



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

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Title: RISKY BUSINESS: INCREASING STUDENT INTELLECTUAL RISK-TAKING IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

In your abstract, please include a brief session description (not to exceed 100 words), and three to four keywords. If your proposal is accepted, this description will be printed in the conference program.

Abstract: The demands of today's ever-changing work environment oftentimes requires that employees engage in intellectual risk taking by being resourceful, trying new things, and asking questions even at the risk of making a mistake. Our research suggests that management educators can better prepare students for their future professions by conducting classes in ways that mirrors the modern work environment; specifically by incorporating autonomy and higher performance expectations. During this roundtable we will discuss strategies for incorporating autonomy and high expectations into a management education course, and share ideas about how to help students feel more comfortable with ambiguity and intellectual risk-taking.

Keywords: Intellectual risk taking, Metacognition, Autonomy, High expectations

2) Format

- ☐ Activity or exercise
- ☒ 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

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

☐ 90 Minutes

4) Planning Details:

Each room contains a white board with markers, computer (PC) with DVD capability and computer projector. Does your session require any other equipment?

No

5) Teaching Implications:

What is the contribution of your session to management pedagogy/andragogy? Specifically, please include your learning objectives, and describe what management and/or teaching topics are relevant to your session, and why. Also, include theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations that will help reviewers understand how your ideas fit within the broader field of management.

The goal of this session is to further the discussion about instructor strategies that will prepare students for the demands of the modern business environment. There is a growing line of research aimed at this topic. Our research contributes to management pedagogy/andragogy by highlighting that while some students have a greater predisposition to taking intellectual risks, instructors can still employ effective strategies to encourage students to engage in metacognition and ultimately increase intellectual risk-taking. Controlling for individual differences known to influence risk-taking behaviors (i.e., self-efficacy, and learning goal orientation) we found that providing students with autonomy over how they do their work, and having high expectations of them increases their use of metacognitive strategies, which in turn increases intellectual risk-taking in the classroom.

This topic is consistent with conceptual research in *JME* which suggests management education should utilize more autonomy-supportive classrooms (e.g., Conklin, 2013; Dachner & Polin, 2014; & Debnath, Tandon, & Pointer, 2007). However, our research empirically tests and found support for the benefits of autonomy in the classroom. This topic draws upon more general management and learning concepts such as intrinsic motivation, job characteristics theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1975), and metacognition (Ford et al., 1998).

In this session we strive to not only increase this awareness of these particular strategies for better preparing students intellectual risk-taking, but also to identify

other instructor initiatives that might better prepare students for the workforce. Top executives (e.g, Kahn, 2012; Levine, 2015) have indicated that success in today's work environment requires that employees take risks, create and implement novel ideas. Yet, practitioners suggest that many new college graduates have trouble dealing with ambiguity in the workplace and want to be told how to do things, not just what needs to be done. Further, research and anecdotal evidence indicate that traditional undergraduate college students have a performance goal orientation such that they are motivated to earn a certain grade to appear competent, not to acquire new knowledge and learn from their experiences (Hiller & Hietapelto, 2001). This limited focus inhibits students from taking risks and learning to address ambiguity through creative and innovative problem solving, which is what is necessary for success in most modern jobs. Thus, our learning goals for this session are to: identify ways that we, as management educators, can better prepare our students for the ever evolving work world that they will face upon graduation, while still instilling the foundational knowledge of the field in a rigorous way? And to identify ways we can get students to put fear aside and take intellectual risks in our classes.

6) Session Description and Plan:

What will you actually do in this session? If appropriate, please include a timeline estimating the activities will you facilitate: how long will they take, and how will participants be involved? Please remember that 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.

20 minutes: For the first twenty minutes we will share our research and how it builds off of past research as well as how it answers a call from recruiters about how to better prepare students for the dynamic work environment they will face upon graduation.

30 minutes: We will ask the following questions and discuss the following topics.

- How can we, as management educators, better prepare our students for the ever evolving work world that they will face upon graduation, while still instilling the foundational knowledge of the field in a rigorous way?
- How do we get students to put fear aside and take intellectual risks in our classes?
- What are some ways that management educators can include more autonomy in their classes?
- How can management educators balance increasing their expectations of students, taking into account that often times student satisfaction and instructor evaluations decrease with more challenging classes?

10 minutes- this session will conclude with a summary of points covered. Participants interested in this topic will also be encouraged to share contact information with each other.

7) Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *United in Service*?

This session suggests that management educators do a “disservice” to students by focusing too much on content and not enough on context. Grade inflation, easy courses, and teaching to the test are all detrimental to student development.

8) 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 research has not been presented before, but it was submitted to Academy of Management (AoM). For AoM a full paper was submitted as a paper discussion to share our research findings. This differs from our proposed OBTC session where we will discuss our findings briefly, but focus more on the implications and next steps.

REFERENCES

Conklin, T. A. (2013). Making it personal: The importance of student experience in creating autonomy-supportive classrooms for millennial learners. *Journal of Management Education*, 37(4), 499-538.

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Levine, M. (2015). Keynote speaker at Jewish Federation of Cleveland Women's Spring Luncheon on May 22, 2015.