

## Leadership Journeys: Insights from MBA Rising Leaders

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Patrick Lageraen:

Welcome to another episode of the UB School of Management's Manage-A-Bull Podcast. I'm your host, Patrick Lageraen. In today's episode, we will center on the experiences of rising leaders within the School of Management, specifically the MBA program. Our guests today are Will Gorman, who's the president of the MBA Consulting Group, and Bob Beach, vice president of the Graduate Management Association or GMA. We talk to them about their responsibilities in their positions, their motivations for pursuing a leadership position, the effect that it's had on themselves and others and more. All right, so Will and Bob, thanks so much for being here. I guess we'll just start with a brief introduction of each person. So Will Gorman, you're the president of the MBA Consulting Group. Could you just tell us a little bit about yourself and about your position?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, of course. I'm a full-time student here at UB in the School of Management, the full-time MBA program, concentrating in finance, and as you said, I'm president of the UB MBA Consulting Group. What we do is we are a student-run organization made only of other full-time MBA students and we do pro bono project work for companies in western New York, small, medium, large, regardless of function. As long as it's a project that can help us learn and drive some impact, we're happy to help the community.

Patrick Lageraen:

Very cool. How many people are inside a consulting group right now?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, I've got four colleagues on the e-board and we serve our group of 24 students.

Patrick Lageraen:

Very cool. Bob Beach, you are the vice president of the GMA. Can you tell us about yourself and what that organization is?

Robert Beach:

Sure, Pat. Yeah, Bob Beach. I'm the vice president of the Graduate Management Association. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization within the University at Buffalo. Ostensibly, we exist to enrich the student experience and provide opportunities for students to become more engaged, not just with faculty and staff events on campus, but also to connect them with resources within the wider community. It's within this capacity that I can represent constituents, my peers, in the full-time, two-year MBA program and host events and work together to achieve goals using an allocated student activity fee. That becomes our budget.

Patrick Lageraen:

Very cool. Thanks, Bob. So let's dive a little bit deeper into each of your organizations. So Will, you're the president, what's that? What's it like being the president? What sort of daily tasks do you have to do?

Will Gorman:

A lot of what I do for the organization is mostly administrative. I work with a lot of school stakeholders within the School of Management and the university as well. I've got a vice president, a director of marketing and recruiting, a director of learning and development, and a director of fundraising and events. And those last three govern most of what we do, barring the executive, that being me and my VP for the group. So I'm mostly in charge of making sure that any of our initiatives are going well. I like to provide small wins for the organization.

Another big part of mine and the VP's job is that we do scouting for clients. We scope all of our projects to be delivered over a school semester. So in the autumn, we do all of our scoping in the winter for those projects. And then for the spring, we scope out all in the summer. So to sum it up, a lot of admin stuff, making sure the group can continue to exist with its compliance through school policy, making sure that we've got leads, making sure things stay on track and mostly just to make sure nothing's on fire. We've got a big group of very independent high performers. They all know what they should be doing, but I'm there in case anything goes really awry.

Patrick Lageraen:

Sure, sure. So I have a couple of questions on that. When you get clients, is a lot of it cold calling businesses around Buffalo or would you say that you have a client base already that you work with?

Will Gorman:

Our client base, I like to call them more pipelines. You've got chambers of commerce, you've got sources here in the School of Management that regularly have clients who are in need of our services. For example, we have CEL, the Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership, here in the School of Management, and they are kind enough to pass along when we are looking for RFPs, requests for proposal, and those are a lot of smaller startups, the people who benefit most from our project work. We do it for firms of any size as long as it is a coherent, value-added project, more than an intern could do, less than a full-time worker could do. But to answer your question, it's mostly right now a lot of pipelines and we're always working to make sure that we solidify relationships with companies that do a lot for the city and region, particularly the large ones. That one is a little more difficult and it's going to be the subject of a lot of our strategic leaning in this final semester, my presidency as well.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, very cool. And then as far as your position, I'm curious if it's more operational or more administrative. Do you ever find yourself getting into the weeds on a project or are you more hands off just sort of overseeing things?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, so we take enough projects to keep each consultant busy to staff each project with three to five people and each project has a lead. And the defacto leads for these projects are the e-board. So I am, last semester and this semester, I've been leading my own projects there. I've had teams, hard workers both semesters. So I do a good amount of both. I am in charge of leading a team and corresponding with a client and making sure that progress is being made, but I also take care of a lot of the administrative stuff too.

