



**OBTC 2015 at University of La Verne
June 17th – 20th, 2015**

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

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Submission Template for the 2015 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) Title of Proposal:

The "Kobayashi-Marui" Meeting: High-Fidelity Experiential Learning

2) Abstract:

Please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words). If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.

The *Kobayashi Maru* is a training simulation in the Star Trek series notable for its defining characteristic as a no-win scenario with no "correct" resolution, and where the solution actually involves redefining the problem. We designed a Board Meeting simulation (for an experiential course in non-profit governance), which places students in a high-stakes decision-making scenario that is closely modeled on real events, and for which there is no clear resolution. When students realize their dilemma, emotional investment increases and it creates an authentic learning experience with high psychological fidelity. We will replicate the simulation with participants to showcase the process.

3) Keywords:

Use three or four keywords to describe your session.

Experiential learning; Role play; Simulation; Essential skills; Psychological fidelity

4) Format

- Activity or exercise
- Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)
- General discussion session

5) Time Requested:

- 30 Minutes
- 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)
- 90 Minutes

6) Planning Details:

Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?

There are no special requirements for this session, other than it should not be delivered in a shared room with other sessions because of its interactive and demonstrational approach. This session is best suited to (perhaps reliant upon) a designated space where discussion can occur.

7) Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:

What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?

Session participants will gain:

1. An innovative, experiential activity for their teaching 'toolbox' that can be translated into many contexts;
2. Reflections on how to prepare for and guide students through a high fidelity simulation;
3. Techniques for facilitating discussions with students during the simulation, in order to capitalize on teachable moments and diffuse tension;
4. Recommended approaches for debriefing the experience to maximize students' learning and development.

8) Management or Teaching Topics:

Describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Please include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.

Our session will describe and demonstrate a role play simulation that showcases an active learning approach to teaching community governance. Studies have shown that active learning is advantageous for students' comprehension, retention, and ability to apply the information to new situations, versus passive learning techniques such as lectures and note-taking (e.g., DeNeve & Heppner, 1997). Role playing is more student-centered and more like real life than tests and lectures (Teed, 2014).

Our role play offers a unique experience that places students in a situation with high realism, challenging context, and a potentially no-win scenario. Our session is grounded upon (and illustrates) principles of experiential learning, manifested in a high-fidelity simulation. Fidelity is a concept drawn from the literature on training transfer, referring to how closely a training context like a simulation models the 'real thing' (e.g., Lane & Alluisi, 1992), with the implication that greater correspondence between simulation and reality increases the likelihood that the skills learned in training will be transferred to the actual context in which they will be used.

There are two main forms of fidelity: physical and psychological. *Physical fidelity* enhances the physical realism of the training context by reproducing the actual performance environment (Kozlowski & DeShon, 2004), including the setting, equipment, or motions that the trainee performs. An example might be a flight simulator that includes a pilot's full instrument panel, a headset with real-time communications, and visual displays that depict movement in response to the trainee's interactions with the controls. To create physical fidelity, we reproduced the context of a board meeting by taking students to a room on campus that included only a long boardroom-style table (i.e., no desks or other classroom tables) with a whiteboard and flipchart at the front. We required students to raise their hands to speak, and to practice using conduct and phrases consistent with Robert's Rules of Order (e.g., making a motion, voting).

Psychological fidelity involves creating the conditions under which the simulation evokes underlying psychological processes that are responsible for 'real world' performance of the skills being trained (Kozlowski & DeShon, 2004). In the pilot example, psychological fidelity might be enhanced by having multiple prompts on the instrument panel lighting up at the same time, urgent commands coming through the headset, and background noise or distractions that have the potential to draw the trainee's attention away.

Psychological fidelity mimics the elements of job performance that are dynamic, emergent, and unpredictable, with ill-defined problems and incompatible goals (Kozlowski & DeShon, 2004). Trainees engage in active learning to develop adaptive, responsive, and controlled performance skills, and they can do so in a safe environment that allows them to make mistakes, receive coaching and feedback, and develop a greater understanding of the 'real life' context in which they would be using the knowledge and skills they are learning. These are precisely the conditions that our *Kobayashi Maru* Meeting is designed to create, such that the scenario that the students have to resolve has no easy answer and the decision making criteria are not clearly defined. Moreover, the values, needs, opinions, and reactions of the others involved in the simulation are unknown and unpredictable, meaning that students must maximally engage their skills around active listening, constructive communication, emotion regulation, and perception.

