OBTC

Teaching Conference for Management Educators

OBTC 2016 at Walsh University
June 8th – 11th, 2016

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Discovering and learning to mitigate our primary saboteur's Impact on us effectively being with our students to facilitate their learning

Effectively serving students' learning is dependent upon how well we know course content and who we are being in our relationships with students. Once we determine who to be, we must then become that person in our daily interactions with students. Saboteurs inhibit us from becoming who we wish to be. Saboteurs develop as part of the normal human development process during childhood when we, most often subconsciously, develop strategies to protect our self-worth. In this session, we will introduce the concept of a saboteur and help participants identify their primary saboteur and its impact on their relationships with students.

Being with Students
Teacher Identity
Saboteurs
Learning-Centered Teaching

2) Format

  __X__ Activity or exercise [**to increase participants' self-understanding and teaching effectiveness]**

  ___ Roundtable discussion (60 minute only)

  ___ General discussion session

2a) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for

  ___ A traditional classroom

  ___ An online class

  ___ Either

2b) For activities and exercises only, is yours best suited for

  ___ Undergraduate students

  ___ Graduate students

  ___ Either

3) Time Requested:

  ___ 30 Minutes

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

  ___ 90 Minutes

4) Planning Details:

No other equipment is required.

5) Teaching Implications:

Learning Goals

1. Understand the concept of a saboteur
2. Identity your primary saboteur
3. Understand the relevance and impact your primary saboteur has on your being with students
4. Develop strategies to mitigate the negative impact of your primary saboteur on your being with students

Being with Students

Ramsey and Fitzgibbon (2005) make the distinction among three approaches to teaching: *doing something to students*; *doing something with students*; and *being with students*. A *doing something to students* approach emphasizes teaching, a *doing something with students* approach emphasizes teaching and learning, and a *being with students* approach emphasizes learning. Rather than being conceived of as three independent categories, they can be seen as points on a *doing-being* continuum. Although the authors do not believe the *doing something to students* or *doing something with students* approaches have no value or place in management education, each of these approaches "objectifies students, distances teachers, and underemphasizes the most critical element of in the classroom: learning" (Ramsey & Fitzgibbon, 2005, 335). In addition, these two approaches dictate that the responsibility for what the students do in the classroom falls on the shoulders of the teacher.

Building on the humanistic approach to education, Ramsey and Fitzgibbon believe that, in truly learning-centered classrooms, teachers focus on who they are being and why they behave the way they do, rather than on determining the specific actions they should take. Thus, when attempting to facilitate student learning, the teachers' underlying values, beliefs and assumptions about teaching and learning become the teachers' central focus of concern. Because of this, teachers should continually assess the impact of their enacted identities, beliefs, attitudes towards students, and motivations on students' learning. In other words, as well as being well grounded in the course content area of the course, the being with students approach requires that a teacher be "personally centered and grounded (341)," as students learn more from and through who we are and how we interact with them than what we say (Ramsey & Fitzgibbon, 2005).

In this session, we will not focus on determining who we need to be to effectively facilitate students' learning. Rather, we will focus on the less addressed topic of a saboteur – a universal personal internal inhibitor that can keep us from becoming who

we need to be to effectively facilitate students' learning. Once identified, we can develop strategies to mitigate the negative impact of our saboteurs on our being with students and their learning.

Saboteurs
Inhibitors can include social expectations, norms and pressures of friends, family, and groups to which we belong, as well as the national culture in which we live. But more insidious than these external inhibitors are our own ways of thinking and feeling that influence us to maintain our status quo way of being and doing. In the coaching literature, these types of thoughts and feelings are often called our *saboteurs*. Saboteurs are universal phenomena that affect individuals in all societies and cultures and people of all races, genders, and ethnicities. In other words, we all possess saboteurs. The fact that you presently may not have a conscious awareness of them does not mean they do not exist. In fact, for most of us, they exist below our level of awareness and impact our lives in ways that we would not explicitly choose. It is not whether or not we have saboteurs, but rather, which saboteurs do we possess and how strong is each of them?

We develop saboteurs in early childhood to survive perceived threats to our physical and emotional lives in order to reach adulthood to pass on our genes. Saboteurs are a normal part of the human development process that provides us with survival strategies. Unlike animals, as humans, we develop strategies to survive both emotionally as well as physically. In modern societies, saboteurs primarily protect us emotionally.
The development of saboteurs does not require one to experience a difficult childhood. Even within the flow of our normal day-to-day life, we have experiences that provoke us to develop saboteurs. These experience may include such things that make us question our self-worth like encountering others that are smarter, faster, taller, better looking and funnier than us, or experiencing failure, defeat, rejection and betrayal. We may be jolted by experiences suffered by others to the point we fear becoming subjected to a similar experience. These are the types of moments when we, most often subconsciously, develop strategies to protect ourselves from bad things happening to us in the future.