Patrick Lageraen:

Very cool. Now, coming to Bob. Bob, could you just tell us a little bit more about the GMA?

Robert Beach:

Sure. So the GMA is an organization that is here to be a voice for students, to serve as an advocacy wing in an area where there really hasn't been too much work done in order to serve as a liaison between the faculty and my peers. It's really about becoming a positive role model and putting yourself out there as

someone who can be dependent on and be a resource for information and happenings of what to do in the Buffalo area as well as some of the events that we're hosting. So we have two main events, one in the winter and one in the spring, our Festivus and Soirée, and these are chances to engage students at a very high level and bring some fun and levity in otherwise pretty grueling and intense program.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Yeah, I don't disagree with that. Could you give us a couple examples of some other things you work on outside of Festivus and the spring Soirée?

Robert Beach:

Sure. So this past semester, I was in charge of a fundraiser. We worked with Panera Bread and we brought in over \$100 in revenue for our nonprofit organization. And this had smashed all the records from previous years. I believe we had two fundraisers last year and we didn't have quite the same turnout. So this involved a lot of work on the ground involving our PR director as well as our internal affairs director to get the word out to develop promotional materials, to coordinate with the business and to be able to get all of everything situated and then finally get paid.

So we have the two main events, we have fundraising events, and we also have what is going to be a newsletter. So when we inherited these roles, we saw that there were plenty of rooms for opportunity. That was the platform that we ran on. So everyone who's in the GMA is an elected representative of their peers. This isn't something that you're going to get in because you have good grades or because someone, it's because you made a promise to students that you would deliver and you would be responsible with their student activity fees.

Patrick Lageraaen:

And then just to clarify, the GMA represents only MBA students in the School of Management, correct?

Robert Beach:

Yes. So there are a few MBA programs, there's the PMBA, the EMBA, and the online MBA. I believe there may be also be used in part-time opportunities, but our constituents are in the full-time two-year MBA, we have first and second-year cohorts.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Understood. Thank you.

Robert Beach:

No problem.

Patrick Lageraen:

So here's a great question, Will, we'll come back to you. What motivated you to take on this leadership role?

Will Gorman:

It's a really good question and it hearkens back to any of the leadership roles that I've taken on. I was lucky enough to realize this in going back a little bit, to realize this in my teenage years in high school, that some of the most impactful and important things you can do that are worth doing are hard. And leadership-

Patrick Lageraen:

Very true.

Will Gorman:

Yeah. Oh yeah, that's what got me on the rowing team in high school is grueling. Leadership itself is something that I always identified as something really difficult that seemed kind of unapproachable to me at first. And just like a muscle, it's something you need to train to get better at. So generally why I would be taking on a leadership role is because I've identified it as something difficult and something rewarding. To answer the question more directly, which is specifically this role, I took it on because I really like the idea of driving strategy for an organization that I have had some time serving on.

I had a semester in the group before I took on a firm leadership role. Somebody else was leading my first project team. We had a different e-board and I was lucky enough to see how the group worked and come up with some ideas about how could I improve it, how could I leave it better than I found it, especially because with the very short nature of the MBA degree, and you might've inferred because we only take MBAs, no one is on the group really for more than a year and a half. And in my want to lead this group that I think does a lot of good for the community and a lot of good for the students, better

than I found it, identified a leadership role as the best way to get to that while also fostering some of my personal development too.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, it's kind of an interesting position for both of you. You jump into a leadership position and then you have a very short time to make an impact and then also train whoever's coming after you and you're in, you're out. So Bob, coming back to you, what motivated you to take on this role as vice president?

