

**Session Title**

Reinventing Classroom Learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: An Exercise Toolkit for Management Courses

**Abstract**

This session introduces four practical application exercises that can be used in undergraduate courses. These exercises can be used both online and in a traditional classroom. We selected topics that have great relevance to students, especially in early stages of their careers. We seek to demonstrate that active learning can be an engaging part of a course that may have from 35-75 students enrolled in a section. In our session we will engage our audience in the exercises with short segments of practice and debrief intended to simulate how we would use in the classroom.

**Three Keywords:**

- Exercises
- Active
- Online

## **Introduction**

The purpose of this session is to present various learning activities. These activities are used in an undergraduate core course – Management Principles and Concepts – and can be used in delivery format, i.e. face-to-face and/or online. Our primary purpose is to bring about student learning and success through effective instruction, student engagement, and active research including scholarship of discovery (discipline based), scholarship of teaching and learning (pedagogical) and scholarship of application (practice). The way in which we feel that the education process can be reshaped to harness our heritage is to make the classroom experience more flexible, more experiential and adaptable to different delivery methods and class sizes.

## **Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications:**

We believe that activities must be designed to help students visualize meaning of content by reflecting on and connecting to past experiences. Additionally, these exercises help students to reflect on future practical application answering the question: *“how can I use this content in future to help me?”* These simple, practical class exercises help us address at least two of the assumptions in Malcolm Knowles’ theory of adult learning (andragogy) that says: (1) *Adults have the need to know why they are learning something.* (2) *Adults bring more work-related experiences into the learning situation.* (Noe, 2017, p. 168).

While adult learning theory seems to get more attention in the corporate training setting, we believe it applies to our adult students as well. Other adult learning theory assumptions include:

- (3) Adults have a need to be self-directed.
- (4) Adults enter the learning experience with a problem-centered approach to learning.
- (5) Adults are motivated to learn by both extrinsic and intrinsic behaviors.

We also believe, to the extent possible, that the classroom should have an “active learning” focus as opposed to a “passive learning” focus. We seek to generate teaching and learning activities for a given subject that are consistent with the principles of active learning (Fink, 2003, p 103-4). Passive Learning includes receiving information and ideas. Active Learning encompasses experiences (doing and observing) and reflection (on what one is learning and how one is learning...can be individual activity or with others.). We make meaning based on information and ideas we encounter (Fink, 2003, p. 104). Our goal is to help students make meaning of our course material. By providing exercises that require original thought and practical skill development the students become more engaged in the coursework.

Also, we find that students will do the necessary work before class if the right kind of activities are presented for a grade. Research shows that students must know doing the reading in advance is necessary to excel on the in-class assignments AND that the in-class assignments are important and valuable work (Fink, 2003, p.167). Providing a clear link to the results from exercises and discussion around learning objectives help students see the value in their work efforts.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. Present simple, adaptable templates for exercises that relate to core course content.
2. Demonstrate four fully developed in class exercises that can be used in the traditional classroom and online.
3. Discuss ways to adapt the templates to participant courses and topics.
4. Develop online discussion forums that are meaningful and easily graded.

## **Exercise Overview**

In our session, we plan to provide a handout of all four exercises (contained in appendices A-D) and execute as we would in a classroom with a debrief. Time will not permit completion of all sections of the four exercises. Instead, we will select key questions, allow audience to reflect and then conduct a debrief that simulates the classroom.

### *Example Exercise #1: Leadership & Emotional Intelligence Exercise*

We will ask our audience to response to a subset of the questions in the exercise. The first one asks them to identify their “groups” as follows:

- My group
- My role in the group
- Description of my role
- Person(s) who turn to me for help, guidance, direction
- What those people look for from me.

During the debrief, we can talk about the importance of various emotional intelligence competencies and help students see that have windows of opportunity to practice leadership and influence skills. Appendix A includes a copy of this exercise.

### *Example Exercise#2: Types of Power Exercise*

In this practice we will ask the audience to list “guidelines for using” the five types of power (French and Raven, 1959). We will conduct a debrief and then provide a handout with a robust list of examples. Appendix B includes a copy of this exercise.

