**Beyond Role Plays: New Strategies for Teaching Negotiation and Conflict Resolution**

**Abstract**

The most common method for teaching negotiation and conflict resolution is to use a series of role plays, cases, and simulations. Come and discuss new strategies, methods, and tools to teach negotiations conflict management to undergraduates and MBA audiences. An informal information period will be followed by round table discussions about how to incorporate these ideas into their own classrooms. Participants will leave the session with a toolkit of practical insights on how to prepare and deliver lessons using these alternative strategies.

**Keywords:** Negotiation, conflict, role plays, curriculum, roundtable discussion

**Introduction**.

We are proposing a 60-minute round-table discussion session. We will begin with a brief and informal introduction to the topic describing some of our own ideas and soliciting the idea from others. The majority of the session will be discussion-based. We will present a number of questions to the audience to initiate dialogue. We will conclude with a five-minute overview of the main points and potential next steps for management educators and researchers in the field. This proposal relates to the conference goal of Reflection Reinvention as we “generate dialogue around what [negotiation] learning is and how [negotiation] learning has changed over time” as well as discuss “tools that help educators navigate future [negotiation] classroom challenges.”

**Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications**.

Courses in negotiation and conflict resolution have been around for many decades and are a popular staple of business school curriculums. The primary way to teach these courses is to use case studies and simulations to give students the opportunity to practice and analyze negotiations in multiple contexts and with multiple counterparts (Lewicki, 1986). Although case studies and simulations are an effective method of delivering the course and they are becoming increasingly complex and nuanced (Greenhalgh & Lewicki, 2015; Susskind, 2015), we would like to explore alternative methods of meeting the course objectives. For example, “real world” experiences may be an antidote to the rigidity and artificiality of role plays (Bordone & Viscomi, 2015). Many role plays have scoring rubrics, which enable calculations of points won or integrative opportunities found. However, these measures do not necessarily relate to the effectiveness of students’ strategies and behaviors. Our objective is to help participants (and the presenters) think through options beyond these role plays to allow students to meet course objectives in a varied, interesting, and thought-provoking way.

While we have conducted a preliminary literature review on the topic and have experience with several alternative methods, we have not completed a comprehensive study or written a formal paper at this time. We plan to provide an overview of some of our own ideas, including negotiation competitions; mini cases; peer feedback, observations, and indices; personality and style assessment; and individual and group negotiation “real world” projects.

We see OBTC as a wonderful opportunity to delve into this topic and hear from our peers in order to share ideas and keep our course content fresh and exciting.

**Session Description.**

**\*\*NOTE: One organizer is teaching at her home university on Saturday and requests that the session take place no later than Friday morning. Thanks!\*\***

Given that we’re doing a roundtable, our session will be 60 minutes in length. We will convene a dialogue and brainstorming session to explore methods and strategies for teaching negotiation and conflict resolution that do not require role plays. We will begin with a five minute overview of some of the alternative methods and strategies that we have used in teaching negotiation and conflict and explain the learning or assessment objectives of these methods.

As the interactive component, the majority of the session will be discussion based. We will present a number of questions to the audience to initiate dialog. For example:

1. What teaching strategies or methods have you used beyond traditional role plays, simulations, or case studies?
2. What learning objectives can be met with these methods?
3. What were the benefits or challenges of using these methods?
4. What are your specific questions or suggestions for using these methods in your classroom?

Afterwards, we will debrief the participants and have a question and answer session. During this portion we will develop a list of resources for using these alternative methods to teach negotiations and conflict resolution in the classroom that can be shared with all participants.

**Brief Bibliography**

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