Robert Beach:

I'm glad that you said that. There's certainly a large sustainability component of the work that we do. We want to see that this is a living organization that gradually improves over time. That with each and every incoming class, we're constantly getting more efficient, more proficient, and we're driving results. So what motivates me personally is seeing others succeed. I think for me, leadership is about creating other leaders. It's about finding what strengths others have and helping them to develop them to their fullest potential.

So when I'm in a position where I can make a change, realizing that I may have some advantages that others maybe don't, I think the first one is my interest in people. I have a very serious interest in actually getting to know people and very quickly helping to pinpoint them to places where they can be most impactful. So I like the responsibility that comes along with it. I like working on a team with just a few people who also have the same ideals and goals in mind. Plus, it's part of my professional development experience. I don't think that I'll be able to get the experience that I have now coaching, facilitating, and motivating if I were not to be involved with the GMA.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, that makes sense. Would you say it's valuable to or enjoyable to have people look up to you and rely on you?

Robert Beach:

I would say it's enjoyable, but it's a heavy crown that you have to wear at times. You really have to not just act responsible. You really need to be that role model and you need to be someone who has a very high awareness.

Patrick Lageraen:

Of course.

Robert Beach:

Because everything that you do is going to be looked at under a microscope.

Patrick Lageraaen:

And without context.

Robert Beach:

Exactly.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Nobody knows all the information that you had going into a decision.

Robert Beach:

Right. We can try our best. We have these investigative methodologies, and that's what's so great about the MBA program here is that alongside the service is this really robust educational experience where I'm learning the theory behind coaching, motivating, and leading.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Great. Thanks, Bob. So coming back to Will, I'm sure there's been a learning curve with any leadership position, and I'm sure you weren't as effective as you are now on day one. So how has being a student leader impacted your professional and personal development and would you say that you feel more confident now?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, that's a good question. I am fortunate enough to have some leadership experience before I came into the program. As I'm sure you two know, I took some years off after my undergraduate degree. I worked as a bartender for years at a staple restaurant in downtown Buffalo called Pearl Street Grill & Brewery.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Love Pearl Street.

Will Gorman:

Oh yeah, me too. I still do. Even though I worked there for eight years, had all the food and everything, still love it. And I was able to get three and a half years of management experience there. And that was a little more day-to-day operational. It was administrative or strategic, but it gave me this idea of what it is like to manage and mentor, and ultimately, the word I like is steward people. It was good to get some refinement in this program, of course, because the processes in the corporate world are more varied than at a restaurant. A restaurant is comparatively pretty simple in execution. I'd say the thing that I have gotten the most professional development with is generally project management, I want to call it, not explicitly the career path of PM, project management, but the idea of having accountability for and scoping out and ensuring progress on a project has been the biggest professional development that I've had so far in my leadership role.

It's been personally an absolute pleasure to get to know better some of my colleagues, some people from very, very different educational walks within the MBA program. As I said, I'm concentrating in finance. There are some people concentrating in marketing, supply chain, anything else where I don't really see them very much. So it's been very gratifying personally to work closer with some of these people because one of the things I was looking forward to at business school is being surrounded by some like-minded individuals. So it's good to get to know as many people as I can in addition to being able to help create small wins for them, just work and grow together. So those are the two big things, project management and more personal affinity.

Patrick Lageraen:

So compared to a restaurant management position where you have pretty much the same daily tasks on a day-to-day basis to now managing a group of 23 people all working on different projects, how is that different? Is there a big difference in the complexity? Has that been a challenge?