9) Session Description and Plan:

What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved?

The session will include an introduction about the purpose of the exercise, as well as the topic and process of the simulation. We will allow time for participants to ask questions to ensure a clear understanding of the process. A maximum of 8 volunteers will then be recruited to take part in the exercise as board members. The remaining

attendees will be observers and can take part in the stop and start discussions and debrief afterward. (15 min)

Participants in the simulation will each be given an envelope containing basic information on the character they will play in the scenario, including background on the character, the stance the character has on the topic at hand, as well as the rationale for this stance and relevant historical events in the character's past.(15 min)

We will then conduct a board meeting with one of the facilitators acting as the chair of the board. This facilitator will run the meeting as well as introduce information at specific points to create more (and realistic) ambiguity in reaching consensus. Such information will be timed to offset any premature agreement among the 'board members.' During this time, the second facilitator will act as an observer, taking opportunity for intentional interruptions to foster objective discussion about what is happening at the table. This may include asking the audience members for input. The purpose will be to ensure an enlightened understanding of the subtleties in the discussion as well as ensure that tension can be dissipated at key moments. (40 Min)

A debrief session will follow to discuss what occurred in the simulation and identify learning moments and insights, as well as challenges and opportunities for using this type of exercise/simulation in the classroom or other training context. Drawing upon attendees own experiences and expertise, we will have an open discussion among the group about how to ensure the wellbeing of all involved, as well as how this type of exercise can be used in different learning contexts. (20 min)

10) For Activities and Exercises:

Attach any materials needed to run the activity and debriefing questions. Evidence for effectiveness may also be included.

No materials will be needed beyond the pre-prepared materials that the facilitators will provide (envelope and character information).

11) Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:

What is the contribution of your session?

Attendees will learn how to create, customize, and facilitate a high-fidelity experiential learning activity. This will also include techniques to achieve desired learning objectives, and considerations for protecting the wellbeing of participants.

The implications for teachers are twofold: Attendees will learn about a novel simulation that they can use for a variety of purposes in their own work, and they will also experience the simulation themselves firsthand. Attendees will be given a resource package with instructions and suggestions on how to replicate the activities, so there will be a tangible takeaway in addition to the experience and discussion.

We anticipate that additional insights and ways of applying the principles will arise from attendees' own experiences and expertise, so session participants will learn from each other and build on everyone's ideas and input.

12) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of Learning in Community?

Information, alone, rarely makes people change their minds, but personal experience often does" (Teed, 2014).

Our session will highlight a simulation that we created for a course in nonprofit governance, in which students are paired with nonprofit boards in the community. The simulation we created was designed to prepare students for their roles as contributing board members (i.e., understanding the basics of governance and meeting protocols, by creating physical fidelity in the training context), but more than that, the simulation helped them to understand other people's emotional investment in a given issue, and how this can manifest in reactions and behaviors. They learned how to engage in constructive communication, even when ideologies and opinions differed, and they deeply understood how boards of community-based organizations face high-stakes and potentially contentious decision-making processes—that is, they gained even greater respect and empathy for the organizations and their missions, and a greater understanding of the broader community in which they live.

13) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

Have you presented the work in this proposal before? If so, how will it be different? Is this proposal under current review somewhere else? If so, please explain. How will your proposal be different for the OBTC conference?

This is a new proposal, thus we have not presented this work elsewhere.

14) References and/or Additional Materials:

DeNeve, K. M., & Heppner, M. J. (1997). Role play simulations: The assessment of an active learning technique and comparisons with traditional lectures. *Innovative Higher Education, 21*, 231-246.

Kozlowski, S. W. J. & DeShon, R. P. (2004). A psychological fidelity approach to simulation-based training: Theory, research, and principles. In E. Salas, L. R. Elliott, S. G. Schflett, & M. D. Covert (Eds.), *Scaled Worlds: Development, validation, and applications* (pp. 75-99). Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing.

Lane, N. E., & Alluisi, E. A. (1992). Fidelity and validity in distributed interactive simulations: Questions and answers. *Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency*.

Teed, R. (2014). Role playing exercises. *SERC Pedagogic Service Project, Carleton University*. Available at: <http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/roleplaying/reasons.html>