

CONFIRMED
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My Calling and Professional Development Strategy
Open elective course syllabus

For academic programs on bachelor, master, and doctoral level

Department of Social Sciences
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The present syllabus cannot be used by other university departments and other universities without consent of the department that developed the programme

1. Area of application

The present syllabus sets requirements for the learning outcomes of the student and defines the content and types of training sessions and reporting.

The syllabus is intended to be used by instructors teaching the discipline *My Calling and Professional Development Strategy*, students, and attendees wishing to participate in the open elective course.

2. Aims of the course

One of the widespread beliefs about career calling is that it can be experienced by only a limited circle of professionals in such domains as medicine, teaching, research, and artistry. However, modern research in organizational and positive psychology shows that calling is an orientation that can be experienced towards any kind of work rather than an objective characteristic of particular professions. This means that any individual who finds the concept of calling relevant is potentially able to find theirs.

The objective of the course is to help students define possible domains of professional self-realization (hypothesis of career calling) and start moving towards them. This goal is achieved via modern psychological instruments and teaching methods.

The students obtain the following learning outcomes upon completion of the course:

- Understanding of one's strengths, sources of enjoyment, and system of values;
- Ability to find opportunities for professional fulfillment;
- Goal setting and planning skills;
- Development of intrinsic motivation for professional development (acting out of interest towards activity rather than external pressure)
- Self-presentation skills.

The students also develop the following universal and professional competences:

1. Ability to learn, acquire new knowledge and skills, including in areas other than main profession (CK-B1);
2. Ability to estimate required resources and plan their usage in professional tasks execution (CK-B5);
3. Ability to critically assessing and reinterpretation of gathered experience (one's own and others'), reflecting on professional and social activity (CK-B10);
4. Ability to improve and develop one's intellectual and cultural level, build the trajectory of professional development and career (CK-M4);
5. Ability to reflect (assess and process) acquired research and work methods (CK-M1).

By the end of the course students will find several possible areas of professional development (hypothesis of calling), develop a plan of testing them, and start executing it.

Additionally, the course is aimed at creating a positive, supportive and creative atmosphere which facilitates self-exploration.

By the end of the course students will also have access to support activities which will help them to make first steps towards their callings.

3. Requirements

The course is available to Higher School of Economics students of all years of education and all academic programs at bachelor, master and doctoral level. External attendees (individuals not studying at HSE) are also allowed to participate in the course.

Only students who pass selection will be enrolled to the course. Applicants have to:

1. Complete psychological tests:

- MBTI (Myers–Briggs Type Indicator), available at <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>
- VIA Strengths, available at <https://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths-Survey>

The results of the tests have to be included into the application. However, only the fact of tests' completion is accounted for in the selection process, not the results themselves.

2. Write a motivation letter (250-300 words) about the reasons for applying to the course. It is recommended to include the following points:
 - Your understanding of what is calling and why it is important for you to find it;
 - Results which you plan to obtain during the course and after it.

The evaluation of the motivation letter will be based upon the following criteria:

- Clarity of structure and writing;
- Neatly articulated concept of calling;
- Understanding of your motivation;
- Clear outlook of the expected results.

Application form will be available from September 5 to December 15, 2018 at <https://goo.gl/forms/Lad1SOmzr6w18q9k1>

75 HSE students and external attendees will be invited to the course. The results will be sent to applicants' e-mails by December 21, 2018.