Will Gorman:

I would say the first thing that comes to mind is the levers of motivation are different. As I had mentioned, it's a pro bono organization that I'm running right now. At a restaurant, we had far more financial incentives. There are far easier and quicker ways to bolster morale. Someone's having a bad night and you can just come up, get water for their table, and remind them elbow and be like, "Hey, make that money," that kind of thing. But with running the consulting group, thank goodness I've got a group of people who are a little more self-motivated too. I met some very, very smart, very educated



people at the restaurant, but just restaurant lifestyle, sometimes it just grinds on you and people are a little less motivated and you've got to motivate them a little differently.

In the program right now, in the organization I'm running at the moment, you have fewer financial... no financial motivators because it's pro bono. So you have to lean on your personality a little bit more, and as an extension, keep mentoring and stewarding other people in the organization. There's someone who, for example, as I said, mostly e-board members lead our projects, but we didn't know if we would have five or six this upcoming season. So I reached out to the group and the second-year cohort and said, "Is there anybody who'd like to lead a project?" And one person stepped up, he's doing a great job. I knew he would step up and I knew he would do a great job. And that's one of the things that you can do in an organization like this is empower others and give them the opportunity to win and to motivate. You don't have to do it all yourself.

Patrick Lageraen:

That's really cool. I guess Bob, coming back to you, how has being a leader impacted personal and professional development? How has this journey been from day one to today?

Robert Beach:

It's always in constant flux. I think in terms of leadership, it's something that everyone has within them and something that I started at an early age, first with the Boy Scouts and through the work that I did with my troop in my community, it gave me a sense of pride and a sense of achievement and a place where I otherwise wouldn't have had access to resources. So what continues to motivate me there is looking at the landscape, where it's going, where we've been, and continually identifying progress and areas where we've maybe come short, but more effectively, areas where we're making an impact. And even if it's something small, it can be done and it's totally achievable. And then for optics, making that change and the actions completely visible. That way, we can remove some of the barriers maybe that exist for change in advocacy efforts.

Patrick Lageraen:

So there's a first year set of elected representatives, correct?

Robert Beach:

Yes.

Patrick Lageraen:

How close has your relationship been with them? Are you working with them to train them to step into the second-year position? What's that relationship like?

Robert Beach:

Sure. So we have four first-year directors. I was one. Last year, I was the director of public relations. We have a very close relationship. Not only do we meet weekly as a team, but we also have conversations outside of the team meeting to bring everyone in in order to meet those deliverables that each of us are responsible for.

So for example, for any event that we have, we need promotional content. And that is one person who's our PR director, and we reach out to them and they provide us with copy and we give them feedback and we have conversations there. As VP, I may work with PR and activities and the president may work more with internal affairs. So we've found a way to split the responsibilities amongst ourselves, being senior leaders in the organization. And the opportunity is there for anyone who's a first year representative to move into the senior roles next year. And we encourage them to do so. And we hope that they found a place where they could really make some serious contributions. But any election, it could be anyone who's enrolled in the program who would be eligible.

Patrick Lageraen:

Sure, yeah. And that's a way to give everybody a chance in case a first year may be decided that, "Hey, a position like this isn't for me."

Robert Beach:

Absolutely. And we encourage a plurality of voices and perspectives all the time.

Patrick Lageraen:

Cool. So obviously, we're all second year MBA students. We all took the same first year classes. I have my favorites. You have some of yours. Were there any specific classes that inspired you to take a position like this? I'll ask Will first.

Will Gorman:

Yeah, that's a good question. I would say right off the top of the dome, I really liked corporate strategy. I really liked some of the theory around why you would lead the way that you do. It's not as organizational. It's a little more toward the legal side. I also really liked my professor.

Patrick Lageraen:

Scott Ptak.

Will Gorman:

Yeah, Scott Ptak, wonderful, wonderful professor. Had him for that class, had him for a class this semester, and he's a faculty advisor for the consulting group as well. And he's always made himself available if we need anything.

Patrick Lageraen:

That's great.