### *Example Exercise #3: Discussion Forums for Ethics and Diversity*

Another way to reinvent classroom learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to engage students in a class discussion in an online environment. There are two ways in which we feel that this is

effective. The first is to teach a theory in management literature, such as ethics and have the students apply the theory (Harris, et al, 2015) to current real-world examples. Appendix C includes a copy of the Ethics Discussion Forum for an online class and uses Epi-pen and Wells Fargo as case studies. The directions for the online discussion are also included in Appendix C.

The second way to engage students in a discussion online is to challenge them to think differently about a topic. An example of this is diversity and inclusiveness. The second discussion in Appendix C shows how we can apply a model from management research (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 2008) with current trends (focusing on inclusiveness; David, 2014) and ask the students to offer insight and personal thoughts on these topics.

*Example Exercise #4: Solving the Problems with Student Teams*

The last exercise that we will focus on is a classroom exercise that puts the students in a managerial role to solve a problem; the issues with student teams in a classroom setting. This exercise would be used late in the semester and provides an opportunity for students to put together many applicable concepts in management education such as the functions of management, teamwork, critical thinking and leadership theory. The exercise is completed in three stages and can be used in a classroom or online using virtual teams. Appendix D includes a copy of this exercise.

This reshapes management education by providing students the opportunity to solve a salient problem that they have experienced as well as the feedback received by the professor to aid in classroom planning. The students provide so much rich and useful information in their analysis that it will influence the way in which we form and manage teams in our future classes. It also provides students with insight into why teams fail on a deeper level and promotes ownership for team projects in the future.

### Session Description and Plan

Activity	Time
I. Brief Overview of course and format where exercises can be used a. Purpose of our exercises (help students connect the dots to past and future experiences)	5 minutes
II. Example Exercise #1 – Leadership and EI practice	15 minutes
III. Example Exercise #2 – Power	15 minutes
IV. Example Exercise #3 – Discussion Forums for Ethics and Diversity	15 minutes
V. Example Exercise #4 – Solving the Problems with Student Teams	15 minutes
VI. Brainstorm other active learning approaches used by audience for Management Principles	10 minutes
VII. Wrap up session/Q & A	10 minutes

### References:

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## Appendix A: Management Principles – Class Exercise – Leadership and Emotional Intelligence (10 points)

*This class exercise accompanies a lesson on Emotional Intelligence. Pre-class reading includes Dan Goleman’s HBR article “What Makes a Leader?”*

***You must complete all parts to each question for credit.***

- Whom Do You Lead?** Consider various groups that may look to you for leadership. Complete at least 2 rows on the table shown below.

My Groups (e.g. work, home, church, friends)	My Role in the group	Describe my Role	Person(s) who turn to me for help, guidance, direction	What those People look for from me

*The purpose of the above exercise is to challenge students to see that they already exercise leadership and have many opportunities to practice informal leadership and their best emotional intelligence.*

- Think of a leader....** Brainstorm in your group the characteristics of a good leader (positive influence, helped you, made a difference) and an ineffective leader (a person where you’d say the company would surely be better off if he/she was not employed here.)

GOOD LEADER

INEFFECTIVE LEADER



*The takeaway here is that the lists commonly include interpersonal (EI type) traits.... I make the point that it's how people treat us and make us feel that causes us to remember them – whether that was a good or bad situation.*

**3. Self-Awareness – Name Those Feelings.**

- a. Think about something that happened recently that caused strong emotions.
- b. Bring the situation to mind in a vivid manner (who was there? what was said? what was done?).
- c. Bring yourself back to that moment.... feel the emotions you felt at the time.
- d. What words describe the feelings?
- e. What parts of your body responds to these emotions?
- f. Consider why you felt the way you did.
- g. DISCUSSION QUESTION: How do you think analysis of previous situations and experiences can help you to be more effective in similar situations in the future?

