involve in "technical" development works. For those who aspired to be an IT specialist, this course will provide a perspective of the other side. Understanding the needs and concerns of general managers would allow you to design and build systems that are more effective. Third, personal computers and the Internet have penetrated into our daily lives significantly to an extent that it is safe to assume most MBA students have basic computing skills for their knowledge work. If you feel this assumption is not applicable to you, please come to see me. I will provide necessary help for you.

Discussion pedagogy can be very effective when educational objectives focus on qualities of mind (curiosity, judgment, wisdom), qualities of person (character, sensitivity, integrity, responsibility), and the ability to apply general concepts and knowledge to specific situations. The issues around the use of information technology in organizations do not present themselves in a neatly packaged form with a clear-cut boundary. Nor, they come with a well-defined set of decision criteria. Also, the decisions often involve difficult choices to be made which requires character, sensitivity, and responsibility. After all, we are not just dealing with technology. We are dealing with people and organizations.

Discussion pedagogy also puts students in an active learning mode, challenges them to accept substantial responsibility for their own education, and gives them first-hand appreciation of, and experience with, the application of knowledge to practice. Through this, students are encouraged to use their own knowledge and experiences to build, test, and modify their own management theories through dialogues with the instructor and fellow students.

As this course is a hybrid of face-to-face and virtual meetings, class participation will include both forms of communications. The course is divided into four parts, each of which concludes with a face-to-face meeting. There will be an opening presentation available for each part and topic. The face-to-face time will be used to have more in-depth conversations on the themes that emerged from the virtual discussion. The presentation material and the questions for the threaded discussion will be posted on the web (ecollege site) on Saturday each week. During the following week, you are expected to build the "conversations", by responding to the comments by peer students, instead of simply "answering my original postings. You are also encouraged to start your own discussion thread, if the existing conversations prompt you to explore new issues that you feel important.

Grading and Evaluation Criteria

Class participation	30%
Case analyses	30%
Tech Report	15%
IT and competitive advantage analysis	25%

Class participation

Much of learning will occur as you prepare for and participate in the class discussions. I encourage you to work with your classmates to prepare the class discussion. As noted earlier, this class depends heavily on class discussion to achieve its pedagogical goals. Thus, it is imperative for you to actively participate in the class discussion.

To encourage your participation, 30% of the course grade is allocated to your class participation.

I also provide a list of discussion questions for each class session on this syllabus. I evaluate your participation after each class. Your participation is not evaluated based on what you know, but what you *contribute*. At the same time, however, effective participation has much more to do with the quality than with the quantity of your interaction. In other words, those who attempt to dominate air time for its own sake without contributing to the advancement of the discussion will *not* be rewarded for it.

Criteria for class participation credit include attendance, punctuality, level of preparation, professionalism, answering questions, discussing readings, discussing cases, and contributing to group activities. Tardiness disrupts the flow of class activities and often leads to having to repeat announcements or instructions. Entering and leaving the room during the class similarly distracts both students and instructors and conveys a disregard for the material being discussed. **You should display your name cards throughout the semester to enhance interaction.** I encourage you to engage in critical thinking, to challenge ideas without showing disrespect for others' ideas. Please use judgment when raising issues in class – do not waste the class's time on a personal matter – instead see me one-on-one.

Class participation will be evaluated for each class. Therefore, **students who do not attend a class session <u>without an advanced notice</u> will not receive any participation score for the class session.** If you miss a class due to an unavoidable emergency without enough time to notice me, you should contact (preferably via e-mail) me as early as possible to avoid such penalty.

I typically start the class with an "opening" question to one or more students about the case. The asked students should be able summarize the key issues, opportunities, and challenges in the case. Therefore, you should be prepared to be "called" upon for the opening question. If for some reason on a particular day you were not able to prepare for that day's class, let me know at the beginning of the class and I won't call on you (to be used once during the semester without penalty).