Will Gorman:

Yeah, he's one of those people who's a role model mentor type. I mean, I could name any professor, I could name any class. I have not had any non-value added classes. My undergraduate degrees are in history and political science and the college of arts and science is really great. But I had maybe two classes where I thought I probably could have done without that one. But I would say all of the classes I've had, even the ones that didn't really have an organizational behavior bent or a focus on organizational behavior and working with people have been useful mostly because there's been such an emphasis on project work.

Even in the classes where I'm just with accounting students or just with finance students, there's been an opportunity to lead. There's been an opportunity to work in teams. I would say any class that had a project that needed managing were the ones that really motivated me to take on a leadership role because it was a very rewarding and gratifying experience to lead a project, to start something off that seems like so chaotic and you just have to go and pin it down and then to synthesize it into something so streamlined, so beautiful that you can show that it was something that was worth doing and I just wanted to keep feeling that and keep winning and keep providing those wins for the people that I'm serving.

Patrick Lageraen:

So what I'm hearing is that all of the MBA classes pretty much taught you one skill or another that you've been able to apply to this. Is that right?

Will Gorman:

Oh, without a doubt. Without a doubt, absolutely.

Patrick Lageraen:

Great. Quick shout out to Professor Scott Ptak. He teaches the first year class business strategy, and we're actually having him in a couple of weeks to be on the podcast, so look out for that. Coming back to Bob, are there any classes that you found particularly inspiring or valuable in this position?

Robert Beach:

If I could echo Will, I think that there is some value in every course that I've taken here. I think that there's no room for anything that isn't a value add at the School of Management.

Patrick Lageraen:

That's for sure.

Robert Beach:

One course that stands out to me would be entrepreneurship. As a small business owner and someone who has higher aspirations of leading my own company, Bob Neubert has been super influential and seriously motivating for me and my personal life, helping me to, A, understand my own adversity within the program. Coming in, I actually didn't study business. I was a psychology student before I studied social work, and now I'm studying data engineering. So I've had an interesting journey there. But it's kind of for me, what I look for in a professor is someone who is knowledgeable, but it takes a certain type of person to be able to teach and to be bringing that knowledge in a way that is used in plain terms. So I would love to shout out all of the professors that I've had here, but Bob would be the one that comes to mind for me.

Patrick Lageraen:

Love it. If you want to learn more about Bob Neubert and entrepreneurship, please listen to our episode featuring him. So coming back to Will. These positions sound great, they give you a lot of personal and

professional growth, and if you're really a hyper motivated person, it seems like a no-brainer to go after a position like this. But can you share any challenges that you faced while in a leadership position?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, that's a good question. I'd like to start off by saying probably the motivation, motivation, getting people and keeping people hot. That's hard, especially without certain incentives. My discussion earlier about financial incentives, that can be really difficult even in a group of very well self-motivated people.

Patrick Lageraen:

Especially when it's not their only job too. They have a lot of other things on their plate.

Will Gorman:

Yeah, that's the thing. Nobody in this club or in this program, quite frankly, is just going to school and going home and twiddling their thumbs, nobody. So that's been consistently the toughest part is whipping up the right kind of motivation and then directing it where it needs to go. I think I've done a pretty good job. I think the group has done so much great work and we are handing it off to a really, really passionate team of first years. But I'd say right out of the gate, that would be the most difficult thing is directing people with motivation because especially people that have a lot going on.

Patrick Lageraen:

That's a great point. And that's why at the School of Management, we have an entire class dedicated to this. It's sort of a part of OB, but then Professor Tim Maynes also has another class called Leadership and Motivation. Bob, I'm going to ask you the same question. What challenges have you faced during this journey as a leader?

Robert Beach:

For me, I think feedback has been an interesting topic of conversation. From my work experience professionally, I've come from some pretty intense sales floors. So within those offices and capacities, there's very little room for error and when things have to get done, people talk in a very direct way. So for me personally, having to get to know everyone else who isn't, not just student government leaders, but those constituents in the program and really understand how they like to be spoken to, what sort of things that they want to work on. Do we use a feedback sandwich or do we employ 360 degree feedback? Do we just provide them with a list? I think for me, it's interesting to find out that some

people don't want to receive feedback at all. So you have to recognize where people are on their own journey in terms of self-improvement and professional development. So having to pull back a little bit in some cases and be a better listener and not always be so forceful has been a challenge for me.