4. Thematic plan of the course

N	Theme	Total hours	Classroom hours	Self-study hours
1	Introduction	2	2	0
2	Professional profile	14	6	8
3	Personal mission and hypothesis of calling	10	4	6
4	Hypothesis testing plan	6	2	4
5	Personal project presentation	6	2	4
Total		38	16	22

5. Assignments

Type	Method	Week								Description
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Ongoing	Homework assignments		*							Mini-report: new ways of using strengths
				*						Mini-report: flow state
					*					<i>Reflected Best Self</i> exercise
						*				Development of personal mission
							*			Development of hypothesis of calling
								*		Development of hypothesis testing plan
Final	Presentation								*	Presentation of personal project

6. Detailed plan

1. Theme 1. Introduction (2 hours)
Session plan:

- Introduction, collection of students' expectations from the course
- Group discussion: what is calling? Myths and stereotypes about calling
- Three pillars of work as a calling: usage of strengths, enjoyment, actualizing values
- Overview of the course and expected results

Result: achievement of common understanding of the concept of calling, setting goals for the course

Homework:

- Read the description of character strengths from the VIA Strengths test at <https://www.viacharacter.org>
- Read the description on MBTI type at <http://www.truity.com/view/types> and in Kroeger, Thuesen, & Rutledge (2009)
- Do the first part of the *Reflected Best Self* exercise (send requests for stories), available at <https://positiveorgs.bus.umich.edu/cpo-tools/rbse>

Reading:

- Wrzesniewski A., McCauley C., Rozin P., Schwartz B. (1997) Jobs, careers, and callings: people's relations to their work. *Journal of Research on Personality*, 31, 21-33, available at <http://faculty.som.yale.edu/amywrzesniewski/documents/Jobscareersandcallings.pdf>
- Brooks K. (2012) Job, Career, Calling: Key to Happiness and Meaning at Work? *Psychology Today*, available at <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/career-transitions/201206/job-career-calling-key-happiness-and-meaning-work> (summary of the above mentioned article)
- Kroeger, O., Thuesen, J. M., & Rutledge, H. (2009). *Type talk at work (revised): How the 16 personality types determine your success on the job*. Delta.
- Quinn R.E., Dutton J.E., Spreitzer G.M., Morgn Roberts L. (2011) *Reflected Best Self Exercise*. Center for Positive Organizations, Ross Business School, University of Michigan.

2. Theme 2. Professional profile (6 hours)

Session 1. Strengths (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Discussion of homework (in pairs): what did I learn about myself from MBTI and VIA Strengths tests, what I agree and disagree with?
- Group discussion of initial results of the *Reflected Best Self* exercise: experiences, issues, solutions
- *Success Story* exercise (in three-people groups), see Teaching methods section for details
- Discussion (in the same three-people groups): how can I use my strengths in new ways?

Result: development of an initial list of strengths.

Homework:

- Try to use strengths in new ways, write a mini-report (150-200 words)
- Continue the *Reflected Best Self* exercise (send reminders)

Reading:

- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. www.viacharacter.org
- Al Taher R. What is the Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues? *Positive Psychology Program Blog*, available at <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/classification-character-strengths-virtues> (summary of the above mentioned book)
- Quinn R.E., Dutton J.E., Spreitzer G.M., Morgn Roberts L. (2011) *Reflected Best Self Exercise*. Center for Positive Organizations, Ross Business School, University of Michigan.

Session 2. Sources of enjoyment and flow (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Discussion (in pairs): what activities do I enjoy now, which ones did I enjoy in my childhood?
- *Flow State* exercise (individual), see Teaching methods section for details
- Flow state and its conditions (according to Csikszentmihalyi)
 - Lack of distractions and complete concentration
 - Balance of perceived challenges and skills
 - Clear goal and immediate feedback
 - Intrinsic motivation

Result: development of a list of activities that bring enjoyment and flow state.

Homework:

- Observe one episode when you were in a flow state, analyze why you experienced it, write a mini-report (150-200 words)
- Continue the *Reflected Best Self* exercise (send reminders one more time)

Reading:

- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2013). *Flow: The psychology of happiness*. Random House.
- Nakamura, J., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2009). Flow theory and research. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 195-206.

Session 3. Values (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Discussion of homework (in couples): what did I learn about myself, in which activities I experience flow, which factors facilitate it and interfere with it?
- *Values* exercise, see Teaching methods section for details

Result: core values and their hierarchy are defined.

