

COMM 210

Contemporary Business Thinking

Dickson Jay
Department of Management

Lecture 1 – Introduction

Objectives for Today

- Introducing ourselves
- Course Overview
 - Goals, content, evaluation
- A first look at critical thinking about business
- Preparation for week 2

COMM 210 Learning Outcomes

- Recognize examples and counter-examples of fundamental business theories in reports of current business activities
- Perform critical analyses of business texts
- Construct persuasive arguments using the language of business (improve your writing skills)
- Demonstrate awareness of and interest in current business events
- Work effectively in groups

Team Project

- Teams of 4 to 5 students, formed in Week 3
- Project requirements
 - Get engaged in a contemporary business issue, collect data, analyze information critically, and write an interesting and persuasive report. Topics to be confirmed.
- **Progress report (Oct. 5, Oct. 26)**
- **Project report due Week 12**
- **Project presentation in Weeks 12 and 13**
- In class Capacity Building Exercises
- Peer assessment at the end of term

Help & Resources

- Academic Advisor
- Academic Integrity
- Access Centre for Students with Disabilities
- CSU Advocacy Centre
- Counselling and Psychological Services
- Dean of Students Office
- Financial Aid and Awards
- Health Services
- HOJO (Off Campus Housing and Job Bank)
- International Students Office
- Le Frigo vert
- Library Business Videos
- Library Citation and Style Guides
- Student Hub
- Student Parents Centre
- Student Success Centre:
<http://www.concordia.ca/students/success.html>
- Undergraduate programs office

Writing Assistance

<http://www.concordia.ca/students/learning-support/writing-assistance.html>

Free help with writing in English and/or French...

Writing Assistants help students:

- understand writing assignments
- organize ideas and overcome writer's block
- cite sources correctly
- review rough drafts
- find and correct grammar errors

Book appointment through "My Concordia" portal:

- Click on "Student Services"
- Click on "Counselling and Development"
- Click on "Peer Tutor Writing Appointments"

Fall 2017 Writing Centre Hours: **(To be confirmed)**

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Videos by Olivier Charbonneau

- 'Do you know the difference between citation and reference? or between Google Scholar and Library databases? Watch these videos to learn which to use and much more!'
- 'Captured a Pikachu on Pokémon Go BUT can't find the right resources for your paper?? Watch these videos on how to get the ultimate resources for your paper and more!'



Business Community “Buzz Words”

- Empowerment
- Vision
- Mission Statement
- Brain Drain
- Best Practices
- Globalization

Business School “Buzz Words”

- Economies of scale
- Learning curve
- Product life-cycle
- SWOT analysis
- Strategy

Excerpt from Fortune magazine article

CONGRATULATIONS, COLLEGE GRADS! Now begins your so-called real life. But here's a bummer: If you took your parents' well-meaning advice and majored in a seemingly useful discipline like accounting or marketing, you may be headed for the unemployment line.

According to a new study by Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York most parents (75%) and college-age kids (85%) believe the point of college is to get a practical education and land a decent job right out of school.

But CEOs queried for the survey were thinking instead of long-term career development: only 37% of them said the purpose of a sheepskin is to acquire work skills. While the parents and kids took a dim view of liberal arts, business leaders called the humanities essential to developing critical thinking (90%) and problem-solving skills (77%).

What if the CEOs are right, and your techie degree lands you in Nowheresville? There's always grad school.

Exercise: Excerpt from *Fortune* Magazine

- 8 ½ x 11”; write your name at the top of page
- Answer the following questions with complete sentences
 - a) Which phrases catch your attention & seem worthy of discussion?
 - b) What is the major idea of this article? Do you agree or disagree with the author?
 - c) Do you think that the writing style is persuasive? Why or why not?
 - d) Write one short sentence that summarizes this excerpt.

Group Exercise: Excerpt from *Fortune Magazine*

- Teams of 4-5 students
- Getting to know each other: Name? Major? Years of study? Current job? Interests? Where do you come from? Etc....
- Discuss the following questions:
 - a) Which phrases catch your attention & seem worthy of discussion?
 - b) Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why?
 - c) Do you think that the writing style is persuasive? Why or why not?
 - d) Write one short sentence that summarizes this excerpt.
- Select a speaker who will introduce the members and share results of discussion.

