

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Title: Virtual Teams in International Business

Abstract: (100 words)

I used VIBu (a virtual, global, business simulation) last year with my students, found it very successful, and would love to share it / discuss it at the OBTS Conference. Learners from all over the world work together in teams of 8-12 to operate their own simulation companies in real-time with the help of synchronous communication tools. Students in my class found the collaboration, the virtual environment, and the international context stimulating, and it is the perfect tool to introduce to more colleges and universities.

Keywords: Virtual, Teams, International, Collaboration

2) Teaching Implications:

VIBu emphasizes learning as a willful, intentional, active, conscious, constructive practice that includes intention-action-reflection activities. During VIBu, the learners discuss the nature of the environment, negotiate together, change knowledge, learn from each other, and make decisions. Thus, they develop an identity as virtual managers of the company they are running.¹

The possible learning outcomes relate to:

- Virtual work and management
- Operations management
- Supply chain management

¹ Turko School of Economics at the University of Turko, "Virtual Teams in International Business," *Studio Sangria*, January 11, 2017, <http://www.vibu.fi/index.htm>.

- Multicultural communication
- International business logistics
- Leadership and team development
- International business management
- Managing across cultures
- International manufacturing
- Management of people over time zones

There are no theoretical or disciplinary foundations needed to help reviewers understand VIBu but further information about the platform is at the end of this document.

3) Session Description and Plan:

Session Timing: 30 Minutes

0:00 – 5:00: Discussion

- Discussion of challenges in management education in terms of virtual teams, multicultural communication, globalization. How are we effectively teaching this in our classrooms?

5:00 – 10:00: Introduction to VIBu

- Introduce VIBu
- Show video <https://vimeo.com/109125815>

10:00 – 20:00: Mock Simulation of VIBu

20:00 – 30:00: Sample Essays and Discussion

4) Application to Conference theme:

This session applies to conference themes by:

- Teaching skills to students interested in working in the global context, where the ability to communicate and collaborate internationally is a pre-requisite.
- Using technology to demonstrate that trust can develop within the virtual environment.
- Using technology (i.e. computer simulation) to replicate tough problem solving situations for our students in the changing academic environment.
- Creating a forum for demonstrating effective tools to be utilized in navigating diverse team dynamics—especially when such teams are solving challenging problems.

5) *Unique Contribution to OBTC:*

This proposal has not been submitted anywhere else and is not under review in any other conference. However, it should be noted that VIBu is NOT my platform—it is a platform / technology that I have used in my classroom successfully developed by colleagues at the University of Turku.

6) *Supplemental Information (from the VIBu website):*

VIBu aims at increasing awareness of the challenges of virtuality and globalization in a modern business decision-making environment. The main goal is to offer the learners better abilities and knowledge on the challenges of virtual work and global business.

We offer VIBu for international educators as an effective learning tool which they can easily integrate into their teaching. Educators can easily link the learning experience to their own course topics and contents. VIBu offers different intended learning outcomes depending on the needs of the educators. On top of that, using VIBu as a part of a course requires very little organizing from participating universities and other organizations.²

More information can be found at <http://www.vibu.fi/why.htm>

² Turko School of Economics at the University of Turko, "Virtual Teams in International Business," *Studio Sangria*, January 11, 2017, <http://www.vibu.fi/why.htm>.