**MOBcasting: Utilizing Podcasts to Teach Management & Organizational Behavior**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this roundtable session is to engage in dialogue with fellow conference participants on the utilization of podcasts as an arts-based teaching tool for leadership education. Facilitators, who are both experienced podcasters and faculty, will share their experiences selecting relevant leadership content and guests for their podcasts and how they have utilized their podcasts and a variety of others as an instructional strategy in their courses to meet specific leadership learning goals. Facilitators will also share anecdotal evidence, share examples of podcasts and specific episodes that align with particular learning goals in management, leadership, and organizational behavior, emphasize the utility of podcasts as a teaching tool regardless of course modality, and invite participants to share podcast resources they have used. The target audience is any conference participant who facilitates leadership learning and is interested in using podcasts as a teaching tool in their courses or programs.

**Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications**

**Podcasts as Pedagogy**

Podcasts, including both audio-only and video episodes, are regularly and consistently distributed media content available to listeners via digital platforms (Shamburg, 2009). With almost 4 ½ million podcasts worldwide and more than 59 million episodes to date, it is no surprise that roughly 57% of the population have listened to a podcast. As a result, podcasts have entered the classroom, and, in the context of technology-based learning, podcasting is a relatively simple teaching device that is both flexible and accessible (Steventon, 2013). Moreover, podcasts can be used to promote understanding and have been identified in the literature as an excellent pedagogical tool for leadership education that incorporates “an especially ‘human’ and ‘humane’ rich interactive experience” (Goldman, 2018; Kidd, 2012; Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020; Salmon & Edirisingha, 2008). In this way, podcast content serves as “art” that can be filtered through a leadership lens to “help students make sense of the art, contextualize leadership, and widen their perspectives on both” (Guthrie & Jenkins, 2018, p. 299).

**Strengths and Weaknesses**

There are two primary benefits to using Podcasts. First, podcasts enable listeners to take their learning on the go (e.g., engaging with the content while they walk or commute to class, exercise, multi-task, etc.) and are closely aligned with the digital media consumption habits of digital natives (i.e., students can control when they consume the information) (Norsworthy & Herndon, 2020). Second, podcasts are an excellent way for students to hear from world-class experts and thought leaders on any number of different topics. Whether it is Adam Grant discussing his latest book *Think Again,* or Bruce Avolio discussing his thoughts on leadership development, podcasts allow access to the world’s leadership experts. On the other hand, we have heard two primary limitations from our students. First, some students simply do not like consuming information via auditory learning. Listening has not been a habit or practice, so the medium can feel foreign. It has not been a habit of theirs in the past, and they struggle to move to podcasts. Second, it can be difficult to parse out what exactly students have to know based on what they have listened to, and thus, it can be challenging to hold students accountable via traditional means such as exams.

**Teaching Strategies**

The facilitators have used podcasts to meet a variety of learning outcomes in our leadership and management courses. Below we share just a few examples.

***Coupling with Course Readings***

Similar to the various scholars highlighted in a course textbook, specific topics such as diversity/equity/inclusion can be highlighted or emphasized via podcasts. For instance, if you are discussing diversity equity and inclusion, a podcast with Robert Livingston (author of the book *The Conversation*) from Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government may nicely accompany the written text and bring the topic to life in a different manner. Moreover, if you identify core scholars or thought leaders highlighted in a course textbook, many have likely recorded a podcast. Resources such as listen notes can help educators quickly find these individuals so that students can learn from scholars featured in your textbook.

In a related example, one of the facilitators paired an episode from the *Harvard Business Review* podcast *Women at Work* titled “Seeing Ourselves as Leaders” with the *Harvard Business Review* article “What’s Your Leadership Origin Story?” (Meister et al., 2020) and related *Human Relations* article “The Stories That Make Us: Leaders’ Origins Stories and Temporal Identity Work” (Zheng et al., 2020) in an exploratory term paper about students’ own leadership journeys. In this paper, students are not only asked to examine how they became the leader they are today through origin stories, but are also quired to share how their social identities (i.e., gender, ethnicity, nationality/citizenship, religion, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, and education) contributed, strengthened, and/or complicated their leadership origin stories.

***Discussion-based Approach***

With podcasts, learning is captured primarily through dialogue and discussion. Students come to class having listened to a podcast episode and often share their thoughts, perspectives, and feelings about what has been heard. In an online course, students may engage via discussion boards and respond to questions posed by the instructor or in response to their classmates’ posts (Jenkins, 2016). By doing so, students can make sense of their experience and the experience of others and ideally share in co-creating new knowledge.

Since each of us has our own podcast, the diversity of topics is quite inspirational. Under the banner of leadership and leadership education, we have covered topics such as developing leaders, leadership education, adult learning, adult development, women and leadership, leading remotely, developing student leaders, diversity/equity/inclusion, complexity theory, systems thinking, followership, gaming/simulations, experiential learning, digital disruption, teaming, finding purpose, self-awareness, storytelling, entrepreneurship, innovation/creativity, high potentials, the importance of mentors/sponsors, presidential leadership, crisis leadership, coaching, and sustainability. Both facilitators have utilized episodes from our own podcasts to emphasize and/or complement course content.

**Teaching Implications**

We include podcasts in our curriculum for two significant reasons. First, it is an impactful way to help students learn from world-class scholars, leaders, and other individuals with meaningful stories that need to be heard. Second, we have found that students enjoy these experiences as one component of a well-rounded and robust curriculum. Podcasts offer an additional learning strategy to help students consume content and learn in the process. Yet, it is also important to consider when and if podcasts are the right instructional strategy to use.

In our experience, “when” to include podcasts in your curriculum depends on your learning goals. For us, a significant consideration is how students have been consuming information in recent weeks. If it has been text-heavy, we may add in a podcast to help shift things up for the learners and help them consume differently, similar to assigning a documentary to augment or accompany content from their text. Podcasts are a great way to help the content come alive in a new and different format and provide new ones that written text may not always offer your learners.

**Session Description**

Facilitators will engage participants through various learning activities, including demonstrations and resource sharing. The outline below includes a detailed description of our session:

1. Welcome & Introductions (15-mins)
   1. Set the stage:
      1. We are podcasters (share our stories about how we entered this space)
         1. DEI integration in our podcasts
      2. Different podcast formats
      3. How we’ve used podcasts in the classroom
      4. Anecdotal evidence from ourselves and students
2. What podcasts have other participants used and/or found interesting for teaching? (10-mins)
3. What podcasts have you used to teach particular concepts? (15-mins)
   1. Length?
   2. Entertainments value?
   3. Topic and/or developmental level alignment
4. Resource Sharing (15-mins)
   1. We will share our lists and invite participants to contribute to a Google Doc list of podcasts around teaching/learning management
5. Q&A (5-mins)

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