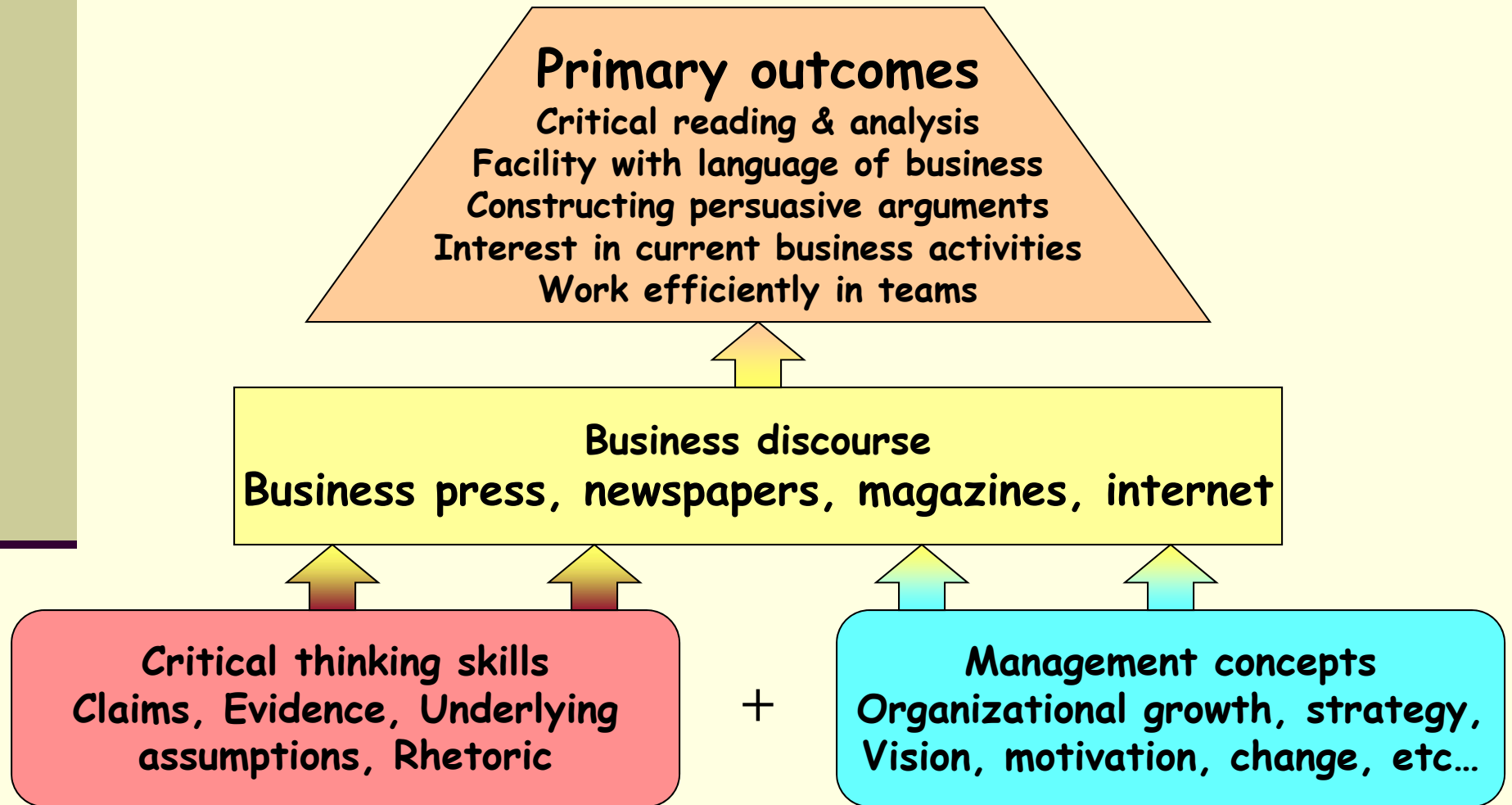
Sharpen Your Analytical Skills

- Critical thinking = Analyzing the validity of arguments presented in a text
 - Identify the author's major conclusions
 - Describe & evaluate supporting evidence
 - Uncover assumptions & values
 - Determine soundness of causal logic
 - Deconstruct use of persuasive language

Fundamental Business Theories

- Chandler on business success
- Greiner on evolution/growth of organizations
- Tannenbaum & Schmidt on leadership
- Collins & Porras on company's Vision
- Mintzberg on the manager's job
- French and Raven on social power
- Barney on internal resources and capabilities
- Kaplan & Norton on performance measurement and evaluation
- Handy on managing change
- Herzberg on motivation

Contemporary Business Thinking Content & Outcomes



Recommended Learning Approach

■ BEFORE THE CLASS:

- Read the fundamental business theory article. Identify the objective(s) of the article, and make notes of the main concepts.
- Read the “Dyer” chapter and make notes of the main points. Practice with the textbook exercises.
- Read the business article(s) and highlight what applies to the theory/concepts of the theory and to the Dyer’s readings

Recommended Learning Approach

- DURING THE CLASS:
 - Answer your professor questions.
 - Participate in the class discussions.
 - Take notes.
 - Many concepts of this class are interrelated; simply reading them and/or hearing them is not enough to provide conceptual understanding and skill development to apply them

Recommended Learning Approach

- AFTER THE CLASS:
 - Make a summary of what you learned.
 - Test your ability to apply the concepts to other business articles.
 - Discuss with classmates/teammates.
 - Reach out to your professor when needed.
 - Use the assistance/help provided by the University, if needed

Capacity Building Exercises

- Exercise 1: Bingo Week 1
- Exercise 2: Marshmallow challenge Week 2
- Exercise 3: Basics of Project Management Week 3
- Exercise 3: Deconstructing an essay Week 5
- Exercise 4: Ethics of Research with human participants Week 6
- Exercise 5: Conducting interviews Week 7
- Exercise 6: Preparing for assessment of project Week 9

Preparation for Next Week

- Readings for next class
 - **Chandler's** article "The enduring logic of industrial success", *HBR*, Mar/Apr 1990
 - **Samsung:** The next big bet, *The Economist* (On electronic reserve in Webster library)
 - Textbook (Dyer): Claims (chapter 2) & Popular business terms (appendix 1)
- Don't forget to check your mailbox and our class folder on **Moodle**
- Don't forget to bring your text book