

Final Project

Paper Due: 11:59pm two weeks after your last class; submit on bcourses

The final project (completed individually and without use of generative AI) synthesizes your understanding and analyzes your application of in-class material based on three sources: (1) your in-class experience, (2) ideas from the readings, and (3) your observations of your daily professional and personal communication and additional research you conduct outside of class.

Your write up of the project should be **3-4 double-spaced typewritten pages, plus appendix**. Submit your paper on bcourses.

Authentic leaders use self-reflection regularly to improve their leadership skills. Use this project as an opportunity to seriously reflect upon your own strengths, weaknesses and opportunities as a leader, and as a starting point to develop your own authentic leadership style. This exercise is based on the principles and techniques outlined in the HBR Article *Discovering Your Authentic Leadership* – please consult this and the other course readings as you undertake the assignment:

- **Keep an ongoing journal during and after the class documenting what you observe about yourself and your interactions with others.** Go beyond simply listing your observations or experiences, and use your journaling as an opportunity to reflect upon your own leadership development. We recommend you use these questions (from the HBR article) to guide your journaling:
 - Which people and experiences in your early life had the greatest impact on you?
 - What tools do you use to become self-aware? What is your authentic self? What are the moments when you say to yourself, this is the real me?
 - What are your most deeply held values? Where did they come from? Have your values changed significantly since your childhood? How do your values inform your actions?
 - What motivates you extrinsically? What are your intrinsic motivations? How do you balance extrinsic and intrinsic motivations in your life?
 - What kind of a support team do you have? How can your support team make you a more authentic leader? How should you diversify your team to broaden your perspective?

- Is your life integrated? Are you able to be the same person in all aspects of your life—personal, work, family and community? If not, what is holding you back?
 - What does being authentic mean in your life? Are you more effective as a leader when you behave authentically? Have you ever paid a price for your authenticity as a leader? Was it worth it?
 - What steps can you take today, tomorrow, and over the next year to develop your authentic leadership?
- You may also want to use this as an opportunity to seek feedback about your authenticity and leadership from those around you. Consider interviewing colleagues, direct reports and family members to gather “external” data to use in your reflections. Do others perceive you the same way you perceive yourself?
- After you have completed the journal and collected any other data that may be useful for your analysis, write a 3-4 page paper **that summarizes your findings and charts a clear path for yourself to develop your authentic leadership over the next 12-18 months.** Please do more than simply present the data you gathered or regurgitate the journal entries you wrote. The best papers will integrate the journal entries, outside research, class readings, and class experiences and will also demonstrate high levels of creativity and self-awareness.
- Attach as an appendix to the paper at least three pages from your journaling exercises. It is okay to scan in handwritten journal entries for the appendix, you do not need to type them.