



Teaching Conference for
Management Educators

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

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.

Mindfulness and Self-regulation: A Series of Application Assignments

Today's students face significant challenges to their thinking, concentration, learning, and self-discipline. Smart phones and other technologies have fundamentally changed the ways many students spend their time, their ability to focus attention over periods of time, and the quality of their social interactions with others. Students and business professionals need personal skills that will enable them to navigate these challenges through mindfulness, self-regulation, and goal setting. A management professor will share a set of mindfulness assignments used in a principles of management course, seek suggestions for improvement, and lead a discussion on other ways to address these important issues.

Keywords: mindfulness, self-regulation, concentration, technology

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.

The contribution this session can make to pedagogy/andragogy is sharing practical assignments that can be used in any management class to address important challenges faced by both students and management professionals. These assignments can easily be utilized as supplements to existing course material, and one could choose to use the whole set or to pick one or two assignments for use.

The learning objectives for these assignments are: 1) to develop awareness of today's challenges to effective concentration, thinking, and learning, 2) to introduce the concepts of mindfulness, self-regulation, delayed gratification, and goal orientation and the role these factors play in achievement, and 3) to facilitate students' self-assessment, personal reflection, and action planning to make needed changes in the ways they think and learn.

A brief description of the extensive literature on which these learning activities are based is provided below.

Technology has changed the way many college students read, study, and learn. According to Bowman, Waite, and Levine (2015), while it is possible for individuals to focus on a single stimulus, it is most common that people divide their attention among various sources of information and technology. Rosen, Carrier, and Cheever (2013) found that students averaged only six minutes of study before they switched tasks, usually to some form of technology. In a study by Uncapher, Thieu, and Wagner (2016) heavy media "multitaskers" displayed lower performance on a working memory task. Borst, Taatgen, and van Rijn (2010) studied the impact of switch tasking and found that when two or more tasks require the individual to remember information, perform intermediate calculations, or follow a line of reasoning, a "cognitive bottleneck" occurs, and the quality of performance on one or both tasks is seriously affected.

At the same time that these challenges are emerging, many students are not spending sufficient time on their studies. NSSE (2015) reveals that senior business students taking a full course load reported spending only 13.2 hours per week studying outside of class, and 45 percent of business students study 10 hours per week or less. This combination of poor concentration and focus during study time along with limited amounts of study time create a performance-limiting situation for many students.

Mindfulness, self-regulation, and the ability to delay gratification can provide tools to address these issues. According to Salomon and Globerson (1987), mindfulness is “the volitional, metacognitively guided employment of non-automatic, usually effortful processes (p. 623). Mischel (1996) discusses goal-directed delay of gratification and willpower, and he contends that intentional, self-imposed deferment of gratification and displaying both a concern and plan for the future are necessary for all mature human behavior. These traits and habits are essential to the higher-order thinking and learning required for success at the university level.

References

- Borst, J. P., Taatgen, N. A., & van Rijn, H. (2010). The problem state: A cognitive bottleneck in multitasking. *Journal of Experimental Psychology. Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 36(2), 363-82.
- Bowman, L. L., Waite, B. M., & Levine, L. E. (2015). Implications for College Students. *The Wiley Handbook of Psychology, Technology and Society*, 388.
- Mischel, W. (1996). From good intentions to willpower. In P.M. Gollwitzer & J.A. Bargh (Eds.) *The psychology of action: Linking cognition and motivation to behavior* (pp. 197-218). New York: Guilford Press.
- National Survey of Student Engagement (2015). NSSE 2015 U.S. summary means and standard deviations by related-major category. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Center for Postsecondary Research. Retrieved from nsse.indiana.edu/links/summary_tables
- Rosen, L. D., Carrier, L. M., & Cheever, N. A. (2013). Facebook and texting made me do it: Media-induced task-switching while studying. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(3), 948-958.
- Salomon, G., & Globerson, T. (1987). Skill may not be enough: The role of mindfulness in learning and transfer. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 11(6), 623-637.
- Uncapher, M. R., Thieu, M. K., & Wagner, A. D. (2016). Media multitasking and memory: Differences in working memory and long-term memory. *Psychonomic bulletin & review*, 23(2), 483-490.

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.

A proposed timeline for the session is as follows:

- (3 minutes) Introduction.
- (10 minutes) Presentation of the mindfulness assignments and readings. The complete set of assignments will be provided.
- (3 minutes) Review of student feedback collected after the initial use of these assignments.
- (14 minutes) Group discussion, including ideas to improve these assignments and other ways to address the challenges to thinking and learning faced by students and managers today.

(Note. This timeline is based on the 30 minute time period requested for this session.)

4) Application to Conference theme:

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

The proposed session is timely and fits the overall conference theme nicely in that it seeks to address challenges that modern technologies present to students and business professionals. In the future, a key component of an individual's success in school and in business will be the personal skill and self-discipline to focus one's time and attention in mindful, deliberate ways and not succumb to the flawed habits that are becoming the norm.

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 particular work is not currently under review elsewhere.

Overview of Mindfulness Assignments

There are a total of six mindfulness assignments in this series. (Although the assignments deal with issues other than mindfulness, the decision was made to keep the title of the assignments simple and clear.) The whole set can be used, or individual assignments may be selected. There is value in taking students on the complete path from understanding the behaviors and choices that limit their concentration, seeing how they currently use their time, and planning any adjustments that are needed. The assignments are shown below, along with the lead time required for students to observe their activities, record them, and complete the worksheet.

Assignment		Minimum Lead Time to Prepare
1	Mindfulness readings; “Multitasking” (Switch Tasking)	3 days
2	Identifying Other Factors Limiting Concentration	2 days
3	Improving Concentration	1 day
4	Prospective-Retrospective Time Use Inventory	9 days
5	Time Log	
6	Self-Assessment of Mindfulness and Self-Regulation	1 day

Discussion of Individual Assignments

Results from each of the first three worksheets was discussed in class on the date the assignment was due. Worksheets 4 and 5 are interdependent, so discussion of those assignments was held after both worksheets were completed. Discussion of the final worksheet was incorporated into the overall discussion at the end of the assignments.

The Mindfulness Portfolio

Students placed all completed assignments into a folder (i.e., their Mindfulness Portfolio) and submitted them for a grade. Grading was based on the care and detail with which the assignments were completed, while leaving plenty of latitude for the specific content and observations made by individual students.

Overall Discussion after the Last Assignment

On the date Mindfulness Portfolios were submitted, there was class discussion of the assignment as a whole, focusing on the final assignment in which students identified the outcomes of their efforts, using the following categories: small successes, significant successes, areas still needing improvement, and goals for improvement. Each student was asked to select one outcome and share it with the class.