

0041 What the world's hottest MBA courses reveal about 21st-century business

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1. What the world's hottest MBA courses reveal about 21st-century business

Management education involves **wading** 蹚水；涉过（有水处） **through** case studies, **poring** (v.) 仔细打量；审视；认真研读；审阅 **over** financial statements /and building sophisticated 复杂巧妙的；先进的 spreadsheets 电子表格. And, like any MBA curriculum（学校等的）全部课程 **worth its salt** 称职；胜任；名副其实, the GSB's has **compulsory** (a.) 必须做的，强制的 **classes** in accounting 会计, finance and computer modelling 系统模型的建立, to be completed [within the first two terms of instruction, out of a total of six]. Look at the school's three most popular **facultative** 兼性(的); 任意的,可选择的,授权的 **courses**, though, and a more interesting picture emerges of the 21st-century manager. All three require (v.) virtually no number-crunching 数字运算. Instead they aim to cultivate (v.) 栽培；培育 in students **a capacity for hardheadedness** 现实的,冷静的,脚踏实地的, **introspection** 内省；反省 and **diplomacy** 外交；外交手腕, respectively 分别；各自；顺序为；依次为. It is these attributes, the students appear to be saying, rather than any technical expertise 专长, **that will determine success.**

Example 1. 标题

worth one's salt

称职；胜任；名副其实。

worth one's salt字面意思是“某人值他所得的盐”。

在两千多年前古罗马，盐可不是廉价品，而是极其珍贵的东西。那时候盐可以当作货币一样交换货物，而军队里也常用盐作为军饷发放给士兵们，salt 直接代表着士兵的勇猛程度，worth one's salt 就相当于 worth one's salary。

现在worth one's salt 用来形容某人“称职的”，“能胜任的”，“值得尊敬的”这可是一句赞美的话。

GSB

Graduate School of Business 商学院

管理教育, 涉及案例研究、仔细研究财务报表, 和构建复杂的电子表格。而且, 就像任何值得一提的MBA课程一样, GSB有会计、金融和计算机建模方面的必修课, 需要在前两个学期内完成, 总共六个学期。不过, 看看学校最受欢迎的三门兼职课程, 就会出现一幅更有趣的 21 世纪经理图景。这三者几乎都不需要数字运算。相反, 他们的目标是, 分别培养学生冷静、内省, 和外交的能力。学生们似乎在说, 决定成功的正是这些属性, 而不是任何技术专长。

The first leg of the triad 三位一体；三件一套 is a module called “Paths to Power”. Students like to quip (v.)讲俏皮话；讥讽；嘲弄；打趣 that /it is designed for the budding 开始发展的；崭露头角的 Machiavellian 马基雅弗利主义的；不择手段的；阴险狡诈的. **The opening line** 开场白 of **the course syllabus** 教学大纲 laments (v.)对...感到悲痛；痛惜；对...表示失望 that 主 “**insufficient sensitivity to**, and skill in, coping with power dynamics” 谓 have cost (v.)使丧失；使损失 many **talented 有才能的；天才的 people** promotions 提拔；晋升 and even their jobs. **The objective 目标；目的 of the course**, writes Jeffrey Pfeffer, the instructor, is to make sure “you never **have to leave a position involuntarily** 身不由己, 不情愿地”.

Example 2. 标题

syllabus

/ˈsɪlə-bəs/ a list of the topics, books, etc. that students should study in a particular subject at school or college 教学大纲

→ 来自晚期拉丁语 syllabus, 清单, 目录, 误读或误写自希腊语 sittybos, 清单, 目录, 词源不详。该错误发生的原因可能是编者认为该希腊词本身是一个错误, 而正确的拼写应为 syllabe, 集中, 聚集, 词源同 syllable. 并由该拉丁词引申词义摘要, 提纲等。

lament

→ 来自PIE la, 叹息, 悲痛, 拟声词, -ment, 名词后缀。

第一个模块叫做“通往权力之路”。学生们喜欢打趣说它是为崭露头角的权谋者设计的。该课程大纲的开篇就哀叹道, “对应对权力动态的敏感度和技巧不足”, 导致许多有才华的人, 失去了晋升甚至是工作。讲师 Jeffrey Pfeffer 写道, 该课程的目标是, 确保“你永远不必非自愿(即被迫)地离开一个职位”。

