1. Title, Abstract &Keywords

*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.*

The Self-Exploration Module: Helping Our Students Understand Themselves

This session introduces the Self-Exploration Module (SEM) which allows for a deeper practice of self-exploration in the classroom. Effective self-exploration encourages us to quiet the mind and become more aware of one’s self and one’s surroundings. This, in turn, exponentially increases the potential for sincere, honest contact which can lead to significant, effective self-awareness. Self-exploration helps individuals focus, plan, and manage more effectively. It also encourages a sense of community, responsibility and ethics. All of which helps to create an effective learning community.

*Keywords:* Self-exploration, self-awareness, goal setting

1. 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.*

This session’s contribution to management pedagogy/andragogy includes the following learning objectives:

1. Participants will acquire skills to help their students engage in self-exploration within the learning environment.
2. Participants will obtain a step by step process in turning one’s attention from external circumstances to an internal examination of one’s thoughts, feelings and past behaviors.
3. Participants will experience how quieting the mind and becoming more self-aware increases the potential for elevated contact and communication, better planning and sense of community, responsibility and ethics.

Self-exploration is an appropriate management and teaching topic. Self-exploration is “the process of turning one’s attention from external circumstances to an internal examination of one’s thoughts, feelings and past behaviors toward a goal of more compassionate and harmonious relations with oneself and with others.” (Wheeler, 2016). It is at this individual, internal level that key global business decisions are made every day. Self-exploration can positively impact a person’s capacity for leadership and his/her ability to work within a classroom or business.

Following are a few of the relevant articles related to management and/or teaching:

* + 1. Being in the Classroom (Ramsey & Fitzgerald, 2005) – This article, published in the *Journal of Management Education*, distinguishes between doing and being in the classroom, highlights three different classroom approaches: a focus on teaching, a focus teaching and learning, and a focus on learning.
		2. Learning through Reflective Classroom Practice (Hedberg, 2009) – This article, published in *JME*, suggests that teachers can model reflective practice.
		3. New Directions in Goal-Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 2006) – This article, published in *Current Directions in Psychological Science,* is written by two scholars considered pioneers in the field of goal-setting theory.
		4. *Towards Holistic Management: Words of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother* (Gupta, 2004) – This book presents a holistic, spiritually-based discussion about the field of management.
		5. Understanding the Use of Self in Organizational Development: An Exploratory Study of the Self-Exploration Practices in Auroville, India (Wheeler, 2016) – This article, published in *Organization Development Journal*, reports on self-exploration practices used by an international experimental community.

Theoretical, disciplinary, or theoretical foundations:

Much of the literature found on self-exploration and management is focused on career development (Cohen, 1929; Creed, McPherson, and Hood, 2011; Emmerling and Cherniss, 2003; Hall and Chandler, 2005; Hirschi, 2011; Maurer, 2001; Nauta, 2007; Stoltz and Young, 2012; Stump and Hartman, 1984; Solomon, Berzon, and Davis, 1970; Taylor and Bright, 2011; Xu, Hou, and Tracey, 2014; and Yitshaki and Kropp, 2016). However, Rozuel and Ketola (2012) and Rozuel (2012) focus upon responsible leadership, which requires individuals to engage in self-inquiry in order to understand one’s self and the “unconscious influences” on consciousness in order to display “ethical awareness and responsible action, as leaders, followers, and generally as organizational agents” (p. 1), and Seashore, Shawver, Thompson, and Mattare (2004) review the use of the “instrumental self as an agent of change,” noting that “Use of Self consists of intentional, conscious and deliberate choices which result in actions/behaviors taken to bring about change” (p. 57).

Several authors outline techniques used in management for self-exploration, such as having students journal for the purpose of understanding how personal issues can influence their work (Morrissette and Gadbois, 2006); using personal development groups as a means of counselor training (Robson and Robson, 2008); using a review of ecological selves to understand how we can effect organizational change (Rogers, 2012); and using meditation practices to “train attention in order to heighten awareness and bring mental processes under greater voluntary control” (Walsh, 1983, p. 19). Shapiro (1994) delves into the use of meditation more deeply, citing an annotated bibliography by Murphy and Donovan (1988) which has over 1,350 references related to the physiological, behavioral and subjective benefits of meditation practices, although they are not specifically associated with organizational or management practices. Taylor and Bright (2011) outline the use of Multisource Feedback Assessments (or 360 degree feedback) as a possible tool to increase self-awareness.

Less mainstream literature makes an easier connection between management, leadership, and the use of the self. For example, Gupta notes in his compiled writings of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother (2004) that “as eastern spiritual thinkers have repeatedly pointed out, right management of the internal self is the key to the successful management of the outer life and environment” (p. 1). Gupta further notes that “someone who cannot manage his own self cannot effectively manage others or anything in the outer life” (Gupta, 2004, p. 1).

1. 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.*

In this session we will discuss the importance of self-exploration in the classroom and global business community. We will discuss how quieting the mind and becoming more aware of one’s self and one’s surroundings exponentially increases the potential for sincere, honest contact which can lead to significant, effective self-awareness. Self-exploration helps individuals focus, plan, and manage more effectively. It also encourages a sense of community, responsibility and ethics. All of which helps to create an effective learning community.

I am requesting 60 minutes for this session. Participants will be asked to participate in a lively discussion where they will be able to share their own efforts at encouraging student reflection.

Following is the preliminary timeline:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity**  | **Time**  |
| Introduce session. | 5 minutes  |
| Introduce the Self-Exploration Module (SEM). In this module:  The student will  1. Explain and understand why they are taking this particular class;  2. Keep a semester-long journal of their personal feelings, responses,  thoughts, and/or inspirations based on class material;  3. Write a paper about their connection to the classroom material.  The teacher will  1. Encourage honesty through class discussion.  2. Help the students make the connection between who they are and the career they have chosen, as a primary focus rather than an aside.  3. Use eye contact, ask direct questions, and encourage reflective activities  such as the writing assignment mentioned in number 3 above.  4. Respond to the students in the classroom in a non-judgmental and  accepting fashion.  5. Encourage students to focus on the things that excite them and bring  them joy and satisfaction.  6. Teach students the importance of staying positive and learning to  manage and learn from the negative.  | 15 minutes |
| Share the SEM in action through recent classroom examples. | 20 minutes  |
|

|  |
| --- |
| Discuss the importance of self-exploration in the global business community. |
|  |

 | 15 minutes  |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Conclude session. |  |

 | 5 minutes |

1. Application to Conference theme:

How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *navigating the Changing Currents*?

 The conference theme, *Navigating the Changing Currents*, acknowledges the many tidal fluctuations that we as educators now face. New technology, flipped classrooms, and dialogic classes are but a few of the rivers we must ford in 2017 and beyond. This session, focused on turning the students inward for deeper reflection, provides one way to help our students cope with the future challenges. Although not a new concept in the field of Management, self-exploration has typically been seen as an afterthought, if at all. This session emphasizes the importance of self-exploration which provides the students with some of the required navigational tools for their professional journeys.

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?*

I have presented at previous OBTC conferences. This session is a continuation of my work on how “starting with the self” can positively impact a person’s capacity for leadership and his/her ability to work within a classroom or organization. I have presented papers outlining my use of certain practices that help both me and my students to get present and make contact in the classroom, then I am able to challenge their participation in the process of learning. Finding these practices effective in the classroom, I became curious about how a deeper practice of self-exploration might broaden a person’s ability to learn, adapt, and work effectively with themselves and others, either in the classroom, the boardroom, or on a global level. This curiosity resulted in the Self-Exploration Module presented in this session.