

**OBTC 2015 at University of La Verne**

**June 17th – 20th, 2015**

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

*\* Remove all identifying properties from this document \**

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*\*Please include ALL supplementary text at the end of this document\* \*Only one document should be submitted\**

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| **Submission Template for the**  **2015 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators** |

1. **Title of Proposal:**

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| How to use Deliberate Practice Exercises to Improve Student Leadership Skills |

1. **Abstract:**

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| *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.*  Deliberate practice exercises are a powerful way to improve student leadership and interpersonal skills. Deliberate practice is a highly focused activity undertaken with the goal of improving specific aspects of personal performance. Deliberate practice exercises are assigned to students for repetition outside the classroom during their normal activities and interactions with others. Deliberate practice is powerful because in terms of dual process theories it harnesses the intention of higher order thinking to change automatic and habitual behaviors. Examples of behaviors that can be improved by deliberate practice include: leading with humility, interpersonal communication, and establishing vision and purpose. This session will provide example deliberate practice exercises.. Participants will experiment with extant exercises and learn to create new exercises that improve student skills. |

1. **Keywords:**

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| *Use three or four keywords to describe your session.*  Deliberate practice, Skill development Exercises, Outside the classroom |

1. **Format**

X Activity or exercise

Discussion roundtable (60 minute only)

General discussion session

1. **Time Requested:**

30 Minutes

X 60 Minutes (*Roundtables must select 60 minutes*)

90 Minutes

1. **Planning Details:**

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| *Does your session have any special requirements for space or materials?*  Just need a projector for PowerPoint slides and physical seating that allows participant interaction. |

1. **Learning Objectives or Goals for the Session:**

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| *What are 2-4 specific learning outcomes that participants will get from your session?*  Participating instructors will:   1. Learn about the concept of Deliberate Practice (DP). 2. Learn how to apply DP exercises outside the classroom to improve student mastery of leadership and behavioral skills. 3. Learn DP exercises for specific leadership skills in the areas of humility, communication, and courage. 4. Learn how to develop original DP exercises for new situations |

1. **Management or Teaching Topics:**

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| *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.*  Most instructors in the area of organizational behavior know that conceptual learning does not translate into new and enduring student skills. Moreover, in-class experiential exercises may deepen student understanding, but also may not improve student skills beyond the classroom. One answer to developing long-term student skills is “practice," which is the act of repeating a behavior over and over. An even more promising approach to improving student skills is the idea of "deliberate practice" (Ericsson, 1996; Colvin, 2008), which is a highly focused activity undertaken with the goal of improving specific aspects of performance. Indeed, Ericsson (1996) and Colvin (2008) assert that deliberate practice is more important than raw talent for achieving an expert level of performance. How good one becomes at a skill is more about how a person practices than about ability or simply repeating a behavior many times.  **Deliberate practice is not fun** Deliberate practice involves hard work, may appear scary, and stretches a person beyond their comfort level with an activity in order to get much better it. Deliberate practice is useful for gaining new skills, for overcoming weaknesses, and for approaching expert-level status at some task. Deliberate practice means breaking down a skill into its component parts and practicing the more challenging aspects until mastery is reached. For example, simple practice is about hitting a bucket of golf balls in a similar way. Deliberate practice is hitting a bucket of golf balls to improve a specific technique such as mentally swinging the club through the golf ball and through a point beyond the golf ball.  **Deliberate practice is mentally demanding** Why do good intentions for personal improvement often go unfulfilled? Because old mental and behavior habits are too strong to change. Deliberate practice uses higher-order thinking to shape lower-order automatic thought and reaction processes. In terms of dual-process theories of cognition (Chaiken & Trope, 1999; Kahneman, 2003), deliberate practice engages the slow, effortful and deliberate process of System 2 to direct and improve the fast, intuitive, and unreflective process of System 1. With deliberate practice, the intention of System 2 can incorporate new behaviors and skills in the System 1 response patterns.  **Deliberate practice thrives with coaching and feedback** Students do not have the willpower on their own to make significant improvement in their behavior. The instructor supplies informal coaching to students by assigning structured practice exercises and by providing follow-up accountability via students’ written reports about their deliberate practice experiences. Students receive immediate feedback from the practice of new behaviors and subsequent feedback from the instructor’s comments and grading of DP write-ups.  **Example topics** In a leadership course, deliberate practice activities may involve various topics, depending on instructor preferences, such as:   1. Setting vision and purpose 2. Influencing others 3. Courage and willfulness to take action 4. Interpersonal communication 5. Practicing humility 6. Facilitating team meetings and dialogue 7. Becoming more outgoing in specific situations 8. Reducing self-criticalness 9. Motivating others 10. Building relationships and coalitions 11. Time management 12. Becoming more decisive 13. Developing others, delegation   A few examples of deliberate practice exercises from the above list are shown in the exhibits attached below. |