*The purpose of the above question is to help students become more aware when they are feeling anxious. With better self-awareness they can adjust their own behavior to encourage a more productive outcome. This is where we discuss the fact that the only person you can really control is yourself!*

- 4. Making Changes.** Hard wiring your new behaviors takes: Motivation + Practice + Feedback. Please write down the following:
- a. Your MOTIVATING goals
  - b. How/when you will PRACTICE? (Where is your “window of opportunity”?)
  - c. How you will get FEEDBACK (and from whom)?

**Final Food for Thought....** How will developing your EI & SI make you a better person and better leader in your group?

*Time permitting, this question can generate some good discussion about leadership roles on student teams and at work.*

**Appendix B: Management Principles Class Exercise - Power**

(10 points)

Students are asked to note the source from each of the five types of power (comes from assigned reading) and to brainstorm in small groups some guidelines for effective and ethical use of each type. Time permitting, we also discuss relevant examples.

<b>TYPES OF POWER</b>		
<b>Types of Power</b>	<b>Source of Power</b>	<b>Guidelines for Use</b>
Reward	Control over rewarding outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Verify compliance</li> <li>✓ Make feasible, reasonable requests</li> <li>✓ Make only ethical requests</li> <li>✓ Offer desirable rewards</li> <li>✓ Offer only credible rewards</li> <li>✓ Reward should be in line with the outcome.</li> </ul>
Coercive	Control over punishing outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Inform subordinates of rules and penalties</li> <li>✓ Warn before punishing</li> <li>✓ Administer punishment consistently and uniformly</li> <li>✓ Understand the facts before acting</li> <li>✓ Maintain credibility</li> <li>✓ Fit the punishment to the infraction</li> <li>✓ Punish in private</li> <li>✓ Watch your tone, don't be threatening</li> </ul>
Legitimate	Occupation of legitimate position of authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be cordial and polite</li> <li>✓ Treat people with respect</li> <li>✓ Be confident</li> <li>✓ Be clear and follow up to verify understanding</li> <li>✓ Make sure any request is appropriate</li> <li>✓ Explain reasons for request</li> <li>✓ Exercise power consistently</li> <li>✓ Enforce compliance</li> <li>✓ Be sensitive to subordinates' concerns.</li> <li>✓ Ask rather than command; don't talk down to others.</li> <li>✓ Watch body language and tone</li> </ul>
Referent	Attractiveness, charisma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Treat subordinates fairly</li> <li>✓ Defend subordinates' interests</li> <li>✓ Be sensitive to subordinates' needs and feelings</li> <li>✓ Engage in role modeling</li> </ul>

		✓ Do things that earn respect from others
Expert	Expertise, knowledge, talent	✓ Maintain credibility ✓ Act confident and decisive ✓ Stay informed in your area of expertise ✓ Avoid threatening others' self-esteem and confidence ✓ Apply talent, education, experience to add value and position yourself for future opportunities

### Leadership and Use of Power

Consider the use of power in both effective leaders and ineffective leaders with whom you have worked and observed:

Answer questions noted below:	Effective Leader	Ineffective Leader
What sources of Power did this leader have?		
What kinds of behaviors did this leader demonstrate?		
How did this leader motivate his/her followers?		

### Sources of Power – Awareness

Understanding sources of power can help you recognize why you might be influenced by someone. With that awareness comes better decision making – you decide if you want to accept the base of power being used. It's important to recognize our own sources of power and follow appropriate guidelines for using that power. Developing your own sources of power can help to build your leadership skills and increase your impact.

Select one of the types of power.

- (1) How did you use it in the past?
- (2) Did you use it appropriately?
- (3) What were the consequences?
- (4) What could you have done differently to increase your effectiveness?

<b>Closing Discussion Question</b>
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When you feel powerless or overly influenced, you can regain control. What strategies can you use to reduce someone's use of legitimate power over you?

(The above question provides an opportunity to coach students on how to “manage up” to bosses. For example, let's say the boss was a micro-manager and always checking up on the employee. What proactive steps could the employee take to minimize the micro-management?)

