



**OBTC 2017 at Providence College  
June 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**Submission Template**

**SUBMISSION GUIDANCE**

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## **Submission Template for the 2017 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators**

### 1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

#### **Influence Across Difference: Influence Would Be Easy If Only There Weren't People Involved!**

Influence would be easy if only there weren't people involved! Organizational life is increasingly diverse, driven by changing demographics, globalization, and technology. This session will share a teaching approach targeted to the thorny issue of how to enhance the ability to develop influence when working with those who "aren't like me." This will be an experiential session designed to take participants through some of the key pedagogical vehicles that motivate the learning. The approach has been used with graduate and executive audiences but is relevant for undergraduate teaching as well.

Keywords: influence, diversity, experiential learning, leadership skills

### 2) Teaching Implications:

The objective for this interactive conference session is to share an approach to preparing leaders to effectively influence individuals across a range of differences. Creating pedagogy that allows learners to consider differences as part of how they will lead and manage is essential in today's increasingly diverse organizational environments but is not always explicitly done. The demonstrated session is designed to be part of any course that focuses on influence and relationship-building as a key focus of leadership.

Specifically, participants will:

- Experience an approach to integrating diversity into teaching about influence
- Take away specific tools that can be used in their own classrooms to demonstrate key concepts including implicit assumptions, figure-ground bias, identity awareness, and public image awareness
- Engage in discussion about how to best use or adapt the demonstrated pedagogy to their own courses and teaching context.

Management education that focuses on diversity in the workplace has a strong foundation and history (Bell & Kravetz, 2008). That focus continues to be needed as shifting demographics, globalization, and technological connectivity press ahead while workplace research suggests that diversity creates challenges for organizational work in terms of communication and cooperation (Jackson & Joshi, 2011), leader-member exchange (Randolph-Seng, Cogliser, Randolph, et. al., 2015) and power and status (Lucas & Baxter, 2012). How can we reframe teaching about influence as a diversity skill (Kulik & Roberson, 2008) that is integrated into leadership thinking (Gotsis and Grimani, 2016)? Pedagogy that begins with self-understanding (Mirvis, 2008; Neville,

2008), that is viewed as a collaborative learning journey (Bilimoria, O'Neil, Hopkins & Murphy, 2010), that provides an opportunity for safe dialogue (Bigelow, Elsass, and Arndt, 2015) and emotion (Spelman, 2010), and promotes an approach of appreciative inquiry (Neville, 2008; Alston-Mills, 2011) creates a foundation for valuable management education. With this in mind, the approach designed and offered in this conference session is an application of this foundation with an eye toward explicitly noting the diversity of the workplace. In other words, rather than hoping students will figure out how to apply concepts of influence, this session asks them to think about the challenges they may encounter as they do so and to do so in the context of other learning about leadership and influence. The goal is to build an integrated diversity skill into their influence mindset and behaviors.

Alston-Mills, B. (2011). Using appreciative inquiry to promote diversity in higher education. *Journal of Diversity Management*, 6(3), 1-6.

Bell, M. P. & Kravetz, D. A. (2008). From the guest co-editors: What do we know and need to learn about diversity education and training? *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(3), 301-308.

Bigelow, B., Elsass, P. & Arndt, M. (2015). Dialogue in the graduate management classroom: Learning from diversity. *The International Journal of Management Education* 13 (2015) 48-56

Bilimoria, D., O'Neil, D. A., Hopkins, M. M., & Murphy, V. (2010). Gender in the management education classroom: A collaborative learning journey. *Journal of Management Education*, 34(6), 848-873.

Gotsis, G. & Grimani, K. (2016) Diversity as an aspect of effective leadership: integrating and moving forward. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 37(2), 241 – 264.

Jackson, S. E. & Joshi, A. (2011). Work team diversity. In Zedeck, S., Ed., *APA Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*: 651-686. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Kulik, C. T. & Roberson, L. (2008). Common goals and golden opportunities: Evaluations of diversity education in academic and organizational settings. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(3), 309–331

Lucas, J. W. & Baxter, A. R. (2012). Power, influence and diversity in organizations. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 639, 49-70

Mirvis, P. (2008). Executive development through consciousness-raising experiences. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 7(2), 173-188.

Neville, M. G. (2008). Using appreciative inquiry and dialogical learning to explore dominant paradigms. *Journal of Management Education*, 32, 100-117.

Randolph-Seng, B., Coglisier, C. C., Randolph, A. F., Scandura, T. A., Miller, C. D., & Smith-Genthôs, R. (2016). Diversity in leadership: race in leader-member exchanges. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 37(6), 750 – 773.

Spelman, D. (2010). Recognizing the centrality of emotion in diversity courses: Commentary on “Gender in the management education classroom.” *Journal of Management Education*, 34(6) 882–890

### 3) Session Description and Plan:

This interactive session ideally requires 90 minutes but could be done in 60 minutes. The timeline would be to use the first two-third of allotted time to explain the context for the class session and conceptual frame for the approach, then take participants through the experiential activities; the remaining third of time would be used for feedback on the pedagogy and discussion of application to participants' courses and context. 90 minutes would allow for more time to experience each of the activities as well as for a richer discussion of application.

Participants will be engaged through the experiential activities – exercises and multimedia – and dialogue will focus on the conceptual approach, their feedback on its value and sharing of what they have found works for them; final discussion will focus on how to apply the ideas from the session to their own teaching efforts.

### 4) Application to Conference theme:

As noted earlier, the inexorable forces of changing demographics, increased globalization, and technological connectivity create an increasingly heterogeneous and diverse context for organizational life. This creates even greater urgency to equip our students with diversity skills. Rather than thinking of this as an add-on to leadership and managerial skills, we need to get better at integrating this context into our topical teaching so that rather than saying “now we are doing diversity,” we instead directly include recognition of differences and diversity within our topical coverage. Similarly to debates about whether international business or ethics should be taught as separate courses or integrated within management curricula, this session takes the philosophy that is essential to create class sessions that directly integrate into our existing courses. Looking around today's world and the shifting social and political trends, we owe it to ourselves and our students to better prepare them with skills to work effectively with those different from themselves.

### 5) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

This proposal is specific to the OBTC conference and has not been presented elsewhere. It is uniquely created to share an approach to integrating diversity into an OB topic area, i.e. influence, to seek feedback on this approach, and to generate discussion about how else to frame such a class session and to apply the approach to colleagues' own teaching contexts and courses.