1. **Session Description and Plan:**

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| *What will you actually do in this session? What activities will you facilitate, how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Reviewers will be evaluating how well the time request matches the activities you’d like to do, and the extent you can reasonably accomplish the session’s goals. Reviewers will also be looking for how you are engaging the participants in the session. Include a timeline for your session.*  1. Introduce and discuss the concept of Deliberate Practice and how it differs from conceptual learning or routine practice. 5 min.  2. Hand out and discuss menus of DP exercises for the leadership skills of humility, communication, and influence (Exhibits 1, 2). 10 min.  3. Small group discussion of how exercises from the menus might be applied in various classroom settings. 10 min  4. Role-play a student using deliberate practice to improve a skill from one of the menus. 5 min.  5. Hand out and discuss a student paper that describes experiences with deliberate practice exercises (Exhibit 3). 5 min.  6. Ask participants to select a DP exercise and practice on each other. 10 min.  7. Briefly discuss how to develop new DP exercises tailored to a student’s personal need for skill improvement. 10 min.  9. Debrief participant takeaways 5 min.  Total time: 60 min. |
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1. **For Activities and Exercises:**

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

The materials to run the session are attached at end of proposal as Exhbits 1, 2, and 3.

Debrief questions will include:

1. What is your takeaway from this session?
2. What worked well for you during this session?
3. What did not work for you during this session?
4. **Implications for Teaching or for Teachers:**

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| *What is the contribution of your session?*   1. Teachers will learn about the concept of Deliberate Practice. 2. Teachers will learn to develop and assign DP exercises for use outside the classroom to improve student mastery. 3. Teachers will be given menus of DP exercises for specific behavioral skills in the areas of leadership and interpersonal relationships 4. Teachers will be given an example of a typical student paper that reports Deliberate Practice experiences outside the classroom 5. Teachers will learn how to develop original DP exercises for new situations |

1. **Application to Conference theme:**

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

Most deliberate practice exercises involve interpersonal relationships. Improved relationships via rehearsed communication skills, for example, adds to the well-being of a student’s family and friendship community. Moreover, when students practice better behavioral skills outside the classroom, they will be adding to the community with students, faculty, and administration in their own school and classroom.

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| 1. **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?*  These ideas have not been presented elsewhere. This is an original proposal.   |  | | --- | | 1. **References and/or Additional Materials:** |  1. Ericsson, K. A., Ralf T. Krampy, & Tesch-Rohmer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review* 100, 3, 363-406. 2. Colvin, G. (2008). *Talent is overrated: what really separates world-class performers from everybody else*. New York: Pentland Portfolio. 3. Colvin, C. (2006). What it takes to be great. *Fortune*, October 30, 88-95. 4. Chaiken, S., & Trope, Y. (Eds.). (1999). *Dual process theories in social*   *psychology.* New York: Guilford Press.   1. Kahneman, D. (2003).A perspective on judgment and choice. *American*   *Psychologist*, 58, 697–720. |

**Exhibit 1: Example Menu of Deliberate Practice Exercises**

**PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS**

*Big egos have little ears*. - **Robert Schuller**  
*The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people*. - **Woodrow Wilson**

*The key to success is to get out into the store and listen to what the associates have to say*. - **Sam Walton**

*You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.* - **Dale Carnegie**

*Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret*. - **Ambrose Bierce**

*If you wish to make a person your enemy, tell him simply, "You are wrong." This method works every time*. - **Henry Link**

This week’s deliberate practice is about enhancing your communication skill by practicing some of the ideas discussed in class as well as a few additional communication techniques. Describe your difficult conversation in your DP paper. Choose a sampling of the other exercises to practice during the week. Test yourself, stretch yourself, lead yourself though these communication exercises this week.

