

Experiential Fire: Reigniting the Flames!

Abstract

Come join us as we rekindle and “reignite the flames” of our experiential fire. A perennial favorite, come experience and learn by doing with this curated collection of engaging experiential exercises. Our eight presenters will introduce you to their innovative exercises in a “speed networking” format. This year’s session includes social categorization, the DISC model of communication, cultivating thought leaders, fostering cohesive classrooms, negotiation, currency exchange, organizational culture, and the UN sustainable development goals. You will see how to creatively use oranges, arm-wrestle, deal cards, and more! Full details of the exercises will be available in the Conference Proceedings.

Three Keywords: experiential exercises, active learning, innovation

Session format: Symposium

Time requested: 90 minutes.

Resource needs: Larger room that can fit 50 people with the typically available classroom resources (PC computer/projector, whiteboard/markers).

Conference Track. General, however, if possible it would be helpful to place this session immediately before the Management Teaching Review session.

Unique Contribution. This is a unique symposium that has not been presented before and is not under review. The Experiential Fire format has been a presence at MOBTC for over a decade.

Introduction.

This dynamic and experientially focused session is designed to engage the audience as active participants in short exercises run by each of the presenters. These exercises explore the ways in which a broad range of management concepts and topics can be taught and experienced in a variety of innovative ways at both undergraduate and graduate level. Audience members have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and to connect after the session concludes to discuss the details, logistics and purpose of the exercises at length. This session is of value to educators of all disciplines and levels and should be equally attractive to those who are looking to adapt and add new tools to their kit or who simply wish to explore and be exposed to new approaches and ideas.

Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications.

This session is heavily grounded in experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). In the last decade a variety of opportunities for experiential exercises in traditional and

non-traditional teaching environments have been proposed (Batchelor & Burch, 2016; Boggs, Mickel & Holtom, 2007; Crowne, 2017; Gibson, Ward, Comer & Rossi, 2017) along with broader calls for an experiential approach to classroom activity (Kalliath & Laiken, 2006; Kenworthy & DiPadova-Stocks, 2010; Whetten, 2007). In addition, the ethical aspects of using experience as an approach to teaching learning have also been discussed (Dean & Forray, 2016). The intention of this session is not to debate the rights or wrongs of the experiential approach (though of course those ideas may well be raised during the session) but to bring to the audience a variety of possibilities which could be adopted or adapted for further use, experimentation and development. The remainder of this submission presents an overview of the actual session and each of the experiential exercises that we would like to present. Additionally, any related theoretical foundations for each of the exercises presented during this session will be described in the conference proceedings.

Symposium Overview.

This symposium will follow the historic Experiential Fire format. In this structure, we will begin with a very brief history of the session, a description of the session, and then a short welcome from a representative from the Management Teaching Review. Swiftly, we will begin the panel of short 5 minute presentations (think power networking or speed dating) where the facilitators demonstrate and describe key dimensions of their experiential exercises to and with willing audience members. Detailed instructions will be provided in the proceedings which include, but are not limited to instructions, role descriptions, and relevant digital resources (video clips, images, PPTs, hyperlinks). After the presentations the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions and network with presenters and other members.

An abbreviated summary of the eight experiential exercises follows:

Exercise #1: What are oranges?**Facilitator: A**

The point of this exercise is to clarify the distinction between how we experience a category of people versus how we experience specific members of a category. The overall purpose of the exercise is to generate a conversation about the difference between our experience of *categories* of people versus *specific individuals* within a category. The exercise begins with giving all participants an orange, then continues with holding up an orange and asking people to describe the characteristics of oranges. The exercise continues in a facilitated manner which includes a description of the orange, mixing oranges, and a structured debrief which links the activity to social categories (Evangelicals, Liberals, Republicans, Jews, Trans, Blacks, Immigrants, and so forth).

Exercise #2: Thought Leaders: Leading the class by taking a step back**Facilitator: B**

This goal of this exercise is to teach leadership, motivation and innovation and can be administered as either an exercise or hands-on experience. It can be used in Leadership, OB, and HR classes – and can be used in both graduate and undergraduate classes. This presentation will demonstrate the activity of how to organize a course so that students take ownership for course material by leading class conversations and content as “Thought Leaders.” This exercise seeks to create a long-term experiential learning based on the research that individuals that teach the

material will retain the highest level of information, and the thought leaders are able to use the material they have learned in real time.

Exercise #3: Triangulating three ways to create the most cohesive class you've ever had!

Facilitator: C

The aim of this session is to describe a trifecta of 3 ways to create cohesiveness in your classroom by learning: 1) ways to share personal information, 2) ways to encourage sharing in groups, and finally, 3) ways to encourage and reward sharing within the class. Guidelines of effective means to share “vulnerable” information will be discussed and strategies for how to best implement the techniques will be outlined.

Exercise #4: Assume the Position! ¹

Facilitator: D

In this quick and easy exercise, pairs are set up in what looks like an arm wrestle challenge. The aim is to quickly uncover participants' assumptions about competition; conflict; collaboration; communication; trust; power; and creative problem solving. However, the facilitator must never say the words “arm wrestle”! The debrief process uncovers our tendency to make assumptions and approach negotiations as a win-lose game. The exercise establishes the need for training, showing our tendency to: assume a zero-sum world, approach negotiations as being adversarial in nature, restrict communication, limit the negotiator's ability to find an optimal solution. Learning objectives, targeted debrief questions, facilitation notes, and follow-up readings will be discussed.