<u>Case analyses</u>

During the semester, I will ask you to write **TWO** case analyses of your own choice. **By the <u>second class</u>, you need to let me know via e-mail, which two cases you plan on analyzing**. Your written case analyses will account for 15% toward the final course grade. The case analysis should focus on one of the two things. First, you can focus on the analysis of the actions taken by the company as presented in the case. You should analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the actions. Evaluate the competitive consequences of the actions. Second, you can develop a concrete recommendation for actions that can be taken. In doing so, you should present evidence that you consider other alternatives and how the option you suggest is superior to others. In any case, you analysis present coherent and logical arguments along with your own reflection on the situations.

<u>Do NOT use a separate cover page; instead, put your name in the header section.</u> A case analysis should be submitted via ecollege in MS Word format no later than the Friday before the topic will be open for the discussion. Late submissions will not be graded (unless excused by me) and you cannot choose another case to analyze.

There is no one particular style for a good case analysis. But, there are few things that I am looking for.

1. You need to make an effort to be specific to the facts and problems of the case. Many times, I found that case analyses are full of "general" observations about information technology that can be made to virtually any companies. Your analyses, observations, and suggestions should be specifically tied to the facts and problems presented in the case.
2. At the same time, you need to strive to make a list of more general lessons learned that can be drawn from the specific situation presented in the case. Once you analyze a case, you must be able to talk about few specific things that have broad applications beyond the immediate case.
3. You need to provide a balanced perspective in analyzing the case. That is, if you are making a recommendation, you should be able to say why the company not only should but also can implement your recommendation. In doing that, you should recognize some of the important threats to the recommendation and identify reasons to believe that the company can overcome those. Again, you should draw on specific facts and data as presented in the case or from your own data about the case, which may not be presented in the case.
4. I generally prefer depth to breadth in case analysis. Instead of touching upon several issues, pick one issue from the case and deal with it in depth. Some students employ a "shot-gun" approach, by mentioning few key words without showing much effort to think about them deeply. This approach will not be favorably graded.
5. Finally, but the not the least, the quality of writing is important. You need to make your points effectively within a very limited space with a clear and coherent logical structure. I have seen case analyses that looked as if students wrote them while they were shaving. At your work, you will not have more than few paragraphs before the executives will throw away your report into their trashcan.

Tech Report

By **September 24**, you will have to submit a 2-page (single spaced) report on an emerging technology of your choice. Your report should include a discussion of the technology or trend, a layman's description of how it works (if appropriate), an analysis of its potential value to organizations, and a discussion of its limitations, costs, and so forth.

Content

How well did you discuss what it is?
How well did you discuss how it works?
How well did you discuss its value to organizations?
How well did you discuss its limitations?
How well did you discuss its future potential?

Style

How convincing were you?
How well organized was the report?
How interesting was the report?

The following is a list of suitable technologies for your report. If you would like to choose another, please consult with me.

- 4G
- Bluetooth
- Biometrics

- Emerging technology in security
- ePayment systems
- Extensible Markup Language (XML)
- Friend Of A Friend (FOAF) / Extensible Friends Network (XFN)
- Grid computing
- IPv6
- Linux
- Nanotechnology and MEMs
- Nomadic computing
- Organic light emitting devices (OLED)
- RFID (Radio Frequency IDentification)
- Really Simple Syndication (RSS)
- Smart dusk / Mote
- Wearable computers
- Weblog
- podcasting

This is an individual report.

IT and Competitive Advantage Analysis

The goal of this project is to write a report comparing two companies on how they use information technology I will assign a company that has been recognized as an effective user of information technology to gain competitive advantage and add values. Your group needs:

1. To identify a company in the same industry with similar characteristics, but not much success in using information technology, or a company that has effective but different approaches in using information technology;
2. To gather information about the two companies from various available sources of public information including their annual reports, published articles or case studies, and the companies web sites; and
3. To compare and contrast the two companies from the data.

