

MANAGEMENT

AS A CALLING

Retreat #1
Orientation Materials

FALL 2023



Orientation Materials

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Program Agenda

Friday, September 8

Theme: Prepare and Inspire

11:00-12:00	Lecture and Discussion: Pick up Program Materials, Discuss Expectations. <i>Exercise: Ikigai</i> (see Exercise Handout in this Booklet)
12:00-12:45	Lunch
1:00-5:00	Depart Ross by Motorcoach at 1:00, Arrive at the UM Biological Station at 5:00 (est). Continued Exercises and Discussion on Bus.
5:50-6:30	Dinner
6:30-8:00	Lecture and Discussion: Introductions, Discussion of Readings, Exercises, Reflection and Community Norms.
8:00-	Campfire, Private Time

Saturday, September 9

Theme: Reflect and Connect

6:15-7:00	Yoga
7:30-8:30	Breakfast
8:30-11:00	Exercise: Ethical Autobiography (see Exercise Handbook) Reflection and Discussion Exercise: Personal Values Map (see Exercise Handbook) Reflection and Discussion
11:00-11:30	Private Time
11:30-12:30	Lunch
12:30-5:00	Exercise: Life Aspiration Statement (see Exercise Handbook) Reflection and Discussion Exercise: Craft Your "Story of Self" (see Exercise Handbook and Ganz Article in Advance Readings)
5:00-5:30	Private Time
5:30-6:30	Dinner
6:30-8:00	Lecture and Discussion
8:00-	Campfire, Private Time

Sunday, September 10

Theme: Integrate and Aspire

6:15-7:00	Yoga
7:30-8:30	Breakfast
8:30-11:00	Lecture and Discussion: Finding and Drawing Energy from Mentors Exercise: Personal Mission/Purpose Statement (see Exercise Handbook) Reflection and Discussion Exercise: Letter to Your Future Self (see Exercise Handbook) Reflection and Discussion
	Lecture and Discussion: Conclusion and Next Steps
11:00-11:30	Private Time
11:30-12:30	Lunch
1:00-5:00	Depart Biostation by Motorcoach at 1:00, Arrive Ross School at 5:00 (est)

Program Roster

	PROGRAM ROSTER			
	First Name	Last Name	Email	Degree Program:
1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
2	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
3	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
5	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
6	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
7	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
8	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
9	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
10	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
11	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
12	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
13	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
14	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
15	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
16	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
17	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
18	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
19	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
20	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
21	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
22	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
23	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
24	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
25	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
26	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
27	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
28	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
29	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
30	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
31	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
32	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
33	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
34	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
35	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
36	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

37	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
38	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
39	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
40	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
41	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

Individual Program Interests

	First Name	Last Name	Industry Sector Career Goal:	Ross Concentration of Focus:	List all issues that you want
1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare Consulting- later Health Equity Startup	Healthcare Management + MBA/MPH	Health Equity, Economic Development in the Global South, Rural US Development, Education Access Globally, Women's Empowerment
2	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare - Pharma	Healthcare	Gender parity, LGBTQ rights
3	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Management Consulting	Health Care Strategy & Management	Mental health equity, disability rights, racial justice, gender equality, economic justice, education equity, immigrant rights
4	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Impact Investment, international climate finance	TBD, Dual Degree with School for Environment and Sustainability	Climate change, international development, climate finance, inequality, etc.
5	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Consulting	Strategy and Finance	Income inequality, gender inequality, living wage, climate change
6	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Financial services	Business and tech	Credit access for lower economic strata
7	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Consulting (Partner track)	MBA - Strategy, Operations, Data and Business Analytics	Income inequality, disability- related issues, LGBTQ rights
8	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Tech Industry	Design Thinking & Innovation	Income Inequality, Wealth Inequality, Financial Inclusion, VC Startup Capital Inequity, Race Inequality
9	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Corporate Social Responsibility or nonprofit leadership with time in consulting out of school	social impact, Management and Organizations	Hunger alleviation, workforce development, the City of Detroit, arts programming for all schools
10	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Tech / mental health / wellness	MBA Stem, and business analytics	Income inequality, stigmatization of underrepresented groups. Mental health and people with diverse ability in DEI, purposeful way of living / awareness of self
11	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Consulting or Technology	Management Science and MBA	Inclusivity for FLI (first- generation low-income)
12	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Corporate Sustainability	Erb Institute	Climate change, income inequality