Patrick Lageraen:

I love that. When it comes to, or when compared to previous positions that you held, you mentioned sales, would you say that the people you deal with today on a daily basis are more diverse in a program like this?

Robert Beach:

I've met people here who are unlike anyone else, any place else. So I think that when I am in a room with students in an IT class, it is a cultural experience that we have moments where we're here in Buffalo and New York State, but we have a really robust international community with many different ways of problem solving. And that diversity of opinion is really the power, I think, behind the institution.

Patrick Lageraen:

But that's also what makes a position like you're so valuable, leading people from different cultures, leading people with different motivators, it really puts your skills to the test and then everything else will seem easy. Right?

Robert Beach:

Yeah. Pat, well said.

Patrick Lageraen:

So coming back to Will, what impact did you hope that you'd make by taking this role? What were you hoping to achieve?

Will Gorman:

To put it really simply, to start really, really generally, just to leave the group better than I found it. It was stewarded by some very, very intelligent, very strategically thinking people, but I wanted to leave it better than I found it so that my successor could do an even better job than me because I identified it as an organization that does a lot of good for the city and region. It does a lot of good for the members. It builds some really amazing connections, gives some very, very cool experiences. And it's a group that I

want to keep surging forward as long as the school of management is around, which is hopefully forever. So all I wanted to do was just leave it better than I found it was the big motivation. Secondly, of course, I had the motivation to push myself outside of my comfort zone and do something that I thought might be difficult and thus character building.

Patrick Lageraen:

Could you maybe give an example of that? Are you building stronger client relationships? Are you training up first-year students to step into a role like yours?

Will Gorman:

Yeah, the latter. I mean, both really. Client relationships and stewarding the first years into leadership roles. I remind them a lot that a month from now, they're going to be speaking and hoping for election to the e-board, and then second years are going to leave and it's going to be their group. And I just keep reminding them not to just light a fire under them, but to remind them that the opportunity is there. And one of the big piece of impact that I think is going to be great for the group, but really not visible to anybody else, is just better training of the incoming e-board. As I said, my predecessors did great. I can just think of ways to do better, and I think that's going to result in less friction as the board turns over and more strategic growth.

Patrick Lageraen:

Awesome. Love to hear it. Bob, what about you? What impacts were you hoping to make?

Robert Beach:

Helping to facilitate lasting memories. When you think back to your MBA experience, what is going to come to mind? Is it going to be Dr. Dambra's accounting exam, or is it going to be... It is going to be that, but at the other end of it, are we going to have memories of times where we weren't always so stressed and we weren't studying and we had an opportunity to get to know each other and to have fun, really. So I think that enrichment and having fond memories along with photos and thinking that this was a good use of your time, that this was a good use of your funds, that if we didn't have a GMA, your lifestyle would be definitely impacted and not in the best way.

Patrick Lageraen:

Yeah, I love that. I think a lot of people in the MBA program are just trying to get through it as fast as they can. They're trying to get over with these two years, myself included, and then having a GMA to remind us to stop and smell the roses, get to know your classmates, it's pretty valuable. So I think a good way to wrap up is to make this a little bit more tangible to our listeners. Give them something that they can apply to their own lives. A lot of people might be looking for leadership roles themselves after hearing how valuable they are. Will, what advice would you give someone looking for a role like this?

Will Gorman:

First and foremost, don't be afraid to look everywhere. It is incredibly unlikely the places that you can find roles to make an impact, no matter how small, that would be the first one because that gets foot in the door somewhere. And the second one, just don't be afraid to fail. Everyone hates to fail. It's one of the things that stops people from doing so many things that let them live up to their potential. I struggle with it every day sometimes thinking, "Oh, what if I try and what if I fail?" So what if you fail? Look everywhere. Don't be afraid to fail. Keep pushing yourself into places that make you uncomfortable, and the leadership roles will come to you.

