



Leadership Interview and Report Assignment

For this assignment, you will interview a business executive of your choice about leadership communication and write up your findings in a Leadership Report. Follow these steps to complete your assignment, which is worth 20% of your grade and is due May 4. You will share the lessons you learned from conducting this interview with our class on May 4 and May 9.

1) Find and solicit a business/nonprofit executive for a 20 minute interview about leadership communication

Guidelines: Your executive must have at least 10 years of experience working in business and have responsibility managing others. While you may not interview a peer in your own MIT Sloan program, you may interview people in other Sloan programs who fit the profile (e.g., current Sloan Fellows or EMBA's, if you are not in one of those programs).

Resources: Your own and your classmates' networks, MIT and MIT Sloan alumni.

2) Create an interview protocol, i.e., the open-ended questions you will ask your executive to learn more about the communication skills and abilities s/he has found to be most important for her/his job as a business leader.

Resources: The New York Times' [Corner Office Interviews](#), any business publication that publishes interviews with executives.

3) Interview your executive

Guidelines: While an in-person interview is preferable, phone/Skype interviews are possible if your executive is not in the Boston area.

*Resources: 15.281 readings including *Humble Inquiry*.*

4) Write up your findings in a Leadership Lessons Report, due on May 4.

Guidelines: Your report will include (at least) the three topics listed below. The audience for your report is your 15.281 faculty member and class TA. Length: 3 pages.

- *What was your process for obtaining and conducting the interview? What did you learn as a result?*
- *What did you learn about leadership communication from your executive? How do the lessons connect with the readings for 15.281? Cite specific readings.*
- *How did this exercise influence how you consider your own leadership communication style?*

Your leadership report will be graded based on the following criteria:

Content of report:

- Did you cover all three topics listed above? Did you convey one or more main messages around each topic?

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- Did you show evidence of having diligently pursued and thoughtfully executed the interview? Did you develop your main points adequately, providing evidence from your actions, course readings, and the interview itself to support them?

Structure of report:

- Did you provide an introduction, relevant sections (e.g., a section on each of the three topics would be a reasonable way to organize the body of the report), and conclusion in the report?
- Did you use direct structure to state your main ideas up front, given your audience’s expectations and preferences?

Writing style and tone

- Is your prose clear, concise, and error-free?
- Is your tone consistent throughout the document and appropriate to the audience?

Document design

- Did you employ design elements (e.g., subheads that carry a message, lists where appropriate) to increase readability of document?
- Did you make it easy for your reader to find important information quickly?

Grading Key for 15.281.

Assignment fails to demonstrate key concepts – review of concepts is recommended =7.5 or below	Assignment below standard in demonstrating key concepts. Improvement required in areas noted = 8.0	Further development needed in areas noted = 8.5	Assignment demonstrates mastery of key skill areas. Further development in the areas noted would add to effectiveness = 9.0	Highly effective completion of assignment = 9.5	Assignment illustrates mastery of materials, skills or concepts = 10
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