

CHAPTER 21. EPILOGUE: ARTISTRY, CHOICE, AND LEADERSHIP

CHAPTER 21 OVERVIEW

Chapter 21 Summary

In the epilogue, the authors reiterate the qualities needed by effective leaders:

1. Personal artistry to respond to ambiguity, challenge, and paradox in organizations.
2. A sense of choice and freedom to find new patterns and possibilities.
3. Flexibility in action.
4. Consistent values and a commitment to core beliefs.
5. The ability to walk the leadership tightrope between rigidity and spinelessness, between maintaining integrity and mission and making their organizations stiff and intractable.
6. Multiframe thinking and the ability to reframe situations.

Chapter 21 Major Case Example

- Mikhail Gorbachev

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING CHAPTER 21

The central ideas in Chapter 21 revolve around reiterating the importance of the reframing for effective management and leadership. Instructors can use this chapter to focus on:

1. Options and empowerment.
2. Review.

Teaching methods appropriate for each approach are described in the sections that follow. Student exercises keyed to the approaches appear in “Student Exercises for Chapter 21,” beginning on page 3.

Chapter 21: A Focus on Options and Empowerment

The basic premise of the book is that reframing and use of the four perspectives on leadership and organizations expand comfort, options, and opportunities. Students should now have a better handle on complexity in organizations, ways of discussing that complexity, and expanded

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options for dealing with it. Recognizing this can be very empowering. Instructors may want to use this class to explore these themes.

One possible activity is to explore the ways in which the four frames now offer students a different perspective on organizations and themselves. Instructors can, for example, return to the first case discussed in the course, some memorable class event, or an activity or simulation from early in the term. Students can revisit the activity—if time permits, instructors might want to actually redo the activity or discuss again the same case—and reflect on how differently they understand the same issue or situation now. If students wrote personal learning goals early in the term, instructors can ask them to reexamine those goals now in light of their learnings from the course. The opportunity to relive a past event with present knowledge is something that many long for. This class activity provides an opportunity to do just that. It can be a powerful way for students to mark their progress and learning this term.

Another option is to offer opportunities for students to practice reframing. Using a simple case, an aspect of the course such as the syllabus, or a short experiential activity such as a milling and greeting activity (see the teaching notes for Chapter 1, Exercise 1.6), students can explore the depth of their understandings of a simple social event or situation. Still other possibilities are presented in Exercises 21.1, 21.2, and 21.3.

Chapter 21: A Focus on Review

Instructors may want to use this chapter to focus on review. In the same way that an overview early in the course can set the stage for exploring the four different perspectives on organizations, a final wrap-up or review can help put loose ends in place.

Instructors can see this review activity as a final opportunity to answer questions, correct misconceptions, or drill the content of each frame. Frame groups can be used in this context, as described in Exercise 21.4. The activity described in Exercise 21.1, in which instructors record student learnings and associations with each frame, is another option.

Alternatively, instructors can think about the review process in broader terms—as a way of focusing not on the content of the frames but on the frames' central premises. Instructors may, for example, want to show four short video vignettes (see the teaching notes for Chapter 1, “Chapter 1: Films or Videos Focusing on Frame Content,” for a discussion of a four-frame video), enabling students to see each frame in action one last time and to see them side by side. Students can explore the ways in which each film clip expresses the central assumptions of the frame and the implications for success in this situation. (Ending this sequence with the last eight minutes of Martin Luther King's “I Have a Dream” speech is very powerful for audiences of all ages.)

Other options include the following:

- Instructors can choose a powerful minicase or film vignette and ask students to reframe the situation.

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- They can form frame groups and ask each to represent, through a symbolic medium (drama, music, poetry, collage, dance, drawings, nonverbal expression, and so on), the “essence” or feel of each frame.
- They can ask students to explore the most powerful aspect of each perspective and the ways in which that aspect affects their abilities to use the frame most effectively.

STUDENT EXERCISES FOR CHAPTER 21

EXERCISE 21.1

Focus: Options and Empowerment

This simple exercise helps to stress the power of the four words *structure*, *people*, *politics*, and *symbols* and how much knowledge those four words now bring forward. Pose a question such as, “What are the most important things that you’ve learned about structure?” or “When you think about structure, what do you think about now?” Post on the board the answers that students generate, and then move on to the other frames. Collectively, the class will generate more ideas than any individual is likely to. This serves as a quick summary of the frames and as a reminder to students of the vast store of knowledge and implicit prescriptions for action now available to them.

EXERCISE 21.2

Focus: Options and Empowerment

Ask students to explore their learnings from the course with such questions as:

- What have been your most meaningful learnings?
- What makes them so important to you?
- How will you use them?
- What will you now do differently because of them?

Students can work in small groups, reporting back to the larger group about their discussions or volunteering to share some of their most meaningful learnings. Alternatively, class size permitting, students can prepare their responses alone, and you can allocate a minute or a few minutes for each student to share his or her most important realizations from the course experience and what he or she will do as a result.

As a variation, instructors can ask students to use a symbolic medium such as drawing, collage, music, or poetry to express their central learnings from the course.

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EXERCISE 21.3

Focus: Options and Empowerment

Have students meet in small groups and create a story about their course experiences. In courses with ongoing case or project groups, students can use this activity to provide a humorous glimpse for the class of their small group's life, joys, and frustrations. For many student groups, this is also an important, healing experience.

Even in courses without ongoing groups, students can have fun devising a story that captures the meaning of each member's individual course experience. Groups can then share their stories in the larger group.

Time permitting, you might ask students to think creatively about how they will share their stories with the larger group. Some students have, of course, read their stories. Others have chosen to act them out in a skit, set them to poetry or music, express them nonverbally, make cartoons or drawings, perform them in a live rap "music video," and so on.

A variation on this activity is to have students work alone to tell a story about themselves in the future that captures what they hope to do or do differently because of what they have learned in the course. Students can share these stories in small groups, which then report back about what the sharing experience was like; or you can ask for volunteers to tell their "hope" stories in the larger group.

EXERCISE 21.4

Focus: Review

Form frame groups. When the groups meet, each is to summarize the central aspects of the group's assigned frame and develop a set of questions that can be used to test the class's understanding of a frame. The questions can be discussed by students in class, used to interview the instructor, serve as the basis for all or part of a take-home exam, or used to set up a simulated game show, such as *Frame Jeopardy*, *Frame of Fortune*, or *Name That Frame*, where groups can playfully vie for the honor of being frame champions.

In *Frame Jeopardy*, for example, each team can be assigned to generate five answers to frame-related questions, and other teams can try to come up with the right question. As an example, a correct response to the answer "An organization exists to achieve established goals and objectives" is "What is an assumption of the structural frame?" Teams get a point for each correct answer, and the team with the most points wins.

In *Frame of Fortune*, each team generates two frame-related phrases or quotations (for example, "differentiation and integration" "person organization fit," "myth, ritual, and ceremony"). One team places a series of underscores on the board to represent the letters in its phrase. Other teams in turn guess one letter at a time. The first team to guess the entire phrase wins that round and then puts its phrase on the board for the next round. You can add an element of "fortune" by having a small spinning device (borrowed from a board game) or a die. The

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team that gets an answer correct could spin the device or throw the die to see how many points it gets.

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