Homework:

- Finish the *Reflected Best Self* exercise (analyze stories)

Reading:

- Mind Tools. What Are Your Values? Deciding What's Most Important in Life, available at https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm

3. Theme 3. Personal mission and hypothesis of calling (4 hours)

Session 1. Mission (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Group discussion of homework: issues in the analysis of stories in the *Reflected Best Self* exercise, finishing the analysis, making final list of strengths
- Group discussion: what is personal mission and what is its purpose
- *My Story* exercise, see Teaching methods section for details
- Coaching in couples: drafting personal mission, see Teaching methods section for details

Result: creation of first draft of personal mission.

Homework:

- Finish personal mission
- Study the Atlas of Future Professions website (<http://atlas100.ru>), select 2-3 professions which are aligned with mission
- Study HSE Career website (<https://career.hse.ru>), mark 2-3 interesting vacancies
- Watch several TED talks from the list (available at <https://www.ted.com>):
 - How we'll earn money in a future without jobs | Martin Ford
 - Why jobs of the future won't feel like work | David Lee
 - The jobs we'll lose to machines -- and the ones we won't | Anthony Goldbloom
 - How to find and do work you love | Scott Dinsmore
 - How to find your passion and inner awesomeness | Eugene Hennie
 - Failure to find passion | Cass Phillipps

- Quit your job and find your work | John Scherer
- Work flow: Finding work you love at any stage | Liz Brown
- Don't find a job, find a mission | Celeste Headlee
- Three questions to unlock your authentic career | Ashley Stahl

Session 2. Hypothesis of calling (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Hypothesis of calling: activities on the intersection of your personal mission and opportunities in the world
- Working with internal critic and real and imaginary barriers
- How to involve with your calling: (1) corporate work, (2) individual projects and entrepreneurship
- Brainstorming exercise, see Teaching methods section for details

Result: development of initial hypothesis of calling

Homework:

- Continue to generate hypothesis of calling, involve other people who can support you without criticizing (friends, family, mentors)
- Assess hypothesis' fit with the mission, career perspectives, and entry barriers; select 3 most interesting/probable
- Find one example of successful professional for each hypothesis, preferably someone whom you can contact in the future

4. Theme 4. Hypothesis testing plan (2 hours)

Session plan:

- Group discussion: what we learnt so far, issues with any of course topics
- Coaching in couples: making the plan for first hypothesis, see Teaching methods section for details

Result: finding of concrete opportunities for testing hypothesis, making of an action plan.

Homework:

- Make plans for testing two remaining hypothesis
- Create presentation of personal project (final assignment), including:
 - personal mission
 - hypothesis of calling
 - next steps of testing them
- The presentation can be done in any form: slides, Prezi, video, illustration, etc.

5. Theme 5. Presentation of personal project (2 hours)

Final session. Students present their results.

6. Support after the course (1 month)

- Daily exchange of steps taken to test hypothesis in social networks (in mini-groups of 5 people);
- Individual work with instructor (upon request).

7. Teaching methods

The following teaching methods are used:

- Group discussions
- Work in couples
- Work in small groups

Instructions for exercises:

1. *Success Story*

The exercise is performed in 3-people groups. First, the participants are asked to study the list of character strengths (available at <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Reports-Courses-Resources/Resources/Character-Strength-Fact-Sheets>) and make sure that they understand what each

strength means. Detailed description of character strengths can be found at <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths> or in Peterson & Seligman (2004). Then they are asked to think about their biggest achievement. After that one of the participants talks about their achievement for 5 minutes (what it was and how they did it) and others listen, ask questions and mark the strengths that their partner has demonstrated. Then they show which strengths they marked and tell why. After that the next person in the group tells about their biggest achievement, and two others listen, and so on until each person in the group received feedback on their strengths.