					Economic Infrastructure in Developing Markets Income Inequality Education Inequality Social Progress
13	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Impact Consulting	NA	
14	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Leadership of a conservation non-profit	Erb Dual Degree	Climate change, equitable outdoor access, land conservation
15	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Brand Management, CPG with a focus on accessibility	Marketing, General Management	Physical and mental accessibility, overall representation
16	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Environmental consulting	N/A	Climate change, GHG standards and tracking, waste reduction, food injustice and insecurity, air and plastic pollution, biodiversity loss, human and labor rights
17	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Corporate sustainability/supply chain	Minor	Climate change, income inequality, healthcare inequity, social justice
18	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare	Healthcare	Health equity, DEI
19	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Food/Agriculture in Strategy/Sustainability	Erb/Sustainability, Tauber/Operations	Climate change, food system access and justice, animal welfare
20	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Social Impact Consulting	STEM	Sustainability, Social Impact, Public sector, Health, Gender equality
21	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Finance	Finance	Climate Change
22	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Venture Capital	Management Science (STEM), Fast Track in Finance	Climate Change and Sustainability, Equal employment and career development, LGBTQ rights, parenting and childcare in Japan
23	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Consulting / Social Impact	Strategy	Income inequality; social & economic mobility, living wage, equitable access to education (e.g., higher ed & career and technical ed)
24	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare (Pharmaceuticals)	Healthcare Management	Children and family
25	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Strategy Consulting	MBA (Tauber) & MS Sustainable Systems (Erb)	Homelessness, healthcare, climate change, racial equity and justice, elder care, youth access to creative arts,
26	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Venture Capital/Startups	Sustainability	Climate change, sustainability, DEI, LGBTQ+ rights
27	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Design Strategy, Product Management, Social Impact	Technology and Operations, Marketing	Economic justice and development; health equity; equity, justice, and belonging

28	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare	Healthcare Management and Fast Track in Finance	Inequities in healthcare access
29	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Technology	Data and Business Analytics	Gender equity, social equity
30	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	To be a leader in the renewable energy industry	None	Climate change, economic development of rural communities, socioeconomic inequality
31	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Healthcare	Healthcare Management	Health Equity
32	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	CPG brand management	Sustainability & Business; Data & Business Analytics	Sustainability, climate change
33	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Startup / VC (by way of a stint at McKinsey)	Strategy	Technology ethics (AI + Social), LGBTQ rights, women's rights, international economic development.
34	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Digital health, tech	Health, Tech, Design	climate change / sustainability, global health / emerging markets, economic empowerment
35	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Tech	Tech	Climate change, Income inequality, LGBTQ rights
36	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Real Estate	Strategy & Operations	Social mobility, equitable design, affordable housing
37	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Humanitarian Organizations	Masters in Supply Chain Management	Climate change, Inequality, Zero Hunger, Sustainable cities and communities
38	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Real Estate Development	Management, Finance	Real estate equity, affordable housing, ethics regarding gentrification, climate change
39	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Consulting Principal or Managing Director	Operations/Consulting	Supply Chain Resiliency, National Security, healthcare policy
40	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	General Management (P&L ownership) at a high-complexity engineering product company	Strategy and Management	Circular Economy, Executive Diversity, Slow Living
41	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Sustainable Operations Manager	Operations	Compostable packaging - Agricultural workers' rights - Accessible preventable health care to all

Group Program Interests

Accessibility - creative arts for youth	Homelessness
Accessibility - physical and mental	Hunger alleviation (2)
Affordable housing (2)	Inclusion - arts programing
Animal welfare	Inclusion - first-generation low-Income
Biodiversity loss	Inclusion (2)
Circular economy	Inclusion and access - education
Climate change (19)	International development (2)
Community development (2)	Justice - economic
Compostable packaging	Justice - race
Credit access for lower economic strata	Justice - social
DEI (4)	Land conservation
Developing markets	Living wage (3)
Disability-related issues	Location - Detroit
Education (2)	Location - global south
Elder care	Location - Japan
Emerging markets	Location - rural US
Equity - design	Mental health
Equity - education	Mobility - social and economic (3)
Equity - gender (7)	Resilience - financial
Equity - income/economic (13)	Resilience - supply chain
Equity - mental health	Rights - agricultural workers
Equity - outdoor access	Rights - disability
Equity - race (2)	Rights - human and labor
Equity - real estate	Rights - immigrant
Equity - social	Rights - LGBTQ (6)
Equity - health (7)	Rural communities
Families	Slow living
Families and children (2)	Sustainability (5)
Families and parenting	Sustainable cities
Finance (3)	Technology
Food systems/justice (2)	Waste reduction
Healthcare (4)	Workforce development

insight 3



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Developing Community Guidelines

