Teaching Conference for
Management Educators

OBTC 2017 at Providence College
June 14th – 17th, 2017

Submission Template

SUBMISSION GUIDANCE

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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.

Title: When Students Have Skin in the Game: Two Classroom Activities to Teach Persuasion and Negotiation with Real Outcomes.

Abstract: Often, when teaching management, students may understand the ideas behind concepts taught in the classroom, but they may not always be able to apply them. This is problematic because usually these skills and tools are the learning outcomes that would be most useful.

This interactive session will teach students about persuasion and negotiation through use of pragmatism and experiential learning. It will incorporate a persuasion exercise that highlights the application of eight influence tactics identified by Yukl and Falbe (1990) as well as the four best practices of negotiation as described by Thompson (2015) and emphasize their application of these skills in two simulated scenarios.

This session's active learning strategies are applicable in many situations outside the classroom and would be particularly useful in various real-world and industry negotiations. Presenters will also discuss their experience using these activities, including both successes and potential challenges.

Keywords: persuasion, negotiation, experiential learning, influence tactics

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 purpose of this session is to demonstrate activities that we've used in the classroom to teach students about persuasion and negotiation by using the teaching philosophies of pragmatism and experiential learning. We believe that the best learning occurs when students can see how the skills being taught are practical (i.e., that there is value in learning them), and when they have a personal stake in the outcome. For this reason, we have devised two related activities in which students actively attempt to persuade (activity 1) and negotiate with (activity 2) the professors to get something that they want (i.e. they have ‘skin in the game’).

Often, when teaching management, students may understand the ideas behind concepts but not fully grasp how to apply the skills we are teaching and how they will be useful to them in future situations, including their future work in organizations. Simulations can be a wonderful tool (in fact, we often use them in our classes!) but they usually do not involve real outcomes or consequences that matter for students. In this case, however, we encourage educators to be creative and come up with outcomes that students actually care about. Specifically, the activities used here will involve *persuading* the professor to do something that students actually want and later *negotiating* with the professor to come to an agreement about something that matters to them. When conducting these activities in our classes, we found that students seemed more engaged and motivated than when we had used fictional scenarios in the past.

The persuasion activity consists of teaching the eight influence tactics identified by Yukl and Falbe (1990) as common tactics that are used in organizations. These tactics include: (1) pressure, (2) upward appeals, (3) exchange, (4) coalition formation, (5) ingratiation, (6) rational persuasion, (7) inspirational appeals, and (8) consultation. We engaged in this activity during the second half of a 1 hour 50-minute class. Prior to introducing these tactics, we lectured about the definition of social influence (producing a change in another person), the outcomes of social influence (Falbe & Yukl, 1992), and the six principles of social influence (Cialdini, 1983). We then gave brief definitions of each of the eight influence tactics and informed students that they now get to try it for themselves. We split the class into eight groups of three to four students (our classes are capped at 35) and assigned each of the groups one of the influence tactics. We then informed them that they will have 5-10 minutes to come up with a plan as a team to use the tactic to which they are assigned to persuade the professor to do something. If they improperly used the influence tactic, we automatically said no, and told them why/how the influence tactic was used incorrectly. Students asked for a variety of things such as extra credit opportunities, a “cheat sheet” to use on the next exam, to get out early next class, and for the professor to bring in food. Because students had the opportunity to get something that was meaningful to them, they were especially motivated to use the tactics correctly.

In the negotiation activity, the students first were taught the 4 best practices for negotiating proposed by Thompson (2014), including: (1) strive to ‘create value,’ (2) identify interests on both sides, (3) know your BATNA, (3) determine the strengths and weaknesses of your position, and (4) build the relationship. The presenter then offered the following explanation:

The professor feels that there a problem has arisen with how much students are on their computers and devices in class. To alleviate the problem, she has purchased a new Wi-Fi Jammer, which will be used to block students from being able to use the internet in the classroom. Students will be given the opportunity to negotiate the terms and conditions of its use. The outcome of the negotiation will become the real policy for internet and device use in the classroom for the rest of the semester.

Students had the opportunity to negotiate for internet use (which they will all want!), using the best practices proposed by Thompson (2015) as a guide. After explaining the scenario, the professor broke students into groups of 4 and gave them 5 minutes to brainstorm questions to ask the professor. The aim of this first phase is to adequately *identify interests on both sides,* which is one of the best practices of negotiating. The class (as a whole) then had about 5 minutes to actually ask their questions to the professor to try to understand what the professor is trying to accomplish by bringing in the WiFi Jammer and what types of concessions and compromises regarding internet use in the classroom they think she is willing to make. Then, groups came together again for phase two. Phase two involved giving the groups another 5 minutes to brainstorm possible solutions/concessions/arrangements for internet use in the classroom (this is negotiation preparation). Finally, the students engaged in a negotiating simulation where students actually have 'skin in the game.'