2. Flow

The exercise is intended at illustrating the concept of *flow*. At the beginning the participants are asked to remember one episode from their life when they were so absorbed by an activity that they lost track of time and forgot everything but this activity. If someone struggles with this, other participants are asked to share their examples or the following examples are given:

- Solving a complicated math task
- Playing a musical instrument
- Dance
- Sports
- Communication with a loved one

Then there is a group discussion about similarities among all those examples (losing track of time, absorption in the activity, lack of tiredness, etc.). The discussion is led to the list of conditions for flow to arise (according to Csikszentmihalyi).

3. Values

The exercise starts with a group discussion:

- What are values? What role do they play in life?
- Are there people who don't have values?
- What is it important to know one's values?
- Can values change throughout one's life? Can one change their values?

The discussion is led to common understanding of the concept of values and the importance of knowing them: *Values are what is most important in life and work. They regulate how you set priorities. If you understand your values and follow them, you feel like a whole and happy person.*

The exercise continues with Mind Tools exercise protocol, available at https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_85.htm

Questions to answer regarding the resulting list of values:

- How much do you like those values?
- Are you proud for them?
- Would you share them with people who inspire you?
- Are you ready to follow those values in face of adversity?

4. Personal Story

The exercise starts with group discussion on how people usually present themselves and how it can be done in a more interesting and memorable manner (with personal story).

Personal story is something that unites the fact form your biography into a coherent and interesting chain. The story consists of a hero, turning points, obstacles, main theme, and future outlook.

- 1) The hero of your story is you. Write 3 words which characterize you. They can be any words: adjectives, nouns, even interjections.
- 2) Turning points are important events and decision which led you to where you are now. For example they could be the decision to enter your current university, a book that you read which changed your outlook on life, an adventure during which you understood what you were truly interested in, or a meeting with people who inspired you. Write down 3 turning points of your story.
- 3) Obstacles are challenges that you successfully overcame. In any good story the hero overcomes obstacles: solves tasks, wins over enemies, overcomes themselves. Write down 2-3 obstacles that you successfully overcame.

- 4) Main theme is what unites all turning points and obstacles in your story. What lead you in life all this time? It can be anything, but it's important that it reflects your personality and resonates with you.
- 5) The culmination of your story is you future outlook, or ideas of what can happen to the hero in the future. Future horizon can be any: a year, 5, 10, 20 years, retirement, after your death.

Then the participants are asked to unite all components of their stories into the common narrative. The following layout can be used:

All my life I ... (main theme of your story). At the beginning I ... (first important event or decision), then I ... (second important event or decision), after that I ... (third important event or decision). Now I ... (what you do now). I would like it to lead me to ... (future outlook).

5. Coaching for personal mission

Coaching is a method of psychological work. The coach ask the client questions and gives feedback, helping them to understand their situation, define the course of action and start acting. In the contest of the present course elements of coaching are used for designing personal mission and hypothesis testing plan. First, the participants are instructed about the principles of coaching and provided with a list of questions that they can refer to during the exercise.

Principles of coaching:

- Your task is to help your client to find their own solution to their challenge which is optimal for this particular person
- What you should do: ask clarifying questions, return the partner their thoughts (say what they said thing using the same words), positively accept everything they say even if you do not share their position
- What you should not do: give advice, assess what the client is saying, interpret their words, state your opinion

General coaching questions:

- If you don't understand what the client means: what do you mean by ...? What do you include in ...?
- If the client lists too many options: what is the most important here?
- If the client uses too complicated explanations: how would you explain this to a 10-year old?
- What else? – to prompt the client to think and come up with options they did not think about before

Characteristics of a mission:

- Outwardly directed
- Wide enough to embrace the bigger part of life, but specific enough to direct action here and now
- Can be reconsidered throughout life

Personal mission template

Verb	Object	Result	Resources
What do you want to do?	For whom?	What will change?	How are going to do it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action oriented • Positive statement 	Not too wide, not too narrow	Not too wide, not too narrow	Internal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengths • Skills • Knowledge External: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Material • Connections
Examples			
Help Create Develop Build	People Organizations Children Students	Find balance Improve health Increase well-being Decrease suffering	With my creativity By building mutually beneficial relationships