Community guidelines give each group member a framework for respecting each other's opinions and respecting and understanding each others' opinions and lived experiences. Guidelines can help dialogues stay on track when conflict emerges. Establishing community guidelines is an essential part of creating a brave, inclusive space. While we believe it is preferable to invite the group to create their own guidelines, in the interest of time facilitators may present a pre-determined list and review it with the group for modifications. Community guidelines should be viewed as a "living document" that are open to modification as needed. The following are the guidelines we have found to be most helpful.

1 **Be present and engaged;** avoid technology distractions. In order for people to share vulnerably and bravely, they must feel that the other participants are also invested in the dialogue. It is important that all participants commit to being present, stay engaged, and avoid using electronic devices or checking out of the dialogue in other visible ways.

2 **Share airtime.** In dialogue it can be easy for those participants who feel most comfortable speaking up in large groups to dominate the conversation and for those who are more introverted to stay quiet. However, in order for everyone to grow and learn, it is important to balance who is sharing. Challenge participants to be reflective about how often they are speaking up.

3 **Be aware of intent and impact.** We often refer to the difference between intent and impact when facilitating dialogue. We remind people that no matter how good their intentions might be, if the impact of what they said was hurtful, then they probably need to apologize.

4 **Don't suppress voices.** Don't suppress marginal or unpopular voices. Civility does not mean lack of dissent.

5 **Expect and accept discomfort (and joy);** we are on our learning edge. Learning happens more when you are on your learning edge, not when you are feeling comfortable. Social justice work is uncomfortable. We invite you to view discomfort as an indicator that learning is happening and recognize that new learning can also lead to feelings of pride, understanding, growth and joy.

6 **Speak our emotions, as well as our intellect.** Our emotional reactions to this process often offer invaluable learning opportunities, and give us insight into processes of which we may be unaware. We will share these responses, including our discomfort, in the spirit of learning and growing; we will try to not attack, blame, shame or dismiss others.

7 **Speak from your own experience.** Encourage participants to use "I" statements when sharing to avoid assuming others in the room share your perspective.

8 **Listen to learn, not to respond;** listen harder when you disagree. Unlike typical discussions where people often focus primarily on what they are planning to say next, in dialogue we invite people to listen generously with the intent to understand rather than to interject. Participants should listen even harder when someone is saying something about which they disagree to try to understand their perspective.

9 **Do not freeze people in time.** The primary goal of dialogue is personal growth. In the most successful dialogues, participants have gone through transformative growth between the first and last session. Dialogue requires that participants take risks, be brave and vulnerable. This inevitably means participants will make mistakes. We often learn the most through making mistakes. Hence, when we ask one another "not to freeze people in time," we are recognizing that we all want the opportunity to grow without being judged or remembered in perpetuity for a mistake we might make along the way.

10 **Anticipate unfinished business.** Naming from the outset that we will not resolve centuries of oppression in one semester, we invite participants to see dialogue as one step in addressing social injustice and recognize that the work is ongoing and that oppression will not be solved in our lifetimes.

11 **Take the learning, leave the stories.** We hope that participants take what they learn in dialogue and apply it to the rest of their lives. At the same time participants also need to be able to trust that they can be vulnerable and that the stories they share will not be repeated outside of the group. We specifically do not promise confidentiality because we cannot guarantee it, but we believe the underlying concept of confidentiality is maintained by asking people not to repeat others' stories without permission.

