Carnegie Mellon University
Master of
Software Engineering

17-612: Business Strategy
M 8:00-9:20amET, virtual via Zoom
A1, Fall 2020, 6 Units

Instructor	Email	Office Location & Hours
Prof. Vijay Sai	vijaysai@andrew.cmu.edu	Virtual by appointment
Gregg Schoonover	gschoono@andrew.cmu.edu	Virtual by appointment

Teaching Assistants		
[Name 1]	[email]@andrew.cmu.edu	[3SC 271, M 3:00-4:00 pm]
[Name 2]	[email]@andrew.cmu.edu	[Zoom, W 10:00-11:00 am]

Course Description. This course is intended to provide a basic introduction to a broad set of business topics that will aid our students to build successful technology leadership careers in their future. The scope of business topics will include: Economics, Business Strategy, Leadership, Organizational Theory, Finance & Accounting, Sales & Marketing, Product Management, Entrepreneurship, Ethics & Governance. The course will be based on an interactive lecture format based on assigned readings and prepared materials. Each lecture will begin with an informal digital survey (not graded) or formal digital Quiz (graded) based on topics and materials previously covered. There will be a Group Project that drives four Assignments during the course and a final Group Presentation in the last week of classes. There will be weekly Advisory Sessions for each Group with the instructors to discuss the project and Assignments.

Prior Knowledge.

Basic business acumen is a valuable start, experience is an invaluable asset.

Learning Objectives. After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand the different size and shapes of technology Organizations
- Understand how Sales & Marketing functions operate at tech companies
- Be able to read and understand an Income Statement, Balance Sheet, and Departmental P&L for a typical tech company
- Experience building a company mission and strategy for a hypothetical business

Learning Resources.

INSPIRED:

Author: Marty Cagan, 2nd Ed., 2017
How do today's most successful tech companies—Amazon, Google, Facebook, Netflix, Tesla—design, develop, and deploy the products that have earned the love of literally billions of people around the world? Perhaps surprisingly, they do it very differently than the vast majority of tech companies. In INSPIRED, technology product management thought leader Marty Cagan provides readers with a master class in how to structure and staff a vibrant and successful product organization, and how to discover and deliver technology products that your customers will love—and that will work for your business. Wiley, 2017. Order it from Amazon.

Course Pack:

Harvard Business Press: We have created a course pack at Harvard Business Publishing website that contains the required readings and case study. You will be required to create an account to access, if you do not already have one, and purchase the HBR content.
https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/749728

Use of Zoom in the Class. In our class, we will be using Zoom. The link is available on Canvas [https://canvas.cmu.edu/courses/18838/external_tools/2991]. Please make sure that your Internet connection and equipment are set up to use Zoom and able to share audio and video during class meetings. (See this page for Computing Resources for information on the technology you are likely to need.) Let me know if there is a gap in your technology set-up [insert email address] as soon as possible, and we can see about finding solutions.

Sharing video: In this course, being able to see one another helps to facilitate a better learning environment and promote more engaging discussions. Therefore, our default will be to expect student to have their cameras on during lectures and discussions. However, I also completely understand there may be reasons students would not want to have their camera son. If you have any concerns about sharing your video, please email the instructors as soon as possible [insert email] and we can discuss possible adjustments. Note: You may use a background image in your video if you wish; just check in advance that this works with your device(s) and internet bandwidth.

During our class meetings, please keep your mic muted unless you are sharing with the class or your breakout group.

If you have a question or want to answer a question, please use the chat or the "raise hand" feature (available when the participant list is pulled up). I **[or a TA or a rotating student who**

serves as the "voice of the chat"] will be monitoring these channels in order to call on students to contribute.

Assessments. Students learn more by applying and explaining ideas to others, thus, the course requires the following activities:

- **Assignment 1:** Company Mission Statement and Organization (presentation slides)
- **Assignment 2:** Go To Market Strategy (presentation slides)
- **Assignment 3:** Financial Forecast (presentation slides)
- **Assignment 4:** Product Strategy (presentation slides)
- **Final Presentation:** Group presentation to the class of your business, including materials developed in Assignments 1-4.

