1) **Title:** From Idea Napkins to Beyond: Using the Ideation Process to Develop Oral Presentation Skills in the Entrepreneurial Classroom

Abstract:

This session will demonstrate the use of "Idea Napkins" in developing oral communication skills and idea development for the entrepreneurial classroom. Participants will experience an abbreviated version of the ideation process, learn how to give, receive and store feedback as data, as well as discuss techniques for analyzing the feedback received. By creating sales pitches as a team, participants will learn how incorporating an iterative presentation process can be beneficial for both idea development and oral communication skills development. Qualitative data from two semesters in the form of student feedback and comments will be shared as well as sample student assignments.

Key Words: Entrepreneurship, sales pitch, idea napkins

2) 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.

I will share with the participants in this session ways of incorporating oral communications skill building into the entrepreneurial classroom. Often times in management education we have so much "material to cover" that sometimes skill building falls by the wayside, especially in our ever-changing classroom where there are demands for online and hybrid education. Most often in general entrepreneurship classes we see students come up with ideas for business models, most of which are not feasible, and the students work all semester on a written business plan for poorly designed ideas.

In order to break the bad idea-business plan cycle I use teaching materials developed by Dr. Alex Bruton which help students develop their business ideas in terms of feasibility and impact. In this way, the students invest time in writing business plans for GREAT (or at least BETTER) ideas. Incorporating the use of "idea napkins" and "big idea

sketch pads" with an iterative sales pitch process, students are able to benefit from improving their oral communication and listening skills (see appendices). Most importantly they receive lots of experience is giving and receiving feedback (Mac Alpine, 1999).

Dixon and Beverly (2015) find that students need to do the same presentation several times over and that the success felt from improvement motivates undergraduate students to keep improving communication skills. For the students, the benefits are two-fold. First, they become more and more comfortable sharing ideas and giving oral presentations. Second, they are able to experience the ideation process from opportunity identification to idea development in a relatively short time. The project can be implemented in a face to face setting, hybrid course, or even an online course setting.

The session will discuss and demonstrate ideation, sales pitch skills, and how to create an immediate feedback setting in the classroom as the students go through several iterations of the oral presentation process. I believe the session will be helpful for educators in several management fields and to business schools educators in general.

3) 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.

I believe 1 hour 30 minutes would be an appropriate amount of time to carry out this session. The first 5 minutes will be an overview of the challenge I see in the entrepreneurial classroom in both communication skills and idea development. I will share with them my failed attempt at solving this problem a few semesters ago. In order to show how I was able to address these obstacles, I will then break the participants into groups, giving them 5 minutes to complete an "idea napkin" worksheet based on a certain theme/industry. During the next 10 minutes, one person from each group will report out to the room the innovative and creative "Big Idea" from their team idea napkin. We will then open the floor up to feedback and criticism in terms of impact and feasibility for each idea. Then 10 minutes will be given to complete the next worksheet "The Really Big Idea Sketch Pad" which requires the group to further refine their idea.

During the second half-hour the participants in each group will use 5 minutes to develop a 30 second sales pitch for their "big idea". It will take about 10 minutes for each team to present their pitch and for feedback/scorecards to be filled out.

For 15 minutes we will then discuss how the feedback received would have influenced the team's 30 second pitch; most importantly highlighting what would need to be changed for each pitch in order for impact and feasibility to increase if the team were to pitch again.

For the remainder of the session I will share with the group how these pitches are used during a hybrid entrepreneurship course, the supporting assignments as well as power point presentations used to help students develop their sales pitches.

Finally, in the last 15 minutes I will share some of the data generated by the students' impact and feasibility score cards during the fall 2016 semester as I require each student group to not only calculate their scores, but also to plot them on a scatter chart so it is easy to see how the presentation iterations, feedback and development have influenced their "big ideas" over a 10 week period.

*******The materials used for this classroom activity are not my own. They are developed by Dr. Alex Bruton and are available for free in .pdf version online (https://www.straightupbusiness.institute/toolkit/). Although they are not my own materials, I believe the way in which I use them is unique to the entrepreneurial classroom*********

4) Application to Conference theme:
How does your session fit with the overall OBTC theme of *Navigating the Changing Currents*?

This session very much fits into the conference theme "Navigating the Changing Currents" as it becomes increasingly important for our students to hone their presentation and communication skills. While many students hope to be groomed to one day work in the C-Suite, there are others who hope to create or support a small to medium sized business. The ability to develop ideas through storytelling and receive immediate feedback is an experience which will support communication skills development no matter which career path the students choose. I believe the students are aware of the changing currents as well and they count on us as educators to help them hone the skills they are unable to hone on their own.

The currents are certainly changing as we begin to work with a generation of students who are always "wired", communicating almost entirely through wireless devices and electronic means. While I believe it is important to reach the students using technology and the latest gadgetry I also find it important to make sure they walk out of the classroom with a new or improved skill. The idea napkins and big sketchpad works sheets seem to add a much desired gaming aspect to the development process. As a result, I believe this session will be useful to educators from several different functional backgrounds as I share how I've successfully

navigated the "changing currents" using ideation, idea napkins and a sales pitch as a semester project.

5) 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 work has not been submitted to any other conferences and it is not currently under review for conferences elsewhere. I believe this conference session will be unique and valuable to the attendees of OBTC for several reasons. First, as a frequent attendee I am aware that many educators attend in order to recharge and return to their classrooms with fresh ideas for the fall semester. Second, I will not only share with them my teaching method which supports the semester project, I will also share with the group copies of handouts and sample assignments which made the project a huge success. In terms of uniqueness, to my knowledge it is rare that entrepreneurship related conference sessions address oral communication skills development in entrepreneurship or the small business classroom. Many focus on business plan writing or competition development. This session will give the attendees new ideas to try in their classroom as well as tools to develop very important skills: listening and oral communication! Most importantly, I will share how this process played out in my own classroom; the first time being a failed attempt and the second being a huge success.

References

Bruton, A. (2016). The Straight Up Business Institute, https://www.straightupbusiness.institute/toolkit/

Dixon, G. and Beverly, G.T. (2015). Improving undergrad presentation skills. *American Society for Engineering Education Annual Meeting,* Seattle Washington. #11205.

Mac Alpine, J.M. (1999). Improving and Encouraging Peer Assessment of Student Presentations, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, (24)*: 15-25.

Appendices