Room Assignments – *By Room*

Women

Room	First Name	Last Name
HTH-1A		
HTH-1A		
HTH-1A		
HTH-1B		
HTH-1C		
HTH-1D		
HTH-2A		
HTH-2B		
HTH-2C		
HTH-2C		
HTH-2C		
HTH-2D		
HTH-2D		
HTH-2D		

Men

Room	First Name	Last Name
109 Dorm		
109 Dorm		
111 Dorm		
111 Dorm		
112 Dorm		
112 Dorm		
114 Dorm		
114 Dorm		
115 Dorm		
115 Dorm		
117 Dorm		
117 Dorm		
118 Dorm		
124 Dorm		
125 Dorm		
125 Dorm		
109 Dorm		

ES-11			
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Teaching Assistants highlighted.

Room Assignments – *By Name*

Women

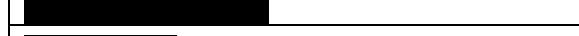
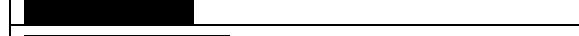
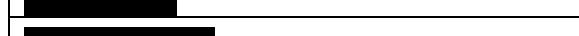
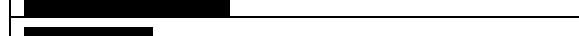
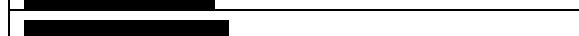
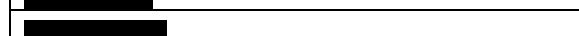
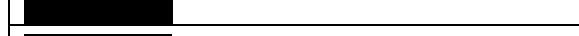
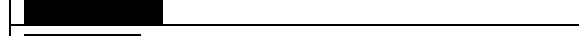
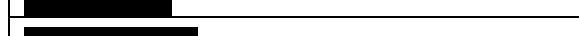
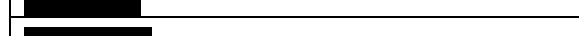
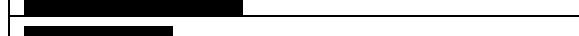
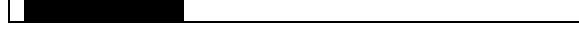
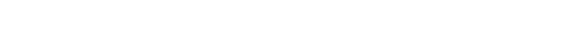
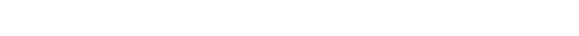
Room	First Name	Last Name
HTH-1D		
HTH-1C		
HTH-1D		
HTH-1D		
HTH-1A		
HTH-1D		
HTH-2A		
HTH-2A		
HTH-2A		
HTH-1C		
HTH-2B		
HTH-2B		
HTH-2A		
HTH-2B		
HTH-1A		
HTH-2B		
HTH-2C		
HTH-2C		
HTH-1A		
HTH-2C		
HTH-2D		
HTH-2D		
HTH-1C		
HTH-2D		
HTH-1C		
HTH-1B		

Men

Room	First Name	Last Name
124 Dorm		
109 Dorm		
117 Dorm		
114 Dorm		
111 Dorm		
117 Dorm		
125 Dorm		
112 Dorm		
118 Dorm		
114 Dorm		
115 Dorm		
109 Dorm		
125 Dorm		
112 Dorm		
111 Dorm		
115 Dorm		
ES-11		

Teaching Assistants highlighted.

