Comments on the Presentation

The PowerPoint presentation is the basis of the course material. It can be used as a visual tool for the presentations of the instructor or of students. The following text comments on details of the presentation to explain their relevance for the course.

Contents:

1. Syllabus
2. Definitions
3. Course Project
4. Project Management
5. An Introduction to Leadership Theory
6. Negotiation
7. Conflict Management
8. Persuasion
9. Political Consulting
10. Debriefing

Ad 1.:

This part of the presentation explains the syllabus and should be self-explanatory. The syllabus describes the main version of this course. Other possible versions include:

- The course as a workshop
- The course as a theory course without a project
- Other versions of the course project (1.-3.)
- Other course projects (determined either by the instructor or by students)
- Without elements of Ganz and Heifetz
- With more elements of Ganz and/or Heifetz (even a copy of their courses is possible)
- The course as an overview for other courses on political advocacy and leadership
- The course as the only course on political advocacy and leadership in the curriculum

Ad 2. :

This part defines the most basic terms of the course from political advocacy to leadership. A more detailed explanation can be found either in the glossary or in the bibliography.

The first slides refer to political advocacy as the basis concept of the course. It is shown how the three faces of the German term “Politik”, polity, policy and politics, apply to several definitions of the political process. The definitions of the political process and of leadership (2.8.-2.10.) can serve as reference points for the reflections on the project activities.

The slide 2.7. describes the technique of „management by objectives“ (MBO). This technique can also be applied for course assignments. In this case, the instructor and students define objectives for their course projects. These objectives can play an important role in their reports. If weekly reports are written, the reports can reflect objectives of the past week and define new objectives for the upcoming week. If a project plan is written at the beginning of the course, this plan should include milestones for different parts of the course and objectives to be evaluated in the final report.

Ad 3.:

This part of the presentation describes the “Global Democracy Experiment“, which can serve as a case study for students training their political skills. If a sub-system is established for this purpose, the presentation can still be used to explain all the rules, which are more or less similar. The same applies to a possible offline version of the project.

Ad 4.:

The slides of this part refer to the theory of organizing by Marshall Ganz. These text are explained in detail in the attached texts of the author. All materials are reproduced with the kind permission of the author. The concept of Ganz can be used either as a whole during the project management section of the course, or in parts during the whole course, because it also reflects other aspects of the course such as leadership and campaigning. It is possible to use this material as the main course material and to organize the course according to its sections (interests, power, leadership, relationships, organizations and campaigns). Even the assignments, assignment instructions and reflection questions can be used in part or as a whole.

Ad 5.:

Most slides of this part refer to a basic text in leadership theory written by Sahkin and Rosenbach. They offer an excellent introduction to leadership theory. Therefore, their article is recommended as the basic text of the course. There can also be a presentation by a student or by the instructor based on the attached PowerPoint document. Because of this importance for the course, the related slides are explained in more detail than the others.

Sashkin and Rosenbach describe the development of paradigms in the history of leadership theory. Each new approach reacts to the weaknesses of the previous one. The last approach described is one of the authors; but this does not prevent the text from being a very useful introduction to leadership theory. In a presentation it is recommended to cite the beginning of the article:

"Looking through the history of the study of leadership, we find that the earliest coherent thrust centered on an approach now referred to as the "Great Man" or "Great Person" theory. For a full generation, leadership scholars concentrated on identifying the traits associated with great leadership. At first it seemed obvious; are not great leaders exceptionally intelligent, unusually energetic, far above the norm in their ability to speak to followers, and so on? However, when these "obvious" propositions were subject to test, the all proved false. (...)
What followed was a focus on the behavior of leaders. If the key was not who they were, perhaps the crux of leadership could be found in what they did. In fact, researchers were able to identify two crucial types of leader behavior: behavior centered on task accomplishment and behavior directed toward interpersonal relations.(...) but (...) research showed that even sustained high levels of the new behavior had little long-term effects."

Distinguishing between "transactional" and "transformational" leadership is the most important dichotomy in modern leadership theory. "Transactional leadership" describes the old "20th century school of leadership" (Rost) of leadership as good management based on an economic model of human behavior.