¹ From trainerswarehouse.com (blog) Arm “Wrestle” Exercise. No author attribution provided

Exercise #5: Teaching the DISC Model of Communication: A Quick-and-Dirty**Experiential Activity****Facilitator: E**

This quick in-class activity involves teaching students about the DISC Model of Communication as well as having students identify their own position within the model. The aim of the exercise is two-fold: 1) students learn about the DISC Model of Communication, which describes four different communication styles based on personality and preference and 2) students self-identify as one of the communication styles so that they know their preferred style and learn how they may need to adjust their style of communicating with others. This is accomplished through a facilitated process using a slide of the DISC model, specific commands related to the model, and student moving within the classroom. The purpose of this exercise is to show students that there are individual differences in communication styles and it is important to be aware of individuals' styles. Moreover, the instructor may highlight that misunderstandings and conflict may arise due to these differences in communication styles. The facilitation steps and the debrief questions will be covered in the presentation.

Exercise #6: The Canadian Money Exchange: A role play to demonstrate the effects of changing currency exchange rates**Facilitator: F**

The exercise is a role play featuring an exchange between a simulated American tourist visiting a Canadian city who is exchanging US dollars for Canadian ones, and a simulated agent at a money-changing business. The aim of the exercise is to provide an interesting and dramatic illustration of exchange rates as an introduction to a more detailed and involved classroom

segment on the topic. It is useful for international business and international management courses, as well as chapters or sections of courses such as principles of management and introduction to business that also cover this topic.

Exercise #7: “Say What You See”: Examining Artifacts of Organizational Culture

Facilitator: G

This exercise introduces students to the concept of visible artifacts as defined within Schein’s model of culture (1984)² frequently and popularly represented in the form an iceberg. By using ‘clean’ images (i.e. with no identifying markers or descriptors) of exteriors and interiors of buildings housing fairly well-known organizations, the exercise is designed to facilitate classroom discussion about how physical aspects of an organization (especially those which are consciously intended) can influence our perceptions of how the organization works in terms of its values, patterns, behaviors and underlying assumptions. The examples used during the session are intended to open up a dialogue in the classroom about how we interpret what we see and how that might enhance our understanding of an organization’s culture.

Exercise #8: 17+ Me: Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) Card Exercise

Facilitator: H

This in-class activity involves using a stack of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cards (see image below). The aim of the exercise is two-fold: 1) students learn about the 17 SDGs and 2) students link this global initiative to their course content and

² Schein, E. H. (1984). Coming to a New Awareness of Organizational Culture. *Sloan Management Review*, 25(2): 3-16.

assignments. This is accomplished through a lightly facilitated process using a stack of the SDGs goals (template provided by the UN) and limited instructions allowing for self-organization, and student movement within the classroom. The purpose of this exercise is to reveal to the students links between their individual values and passions and this global initiative. The facilitation steps, use in various courses, and the debrief questions will be covered in the presentation.



Session Description

As discussed above, we will follow a streamlined and highly structured format of an introduction, mini-presentations, to leave time for a question and answer session. This is a highly engaging session where the audience is asked to participate in the various experiential exercises which allows for active learning of our members and a “try it before you buy it” opportunity. If possible, we would like the session to precede the Management Teaching Review “Meet the Editors Session” to provide further synergy between our conference presentations and scholarship opportunities. See the timeline below for specifics.

| Topic | Presenter/s | Time (Elapsed Time) |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Crowd Management-Settling in | Co-organizers | 5 (5) |
| 2. Introduction | Co-organizers & Management Teaching Review Representative | 10 (15) |
| 3. Mini-presentations | Presenters (8 @ 5 min. each) | 40 (55) |
| 4. Question & Answer | Everyone | 35 (90) |

References

Batchelor, J.H. & Burch, G.F. (2016). Transforming a Trip Abroad Into an Experiential Exercise in Entrepreneurship. *Management Teaching Review*, 1(2): 128-134.

Boggs, J.G., Mickel, A.E. & Holtom, B.C. (2007.) Experiential Learning Through Interactive Drama: An Alternative To Student Role Plays. *Journal of Management Education*, 31(6): 832-858.

Crowne, K.A. (2017). It's Salsa Time! A Team Activity. *Management Teaching Review*, 2(4): 289-298.

Dean, K.L. & Forray, J.M. (2016). "Malevolent, Callous, or Selfish"? Experiential Teaching and the Ethics of Student Deception [Editorial]. *Journal of Management Education*, 40(2): 115-120.

Gibson, L.A., Ward, D., Comer, D.R. & Rossi, K. (2017). When Harry Resigns Unexpectedly: An Asynchronous Discussion Role-Play for the Online Management Classroom. *Management Teaching Review*, 1-7.

Kalliath, T. and Laiken, M. (2006). Use of teams in management education. *Journal of Management Education*, 30(6): 747-750.

Kenworthy, A. & DiPadova-Stocks, L. (2010). Scripting the next wave of exigent issues for service-learning in our unscripted future: When technology, globalism, and community engagement collide. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 18(2): 173-180.

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Kolb, A. Y. & Kolb, D. A. (2005) Learning Styles and Learning Spaces: Enhancing Experiential Learning in Higher Education. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(2): 193–212.

Whetten, D.A. (2007). Principles of effective course design: What I wish I had known about learner-centered teaching 30 years ago. *Journal of Management Education*, 31(3): 339-357.