Cohort Breakout Groups

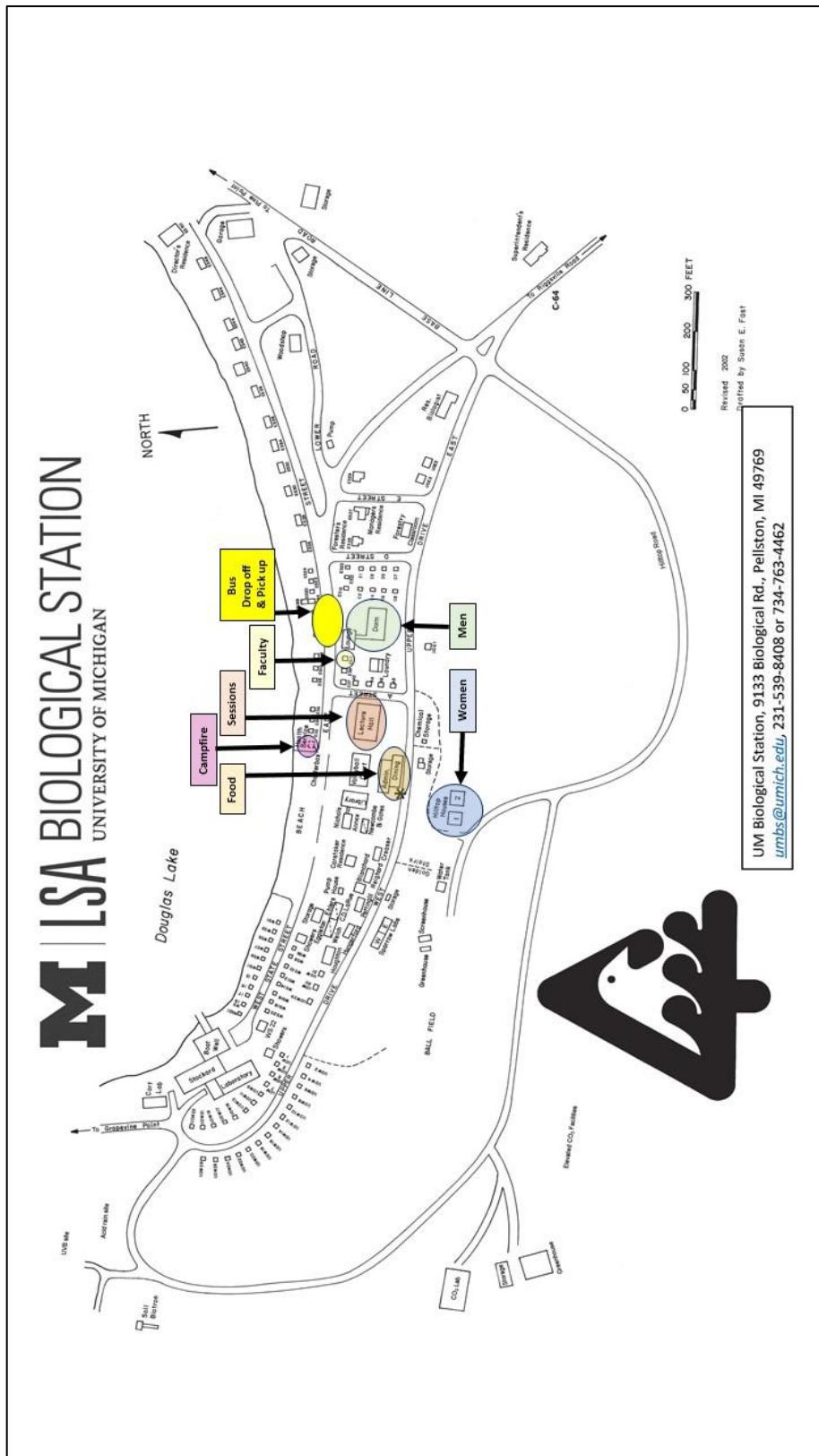
COHORT BREAKOUT A	
COHORT #1	COHORT #4
	
	
	
	
	
	
COHORT #2	COHORT #5
	
	
	
	
	