Provide opportunity Further Protect Encourage ...	Society Country ...	Achieve harmony ...	With my zest and so- ciability ...
Examples of questions			
<u>Negative statement</u> (i.e. not let, not allow, not miss): How could you refor- mulate this in a posi- tive way? If you don't want this what do you want instead?	<u>Too wide:</u> It's great that you want to help the humanity. But maybe there is a part of it which you would like to start with? <u>Too narrow:</u> It's good that you want to help a specific group, and it goes well with your current work. But what would change if you include other areas you your life and future projects? Who else would benefit from your activity?	<u>Too wide:</u> You are saying that you want to live a decent life. What does decent life mean to you? What should be part of it? <u>Too narrow:</u> You are saying that want to write a book. Is this enough to fill your whole life? If you knew that you would die to- morrow would it be a good enough result?	

Questions for checking mission's completeness:

- How does your mission make you feel? What can you change or add to make it more joyous and inspirational for you?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how much does you mission inspire/brighten/motivate you?
- What could you add or change in your mission?

The partner who acts as a coach asks questions until the mission fits the above mentioned characteristics and feels right for the second partner and inspires them. The main criteria for mission's completeness is that the client confirms that its current version is optimal, brings out positive emotions and doesn't need to be changed. Then partners exchange roles.

6. Coaching for hypothesis testing plan

Coaching for hypothesis testing plan is based on the same principles and coaching for personal mission. The only difference is that here the coach can nonintrusively share their ideas on actions that the client might undertake to test their hypothesis. The main task of the coach however remains listening and asking questions.

Components of plan:

- Hypothesis
- Time-bound actions
- Indicators of success (how can I understand that a hypothesis works?)

Recommended planning horizon is 3-6 months.

The process of planning:

1. Find projects and activities corresponding to the mission
 - Existing now
 - Will be in relevant in the future
 - Optional: find inspirational examples of people who do it, read their biographies
2. Define areas of development for getting involved in those projects and activities
 - Developing skills
 - Acquiring knowledge
 - Building relationships, networking
3. Define actions needed to follow those directions

- Actions have to be time-bound and as specific as possible
 - Complex actions (for example learning to develop mobile apps) have to be reformulated in such a way that you would understand what needs to be done and when (subscribe to a Coursera course CODAPPS: Coding mobile apps for entrepreneurs, starting September 12), or into simple actions (today: read online courses reviews, write a Facebook post asking to introduce me to developers; next week: choose a course and subscribe)
 - You should include actions that you can perform now or in nearest time into your list
 - Pay special attention to actions that you can perform in your university (elective courses, student activities, volunteering, research, communication with professors, mentorship, career events, etc.)
4. Define risks (what can interfere with your plan)
- External (circumstances interfering with your actions)
 - Internal (losing motivation, tiredness, doubt)
 - Actions to mitigate the risks, sources of support

Questions for checking plan's completeness:

Вопросы для проверки завершенности плана:

- From 1 to 10, how much are you ready to act on your plan now? What is missing for a grade of 10? What can you do now to raise your readiness by one point?
- How realistic do you think your plan is? Assess the probability of completing it on time. What can you do to maximize it?

The partner who is acting as a coach asks clarifying questions until the plan is filled with specific, simple, time-bound actions. The main criteria for the completeness of the plan is client's understanding of their actions, feeling that completing the plan is realistic, and strong urge to go and act on it.

7. Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a method of group work aimed at generating large quantities of ideas. In the context of the course brainstorming is used for generation of ideas about actualization of mission.

Preparing the room. Stick A2 sheets on the walls (according to the number of the groups of students) for writing down ideas. Each group will need 6-7 sheets.

Step 1. Participants write down all ideas on the implementation of their mission for 5 minutes.

Step 2. Participants divide into 6-7 people teams and occupy different parts of the room. In each round one of the participants takes a role of facilitator who will manage brainstorming and write down ideas on the sheets of paper on the wall.