One way **to maintain power**, students are taught, is to avoid **grooming (v.)** 使作好准备; 培养; 训练; (给动物) 擦洗, 刷洗 **successors**. MBAs are quick **to draw parallels (尤指不同地点或时间的) 极其相似的人(或情况、事件等)** with 相提并论 contemporary events. After a recent lecture 讲座 /a student observed that /Donald Trump naively 无邪地; 天真烂漫地 “created his own competition” when he endorsed (公开) 赞同, 支持, 认可 Ron DeSantis for governor of Florida in 2018. How to **guard against** 防止, 防范, 提防 (某事) scheming (a.) 惯搞阴谋的; 诡计多端的; 狡诈的 rivals? One way is **to hold “multiple overlapping 相互重叠的 roles”** within an organisation, **as an assigned 指定的; 已分配的 reading (n.) recommends**: it is harder to be defenestrated (将人或物) 抛出窗外 if multiple teams report to you. Xi Jinping, who holds at least ten titles, including China’s president and Communist Party chief, is not known to have taken Mr Pfeffer’s class but seems **to have internalised (使) 内在化 its lessons**.

Example 3. 标题

groom

→ 来自古英语grome, 男仆。词源同grow, crew.

学生们被教导，保持权力的一种方法是避免培养接班人。mba们会很快将其与当代事件相提并论。在最近的一次讲座之后，一名学生观察到，唐纳德·特朗普在2018年支持罗恩·德桑蒂斯(Ron DeSantis)竞选佛罗里达州州长时，天真地“制造了自己的竞争对手”。如何防范诡计多端的对手？一种方法是在一个组织中担任“多个重叠的角色”，正如一份指定读物所建议的那样：如果多个团队向你汇报，你就很难被解雇。拥有至少十个头衔的习近平，包括中国国家主席和中共中央总书记，不知道是否上过普费弗先生的课，但似乎已经将其内化了。

If “Paths to Power” trains future leaders to conquer 攻克；征服；（成功地）对付 external opposition 对手，敌手，“Touchy 敏感性的；需要小心处理的 Feely” 触摸感受 directs them to turn their gaze to their own public image. The course, perhaps the GSB’s most famous, has been running [for half a century]. Its aim is to help students assess (v.)评估，评定（性质、质量）whether 主 the way (they **come across 留下印象 to others**) 系 is the way (they want to be perceived (v.)注意到；意识到；察觉到). Much of the class **consists of** unstructured conversation in groups of 12, plus a weekend retreat 撤退，静修期间（或活动）. **No topic is off the table 不予讨论；离开台面**; dating (v.) history, mental health, **political orientation**（个人的）基本信仰，态度，观点 are all **fair game 可开玩笑（或嘲弄、作弄）**的对象. Students are instructed 教授，传授（技能等）to observe each other’s behaviour, from emotional expressiveness 善于表现；表情丰富 to problem-solving skills.

Example 4. 标题

Touchy Feely

字面意思是“触摸感受”。其实就是 Interpersonal Dynamics 人际互动学。在斯坦福，它被称为 Touchy Feely。在课程里面，**我们探讨如何处理冲突、倾听对方、照顾自己、表达需求。**

36人一个小班，12个人一个T-Group，课堂讲授基本原则，T-Group实践，加每周的自省日记做深入思考。其中T-Group是学习的重点所在，**教授会根据大家的背景，尽量将不同性别、性取向、宗教、民族、婚姻状况的人放在同一个小组里，用多样化的背景来提升学习效果。**