**Difficult conversation** (required). Arrange to have a “difficult” or crucial conversation with someone about an issue that is meaningful to you both, may stir emotion, and about which your viewpoints are in conflict. Arrange to meet with the person in a setting conducive to the conversation. Follow the “ILETS” model (listen first) to the extent possible. Can you also incorporate tactics from the Stressful Conversations article?

**Ask Five Questions.** Questionsreveal curiosity and shift the focus of attention to the other person. One or more days this week, start a conversation (with an individual or team) by asking a question (“how are you,” doesn’t count) and follow up with at least four more questions. You might ask something unusual of a friend, and follow up as you add more questions to the conversation. Observe the following rules: Only ask questions about what you are sincerely curious about; observe the reaction of the person you ask and others who overhear, and listen to the actual content of the responses; note your feelings and other reactions. Keep a daily log of all questions you ask one day. How much do you use questions in team meetings? During one-on-one conversations? What percentage of your communications are questions?

**Ask Dumb Questions.** "Dumb" questions are spontaneous questions we don't ask because we think the answer must be obvious, or we'll look silly, or we're supposed to know the answer. These are the naïve questions that children ask full of wonder. V.O.J. inhibits the asking of spontaneous questions. Ask at least one “dumb” question every day. Identify the dumb, the penetrating, and the limiting questions you use. Ask a dumb question in public by clarifying a point made in a meeting or lecture.

**Listen like a Professional.**  Behave as a professional listener during a conversation. Listen actively to what the other person says. Maintain contact with the person’s left eye as described in class, or focus on the space between the person’s eyes/eyebrows. Clear your mind of thoughts and just listen to what the person is saying. Respond during the conversation as you feel appropriate for a professional listener.

**Paraphrase**. During a conversation, periodically practice paraphrasing or summarizing aloud what the other person has been saying. What is the effect of paraphrasing on the other person? On yourself?

**Unsolicited advice.** During the course of a typical conversation, count the number of times you give unsolicited advice or opinions. Also count how often you communicate negative opinions of other people. What percent of your conversation is unsolicited advice/opinion, or negative opinions?

**Refocus on Outcomes/Vision**. During a problem-solving conversation (with individual or team) that seems stuck, ask, “What do you (we) really want to have happen?” This question helps refocus people away from the problem toward their desired outcome or vision, and awakens creative solutions. Help articulate a purpose, dream, outcome, or vision that will engage the person or group. As another option, articulate your own vision to the person or group and try to engage them in your vision.

**Speak with candor.** Keep a mental log of situations where you beat around the bush rather than speak with candor. What is inhibiting or blocking you? Practice saying something spontaneously just as you see it. Just put your truth out there. What did you feel and how did others respond?

**Exhibit 2: Example Menu of Deliberate Practice Exercises[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**BE HUMBLE**

*Be what you is, not what you ain’t, ‘cause if you*

*ain’t what you is, you is what you ain’t*

Luther D. Price

*The Great Way is not difficult*

*for those who have no preferences.*

Sengstan, third Zen patriarch

This deliberate practice is about becoming you in the highest possible way. Through humility people find nobility. To be humble, let go, surrender your outer pretensions, surrender any inflation or alienation you might feel. The idea is that after you shed all this, you are simply yourself, and you can work hard and accomplish work efficiently with a great deal of joy.

**Seek no approval from others.** Try to live up to your own highly set standards for your work without the compulsion to please others. If you find yourself seeking approval, say to yourself “Seek no approval” and get on with what you are doing. For the week:

**Make no comparisons of yourself or your work to others.** If you find yourself feeling superior to or inferior to someone else, say to yourself “Make no comparisons” and get on with what you are doing.

**Seek no recognition or reward.** Do your work well because it pleases you to do it well. If you find yourself motivated primarily by recognition or reward, say to yourself “Seek no recognition or reward” and get on with your work. This is not to suggest that you reject recognition and reward when it comes your way--as it inevitably will. Just try not striving for it.