The report need to include: (a) a brief description of the history of the involved companies and their current status, (b) their business models and manifested strategies, (c) the ways in which they exploit information technology to implement their strategies, and (d) analysis. The analysis section should include:

- Your team's evaluation of how information technology was used in these companies
- Challenges and opportunities for involved companies (regarding the use of technology)
- General management implications

The ultimate goal of the project is not only "documenting" the histories of the involved companies, but "comparing and contrasting" the two companies with an aim to understand what makes one company more successful than the other, particularly in their applications of information technology. In order to achieve this goal, each team needs to analyze these two companies. In the analysis, the team should focus on the question of how the two companies differ in the way they deploy information technology to gain competitive advantage. It is strongly recommended that you use a conceptual framework(s) that we discuss in the class or your own in analyzing the companies. The final section of the report should include managerial recommendations for information technology that you can present to *any* executives (not just these two involved companies).

The final paper is due on **December 3,** not exceeding 15 pages (single-spaced, including supporting materials such as financial statements and organizational charts). A hardcopy should be handed in at the beginning of the class.

On the last class, students will be asked to perform a peer evaluation for the group project. Students will be asked to allocate 100 points among team members (including him or herself) for case write-up. For example, if all five members equally contributed, you would give 20 points per person. The sum of these scores for each individual will be used to adjust the 70% of the team score for that individual. In other words, 30% of your team's score is guaranteed and the rest of it will be adjusted based on the peer evaluation. While the evaluation information will be kept confidentially, I may request an explanation for unusual allocations of scores.

Grading Policy

It is important to recognize that a grade reflects another's evaluation and judgment of your work. Different reviewers might evaluate a paper or exam differently. You are encouraged to meet me at anytime to discuss the strengths and weakness of your course work (i.e., to gain understanding of your performance). Grade appeals on course assignments and exams, however, are discouraged.

If you decide to appeal a grade, follow these steps:

1. Within seven days of receiving the grade, send me a written appeal. After seven days, I will not consider any grade appeals.
2. To file an appeal, prepare a written statement detailing why your are appealing your grade. Be sure to document your reasons by referring to grading standards, incorrect point calculations, etc.; stating simply that you feel you "deserve" a higher grade because you worked hard or based on a vague impression is not sufficient grounds for an appeal.
3. Submit the written statement together with the graded material.
4. I will consider your appeal and make a decision within a week.

Regarding final grades, changes will be considered only in cases of alleged "arbitrary and capricious grading," which can be defined as " (a) The assignment of a course grade to a student on some basis other than performance in the course; (b) The assignment of a course grade to a student by unreasonable application of standards different from standards that were applied to other students that were in that course; or (c) The assignment of a course grade by a substantial and unreasonable departure from the instructor's initially articulated standards." This policy is intended to assure that grading is consistent and fair to all students.

Two key ground rules apply: 1) you must appeal a grade within one week of the time the score for you exam, homework, or project is made available to you, and 2) class time will not be used to discuss grade appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Any student in this class who has a documented visual impairment, cerebral palsy, hearing disability or any other disability should contact the professor during the first week of class to discuss and arrange any instructional accommodation that may be necessary. Student who would like to serve as volunteer tutors, readers, or note takers for students needing special assistance are encouraged to contact the professor during the first week of class.

