INTRODUCTION:

Movies and movie clips have been a staple in Organizational Behavior classrooms for more than two decades. In 2002, Joseph Champoux published At the Movies: Organizational Behavior, a book that became a staple resource for many teachers of Organizational Behavior. Many of the textbook publishers include movie or video clips with instructions on how to use them to supplement the materials in the books. In my own classes, students have used movies as the basis for a culminating analysis and application of theories for more than two decades. Typical assignments require students to watch clips of video and then to discuss how a particular construct or set of constructs are demonstrated in clip presented.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION/TEACHING IMPLICATIONS

Piaget’s constructivist learning theory suggests that there are two key elements required for an individual to construct new knowledge: accommodation and assimilation (Piaget, ). Learning, in this theory, is something that is done individually, by connecting prior experiences, beliefs and opinions to additional situations (Sigel, 1984). Sigel argues that, under the constructivist perspective, individuals develop their own reality through resolving perceived discrepancies between the known and unknown. In other words, given one experience, individuals resolve the discrepancies between that experience and another situation by identifying what’s different and resolving those differences (Sigel, 1984).

Combining the constructivist view of knowledge acquisition with the idea that students learn better when they are actively engaged in the process (Prince, 2004). Student involvement in their learning is a key predictor of student success in college (Astin, 1993).This activity gives students the ability to begin with the known and, in a hands-on fashion, identify the discrepancies between the known state of each of the constructs and the unknown state given the required constructs and to use the knowledge of the constructs to build a revised example of behaviors. By incorporating the use of video clips taken on cell phones, the projected new set of behaviors can be seen and evaluated for similarity or discrepancy to the state of each of the constructs identified in the assignment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this assignment, students will be able to demonstrate what behaviors might be associated with a specific level of a specific construct.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Students are given a video scenario to watch. They then are assigned to make a specified number of changes to the constructs displayed in the scenario. For example, if the Big Five were the construct in question, the students might be challenged to create changes based on a main character who was low rather than high in extroversion, or high rather than low in openness to experience. The exercise can be tailored to any set of constructs providing a good sample clip is available. A more advanced version would be to challenge the students to create a “real life scenario” that includes characters that display specified levels of various constructs (e.g., someone who is highly Machiavellian, low in self-monitoring and displays high self-esteem), and how that character would respond in a given situation. The expanded version takes suggestions from Problem Based Learning, and has students give feedback on the initial submissions, asking questions, clarifying reactions and making suggestions for how to further demonstrate the constructs identified.

SESSION DESCRIPTION

This session will be run as a first pass at editing. A brief movie clip will be shown. The attendees will break in to groups and have 12-15 minutes to create a reshoot of the scene as it might have taken place if a different level of a specific construct were present. For example, if the sample scene featured a character who had a high need for power and who seized control of the situation causing issues to arise, how would that have played out if the character instead had a high need for achievement or a high need for affiliation? The groups will then film short clips to be shared with the rest of the group based on that new level and/or new construct.

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