Step 3. Each group chooses the participants whose mission will be discussed in the first round. They write their mission on the sheet of paper on the wall. Then other participants generate ideas of its implementation for 5 minutes (including those that can be tried now, as well as in the future). The facilitator writes down ideas on the sheet of paper on the wall. Then participants change roles until each one's mission is discussed. The facilitator changes after each round.

8. Guidelines for the students

The course is designed in such a way that each new topic is based on previous work. The results of homework exercises are used on classroom sessions, and the results of classroom sessions are used in further work. This is why your full commitment (attending all classroom sessions and completing all homework assignments) is crucial for achieving the results.

Homework assignments take around 1-2 hours per week. The biggest homework assignment is *Reflected Best Self* exercise. Since it involves engaging other people, many of whom would be very busy and will take considerable time to reply, it is advised to send invitations as soon as possible.

9. Reporting

Students have to complete their homework assignments as part of continuous assessment of their progress. Each assignment is graded on a 10-point scale.

Students are allowed to participate in the final exam if they attend 5 sessions out of 7. Final exam is taken in a form of a presentation of their personal projects. The presentation should not exceed 10 minutes and should include personal mission, hypothesis, main point of the plan of hypothesis testing.

It can be done in any form: PowerPoint, Prezi, video, collage, poster, etc. The presentation is graded on a 10-point scale according to the following criteria:

- Personal mission corresponds to the criteria of width (spans a large share of one's life) and specificity (defines actions here and now)
- Hypothesis testing plan is sufficiently detailed
- High quality of visual representation and presentation skills (working with the audience, answering questions, respecting time limits)

10. Grading

Final grade is calculated in the following way:

$$G_{final} = 0.3 \times G_{h/w} + 0.3 \times G_{attn} + 0.4 \times G_{exam}$$

$G_{h/w}$ (cumulative grade for homework assignments) is calculated as a sum of weighted grades for each homework assignment (see table below for weights):

$$O_{h/w} = \sum G_{assign} \times k_{assign}$$

Assignment	Weight (k)
Mini-report: new ways of using strengths	0.1
Mini-report: flow state	0.1
<i>Reflected Best Self</i> exercise	0.5
Development of personal mission	0.1
Development of hypothesis of calling	0.1
Development of hypothesis testing plan	0.1

G_{attn} (attendance grade) is given on a 10-point scale and decreases by 2 points for each missed session (if a student misses more than two sessions they are not allowed to participate in the final exam):

$$G_{attn} = 10 - 2 \times N$$

$$N \in [0; 2]$$

where N is the number of missed sessions.

Final grade is given on a 10-point scale, with arithmetic rounding. Passing grade is 4 out of 10. 10-point grade is converted to 5-point grade in the following manner:

10-point	5-point	
0-3	2	Unsatisfactory
4-5	3	Satisfactory
6-7	4	Good
8-10	5	Excellent

11. Resources

Main literature

1. Wu-Pong, S. (2014) A Novel Calling Intervention for Career Development and Well-Being. Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) Capstone Projects, available at http://repository.upenn.edu/mapp_capstone/72

Additional literature

1. Wrzesniewski A., McCauley C., Rozin P., Schwartz B. (1997) Jobs, careers, and callings: people's relations to their work. Journal of Research on Personality, 31, 21-33, available at <http://faculty.som.yale.edu/amywrzesniewski/documents/Jobscareersandcallings.pdf>

2. Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. www.viacharacter.org
3. Quinn R.E., Dutton J.E., Spreitzer G.M., Morgn Roberts L. (2011) Reflected Best Self Exercise. Center for Positive Organizations, Ross Business School, University of Michigan
4. Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2013). Flow: The psychology of happiness. Random House.
5. Nakamura, J., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2009). Flow theory and research. *Handbook of positive psychology*, 195-206.
6. Kroeger, O., Thuesen, J. M., & Rutledge, H. (2009). Type talk at work (revised): How the 16 personality types determine your success on the job. Delta.

12. Equipment

Equipment: flipchart, tip markers.