Assessment	Final Grade %		Grade	Percentage Interval
Pop Quizzes 3 x 5%	15%		A	90-100%
Assignment 1	15%		B	80-89%
Assignment 2	15%		C	70-79%
Assignment 3	15%		D	60-69%
Assignment 4	15%		R (F)	59% or below
Final Presentation	25%			

Course and Grading Policies

- **Late-work policy**: All work is expected to be handed in at the indicated due date and time. For fairness to the whole class, no late submissions will be accepted for the group work. In the first week of classes, you should receive a course schedule for each course; please use them to plan ahead. Each student is allowed one late submission for the individual homework assignments. You should immediately notify the course Instructors and TA(s) before the submission deadline that you will submit late. Late work must be submitted as soon as circumstances allow, ordinarily within 24 hours of the due date. If you have any questions you should raise them immediately rather than waiting for conflicts to arise.

- **Participation policy**. Class participation will be assessed by in-class engagement, including asking relevant questions based on a critical review of required readings, lectures, and comments made by your peers. The lack of attendance, and the use of mobile devices, including phones and laptops, will be discouraged.

  This semester involves regular use of technology during class — both for in-person and remote students. Research has shown that divided attention is detrimental to learning, so we encourage you to close any windows not directly related to what we are doing while you are in class. Please turn off your phone notifications and limit other likely sources of

technology disruption, so that you can fully engage with the material, each other, and me. This will create a better learning environment for everyone.

Recording of Class Sessions. All synchronous classes will be recorded via Zoom so that students in this course (and only students in the course) can watch or re-watch past class sessions. Please not that breakout rooms will not be recorded. We will make recordings available on Canvas as soon as possible after each class session (usually within 3 hours of the class meeting). Recordings will live in our Canvas website [https://canvas.cmu.edu/courses/18838/external_tools/2991]. Please note that you are not allowed to share these recordings. This is to protect your FERPA rights and those of your fellow students.

Course Schedule. The following schedule provides a general overview of topics and assignments. Please refer to the syllabus online in Canvas for specific lecture topics, reading assignments and due dates.

Class	Topic	Assignments
1	Introduction, Course Overview, Goals & Objectives	
2	Economics & The Tech Sector	
3	ORG: Organizational Structures and Basics	
4	ORG: Enterprises and Ownership/Governance	
5	GTM: Sales & Marketing 101	Assignment 1 due
6	GTM: Sales & Marketing 101	
7	FIN: Finance 101	Assignment 2 due
8	FIN: Finance 101	
9	Product Strategy	Assignment 3 due
10	Tech Economy	
11	Management & Leadership	Assignment 4 due
12	Ethics & Governance	
13	FINAL PRESENTATIONS	
14	FINAL PRESENTATIONS	

Accommodations for Students Disabilities. If you have a disability and have an accommodations letter form the Disability Resources office, I encourage you to discuss your accommodations and needs with us as early in the semester as possible. We will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have

a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, we encourage you to contact them at access@andrew.cmu.edu.

Academic Integrity. Honesty and transparency are important to good scholarship. Plagiarism and cheating, however, are serious academic offenses with serious consequences. If you are discovered engaging in either behavior in this course, you will earn a failing grade on the assignment in question, and further disciplinary action may be taken.

For each major assessment, you will be asked to sign a statement affirming that you will not cheat, plagiarize, or receive unpermitted assistance on the work that you turn in. For a clear description of what counts as plagiarism, cheating, and/or the use of unauthorized sources, please see the University's Policy on Academic Integrity.

If you have any questions regarding plagiarism or cheating, please ask me as soon as possible to avoid any misunderstandings. For more information about Carnegie Mellon's standards with respect to academic integrity, you can also check out the Office of Community Standards & Integrity website.

Student Wellness. As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may diminish your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. CMU services are available, and treatment does work. You can learn more about confidential mental health services available on campus at the Counseling and Psychological Services website. Support is always available (24/7) from Counseling and Psychological Services: 412-268-2922.

This semester is unlike any other. We are all under a lot of stress and uncertainty at this time. Attending Zoom classes all day can take its toll on our mental health. Make sure to move regularly, eat well, and reach out to your support system or the instructors if you need to. We can all benefit from support in times of stress, and this is semester is no exception.

Respect for Diversity. It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspective be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know if any of our class meetings conflict with your religious observations so that I can make alternate arrangements for you.