- ✓ Understand the boss's goals – what steps can you take to help achieve those goals.
- ✓ Understand the boss's strengths and weaknesses – consider how you might complement.
- ✓ Take initiative – when finishing up a project, ask what else you can do.
- ✓ Deliver high quality work – that is how the boss starts to have more confidence in you and may decrease the frequent checks.
- ✓ Follow the boss's preferences...if he/she likes updates and is always checking on you, why not offer to provide a brief email update to summarize progress.
- ✓ Be sure you are adding value and communicating with your boss.
- ✓ Respond to the boss's communication preferences. In person? Email? Early in morning, later in day?

**Sources:**

- (1) Wagner III, John A. & Hollenbeck, John R., “Power, Politics, and Conflict,” Organizational Behavior, pp 215 – 236. 2009. Taylor & Francis Group LLC.
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- (3) Nelson, D. L. and Quick, J.C. (2008). Managing Organizational Behavior, South-Western Cengage Learning, Mason OH.

## **Appendix C: Online Discussion Forums**

To complete the discussion activity, please complete the **minimum requirements by posting an initial response to every question/prompt** in the forum (2 question responses) **AND then responding to two other participants' messages for each chapter** (4 replies; 6 posts in total). *Note: This will require you to access the discussion forums for each module on multiple occasions. Once to provide your responses and then again once others have posted to be able to respond.* Interaction is essential for a true "discussion" to take place, and responding to at least three other posts facilitates this interaction. You are not limited to three replies, and a reply can be to any part of an ongoing "conversation" or any other post. Discussion boards are generally not the place for formal writing. You need not worry about polishing and perfecting your posts. Your purpose is to be interesting, stimulating, informative, and conversational. Be informal and fresh. Write as you would talk.

### **1. Discussion 1- Business Ethics for Managers**

Ethics can be defined as "how we ought to live" and business ethics as the way we ought to make decisions. When thinking about this topic a distinction should be made in your mind between what is ethical- right or wrong, what is moral- the actions that we perform based on our values and what is legal- society has designed rules and punishments (Hallam, 2017). While the book gives many examples of unethical behavior in big business, we unfortunately have even more current examples with Epi-pen and Wells Fargo. Read the following stories (as well as any additional research that you would like to do) and answer/discuss the following question.

#### **Epi-pen**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/16/business/epipen-maker-mylan-preventative-drug-campaign.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/16/business/epipen-maker-mylan-preventative-drug-campaign.html?_r=0)

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/09/21/what-to-expect-when-congress-takes-on-epipen-maker-mylan/>

### **Wells Fargo**

<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2016-09-09/wells-fargo-opened-a-couple-million-fake-accounts>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-wellsfargo-accounts-trust-idUSKBN12H09M>

And more recently...

<http://fortune.com/2017/07/21/wells-fargo-rehire-whistleblower-scandal/>

### **DISCUSSION QUESTION (answer all parts for full points)**

Based on reading these current news stories what do you think are the biggest ethical violations?

What decisions were made by managers that led to this problem? Select a concept out of the book or from the additional reading (Ethics Beneath the Surface; *Harris et al., 2015*) and explain how it can be applied in this scenario. What downstream impacts do you see from these actions for the customers or our society because of these acts?

### **2. Discussion 2- Diversity and Inclusiveness for Managers**

Diversity is defined as the differences that make us similar and different from each other. A current approach to diversity in business focuses on embracing these individual differences and is called 'inclusiveness'. Inclusive organizations are defined by a quality of including many different types of people and treating them all fairly and equally. Most of us, when we think of diversity think about external demographic differences, the framework here expands the notion of diversity to include all the differences that we possess in the workforce:



Source: L Gardenswartz and A Rowe

**Inclusiveness Article:**

<https://hbr.org/2014/06/inclusiveness-means-giving-every-employee-personal-attention>

**Discussion Question(s): please respond to all aspects of the question in your response to receive full credit:**

After reading and considering the importance of a diverse workforce, what do you think of the model above? Is it a fair way to think of diversity? Did it make you think about diversity differently?

**Now read this statement:**

*Each of us should learn to be accountable for what we say and do, such that when accused of being discriminatory or harassing, we do not fall back on a somewhat common response of "That is not what I meant."*

Do you ever find yourself thinking or saying that statement? How can you be more accountable to what you say and do?