Patrick Lageraen:

So you say, look everywhere. And I'm just thinking about leadership role titles, because obviously they're great to put on a resume. You have a great title, president of the MBA Consulting Group.

Will Gorman:

Thank you.

Patrick Lageraen:

Would you say that title is important when looking for a leadership position or can you make the most out of wherever you are?

Will Gorman:

Well, it depends on what you are looking at it for, really. If you want something to put on a resume, then those very small leadership roles might not work for that. However, I think that if you're looking to professionally develop yourself and get you toward the trajectory of someone who can attain those titles, I think it's better to keep looking for them anywhere they can be. If you do a sport as a hobby, that's a good place to look. If you have a local just hobby club around, something like that, just find the



small ones. Lead a project with your significant other, work on something. Just look for the opportunity to spearhead something everywhere, and that'll help you develop yourself professionally and help you get those titles, if that's what you're looking for, to put on your resume to show as proof of concept that you're the kind of person who can lead and motivate people.

Patrick Lageraaen:

So basically always be looking for a position, I think is good advice, but doesn't it also make sense to just naturally fall into it and not just go around title seeking.

Will Gorman:

Oh, without a doubt. Yeah, that's why my preamble holds up. It depends on really what you want it for. If you're looking for a professional, real, authentic professional and personal development, I really don't think you should care about a title. I think it's the last thing you should worry about, really.

Patrick Lageraaen:

And make sure that you're in a position that matches your skills. Don't become the president of a soccer team if you can't play soccer.

Will Gorman:

Yeah, that's really important too. That's why I think it's good to make sure you have a little domain, area of expertise and you get to feel out an organization before you start leading.

Patrick Lageraaen:

Sure. Bob, what advice would you have for students looking for a leadership role?

Robert Beach:

Well, to echo a little bit of what Will said, find out where your interests and your talents align, but also where you're going to achieve the most growth as a person. And a lot of times, that's going to be when you have that gut feeling like, "Oh, this may hurt a little bit." I think that that pushing yourself in that direction to overcome some of those limitations maybe that we have, because I think at the end of the day, we all have an idea of who we are and where we're going. And if you can recognize an area on campus or within the community and anywhere in your personal life, if you have the ability to recognize

where there's a need and you can find a way to harness the energy and get people rallied around resolving that need, then essentially you are providing value without going through an organization.

But two years isn't a very long time to make a lasting impact. It's all about the, I guess, intergenerational impact that we're making as one class leaves, and they have that inherited institutional knowledge of what's been done and tried and successful before. So there are plenty of opportunities here. I definitely recommend speaking with those clubs and with the leaders of those clubs. But also, don't be afraid maybe to start something new. I know that you can create your own club or organization, and although for GMA, at least we have the smallest constituency of any of the student organizations. That may actually be an advantage for us because there may be more opportunities for students than would be in other programs.

Patrick Lageraen:

Thanks for pointing out that there's plenty of opportunities. So one thing that I want to say about that is there's these clubs that you can become leaders in, but there's also every single group that you've ever been in inside the MBA program. Luckily, not luckily, depending on how you want to look at it, every single class has a group project pretty much. And so, you have nothing but opportunities to become a leader in at least one of these groups, and you can almost treat it as a practice run for the real world. Thanks both for coming in. Thanks for taking the time. I sincerely wish you good luck with your handoffs.

Will Gorman:

Thanks for having us. It's been a pleasure.

Robert Beach:

Thank you.

Patrick Lageraen:

Absolutely. Thank you. I hope you enjoyed this episode. If you'd like to learn more about graduate programs at the School of Management, you can visit the School of Management website, [management.buffalo.edu](http://management.buffalo.edu). I'm your host, Patrick Lageraen, and thanks for listening.