

| Case Study

# Develop Emotionally Intelligent Leaders with the Power of Birkman

## ■ Executive Summary

The Goizueta Business School incorporates The Birkman Method® into its MBA programs to assist students in enhancing their leadership effectiveness. Based upon the Emotional Intelligence framework, the Birkman augments the development of key traits of effective leaders that cannot be solely taught in the classroom.

Since first using Birkman in its executive education and MBA programs, the assessment has expanded into departments across the entire university, for students, faculty, and staff.

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Peter Topping

**Associate Professor in the Practice of Organization & Management**

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## ■ Developing Leaders

Peter Topping, an associate professor in the Practice of Organization & Management at Goizueta Business School, poses a challenge relevant for all colleges and universities: How can we effectively prepare students to be successful leaders in the workplace solely through a classroom setting?

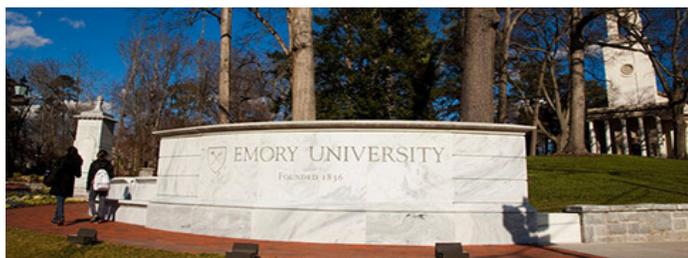
Emory University's Goizueta Business School is a private institution located in Atlanta, Georgia, and is known for being consistently ranked as one of the Top 25 MBA programs in the nation. Its motto, Principled Leaders for Global Enterprise, is a key driving force behind the important teachings and research of the school and its faculty.

Peter is an active management consultant and executive coach who has been using The Birkman Method for more than 20 years.



When he joined the Emory University faculty In 1999, he introduced The Birkman Method to the Goizueta Business School in order to help overcome the barrier to developing effective leaders for the workplace.

Peter explains, “You can’t really do this through lectures alone. This is why we use Birkman with individuals as well as with our groups and teams; you need a tool that will stand up to a combination of applications.” At Goizueta, Birkman is primarily used for Leadership Development. It is also used in Team Building applications, as Topping believes that learning how to be a valuable team member has a direct impact on becoming a better leader. In Goizueta’s MBA programs, their students are put into semester-long study teams and are introduced to Birkman from the beginning of their MBA experience through the onboarding process. “The Emotional Intelligence framework aligns well with the Birkman data. The four principal elements of Emotional Intelligence – self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills – are all addressed by The Birkman Method”, stated Peter Topping. “The combination of cognitive learning with the insights provided through the Birkman data enhances the students’ efforts to become highly effective leaders”.



Peter further commented that due to Birkman’s alignment with Emotional Intelligence, “We are able to assist our students in enhancing their understanding of self, managing their stress behaviors, having insight into understanding others, and working with a diverse team.”

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Birkman enables students to realize that The Golden Rule, *treat others how you want to be treated*, is not a useful concept for leaders. The challenge is to treat others how they need to be treated to tap into their full potential. To do this, you must understand their Needs, one of Birkman’s key differentiators. A student in the Executive MBA program commented that, “The Birkman analysis and application to teamwork was one of the most valuable experiences from the beginning of the EMBA program.”

## Comparing Birkman to Other Assessment Tools

In addition to Birkman, Goizueta also uses several other assessments to complement the insights from the Birkman Method, including the Firo-B®, Learning Style Inventory, and Strong Interests Inventory®. While there are many other assessments available, Birkman has remained the preference for Goizueta over the years. “With the opportunity to incorporate an instrument across many different programs and settings at the School, we felt it was best to commit to one instrument”. Peter feels that Birkman is “the most comprehensive and applicable across borders, industries, cultures, and different levels of management. It is a solid social science instrument with valid and reliable data”.

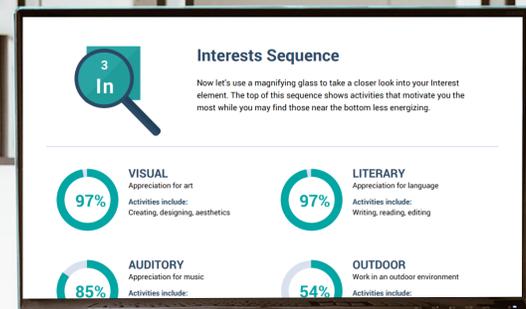
## Expanding Use of Birkman Throughout Goizueta

At Goizueta, there are about a dozen Birkman certified faculty and staff. Birkman has truly grown across the entire University, starting from students and expanding to faculty and staff in various departments.

Now, every MBA student and undergraduate business student takes The Birkman Method questionnaire at Emory.

“There is no doubt that it is beneficial” explained Peter. “Anecdotal evidence is strikingly positive from the reactions from students at all levels. We are now looking to explore the benefits in a more systematic way through longitudinal research studies. We believe that Birkman provides insights that you can’t create in the classroom and we will test that theory through research projects with our students and alumni. Developing Principal Leaders for Global Enterprise is our school motto. Birkman is the primary instrument for doing just this.”

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## About Birkman

Birkman International is a behavioral and occupational assessment company headquartered in Houston, Texas with an extensive global reach. The company began assessing personality through a proprietary methodology founded by innovative organizational psychologist Dr. Roger W. Birkman in 1951.

The Birkman Method remains a preferred instrument to better understand interpersonal dynamics and achieve higher performance through positive psychology. It is used widely in the fields of career coaching, leadership development, human resources management, and organizational design today.