



## **Building and Working in a High Performing Team**

**Masters of Business/Masters of Engineering – Computer Science  
Cornell Tech Campus  
Fall 2014/Winter/Spring 2015**

**Instructor: Janet Gilfillan, MBA**

### **Program Syllabus**

#### **Program Overview**

An interactive approach to learning and applying the core concepts behind the development and sustainability of high performance teams. Students will attend a half day in-class session, followed with participation in a series of one hour team coaching calls over the course of the academic year. Skill development and topic overviews are posted below.

#### **Textbook/Resources**

In order to deepen the student experience, both as an individual leader and as a contributing member of a team, students will complete the on-line assessment and read the book “StandOut – Find your Edge. Win at Work” by Marcus Buckingham (2011). This is an excellent resource to allow teams to not only better understand their individual strength roles, but as well to embrace how best to leverage these strength roles in their team dynamic to deliver even higher output and effectiveness. Students will discuss their assessment results during our Team Coaching Sessions.

Students can purchase the textbook on Amazon.com for an average price of \$15.00. Students **MUST** purchase a **NEW** copy, as they require the unique assessment code found in the back of the book to be able to complete their individual assessment and get their online results.

**ISBN-10:** 140020237X **OR**

**ISBN-13:** 978-1400202379

***Students must complete the assessment, and have reviewed their results prior to their September Team Coaching call.***

**Session 1 (In class) – Friday September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014****Topic: Building a High Performing Team**

When individuals/peers come together to work on a common outcome, one of the first conversations that need to take place is to create an understanding around expectations. How do we need to 'be' together in order for this team relationship to be successful? Students will have the opportunity to experience a case-based exercise where they will take a hands-on approach to solving a team challenge. In addition, students will be given an overview of the importance of team contract, sharing goals, why team contracts add value, how to use them, when to use them, etc.

**Outcome:** Students will complete this module learning a 'Team Contract Framework', as well as be equipped with tools to hold a conversation with their colleagues to complete a Team Contract for their 'Company Project' team deliverable.

Students are expected to complete their Team Contract within their current learning team for submission to their Team Coach for review and feedback.

***Team Contract DUE: Friday September 19<sup>th</sup> 5:00pm EST***

## **Fall Term 2014 - Project Team #1 – Company Project**

- Each project team will have 3 coaching sessions over the course of the term (Sept/October; November, December)
- Each 1 hour team coaching session will be via conference call with the Team Coach and will encompass the topics/activities detailed below
- Teams will be responsible for scheduling a team call with their Team Coach (schedules will be provided)

### **Team Coaching Session #1**

**Timing: end of September /early October 2014**

#### **Topic: Review of Team Contract & Strengths Assessment Discussion**

The first team coaching meeting will focus on two main topics; review of the Team Contract, and discussion around individual strengths as provided in their StandOut™ assessment. In advance of this session, students must have completed their Assessment, reviewed their results, and shared their results with their teammates. Discussion during our meeting will explore the design of the team strengths.

**Outcome:** Students will complete this discussion ensuring alignment around their team contract. They will further explore the results from their StandOut™ assessment, and discuss how their individual strengths are contributing to their team experience and individual performance.

### **Team Coaching Session #2**

**Timing: early November 2014**

#### **Topic: Team Alignment & Accountability**

Students will review with the Team Coach how they are tracking to their Team Contract. In addition we will explore the concept of team alignment and holding each other accountable to what the team has contracted for. In today's project driven world, being accountable for self and others is a critical skill. In this area, students will be given some insight around personal accountability; how to own individual behaviors; learning what you can and can't control; how to use the tools of enquiry and curiosity to open up conversations that seek to clarify someone else's position or reasoning behind actions.

**Outcome:** Students will have increased awareness and skills in creating and holding self and colleagues accountable for behaviors and actions. Students will be better equipped to appropriately and professionally seek additional information and insights from their teammate(s) in order to identify when it's appropriate to have a courageous conversation.

### **Team Coaching Session #3**

**Timing:** early December 2014

#### **Topic: Check in/Giving & Receiving Feedback**

In this session, we will give the students the opportunity to share with each member of their team some constructive feedback; to offer some insight into the value that the team member brought to the team, and any areas that the team member should focus on or be aware of as they transition to their new team. This is a powerful team experience, giving students the opportunity to truly celebrate the strengths that they witnessed from their colleagues, and the benefit of receiving feedback designed to increase personal awareness of individual impact as they move into new team structures.