	
COHORT #3	COHORT #6
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	
	

COHORT BREAKOUT B	
COHORT #1	COHORT #4
COHORT #2	COHORT #5
COHORT #3	COHORT #6

COHORT BREAKOUT C	
COHORT #1	COHORT #4
COHORT #2	COHORT #5
COHORT #3	COHORT #6

COHORT BREAKOUT D	
COHORT #1	COHORT #4
COHORT #2	COHORT #5
COHORT #3	COHORT #6

Map of UM Biological Station

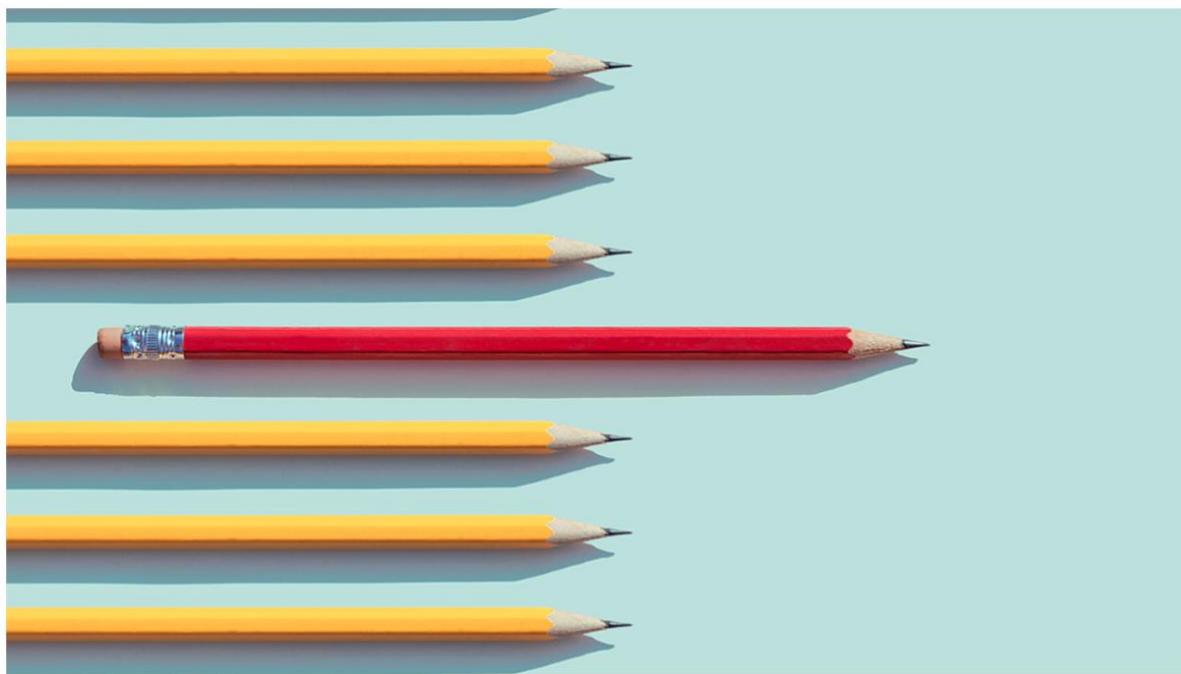


Business And Society

How to Be a Purpose-Driven Leader in a Capitalist World

by Celia Bravard, John Pontillo, and Andrew Hoffman

June 10, 2021



Getty Images/pepifoto

Summary. Today's business school education isn't suited to the big challenges facing the world — climate change, economic inequality and racial injustice — that the leaders of tomorrow will be expected to solve. So, how can students and young professionals succeed in a system that primarily rewards profit? How can they create real change while working in a corporate world that's mostly stuck in outdated business models? According to former CEO of Unilever Paul Polman, you must supplement your business education in three ways:

- Figure out your purpose and values. Create space for yourself to discern your calling by finding the intersection of your purpose (what do you care about?), your skillset (what are you good at?), and what the world needs (where do you need to devote your energies?).
- Develop a sphere of influence. You need a network of people — both inside and outside your school or organization — who share your values and believe in your vision.
- Once you enter or re-enter the workforce, it will be easy to get distracted by the pursuit of your next promotion or nailing your next big project. But keep yourself focused on the long game. When you do, better opportunities — ones that align with your values and purpose — will arise in both local and global ways.



Where your work meets your life.

In business school, we're prepared to fill the management roles of tomorrow. But the training we receive is not entirely suited to the challenges we are up against. The world we live in is far from perfect. Climate change, economic inequality, and racial injustice are just a few of our most pressing problems. As the next generation of business leaders, we want to solve them.

The tactical skills of our education are vital. At the same time, we need to cultivate a purpose-driven core to direct their application. We envision a future guided by a group of courageous leaders who are ready to reimagine what capitalism looks like and change the system into one that promotes economic, environmental, and social equity.

The big question for us, then, is: How can we succeed in a system that primarily rewards profit, with much less attention paid to social or environmental issues? How can we create real change while working in a corporate world that's mostly stuck in outdated business models?

As two business students (Celia and John) and a business professor (Andy), we know first-hand how deeply today's students feel the magnitude and urgency of these tensions.

The Problem

We, Celia and John, have held roles in the food and social-impact consulting industries (respectively). Throughout our early careers, we were often told by our employers to keep our heads down, stay in our lanes, and meet our prescribed deliverables. Regardless of all the aspirational statements about "doing good," these deliverables were designed only to increase share price.

When we questioned why every quarter's numbers were the most important measure of success, the answer was always some variant of "our responsibility is to make money for some unseen shareholder." This narrow focus was sold to us under the guise of what was necessary — no matter what the consequences — for the company to grow. We were blinded from the larger implications of our actions while the stock market grew and the rich got richer.