我能想到和T-Group最接近的形式是无领导小组讨论。但T-Group不仅仅是无领导，在这里，也没有任务要完成，没有共同的目标，没有成型的规则。我们大多数人很不习惯这样的小组形式，所以第一天进组的时候，12个平日里风风火火的商学院学生坐在一起面面相觑尴尬值破表，好不容易打破了沉默，又陷入了为一件小事讨论一个半小时没有结论的怪圈。

但这些尴尬和问题正是学习的机会。Touchy Feely注重“当下”和“此刻”，每个人需要了解在此刻发生了什么，自己有什么感受，并且选择要不要将自己的感受分享给小组，然后观察自己的分享对其他人造成了什么影响。这是“人际互动”的真义所在，我们在日复一日的生活中一直在做的选择。只是Touchy Feely教我们用更用心地观察、也更勇敢地尝试不同的沟通方法。

在长达3小时的T-Group讨论里，我们还会有各种其他的感受：焦虑、怀疑、好奇、恐惧、信任、悲伤、开心，甚至一个感受会激发另外一长串感受，我们要做的事情是，问一下自己为什么会有这些感受，为什么选择分享或者不分享这些感受，如果决定分享，要怎么分享，背后有什么关于小组或对对方的假设，和对方求证以后假设是正确的吗，等等等等。

touchy

[not usually before noun] ~ (about sth)(of a person 人) easily upset or offended 易烦恼；易生气；易怒

[usually before noun] (of a subject 课题) that may upset or offend people and should therefore be dealt with carefully 敏感性的；需要小心处理的；棘手的

fair game

[U] if a person or thing is said to be **fair game** , it is considered acceptable to play jokes on them, criticize them, etc. 可开玩笑（或嘲弄、作弄）的对象

如果说《通往权力之路》是训练未来的领导人,来克服外部的反对，那么《敏感的感觉》则引导他们将目光转向自己的公众形象。这门课程可能是GSB最著名的课程，已经开办了半个世纪。它的目的是帮助学生评估他们给别人的印象是否是他们想要的。课程的大部分内容是12人一组的非结构化对话，外加周末的

静修活动。没有什么话题是不可以讨论的;约会史,心理健康,政治倾向都是可以讨论的话题。学生们被要求观察彼此的行为,从情感表达到解决问题的能力。

The course culminates (v.) (以某种结果) 告终; (在某一点) 结束 in an activity that is known to **induce** 引起; 导致, 诱使 **tears** in some. Students are asked to **sort themselves into a line** according to the degree of “influence” each person possesses 拥有, 具有 (特质). 主 Those **convinced** (v.) 使确信; 使相信; 使信服 **of their own brilliance** 谓 may try to insert themselves at the front of the pack. **They risk** (v.) **getting rebuffed** 粗暴回绝; 生硬的拒绝. Disagreements often erupt /as others **jostle** (v.) (在人群中) 挤, 推, 撞, 操 **for** 争夺; 争抢 **position** near the front. It is humbling 令人羞辱的, 使.....谦恭; 使.....卑贱, even traumatic (a.) 痛苦的; 极不愉快的, **to be consigned** 把...置于 (令人不快的境地); 打发; 发落 **to** the back of the line. Yet 主 this exercise in **tough love** 严厉的爱 (为帮助而严厉对待有问题的人) 谓 offers a chance for self-discovery. [Only when you know your weaknesses] can you act to mitigate (v.) 减轻; 缓和 them. [For some] this might mean speaking more forcefully. [For others] it could mean **frowning** (v.) 皱眉; 蹙额 **less** and smiling more.

Example 5. 标题

JOSTLE FOR STH

to compete strongly and with force with other people for sth 争夺; 争抢

*[Only when you know your weaknesses] **can you act to mitigate** (v.) 减轻; 缓和 them.*

当“only when”位于句首时,其后习惯上要用部分倒装,即将be动词、助动词或情态动词,放在主语之前。

这门课程的高潮,是以一项众所周知的“会导致一些人哭的活动”告终。学生们被要求根据每个人拥有的“影响力”程度,将自己分成一行。那些对自己的才华深信不疑的人可能会试图让自己站在人群的前面。他们冒着被拒绝的风险。当其他人在前排争夺位置时,分歧往往会爆发。被安排到队伍的后面,是一种羞辱,