Both activities were also effective for reminding students about power dynamics (a concept covered the week prior) in these situations. For example, the professors have more power in both the persuasion and negotiation activities, so students have to work harder to achieve favorable outcomes. This can be turned into a discussion about what kinds of things you can do when you are in a lower power position, as well as how to effectively leverage a situation when you are in a higher power position. Although this was not the primary aim of these activities, it ties in nicely with other OB topics such as power.

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.

We intend for this to be a 60-minute session. Please see Table 1 for a breakdown of how we will use the time in this session.

Table 1.

General Introduction	5 mins
Intro to Persuasion Activity	5 mins
Time for groups to discuss strategies	5 mins
Persuasion activity	15 minutes
Intro to negotiation	5 mins
Group brainstorming for discovering parties' interests	5 mins
Q & A for discovering parties' interests	5 mins
Brainstorm for negotiation	5 mins
Negotiation	5 mins
General debrief & discussion	5 mins

For the first five minutes, we will give a broad introduction to both of the activities, summarizing some of the goals and implications of the activities. We will then start on the persuasion activity, which we plan will take a total of 25 minutes. This portion will begin by giving a brief description of the 8 persuasion tactics, then breaking the participants into groups (or partners). We feel that this activity is most effective when participants actually care about the outcome. While we had our students attempt to persuade us for outcomes they cared about, we hardly think that participants (likely other professors) will care about trying to persuade us for extra credit in a scenario in which it doesn't personally affect them. Therefore, we will bring three different types of chocolate that vary in amount and quality (there will be less of the highest quality and most of the lowest quality). Assuming that most people like chocolate and would want the high-quality products, we feel that this will be a good simulation of the activity. For the next 15 minutes, we will engage in the persuasion activity, assigning a different persuasion tactic to different groups/partners. In the classroom, we were able to have 8 groups, each with a different tactic. However, in our OBTC session, we plan to only assign 4 tactics, as this will shorten the time needed to engage in the activity and still give participants a good feel for the activity.

We will then switch to the negotiation activity, beginning with a brief five-minute introduction to the activity. We'll then give groups about 5 minutes to brainstorm for the portion of the activity where they will try to discover the interests of the other party in the negotiation (the presenters), which will be followed by another 5 minutes of the question and answer in which both sides try to discover each other's interests. We will then give the groups another five minutes to brainstorm for the actual negotiation, followed by 5 minutes for the negotiation itself.

The remaining portion of the session will be spent discussing the applications of these activities by the presenters, including their challenges and potential limitations. The aim of the final question and answer portion is to encourage the audience to ask clarifying questions and have an open conversation about how these 'skin in the game' activities can be used in their own classrooms. In our classrooms, we recognize the need for adaptability, which is not necessarily reflected in this timetable. However, these are only approximations for how long each part will take. While we will keep a close watch on the time, we do believe we'll be able to adapt to the situation in the session that may be affected by the number of participants that show up for the session, needing less time for discussion in small groups, needing more or less time for the actual persuasion and negotiation, and any other factors that may arise.

4) Application to Conference theme:

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

We believe our session, *'When Students Have Skin in the Game: Two Classroom Activities to Teach Persuasion and Negotiation with Real Outcomes,'* contributes to the OBTC theme, *Navigating the Changing Currents*, by addressing at least two important issues. First, as educators, it is clear that striving for a more successful classroom experience means going beyond students' ability to remember information for exams, and instead, insisting on integrating experiential learning activities which encourage them to apply the skills and tools they were taught. By developing effective and interactive classroom experiences, such as the ones put forth in this proposed session, the hope is to provide ideas about what has worked well for us to be used by other educators.

Second, by demonstrating and candidly discussing our successes and challenges using the activities that we propose, we aim to encourage an open dialogue for sharing the experiences and trails and tribulations of others. The hope is to foster an environment where feedback is welcome and ideas can be shared constructively for the betterment of effective student learning. By addressing both of these objectives, we believe our proposed session fits well with the overall OBTC conference theme.

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 is unique work that has not been presented at any other conference or forum. These are activities that we devised ourselves and have used successfully in the classroom.

Sources

Cialdini, R. (1983). Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion. New York: HarperCollins.

Falbe, C.M., & Yukl, G. (1992). Consequences for managers using single influence tactics and combinations of tactics. *Academy of Management Journal*, *35*, 638-652.

Thompson, Leigh L. (2015). The bargaining zone. The mind and heart of the negotiator (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Yukl, G. & Falbe, C.M. (1990). Influence tactics and objectives in upward, downward, and lateral influence attempts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *75*(2), 132-140.