Our experiences shed light on a consistent theme in the for-profit business world: Short-term decisions are made that worsen problems like income inequality, pollution, and discrimination (among others).

When we left our roles and began business school with the goal of paving a better way forward, we found a curriculum that reiterated that exact message: Create shareholder value by using strategies rooted in growing net worth and securing short-term gains.

Similarly, as a professor, Andy has taught countless students who feel alienated by the underlying messages of business school. One student even confessed feeling that her values were under attack every time she walked into the building. He has seen first-hand what surveys tell us — 97% of young business professionals want a career with "purpose" while only 34% report having a deep interest in their work and only 16% report enjoying it.

If the next generation of business leaders does not alleviate this “purpose gap,” then a future that is equitable and sustainable will fade from sight.

The Solution

If you’re a student, know that the world around you is changing way too fast for many schools to keep pace. Your curriculum asks you to master skills that maximize shareholder value in popular fields like finance, accounting, marketing, operations, or human resource management. But it falls short in teaching you that there are other important stakeholders — and a bigger purpose — to which those skills should be directed.

You can put purpose back into your work by taking ownership of your professional development and not accepting the curriculum as is. It’s a privilege to take a few years to immerse yourself at a university with vast resources and explore new ideas across a variety of disciplines. This time away from the traditional workday offers you space to unlearn antiquated or harmful business frameworks and replace them with forward-thinking and relevant ones.

To do this, you need to recognize the limitations of your coursework and supplement it in ways that broaden the lens of your own education. No one is going to explicitly guide you through this process. You have to seek it out these opportunities for yourself. If you don’t, your education will remain incomplete.

With this strategy in mind, we set out to supplement our University of Michigan MBA curriculum by learning directly from a forward-thinking business leader, Paul Polman. As former CEO at Unilever, Paul pushed his company to focus on long-term goals surrounding social and environmental progress by eliminating quarterly reporting and developing the [Unilever Sustainable Living Plan](#).

Now, as co-founder and chair of [IMAGINE](#), a nonprofit that aims to advance sustainability through collaborative actions, he devotes his energy to partnering with other changemakers who are interested in transforming how we think about business.

Through a [series of interviews](#) with Paul, we sought to learn how to lead with purpose in a business world that seemingly wants to tamp that passion down. We asked:

- How do we remain hopeful in the face of these challenges?
- How do we, without formal positional power, promote economic, environmental, and social equity in our roles?
- How can students and young professionals reach success in our industries, while also trying to reconceive the outdated and harmful systems that drive them?

If you are a business student or young professional looking to bring more purpose into your career, let these answers be the first addition to your new and improved education.

Take the time to discern your purpose and values.

Our fast-paced world, bursting with data, notifications, and social media, leaves us with little time to think, reflect, and ponder our paths in life. The furious pace of business school doesn’t help either. Classes, clubs, meetings, networking, and job hunting eats up most of the time we could be spending on introspection.

But without careful contemplation of our futures, we risk neglecting the foundational purpose of our education in pursuit of status. When this happens, we are more likely to adopt popular but outdated viewpoints and define success in relation to our peers and professors — not by our own metrics. We are also more likely to end up where the system shepherds us, often [in finance or consulting](#), enticed by high salaries as a return on our investments, measuring our self-worth by our net-worth.

To avoid this fate, *make time* to step back from the flurry of your school activities. Create space for yourself to discern your [calling](#) by finding the intersection of your purpose (what do you care about?), your skillset (what are you good at?), and what the world needs (where do you need to devote your energies?).

“Introspection is not for the faint of heart,” Paul told us. “You must know yourself to remain steadfast as you prepare to enter a world in which you plan to lead with courage and heart.”

Maybe you care about making business more sustainable (your purpose), excel in finance (your skillset), and know that serious problems threaten the future of our market system (what the world needs). How can you use the levers within your chosen sector to drive change? For example, John now uses his finance skills to do work that accelerates our renewable energy transition. Celia leverages her food science and supply chain experience to generate solutions to food waste challenges.

This process of discernment is going to take time and will be neither linear nor easy. It is not meant to lead you to a destination, but rather, to invite you on a journey of continued exploration. When you search for the nexus of the three questions above, you inevitably move closer to finding satisfying, productive work that is needed by others.