甚至是创伤。然而，这种严厉的爱，提供了一个自我发现的机会。只有当你知道自己的弱点时，你才能采取行动来减轻它们。对一些人来说，这可能意味着说话更有力。对其他人来说，这可能意味着少皱眉多微笑。

The third popular course, “Managing (v.) Growing Enterprises 企业”, is not, as its name might suggest, about small-business accounting 会计. Rather, the focus is on **how to deal tactfully 巧妙地；机智地 in sensitive situations**, when many aspiring 有抱负的；渴望从事.....的 managers **are tripped up 绊；绊倒 by an inability** to find the right words. How do you **lay someone off 解雇**? How do you **decline 谢绝；婉言拒绝 unsolicited 未被请求的；主动提供的 and unhelpful advice** from a big investor? How do you **respond to** a nosy journalist? **The course is structured around** role-playing, in which a handful of students **are cold-called** (向潜在的主顾打的)冷不防电话；冷不防上门推销 each session 一场；一节；一段时间 **to act out** 模仿表演(想法、先前发生的事件等) such exchanges 交谈；对话；争论. The professor and other students **offer feedback**, which can be scathing (a.)严厉批评的；无情抨击的；尖刻地斥责的. Prospective 有望的；可能的；即将发生的；行将来临的 students who visit the GSB **are regularly invited to sit in** on MGE, as the class is commonly known [on campus]. Applicants 申请人（尤指求职、进高等学校等） from Asia, many of whom **have been brought up** to be conflict-averse 反对的，不愿意的，讨厌的, appear particularly engaged, **taking copious 大量的；充裕的；丰富的 notes** as the **role players** in the classroom **try their best** to be diplomatic but firm.

Example 6. 标题

第三门热门课程“管理成长型企业”，正如其名称所暗示的那样，并不是关于小企业会计的。相反，课程的重点是如何巧妙地应对敏感情况，当许多有抱负的管理者因找不到合适的词语而陷入困境时。你如何解雇一个人？你如何拒绝一个大投资者主动提出的毫无帮助的建议？你如何回应一个爱管闲事的记者？这门课程是围绕角色扮演进行的，每节课都会有一些学生，被随机邀请，出来表演这样的交流。教授和其他学生提供的反馈可能是严厉的。访问GSB的未来学生，定期

被邀请参加MGE课程，因为这门课在校园里很常见。来自亚洲的申请者，他们中的许多人从小就被教导要避免冲突，他们似乎特别投入，做了大量的笔记，而课堂上的角色扮演者，则尽力表现得圆滑而坚定。

The four pillars of the corner office

主 A degree of ruthlessness, self-awareness 自知；自明；自觉 and tact (n.) (处事、言谈等的) 老练，圆通，得体，乖巧 谓 can, of course, be a familiar mix in corner offices and boardrooms past and present. The GSB's courses suggest that /they are likely to remain commonplace 平凡的；普通的；普遍的 for the foreseeable 可预料的；可预见的 future — though **in varying proportions** 比例；倍数关系 depending on the individual. They will also always **be supplemented (v.)**增补；补充 **by** a fourth characteristic. **The admissions (机构、组织等的)** 准许加入，加入权，进入权 **director** 招生办主任 who accepted Mr Sunak nearly 20 years ago /recalls that /the young Rishi **exuded (v.)**流露，显露 (感觉或品质) **a certain “selfless 无私的 ambition”**. No course can teach **steely 强硬的；冷冰冰的, (色泽) 似钢的 determination** — not even at the GSB.