## **Appendix D: Exercise: Solving the Problems with Student Teams**

Congratulations! You have just been promoted to the new position, Manager of Team Projects. Your primary job duty is to troubleshoot and resolve all issues that arise during team projects in the classroom setting. As a new manager, you will use the functions of management as a guide to attempt to solve the problems that students experience while working in teams and groups at The University.

This assignment has 3 phases.

### Phase 1 List problems

In phase 1 you will work as individuals and list all the problems that you feel exist within team-based assignments. It can be anything that you have experienced, that someone you know has experienced or something that you feel is important to address. This is meant to reflect your opinions based on your perspective, there is no wrong or right answer. Think about the following aspects of teams:

- Communication
- Trust
- Leadership
- Motivation
- Diversity
- Shared outcomes (grades)

You can list these as detailed bullet points or describe them by writing short paragraphs. Each person should be able to provide 3-5 specific examples of problems with team assignments.

### Phase 2 Manage the Situation (as a team)



In phase 2 you will apply a strategic framework using the Management functions regarding team-based projects. **Review the summary that I have provided outlining the problems that have been identified.**

**Function 1: Planning: *Strategy and action***

- Your first objective is to create a mission statement that will provide an overall goal for the teams.
- Your vision statement will describe the result of the team project.
- What are the values that your team should keep in mind?
- What steps will be taken to ensure the group succeeds in achieving its goals?

**Function 2: Organizing: *Team structure and time management***

- How often should the group meet?
- Who is responsible for setting objectives and ensuring each team member accomplishes their tasks on time?
- How will you communicate? How often is communication expected? What is the desired response time when posing a question to the group?

**Function 3: Controlling: *Accountability and standards for performance***

- Quality of work
- Shared responsibility for a shared grade
- Consequences for failing to meet established standards of performance. What steps will the group agree to take?
- Ethical considerations?

**Function 4: Leading: *Interpersonal factors***

- Is the leadership role formal or informal?

- What style is best? Authoritative, Democratic, Laissez-faire
- Motivation
- Emotional Intelligence

After reviewing all the functions of management and considering the problems that have been identified, your team leader will submit a document with the following information for phase 2:

1. Example of a mission statement and vision for classroom-based team projects.
2. Describe a plan for the team as it relates to achieving the team goals and communicating progress/completion.
3. What are the expectations for a team (as you see it)? Describe how failure to meet minimum performance standards will be addressed by the group.
4. Include at least one paragraph describing the role of the group leader, motivation of the group members and how emotional and/or social intelligence concepts can be applied to successful team performance.

### Phase 3 Critically Evaluate Solutions (individually)

In phase 3 you will review the solutions that have been proposed by your classmates and team members (participative leadership) and analyze them to see which are most effective and identify any issues that may arise if some of them are implemented. **Review the summary that I have provided outlining the solutions that have been identified.**

Think about the qualities of an effective team. As you analyze the solutions think about how they can be applied to classroom teams (by the professor or by the students in the teams).

### Critical Thinking Tips:

- Consider the problems from all points of view; the instructor (boss/manager), the college (organization), the other team members (peers), even those who are struggling.

- *Example: What assumptions are made when a team member fails to contribute as you would like?*
  - *Example: What can the professor do to help? What can you do?*
  - Deeply analyze; Compare examples of good and bad teams in your mind. Understand what led to good and bad outcomes.
    - *Example: Do peer reviews work?*
    - *Example: Does fairness matter if the group works well and gets the desired result?*
  - Synthesize; after reviewing the additional readings on this topic, try to comprehend the material instead of simply memorizing it. This allows you to apply concepts to new situations.
    - *Example: Does team leadership matter for these types of teams?*
    - *Example: How can we adapt the concepts from the articles to this situation?*
1. What does your plan look like going forward? Please list all the things that you feel should be done to make classroom-based teams more effective in the future.
  2. Does your plan solve the problems that have been summarized? List any that remain or that you feel will not need to be addressed.
    - a. Evaluate your plan. Is there anything that we missed?
  3. What new problems may occur under the new plan?