At one time in our life, these ways of thinking and feeling (i.e., survival strategies) effectively protected our sense self-worth and value. They kept us safe and helped us survive. But as we mature into adulthood and decide we want to change ourselves to live a more wholehearted and fulfilled life, these ways of thinking and feeling inhibit us from successfully taking the risks inherent in our attempts to change ourselves. These thoughts and feelings inhibit us from producing more effective, meaningful and positive outcomes in our lives. They help maintain the status quo of our lives through making the changes we seek to make in ourselves unnecessarily complicated and scary through our negative self-talk and self-criticism. In other words, our saboteurs inhibit us from thriving in our life and being fulfilled. They *sabotage* our success and happiness.

A Saboteur is the equivalent of a negative voice or alter ego. "[Your saboteur] says things like "you aren't working hard enough," "You should be further along in your career," "You don't do well on tests" – you're not smart enough, attractive enough, wealthy enough, experienced enough, old enough…you're not enough. Or it could be the opposite: You're too old, bald, frumpy, young, aggressive, introverted, extroverted… you're too much" (Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House & Sandal, 128). Our saboteurs are activated when we experience increased stress. By triggering negative emotions such as shame, regret, anger and anxiety, a saboteur undermines us from taking actions that would allow us to realize who we consciously wish to become, under the unconscious guise of self-protection.

What is particularly insidious is that our saboteurs are most often unconscious to us and thus, we don't understand how they impact our experience, behaviors and the outcomes we achieve in our lives. We can never eliminate our saboteurs and, in and of themselves, they are neither good nor bad. Rather, they produce certain outcomes and inhibit other possible outcomes in our lives. In most situations in which we find ourselves as adults, situations in which our survival is of no concern, they inhibit our ability to thrive, find personal meaning, be fulfilled and reach our potential. Saboteurs justify our actions and thoughts that keep us in our status quo by expressing lies about our self, the people around us, and our circumstances.

Through identification and externalization of our saboteurs, we can determine our relationship with our saboteurs (i.e., we are not our saboteurs; we *have* saboteurs and, thus, can determine our relationship with them) and choose alternative ways of thinking and feeling than those represented by our saboteurs to create more positive and fulfilling outcomes in our lives.

The 10 Saboteurs (Identified by Shirzad Chamine (2012))

As mentioned above, saboteurs are internal threats to changing ourselves. For most of us, they are unconscious, reflexive patterns of thinking and feeling that undermine us being authentic, fulfilled, wholehearted, and purposeful, as well as preventing us from reaching our full potential. They keep us in our status quo.

The *Judge* is the master saboteur. It is the one we all have, and it significantly impacts our day-to-day lives. It judges everything about our selves, the people we interact with, and the circumstances/events that occur in our lives as good or bad. It assumes the worst and exaggerates the negative in all situations. This is an effective strategy in situations in which the ultimate goal is to survive (e.g., combat in war) but not in those situations in which we wish to thrive, fulfill our purpose or realize our potential. Through the labeling of everything as either good or bad, the *Judge* provides us with a sense of predictability and control. Everyone has a *Judge*, but the strength of that *Judge* varies from person-to-person.

Example 1: I am not what I need to be. I need to be the smartest person in this class to succeed and feel good about myself.

Example 2: That person comes from a 'lesser' neighborhood than I. They don't belong here.

Although each individual possesses varying types and relative strengths of the below nine accomplice saboteurs, in concert with the *Judge* saboteur, each individual primarily employs one of the nine accomplice saboteurs to ensure one's physical and emotional survival. This accomplice saboteur is determined by one's nature, as well as nurture. One's primary motivation for one's emotional survival and style of handling personal challenges heavily influence the primary accomplice saboteur that one develops.

Although each of us is driven by all *three* primary motivations for our emotional survival, each person's drive for emotional survival is more dependent on *one* these motivators. These three primary motivations for emotional survival are to:

1. Be *independent* of and maintain boundaries between us and others
2. Be *accepted* by others and gain their affection
3. Feel *secure* by attempting to control things and others that make us anxious

Our primary motivation is displayed through one of three styles. Our primary motivation is realized though:

1. *Asserting* by engaging in behaviors that demand fulfillment of our primary motivation
2. *Earning* the fulfillment of our primary motivation
3. *Avoiding* by withdrawing from other people, situations, our thoughts, and our feelings to fulfill our primary motivation

Our likely accomplice saboteur most often exists at the intersection of our primary motivation for emotional survival and style through which it is expressed.

Nine Accomplice Saboteurs

Style	Motivation		
	Independence	Acceptance	Security
Assert	Controller	Hyper-Achiever	Restless
Earn	Stickler	Pleaser	Hyper-Vigilant
Avoid	Avoider	Victim	Hyper-Rational

Below is a brief description and example of each of the nine accomplice saboteurs, as well as the lie the saboteur expresses and the subverted strength associated with it. A subverted strength is a strength that has been developed to such an extreme that it has become a hidden weakness.

Controller: Needs to control every situation.
Example: I have a large project due at the end of the week. To ensure it is done the way I want and that it is completed correctly, I'll sacrifice my weekend to do the whole thing myself. If I give the task to someone else, they might not do it the correct way.