Instructor biography

Youngjin Yoo is Lewis-Progress Associate Professor in Information Systems department at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. He holds a Ph.D. in information systems from the University of Maryland. He received his MBA and B.S. in Business Administration from Seoul National University in Seoul, Korea. He joined Weatherhead School of Management in fall 1997. Dr. Yoo was selected as a participant to 16th Ernst & Young/International Conference on Information Systems Doctoral Consortium representing the University of Maryland at College Park and was the recipient of 1995 Frank T. Paine Award for Academic Achievement in Maryland Business School. He also received Walter Nord Grant for 1998 – 1999 to investigate the role of IT in managing electronic teams in global economy. He was a summer research fellow at NASA in summer of 2001 and spent a year as a research associate in 2003 – 2004 at NASA Glenn Research Center to study the implementation of the integrated financial management systems at NASA. Also in 2003 – 2004, he was a Glennan Fellow to study how to incorporate *design* approaches into management education. In summer 2004 and 2005, he was a visiting professor at Hong Kong City University. His research interests include knowledge management, the role of information technology for virtual teams, and IT-based new organizational forms. His work was published at leading academic journals such as *Information Systems Research, MIS Quarterly, Organization Science, the communications of the ACM, the Academy of Management Journal, the Journal of Strategic Information Systems, the Journal of Management Education,* and *Information Systems Management*. He also wrote several books chapters. He also presented his work at several national and international research conferences, including International Conference on Information Systems, Americas Conference on Information Systems, and Hawaiian Conference on Systems Sciences. He has researched or consulted leading companies including Andersen Consulting, American Management Systems, Lotus, NASA, Parker Hannifin, Poly One and the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Class Schedule

Note: Readings with an * is not included in the reading packet. They are available from the course web site.

Part I

Week 1: August 27, 12:45 – 2:45 PM

Topic: Learning to be a reflective manager

Case: *Winter Oak (HBS Case: 2-394-220).*
Readings: Argyris, "Teaching Smart People How to Learn," HBR, No. 91301.

Discussion Questions:
1. What is the most significant lesson you learned from the story? And, why?
2. What would be your recommendations to Anna?
3. What are the implications of the story for organizational learning?
4. What are the potential roles of information technology in organizational learning and human development in organizations?

Week 2: Virtual Class (September 3)

Topics: Basic concepts (1): Managing in changing world

Case: Google IPO*
Readings: Blog will change your business, BusinessWeek, May 2, 2005
A Blog Revolution? Get a grip, New York Times, May 8, 2005
Malone and Laubacher, The Dawn of the E-lance Economy," HBR, No. 98508.

Discussion Questions:
1. How is Google's IPO strategy different from the traditional model?
2. Who are the players that are affected by Google's decision?
3. What is the significance of Google's move?

* There are many news articles written about Google's IPO strategy. *Google* and use library search to find and read articles related to Google's IPO.

Week 3: September 10, 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Topic: Basic concepts (2): System Thinking

Case: Fordley car park*
Readings: O'Connor & McDermott, What is system?*
Amrstrong, The systems approach*

Discussion Questions:
1. How could this meeting have been made more productive?
2. What are the systems that were discussed during the meeting?
3. What systems *should* be considered?
4. What would you recommend?

Part II

The next four weeks, we will focus on the interplay between IT and Strategy using four case studies. The readings assigned for these four weeks should be used for all four weeks in analyzing and discussing the cases. While for your convenience I broke them into four separate groups, you are encouraged to read them together if possible.

For those who have not taken strategy class, read *Note on the Structural Analysis of Industries* (HBR: 9-376-054), by Michael Porter. It is not included in the reading package. The article can be purchased individually from Harvard Business School On-line (http://www.hbsp.harvard.edu/).

Week 4: Virtual Class (September 17)

Topic: IT and Strategy (1): IT Architecture

Case: *Enterpirse IT at Cisco (2004)* (HBS Case 9-605-015)
Readings: Weill, Subramani, and Broadbent, Building IT infrastructure for Strategic Agility, Sloan Management Review.
Laartz, Sonderegger and Vinckier, "The Paris guide to IT architecture" McKinsey Quarterly.

Discussion Questions:
1. Describe Cisco's IT architecture. What are its key components and defining characteristics? What are its potential weaknesses and threats for future growth of the firm?
2. What are the roles of Cisco's IT architecture for its implementation of its key strategic objectives articulated by John Chamber?
3. What is the core competency of Cisco and how is IT used to support it?

