



American University of Beirut
Suliman S. Olayan School of Business

The Strategic Executive Leadership Program
George K. Najjar

Any casual visit to a major bookstore is enough to convince even a lay observer that leadership is a core concern for business reach, scholarship and practice alike. Hundreds of books, articles and reports appear every year in the US and elsewhere with a focus on Strategic Executive Leadership. The scene gets even more exciting when we see the work coming out of scores of CEOs who write best sellers telling their stories and their institutions’.

Business schools were quick to realize that the academic study of leadership is a mainstream activity as it addresses a process which is partly rational and explicable and partly mysterious and vexing. One can easily think today of scores of Business Schools that have Leadership Centers, Programs and Chairs. The purpose is to better understand the transformative dynamics that can, when successful, create institutions that are “built to last” and achieve the greatest turn around in Business history.

The Olayan School of Business at AUB is acutely aware of the void we have in Leadership Programs throughout the Middle East. This awareness has been at the heart of our determination to establish a strong portfolio of activities centering around better understanding Strategic Executive Leadership particularly in our part of the world. The Kamal Shair Strategic Executive Leadership Program should thus be viewed in the context of OSB

capacity building in the leadership area. We look forward to seeing this first program augmented through a Chair and a Center.

Within the parameters of the The Kamal Shair Strategic Executive Leadership Program, we will be hosting two major speakers a year representing major leadership icons regionally and internationally. They will address a mixed constituency from academia and business highlighting their experiences and leaving all of us a little better informed about a crucial part of the elixir of success in business. This will be made possible thanks to the initiative of a very special leader. Dr. Shair, you set the bar a little too high for the rest of us.