Dauphine | PSL ★
UNIVERSITÉ PARIS

Startup Team Management:
How to Build and Motivate Your First Team

Lecturer: Gilles Mautin
Contact information:
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Department: LSO
Semester: 1

Course level: L3 Undergraduate
Domain: Business (HRM, entrepreneurship)
Teaching language: English
Number of in-class hours: 18
Number of course sessions: 6
ECTS: 3

Course description and objectives

How do young managers and founders build an effective startup team?

This course introduces students to the essentials of **managing people and teamwork in entrepreneurial settings**.

It focuses on concrete methods — recruiting, organizing, motivating, and communicating — using real startup cases and simple management frameworks.

A distinctive feature of this course is the use of the DISC behavioral model, a professional tool that helps students understand their own communication style and how to collaborate effectively with others.

Through workshops, simulations, and team projects, participants will learn to apply management fundamentals in small, fast-changing organizations.

By the end of the course, students will understand the principles of startup team management and will be able to apply simple, practical methods to recruit, organize, motivate, and collaborate effectively within teams.

Prerequisites

None specific. Open to all L3 students interested in entrepreneurship, innovation, or people management.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize key managerial roles and challenges in startups.
2. Apply basic frameworks for recruitment, onboarding, and team organization.
3. Use the **DISC model** to improve communication and teamwork.
4. Give and receive constructive feedback in a startup context.
5. Handle basic motivational or conflict situations with structure and empathy.

Beyond management theory, this course develops the ability to **self-manage within teams**.
Students learn to:

- navigate onboarding and feedback proactively,
- adapt communication to different managerial styles,
- understand and defuse tension before it escalates, and
- take initiative in shaping their role and responsibilities.

These skills directly enhance performance during internships, group projects, and early career experiences.

Assignments and grading

Component	Description	Weight
Participation & engagement	Active contribution to workshops, discussions, and simulations	30 %
Group project	*"Up-Managing: How to Coach Your Boss"* – each team analyzes a real or fictional case (internship, university teamwork, or startup scenario) and presents how course tools could improve collaboration.	70 %

The numerical grade distribution will dictate the final grade. The passing grade for a course is 10/20.
Exam policy: Unexcused absences from exams or failure to submit cases will result in zero grades in the calculation of numerical averages. Exams are collected at the end of examination periods.

Attendance
Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and stay for the entire session. Repeated absences or lateness may affect the final grade.

Class Participation
Active participation is encouraged, as it contributes to making classes more engaging and instructive. Students are expected to come prepared and contribute thoughtfully to discussions. When participation is part of the course assessment, it is evaluated based on the quality of contributions rather than their quantity.

Exam Policy
Students are not allowed to bring any materials into exams, except those explicitly authorized by the instructor. Unexcused absences from exams or failure to submit assigned cases will result in a grade of zero when calculating final averages. All exams must be submitted at the end of the examination period.

Communication and Grading
All questions or concerns regarding grading or course policies must follow the official procedures. No direct negotiation with instructors about grades or assessments is permitted.

Course structure

Session	Theme	Core topics & activities
1 – Why teams matter	Manager vs leader in startups; introduction to DISC	DISC test & color group debrief
2 – Recruiting right	Vision, job fit, bias & evaluation grids	*TaskFlow* case + recruitment simulation
3 – Onboarding for success	Lean Onboarding Canvas & first 90 days	Workshop – design an onboarding plan
4 – Motivating and giving feedback	Feedback model, recognition loops	Role play – Manager / Collaborator / Coach
5 – Managing conflict constructively	Communication styles in tension; up-managing concept	*Camille* case + team prep for final project
6 – Final presentations	*"Up-Managing: How to Coach Your Boss"* team presentations + collective synthesis	Peer feedback + recap + toolkit submission

Bibliography

Core academic & conceptual references

- Goffee, R. & Jones, G. (2006). *Why Should Anyone Be Led by You?* HBS Press.
- Blanchard, K. (2010). *Leadership and the One Minute Manager.* HarperCollins.
- Lencioni, P. (2002). *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team.* Jossey-Bass.
- Herzberg, F. (1959). *The Motivation to Work.* Wiley.
- McGregor, D. (1960). *The Human Side of Enterprise.* McGraw-Hill.

Applied / contemporary readings

- Sinek, S. (2009). *Start with Why.* Portfolio.
- Bungay Stanier, M. (2016). *The Coaching Habit.* Box of Crayons.
- HBR (2023). "Managing Conflict in Startups."
- Aulet, B. (2013). *Disciplined Entrepreneurship.* MIT Press.

Lecturer's biography

Gilles Mautin is an entrepreneur and educator specialized in startup management and innovation, is the founder of **The Cantillon**, an entrepreneurial education ecosystem connecting sustainability, leadership, and innovation. He teaches entrepreneurship and management at PSL, CentraleSupélec, and various incubators and universities. His pedagogy combines strategic frameworks, experiential learning, and reflection, helping students develop both entrepreneurial competence and self-awareness.

Moodle

This course is on Moodle: **No**

Academic integrity

Be aware of the rules in Université Paris Dauphine about plagiarism and cheating during exams. All work turned in for this course must be your own work, or that of your own group. Working as part of a group implies that you are an active participant and fully contributed to the output produced by that group.