The "transformational leadership approach" makes a distinction between leadership and management. Bennis calls managers "people who do things right, while leaders do the right thing." Burns defines "transformational leadership" as „engaging with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality".

According to Sashkin and Rosenbaum in transformational leadership environments „both leader and followers – as well as the social system in which they function – are transformed."

Researchers on „transformational leadership" have tried to develop empirical methods (in particular factor analysis) to get test instruments for „transformational leadership" in order to diagnose and train transformational leadership skills. Examples of these instruments are MLQ, LPI and TLP. Their test dimensions are explained in the presentation.

Sashkin and Rosenbach describe "paradoxes of transformational leadership", referring to the crucial role "followers" play in leadership processes. Vision as the core of "visionary leadership" is therefore not only "to come up with an image of an ideal future condition and then explain it to others and convince them to do what's necessary to attain the vision", but also to help followers expand and improve their own vision.

According to Schein "the only important thing leaders do (...) is constructing culture". The process of culture building includes the elements of adaptation, goal achievement, coordination, shared values and beliefs.

Sashkin and Rosenbach view transformational as the new paradigm that adds value to the old approach of transactional leadership. However, they stress the necessity of transactional leadership. Transactional and transformational leadership are independent dimensions rather than ends of a continuum. That is why Bass creates a 360 degree picture of the leader including both dimensions. A leader can exercise just one dimension, the other, both or neither. A good leader exercises both.

Slide 4.3.4. describes the leadership quotient "LQ". A more detailed description can be found in the attached article by Rasmus Tenbergen on "Leadership, Morality and Power".

The slides from 4.6. on refer to the leadership theory of Ron Heifetz. His approach can be discussed on the basis of his book "Leadership without easy answers". In addition, his material in the appendix can be used to include elements of his leadership course at Harvard University in this course.

Ad 6.:

The slides of this part are explanations of two short texts: “Principled Negotiation and the Negotiator’s Dilemma – Is the „Harvard-Approach“ too soft?“ by Rasmus Tenbergen (see appendix) and “Six habits of a merely effective negotiator“ by James Sebenius. Both of them can be the basis of a presentation by the instructor or by students.

The intensity of the focus on negotiation depends heavily on the possible existence of a negotiation course in the curriculum. If there is an extra negotiation course, the texts mentioned above are sufficient for an introduction of the basic concepts. If there is no extra negotiation course or if negotiation should be a core aspect of this course, it is recommended to use training material of the “Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School“ (for example the case “George and Martha“) and to focus in more detail on the famous book “Getting to Yes“ by Fisher and Ury.

Ad 7.:

This part contains an introduction to the theory of conflict management based on the theory of mediation. This approach is justified by the assumption that mediation techniques can be used in any conflict, even if there is no mediator present. In this case, it is helpful, if the parties view the conflict as if they were mediators in order to find solutions. This concept, based on an active role of the mediator, is discussed in the attached article “The Mediator as Negotiation Consultant – Should the Mediator Give Advice to the Disputants?“ by Rasmus Tenbergen.

Ad 8.:

The part on persuasion is based on the assumption that a few persuasion principles accurately describe the persuasion process. These 25 (Orren) or 6 (Cialdini) principles are listed on the slides. A discussion of Cialdini´s insightful (and oftentimes entertaining) book on the psychology of persuasion is recommended.

Ad 9.:

The part on political consulting is based on a few basic theoretical concepts: mainly the communication model of Watzlawick (focusing on the process of sending a message and its potential obstacles) and the model of possible ways to win an election by Edwards. A very important practical application is the framework for option memoranda, since it reflects a crucial part of the daily work of a political consultant. An example of such a memorandum is attached in the appendix.

Ad 10.:

For the final part there is just one slide because all the aspects mentioned relate heavily to the actual process in one specific course. However, it is possible and desirable – here and elsewhere – to add new slides to reflect specific demands of a group of students or to give new aspects and perspectives to the course.