Week 5: Virtual Class (September 24)

Topic: IT and Strategy (2): Emerging technology and innovation

Cases: OnStar: Connecting to Customers Through Telematics (Stanford Graduate School of Business Case: GS-38)
Readings: Yoo, Digital Strategy*
Fano & Gershman, The future of business services in the age of ubiquitous computing, Communications of the ACM, 2002

Discussion Questions:

1. How does the developments of telematics blur the distinction between information technology and production technology in automotive industry? Think of similar examples from other industries of such digital convergence.
2. How does telematics service challenges the existing industry structure in automotive industry? What are the weak links? Where can you gain the largest value?
3. How would you advice GM for future strategic moves?

Week 6: Virtual Class (September 1)

Topic: IT and Strategy (3): IT and Complementary Resources

Cases: Wyndham International: Fostering high-touch with high-tech (HBS Case)
Readings: Ross and Weill, Six IT decisions your IT people shouldn't make, HBR

Discussion Questions:
1. What was the situation facing Wyndham in 2001? Why kinds of things were at stake for the chain and for the industry?
2. How central was technology to the strategy Wyndham chose to execute?
3. Is the strategy sustainable? Is it inimitable? What factors make it possible or impossible to imitate?

Week 7: October 8, 12:00 – 3:00 PM

Topic: IT and Strategy (4): IT as disruptive technology and industry

Case: *Online Music Distribution in a Post-Napster World,* (HBR)
Readings: Christensen and Overdorf, Meeting the challenge of disruptive change, HBR3456. Andal-Ancion, Cartwright, and Yip, The digital transformation of traditional business, Sloan Management Review.

Discussion Questions:
1. How did peer-to-peer technology change the music record industry?
2. Analyze how digital music threatened the existing value chain of music record industry.
3. How would you advice the incumbent members of the music record industry?
4. Who would be potential threat of new entry to the music record industry and why? What would be your advice to them?

Part III

The next four weeks, we will focus on the management of information technology. We will first focus on three key technologies and then discuss how we can make intelligent decisions regarding the IT investment.

Week 8: Virtual Class (October 15)

Topic: IT Management (1): Enterprise Resource Planning systems

Case: Metallica (Avital and Vandenbosch case)*
Readings: Enterprise Resource Planning (Harvard 9-699-020)

Discussion Questions:
1. How well-prepared was Metallica to undertake the implementation of SAP at the outset of the case?
2. What was different about San Diego? How would you assess a successful implementation?
3. What are the risks involved in implementing integrated corporate systems and has Metallica guarded against them effectively?

Week 9: Virtual Class (October 22)

Topic: IT Management (2): Knowledge Management

Case: *Knowledge Management at Andersen Consulting (HBS Case: N9-499-032)*
Readings: Yoo, The less, the better, perhaps: Learning from music language*
Hansen, Nohria, & Tierney, What's your strategy for managing knowledge? HBR, March-April 1999, Reprint X99206

Discussion Questions:
1. Using the framework put forward by Hansen, Nohria & Tierney, evaluate Andersen's knowledge management imitative.
2. What is the role of information technology in Andersen's knowledge management strategy?

Week 10: Virtual Class (October 29)

Topic: IT Management (3): Database and Customer relationship management systems

Case: *IIF and QuaTeams Creating a Custom CRM*
Readings: Davenport, Harris, De Long, and Jacobson, Data to Knowledge to Results, California Management Review, Winter 2001, Vol. 43, No. 2, 117-138.

Discussion Questions:
1. Drawing on Davenport et al.'s article, evaluate IIF's plan for the CRM project. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the overall plan? What recommendation would you provide if you are to audit the plan?
2. Three options are presented as fot the database performance issue. What is your recommendation for the issue and why?
3. Discuss the implementation plan of the CRM project. What are the weakness in its plan and how would you address those weaknesses?
4. Once the CRM system is fully deployed, how would you transform the some of IIF's business processes? And, how would you measure the success of such transformation efforts?