Develop your sphere of influence.

The pursuit of purpose is not an individual endeavor. It requires a community that will support and help you achieve your goals. That's why you need to develop what Paul calls a "sphere of influence," or a network of people — both inside and outside your school or organization — who share your values and believe in your vision.

How do you do this?

When you know what you care about, what you're good at, and have some ideas around how to use those skills to give back to the world, begin looking for opportunities to do that work — and do it well to build credibility and respect. If you know your stuff, others will begin to trust you and look to you for answers. Stanford Professor Deb Meyerson calls this being a "tempered radical": You are *tempered* (meaning you succeed at your work) and you are *radical* (meaning you hold firm to your personal values).

Second, you need to actively model to the people around you that you are true to the values of your purpose. You need to show people that "what you demand from others, you would first demand from yourself," Paul advised us. "Some people think if they're just compliant, then it's equal to building trust. But that's absolutely not the case." By going above and beyond the tasks required of you in any role, you demonstrate to others that you're willing to go the extra mile for them. That's how you gain trust, which is the only way to move your relationships beyond the typically transactional nature of business.

Third, you must connect your work ethic to your values, thereby exemplifying an outward commitment that others can readily recognize. For example, at Unilever, Paul took the time to set up training for employees to define their purpose, starting first with 100 leaders, then 500, and so on until everyone had worked to discern their purpose. And of course, he started this process with himself.

People are more comfortable endorsing a leader who they know to make consistent and well-formed, value-based decisions, a leader who is willing to walk the talk.

When the opportunity arises, change the system.

The last piece of the puzzle is deceptively simple: Choose to disrupt the systems that you find most harmful. Once you enter or re-enter the workforce, it will be easy to get distracted by the pursuit of your next promotion or nailing your next big project. But keep yourself focused on the long game. When you do, better opportunities — ones that align with your values and purpose — will arise in both local and global ways. You will also be opening doors for those in your sphere of influence, and those that come after you, to do the same.

"Unilever's incentive was to show that business could be done in a different way," Paul said. "We recognized that we also had to satisfy the shareholders, but if we failed in achieving our broader purpose, we would have failed the biggest experiment in mankind. If the private sector didn't change, mankind wouldn't function."

Paul told us that he sees the role of business as an entity that can be called upon to solve the biggest problems that society faces. At Unilever, he argued that "...every brand had to solve the world's problems." For example, the incentive of Domestos was to build 30 million toilets to stop the issues of open defecation. The incentive of Dove was to reach 100 million girls and inspire self-love among them. The incentive of Lifebuoy was to improve health by motivating a billion children to wash their hands.

As his team pursued those goals, they got more in touch with society. They discovered bigger opportunities, their brands had a stronger reason for being, their customers saw a company that cared,

and their businesses grew. In each of these ways, he was changing the system that guided people's understanding of why they were coming to work.

While you cannot control how society at large will react to your own efforts to create change, you can put yourself in a position to transform practices you feel are inadequate. Act as the catalyst capable of starting a chain reaction that ultimately will unlock a new way of working.

Now, go get started.

At the end of our interview with Paul, he asked us a provocative question, "So what's the game you're playing here? For whom are you playing it?"

Now we pose that question to you.

Do you choose to be a hero for the short-term, justifying your decisions to increase profits in the next quarter? Or do you choose to play the long game for the whole of humanity, seeking authentic, moral leadership that looks far beyond shareholder profits?

Paul was quite blunt about the first scenario. "We are short of courageous leaders. These leaders that are not courageous — they play it safe. They play it not to lose instead of playing to win. They will never go out of their comfort zone. They will never make a commitment unless they are 100% sure that they can deliver. But [their ideas are often] repackaged. We call it greenwashing."

If you choose the latter, like we did, know that you can't begin tomorrow. You can't wait until you have formal, positional power, or three letters (MBA) behind your name to realize your purpose and live it out. Your decision to spark systemic change should begin today, and your hunger for learning should not end when you receive your diploma. You must remain curious, continuing to develop new abilities, refine existing skills, and set yourself up to evolve with business and its societal impact for years to come.

The power that business leaders wield is enormous. Take this responsibility seriously and strive to steer business to be both successful and a positive force. The world you are inheriting demands it.

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