**Work hard and do your best, for its own sake.** To be humble is not to lower your standards and become a sloth. To be humble is to honor your internal standards more than what the rest of the world thinks. Take pleasure in the *process* of doing your work to the best of your ability. If you find yourself thinking or worrying about what others will think, just say to yourself “Do your best” and then get on with your work.

**Have no expectations for yourself or others.** Practice being open to new possibilities. Accept what is. Adopt a very open mind set. Don’t try to control conversations or work outcomes. Facilitate what is meant to be.

**If at first you don’t succeed, surrender.** Surrender doesn’t mean to quit or give up but rather to let go of emotional attachment to the final outcome. Stop worrying, stop pressing, and stop resisting the natural flow. Accept what is and facilitate what is meant to be.

* Try keeping a daily log of what you notice when you adopt a sense of being humble.
* Notice situations in which you make comparisons with others, want approval, seek rewards, or want to control outcomes. Try entering these situations in a brand new way.
* See if being ordinary tells you anything about being extraordinary.

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| **Exhibit 3: Example of Short One-Page Deliberate Practice Paper Turned in by a Student**  I seem to regularly “bubble to the top” when in groups, in that I often end up being the leader. Much of this is due to my tendency to be incredibly organized and to be a strong communicator. What has major potential to hold me back in terms of being the most effective leader possible, however, is my constant underlying feeling of needing to please everyone.  **People Pleaser Log**  To ground myself in some reality, I took one day and tracked how many times I thought about pleasing other people “against my will.” There were a number of occasions in which I tried to please. For example, I had promised a few people I would take them to Costco, but other things came up that I much rather would have done – and I took them to Costco anyway. Then there were 60+ times when I was not in the best of moods but I still made an effort to smile and say hi to everyone that I passed in the hallway at school. I have created an image for myself at school that is one about being friendly all the time, and this compels me to always do this. What I realized, however, was that doing this 60+ times in one day is ridiculous – a major reality check for me. I’m in the process of still trying to figure out what a good number would actually be.  **Repeating a Mantra**  After our coaching session, I began trying to train my elephant with the mantra, “I’m pleasing myself more than others.” What I realized, was that this wasn’t making me happy, so instead of using that one, I changed my mantra to “I can’t please everyone.” It flows off my tongue much easier and aligns more with my values (I don’t always want to please myself more than others – that’s not how I was brought up.  Instead, I need to realize that I can’t please everyone). Though this has a somewhat negative feeling since it includes the word “can’t,” I’ve found that it has really helped remind me of the importance of thinking before I respond or act. It also helps me temper my emotions that are associated with projects/actions with other people.  **New Automatic Response**  Over the last week, the phrase “let me get back to you later” has become part of my vocabulary. I have a very strong “get it done” mentality, and this sometimes impedes me from thinking through whether or not I will choose to do something because I want to do it or I just want to please the other person. In conversation, particularly email conversation, I’ve found that this phrase has helped me pause and think through my reasoning/response. It’s almost like the 24 hour rule, where in situations that include a lot of emotion, you wait 24 hours until you respond – only I’ve tried to translate it to my everyday actions. It does help me contain my elephant’s desire to just say “yes” and get done whatever needs to get done. For instance, the other day, someone asked me to help them think through a paper topic. I was able to stop and say, “let me get back to you” and was able to schedule the time into my calendar and effectively “time box” the activity so it didn’t become a drain on my day.  **Use “No” Muscle**  Though I was originally thinking I would try to say “no” for an entire day, I decided this wasn’t really what I wanted. What I wanted, was to be able to use “no” in the heat of the moment. So, instead, I gave myself the goal of saying “no” one time each day. I started with little things like not picking up the phone when someone called that I didn’t feel like speaking to, and then I practiced “no” with my econ group when deciding who would be responsible for a certain part of our project. I’m going to continue trying to say no once each day to keep it on the forefront of my mind.  **Overall Learning**  I still stand by the phrase “practice makes perfect,” so I will continue to say my mantra regularly and deliberately practice saying “no” once each day, in the hopes that I can make it a regular part of controlling my Elephant. |

1. Many thanks to Michael Ray, Stanford University, for providing copies of his Live-With exercises upon which many of these exercises are based. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)