Week 11: November 5, 12:00 – 3:00 PM

Topic: IT Management (4): IT investment

Cases: *Biogenetica,* Indiana University, 1999*
Consumer Products International Business Case, Indiana University, 1999*

Readings: Ross and Beath, "Beyond the Business Case: New Approaches to IT Investment" SMR 2001
Fichman, Kei, and Tiwana, "Beyond Valuation: 'Option thinking' in IT project management" California Management Review, 2004.

Discussion Questions:

1. Compare and contrast the differences between the two business cases.
2. Would you fund either of the proposed projects? Why or why not?
3. What behavioral and organizational changes would Andersen need to have effective knowledge management?
4. What are other challenges in knowledge management facing Andersen?

Part IV

For the next four weeks, we will focus on the fundamental transformation of organizations using information technology. We will examine various different aspects of such transformations. I encourage you to read the assigned the readings together, although they are necessarily broken into weekly assignments. For those who are interested in this topic, I recommend to read the second chapter of *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century,* by Thomas Friedman.

Week 12: Virtual Class (November 12)

Topic: IT and Transformation (1): Redesigning businesses and processes

Case: *Otis Elevator: Accelerating Business Transformation with IT (Harvard Business School Case #9-305-048)*

Readings: ElSawy, Principles and Tactics of Process Redesign for e-Business

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the growth opportunities of Otis and how IT can provide strategic capabilities to meet such opportunities? Can you think of similar opportunities and challenges in other sectors and companies? How do they respond to those challenges?
2. Discuss the challenges of specific business transformation within the context of big transformation to a service company. What would you do differently, if any? How would you measure the performance of the process redesign initiatives?
3. How does the transformation from an *industrial* Otis to a *service-centric* Otis change the role of IT in the company?

Week 13: Virtual Class (November 19)

Topic: IT and Transformation (2): Virtual Organizing

Case: *Sony Broadcast and Professional Europe: Becoming a virtual company (IMD 038)*

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the key managerial and technical challenges of creating and maintaining Sony Broadcast and Professional Europe?
2. Given the differences in different markets and regulations, how can you best utilized the virtual organization structure of Sony BPE to maximize its potential? Make specific and concrete suggestions.
3. Examine Sony BPE's mission statement. Is its virtual strategy consistent with its stated missions and values? If not, how would you address the challenges?

Week 14: Virtual Class (November 26)

Topic: IT and Transformation (3): New organizational forms

Case: *Oticon A/S (consolidate) (HBS Case: 9-195-142).*
Readings: The coming of the new organization, Drucker, HBR, January – February, 1988.

Discussion Questions:

1. What would be your concerns about Oticon A/S, if you were a stockholder of the company?
2. What was the role of information technology in creating new organizational structure at Oticon?
3. How was information technology related to other components of the Oticon?
4. What would you do next?

Week 15: December 3, 11:45 AM – 2:45 PM

Topic: IT and Transformation (4): Putting it together

Cases: IBM's Decade of Transformation (A): The Turnaround (HBS Case: 9-805-130)
Readings: Sauer and Wilcocks, The evolution of the organizational architect, Sloan Management Review

Discussion Questions:

1. Define key challenges that IBM faced in 1993 when Gerstner took over the chairmanship.
2. What were the key products of IBM in the past and what are they now? What was the rational behind such radical changes?
3. Examine IBM's transformation from an organizational architect perspective. Can IBM's experience and strategy be applied to other companies?
4. Study HP's own efforts to transform itself. Compare that experience with IBM's.

Week 16: Virtual Class, (December 10)

Topic: Review of key concepts

Reading: Carr, IT doesn't matter, HBR

Discussion Questions

1. What are the key arguments that Carr is making? What are the parts that you agree and the parts that you don't agree with? Explain why and provide evidence to support your arguments.
2. Will IT become utility? Provide evidence for your support. If so, what would be your recommendations for companies like UPS, Wal-Mart and Progressive Insurance that built their strategic advantage on the effective use of IT?