Lie: I must determine what is wrong with every situation or person I interact with.

Subverted Strength: Discernment, responsibility, accountability

Hyper-Achiever: Believes happiness occurs through the success of external performances.
Example: I need to get all A's on my papers and exams to be successful, appreciated, and valued by others. This will help me to get the best job I can get which will pay a healthy salary and give me ample responsibility.

Lie: Success is the path to happiness.

Subverted Strength: Goal and achievement oriented

Restless: Always looking for the next 'big-thing'. Always busy.
Example: "I'm currently pursuing a master's in business administration. What will be my next pursuit? I'll run my own business or travel the world. I want to get to 10 countries within the next year. Once that is done, I'll…"

Lies: This is the only way to achieve all the things I want to achieve.

Subverted Strength: Flexibility and risk tolerance

Stickler: A perfectionist that wants to live in an extremely organized world and possesses a black and white view of everything.
Example: I'll just re-read this paper a third and fourth time just in case there is something more I can add to make it perfect.

Lie: Perfectionism is the only way to get things done the right way.

Subverted Strength: Detail orientated and organized

Pleaser: Always makes sure that others are happy so that one is accepted and like by them. Puts own needs on the backburner for the sake of others.

Example: Never saying no when being asked to do something, even if I am swamped with my own work and life commitments.

Lie: I do not want or expect anything in return for the help I provide.

Subverted Strength: Caring and compassion

Hyper-Vigilant: Possessing a negative outlook of all situations. Always focuses on the negative elements of a situation or outcomes of a decision in a belief that it will keep me safe. When given a choice between situation A or situation B, I decide based on which situation has the least possible negative outcome.
Example: I have vacation days coming up, and I have the choice of either booking a flight to a new destination or staying at home. If I book a flight, it will cost me significantly more money than staying at home, and I have no idea if I'll enjoy it or not. If I stay at home, I am guaranteed that I won't waste my money. I will stay home.

Lie: This is the best way to avoid a bad situation and protect myself and others.

Subverted Strength: Reliable and dependable.

Avoider: Avoids all negativity, including relational conflict and uncomfortable situations.
Example: Bob: "Can you file these for me, Wendy?" Wendy: (I have too many things to do to take the time to file them. Why is he asking me to do these thing when he knows I have other more important things that I am time-pressured to accomplish?) "Yes, of course." Wendy has trouble saying no as she does not want to have to face Bob if he doesn't react well to her denying his request.

Lie: Conflict does not manifest positivity.

Subverted Strength: Appreciation and positivity

Victim: Uses emotions to an extreme to gain attention. Over exaggerates one's feelings.
Example: "My job is so stressful. I work so much and people take advantage of the work I do. I'm on the verge of a breakdown. I don't know what's wrong with me."

Lie: Affection and attention will only occur this way.

Subverted Strength: Emotional self-awareness

Hyper-Rational: Makes all decisions based on a rational thought process versus emotional needs.
Example: This job high-stress job in accounting is offering me significantly more money than this less stressful job in which I can be more of the type of person I am meant to be. I don't enjoy accounting but the money is a 'no-brainer' and it would be stupid of me to decline the accounting job.

Lie: Logic is greater than emotions. Emotions cause distractions from the real issues.

Subverted Strength: Objectivity and logic

References
Ramsey, V. J. & Fitzgibbon, D.E. 2005. "Being in the Classroom." *Journal of Management Education*, *29*(2), 333-356.

Chamine, S. 2012. *Positive intelligence: Why only 20% of teams and individuals achieve their true potential and how you can achieve yours*. Greenleaf Book Group Press: Austin, TX.

Kimsey-House, H., Kimsey-House, K., & Sandahl, P. 2011. *Co-active coaching: Changing business, transforming lives*. Nicholas Brealey: Boston, MA.

6) Session Description and Plan:
- Introduce (ourselves and) the concept of saboteurs – 5 minutes
- Share an example of how a saboteur manifested in a student/teacher interaction – 5 minutes
- Introduce 10 primary saboteurs – 15 minutes
- Facilitate an activity in which participants will identify their primary saboteur – 5 minutes
- Facilitate participants identifying their primary saboteur's impact on their relationships with students – 10 minutes
- Identify strategies to mitigate the impact of participants' primary saboteur – 10 minutes
- Closing thoughts, plus Q&A – 10 minutes

7) Application to Conference theme:
In order to effectively serve our students, to allow them to "learn and thrive", we must not only have a deep understanding of the course content, but we must also be mindful of who we are *being* with our students. Everything we do, everything the students do, is with and through other people, whether it be a student-teacher relationship, student-faculty relationship, or students working together. How we *be* in our relationships with our students thus affects how they will learn and grow. We all have saboteurs that inhibit us from becoming our best self. By recognizing and acknowledging our saboteurs and the impact they have on our relationships, it can help foster a more united and collaborative classroom space where teachers and students can be in service to each other and the learning process.

8) Unique Contribution to OBTC:
This is the first time this work will be presented, and it is not under review anywhere else.