Example 7. 标题

转角办公室的四大支柱

当然，无论是过去还是现在，某种程度的冷酷无情、自我意识和机智，都可能是角落办公室和董事会的常见组合。GSB的课程表明，在可预见的未来，它们很可能仍然是司空见惯的——尽管比例会因个人而异。它们还总是会得到第四个特征的补充。近20年前录取 Rishi Sunak (现英国首相) 的招生主任回忆说，年轻的 Rishi Sunak 散发出某种“无私的野心”。没有一门课程能教会人们钢铁般的决心——即使是在GSB。

2. <pure> What the world's hottest MBA courses reveal about 21st-century business

Management education involves wading through case studies, poring over financial statements and building sophisticated spreadsheets. And, like any MBA curriculum worth its salt, the GSB's has compulsory classes in accounting, finance and computer modelling, to be completed within the first two terms of instruction, out of a total of six. Look at the school's three most popular facultative courses, though, and a more interesting picture emerges of the 21st-century manager. All three require virtually no number-crunching. Instead they aim to cultivate in students a capacity for hardheadedness, introspection and diplomacy, respectively. It is these attributes, the students appear to be saying, rather than any technical expertise, that will determine success.

The first leg of the triad is a module called "Paths to Power". Students like to quip that it is designed for the budding Machiavellian. The opening line of the course syllabus laments that "insufficient sensitivity to, and skill in, coping with power dynamics" have cost many talented people promotions and even their jobs. The objective of the course, writes Jeffrey Pfeffer, the instructor, is to make sure "you never have to leave a position involuntarily".

One way to maintain power, students are taught, is to avoid grooming successors. MBAs are quick to draw parallels with contemporary events. After a recent lecture a student observed that Donald Trump naively "created his own competition" when he endorsed Ron DeSantis for governor of Florida in 2018. How to guard against scheming rivals? One way is to hold "multiple overlapping roles" within an organisation, as an assigned reading recommends: it is harder to be defenestrated if multiple teams report to you. Xi Jinping, who holds at least ten titles, including China's president and Communist Party chief, is not known to have taken Mr Pfeffer's class but seems to have internalised its lessons.

If “Paths to Power” trains future leaders to conquer external opposition, “Touchy Feely” directs them to turn their gaze to their own public image. The course, perhaps the GSB’s most famous, has been running for half a century. Its aim is to help students assess whether the way they come across to others is the way they want to be perceived. Much of the class consists of unstructured conversation in groups of 12, plus a weekend retreat. No topic is off the table; dating history, mental health, political orientation are all fair game. Students are instructed to observe each other’s behaviour, from emotional expressiveness to problem-solving skills.

The course culminates in an activity that is known to induce tears in some. Students are asked to sort themselves into a line according to the degree of “influence” each person possesses. Those convinced of their own brilliance may try to insert themselves at the front of the pack. They risk getting rebuffed. Disagreements often erupt as others jostle for position near the front. It is humbling, even traumatic, to be consigned to the back of the line. Yet this exercise in tough love offers a chance for self-discovery. Only when you know your weaknesses can you act to mitigate them. For some this might mean speaking more forcefully. For others it could mean frowning less and smiling more.

The third popular course, “Managing Growing Enterprises”, is not, as its name might suggest, about small-business accounting. Rather, the focus is on how to deal tactfully in sensitive situations, when many aspiring managers are tripped up by an inability to find the right words. How do you lay someone off? How do you decline unsolicited and unhelpful advice from a big investor? How do you respond to a nosy journalist? The course is structured around role-playing, in which a handful of students are cold-called each session to act out such exchanges. The professor and other students offer feedback, which can be scathing. Prospective students who visit the GSB are regularly invited to sit in on MGE, as the class is commonly known on campus. Applicants from Asia, many of whom have been brought up to be conflict-averse, appear particularly engaged, taking copious notes as the role players in the classroom try their best to be diplomatic but firm.

The four pillars of the corner office

A degree of ruthlessness, self-awareness and tact can, of course, be a familiar mix in corner offices and boardrooms past and present. The GSB's courses suggest that they are likely to remain commonplace for the foreseeable future—though in varying proportions depending on the individual. They will also always be supplemented by a fourth characteristic. The admissions director who accepted Mr Sunak nearly 20 years ago recalls that the young Rishi exuded a certain “selfless ambition”. No course can teach steely determination—not even at the GSB.
