**Session Title: What Students and Educators Can Learn from Negotiation Competitions**

**Abstract:** While negotiation competitions for law students have existed for some time, such competitions for business students have emerged more recently. Drawing on their recent experiences as a coach for a domestic competition and a judge for an international competition, the presenters will lead an interactive session exploring the benefits of negotiation competitions for both students and educators. Participants will reflect on the relevant criteria for judging negotiation “success”; assess the design of several business negotiation competitions; discuss the potential benefits for competition participants; and brainstorm ideas for incorporating elements of negotiation competitions into existing skills-based courses.

**Keywords:** negotiation, competitions, assessment

**Introduction**. *Provide a brief introduction that establishes a need for this type of exercise and identifies the target usage. Include potential course applications and explain for whom the exercise is designed: early undergraduate, late undergraduate, graduate, etc.; traditional, non-traditional, cross-cultural, etc.)*

Negotiation competitions offer potential pedagogical and practical benefits for both undergraduate and MBA students, as well as for management educators acting as competition advisors, coaches, judges, or organizers. The session will be relevant for anyone teaching negotiation or conflict management as a standalone course or as a unit in a broader course, whether or not they have competition experience. Participants will learn about several existing business negotiation competitions (e.g. the Baylor Business Negotiation Competition, the Negotiation Challenge, and the Warsaw Negotiation Round) and explore ways in which they might incorporate elements of such competitions into existing coursework on negotiation or conflict.

**Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications**. *Briefly specify the relevant background literature that the exercise is based upon and how your session contributes to effective teaching and learning in the field of management.*

Performance-based assessment is a cornerstone of teaching for understanding (Wiske 1997) and is particularly relevant when teaching behavioral skills such as negotiation. Negotiation competitions place assessment front and center, explicitly judging which negotiators have been most “successful” and why (Smolinski and Kesting 2013, Delicado et al. 2012). Yet these competitions vary in *how* they define and evaluate success. How should one judge the “best” negotiator or negotiation team? Are quantifiable outcomes the fairest measure? What about the intangible elements of an outcome, such as relationship and reputation? Should the process be judged along with the outcome? Should we judge factors such as creativity and ethics – and if so, how? And are there certain negotiation skills that cannot or should not be competitively judged? (See Falcão 2012).

In this session, participants will reflect on which criteria they would find most relevant in judging a negotiation competition, and compare their own ideas with the actual criteria used in several existing competitions. In addition to increasing awareness of formal negotiation competitions, this exercise encourages re-examination of the assessment methods in participants’ existing courses. Participants will also discuss the educational and practical benefits of competitions for both students and educators, with the goal of developing concrete ideas for incorporating elements of such competitions into their own teaching.

**Learning Objectives**. *Specify the learning objectives for the exercise by articulating the expected changes in knowledge, attitude, or skill that are associated with participation in the activity. What teaching topics are relevant to your session?*

1. Participants will increase their awareness of business negotiation competitions. Many business educators may be unaware of the various negotiation competitions currently open to business students. The Baylor Business Negotiation Competition for instance, is being run for the first time in April 2018. Participants will learn about (and if applicable, share their own insights about) several domestic and international negotiation competitions open to undergraduate and graduate business students, and about their potential pedagogical and practical benefits.
2. Participants will deepen their understanding of negotiation assessment. Different negotiation competitions use different criteria to judge “success.” Participants will discuss what criteria they would find most appropriate for assessing performance in a negotiation competition (and in negotiation more generally). They will also learn about and critique the different criteria used in judging negotiation competitions.
3. Participants will deepen their understanding of negotiation competition benefits. Participants will discuss the potential benefits of negotiation competitions (based on their own experiences, if applicable). In addition, participants will learn from the presenters’ firsthand experiences as a coach in a domestic negotiation competition and a judge in an international competition, as well as from interview data collected from students and organizers, about the surprising range of benefits.
4. Participants will identify opportunities for participating in negotiation competitions and/or incorporating aspects of competitions into their teaching. Educators may incorporate negotiation competitions into their teaching in a variety of ways. They may choose to play a formal role in an existing competition, such as an organizer, judge, or coach. They might also choose to hold an internal competition among their own students (as the presenters have done), whether or not for purposes of sending a team to an external competition. Participants will brainstorm ideas for participating in existing competitions or incorporating elements of competition into their own teaching.

**Exercise Overview**. *Provide an overview of the activity/exercise, including the logistics of running the exercise (e.g. timing, materials, class size), the flow of the exercise, variations or alternate applications, debriefing guidelines (e.g. questions to ask, how students generally respond). The goal is to give the reviewer enough information so that they understand what the activity is that you plan to present in your session.*

Participants will engage in a brief small-group exercise in which they identify criteria for assessing negotiation success. They will then compare their own criteria with the criteria used in various business negotiation competitions, reflecting on the impact and relevance of these different assessment methods. The remainder of the session will be primarily discussion-based (see details below).

**Session Description.** *Provide an overview of what you will actually do in the MOBTS conference session. Include a timeline for the session and how participants will be involved. Remember, reviewers are looking for participant engagement in these sessions.*

Our proposed agenda for a 60-minute session is as follows:

0:00 – 0:05: Welcome, overview of session goals, introductions.

0:05 – 0:15: Small group exercise: assessing negotiation success. In groups of 3 – 4, ideally with at least one negotiation / conflict instructor in each group, participants brainstorm criteria for assessing success in a negotiation competition. Small groups share out their primary criteria.

0:15 – 0:35 Discussion: existing negotiation competitions / criteria. Presenters provide an overview of several business negotiation competitions and summarize the criteria used to judge the winners. Participants compare and contrast the different competition criteria and their own criteria.

0:35 – 0:45 Discussion: negotiation competition benefits. Participants discuss potential benefits of negotiation competitions for both students and educators. Presenters share insights from their own recent experiences as a coach and a judge, and from interviews of student participants and organizers.

0:45 – 0:55 Small group exercise: practical applications. In groups of 3 – 4, participants discuss ways in which they might participate in a negotiation competition or incorporate aspects of such competitions into their own teaching. Small groups share out their ideas for discussion and feedback.

0:55 – 1:00 Q&A, wrapup. Participants will leave with a handout describing existing negotiation competitions for undergraduate and graduate business students.

**Bibliography**

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