**Outcome:** Students will leave this discussion with increased confidence in the techniques of structuring constructive feedback conversations, as well as how to receive constructive feedback in a way that increases team productivity and individual effectiveness. This session is designed to have each student on the team provide constructive feedback to their colleagues; what they really appreciated about what that individual brought to the team AND what would have been even better, or areas to focus on; this is a nice set up for students to then move to their next team for their Start Up project.

## **Winter/Spring Term – 2015 - Project Team #2 – Start Up Project**

- Each project team will have 3 coaching sessions over the course of the term (January/February/March or April)
- Each 1 hour team coaching session will be via conference call with the Team Coach and would encompass the topics/activities detailed below
- Teams will be responsible for scheduling a team call with their Team Coach (schedules will be provided)

### **Team Coaching Session #4**

**Timing: end January/early February 2015**

**Topic: Review of Team Contract**

***Team Contract Due: Friday January 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm EST***

Students will be expected to create a new Team Contract for their Start up Project Team.

**Outcome:** Students will review with their Team Coach their Team Contract; discussing the approach they used, exploring the components of their contract and raising any questions they might have. Team Coach will constructively challenge them to consider all aspects of their team functioning and expectations to ensure students are aligned around their ‘team contract’.

### **Team Coaching Session #5**

**Timing: early March 2015**

**Topic: Check in/Managing Healthy & Unhealthy Conflict**

Students will be given some tools to help them explore their ability to lead through conflict. This call will focus on a combination of teaching and reflecting; topics to be reviewed include:

- 3 Levels of Listening
- Marilee Adams “Judge/Learner” & the concept of positive intent

**Outcome:** Students will have an increased awareness of the importance of healthy conflict in a team environment; and will be able to better understand their own unique conflict management style and approach. Students will also be assigned the 'Reflection Journal' to be completed over the course of the month prior to their final Team Coaching call.

### **Team Coaching Session #6**

**Timing:** early April 2015

### **Topic: Check in/Constructive Feedback Session/Reflection Journal**

As in the last session in December, student teams will have the opportunity to give each other the benefit of constructive feedback, and to share with their colleagues' insights to help them continue to be high performing in their next team endeavor.

In addition, students were assigned in March a "Reflection Journal" to capture their insights around their own development as a collaborative and supportive team member. Students will be invited to share one of their reflections as part of the final team meeting.

## **Janet Gilfillan, MBA, ATC**

Janet Gilfillan is a trained Coach, Facilitator and Leadership Consultant servicing clients in a variety of industries and organizations.

Janet brings an extensive background in sales and marketing, having held Senior Executive positions in several Corporate Communications and Marketing Agency organizations over the past 15 years. Her initial training as a Corporate Marketing Specialist with IBM Canada contributed to Janet's expertise and experience in client management, business development, sales effectiveness and training. She has worked with leading multi-national clients in the packaged goods, manufacturing, government and pharmaceutical sectors.

An experienced Team Facilitator and Coach, Janet works with individuals and teams to access their leadership capacity, understand and appreciate their inherent strengths, and to support the creation of collaborative, inspiring and productive environments designed to increase personal and business impact. Over the past several years, Janet has engaged with business leaders and senior executives across a variety of industry sectors in the development and delivery of sustainable leadership development programs and strategic business strategies.

Janet supports the SC Johnson Graduate School of Management, Executive Education department at Cornell University, responsible for overseeing and delivering Team Coaching for US-based teams enrolled in the Cornell-Queen's Executive MBA and Cornell Executive MBA programs. In addition, Janet holds a Visiting Instructor role teaching Leader as Coach to participants in the Cornell Executive MBA program. Outside of her work at Cornell, Janet maintains an Associate Consultant position with a North American leadership solutions consultancy.

Janet is a past Marketing Instructor with the Seneca School of Business, Faculty of Continuing Education. She is an accomplished presenter, having spoken at a variety of industry and higher education conferences over the past number of years. Janet is a member of the Women's Executive Network and the International Coach Federation. She is a past Chair of the Canadian Marketing Association's Women in Leadership Conference, a member of the Marketing Committee for the Duke Of Edinburgh (Ontario Chapter) and Executive Mentor with Free the Children.

Janet holds an Honors Bachelor of Arts degree from Western University, and a MBA (with distinction) from Queen's University. Janet completed her Coach training with Adler International/OISE, and has advanced training in Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching (ORSC™). Janet is certified in The Birkman™ Personality Assessment, The Leadership Circle™ 360 and Team Culture assessments.

