



Classroom as Organization: A new model and an exercise in peer-to-peer feedback

Introduction

This workshop will provide an experiential introduction to a developmental feedback process employed within an emerging model of the teaching approach known as Classroom as Organization (CAO). The use of experiential learning in developing managerial and leadership skills has a long and deep history. The philosophy underpinning CAO is that we learn through doing management and leadership in context. Consequently, CAO designs focus on creating an organizational container in which empowered learners enact management and leadership. This workshop will demonstrate one specific design feature from our emerging of CAO: peer feedback. Peer feedback can range in efficacy depending on the structures in place to support its' execution. We share the specific design that enables a powerful and effective peer feedback process in our CAO classroom which could be in our CAO classroom which could be utilized in an experiential classroom. This activity is relevant to students at any stage of undergraduate or graduate programs; the experience will vary based on where students are at developmentally.

Theoretical Foundation

Classroom as organization (CAO) is an approach at the extreme end of the experiential learning intensity (Sleeth & Brown 1984). Pioneers of CAO described their early attempts, and various degrees of success, at empowering students (Cohen, 1976; Cotton, 1975; Claire, 1976). Their models varied on a number of points including: who delivered the content (i.e. teacher/facilitator versus learners), who assessed the work produced by learners, the extent of task interdependence in the system, and level of learner empowerment (i.e. decision making). Building on the work CAO pioneers, more than numerous forms of CAO are found in the literature (for example: Randolph & Miles, 1979; Miller, 1991; Sheehan, McDonald & Spence, 2009), all of which vary on the aforementioned characteristics. As described by Cohen (1976), the objective of the CAO:

...is not to simulate an organization, but rather to create genuine organizational issues for students, to put them in the position of an organizational member who must deal with such problems as: how does work get allocated; how does one work with others who bring different expertise to tasks; how does one influence and motivate

subordinates, peers and superiors; how does one cope with ambiguity in solving difficult tasks which do not have any obviously correct single answer; how can disagreements among coworkers be resolved; and how will decisions be made (p. 14).

Proponents of CAO speak passionately about the process and impact of this approach and suggest they would never go back to 'regular' teaching. And yet, CAO has not become widely adopted. The limited adoption rate may be influenced by faculty/facilitators feeling unsure of how to make CAO work given how different it is from traditional teaching. This workshop will illuminate some of the design elements of CAO which require a significant shift in thinking.

The specific model of CAO employed for this workshop forms the basis of an emerging book on the CAO pedagogy. It is based on the work of David Bright at Wright State University and offers a fundamentally different organizational structure than XB (Putzel, 1992). This workshop introduces the CAO approach through the new CAO model that we are developing and offers an opportunity for tacit understanding through direct experience as well as discussion with professors who have utilized this model. It will provide participants the opportunity to engage with critical elements of one version of CAO and develop a community of practice to support their future experiments with this approach.

The CAO approach is based on peer-to-peer interactions which provide a strong foundation for peer feedback to be utilized. Peer feedback empowers students (Dixon, Hawe, & Parr, 2011) and benefits learning and performance in both the giver and receiver (Zhu & Careless, 2018). However, peer feedback can be challenging to implement due to students' fear of retaliation, lack of skillful communication strategies, and/or low motivation, or perceived benefit, to invest in improving a peers' performance (Panadero, 2016; Topping, 1998). Attention to both social and structural aspects of peer assessment can increase the overall efficacy (Ghahari & Sedaghat, 2018; van Gennip, Segers, & Tillema, 2009; van Zunderte, Sluijsmans, van Memenboer, 2010). We share a structured process for implementing peer feedback that leverages a feedback loop to increase the skill of the feedback provider. Our anecdotal experience suggests it is effective in developing students' feedback and team skills.

Learning Objectives

Participants in this workshop will:

- Understand an overarching view of our emerging CAO model and how peer feedback fits into the design of the course.
- Learn the key design features that enable a powerful peer feedback process,
- Engage in some of the team activities that occur in our emerging CAO model.
- Provide peer feedback as the students do in our model.
- Experience the team structure and classroom structure of our model.
- Receive a resource package to support future experiments in CAO.
- Be invited to join a community of practice around CAO.

Exercise Overview

The exercise consists of two distinct steps. Step 1 involves having participants complete a small task in a team. Upon completion of the task, participants individually reflect on three specific questions related to their experience of their peer in completing this task. Finally, participants deliver this feedback verbally. Step 2 involves the feedback recipient assessing the quality of the feedback received using a structured rubric.

Session Description

Timing	Activity
As participants enter the room	<p>The room will be organized in small groups, each group representing a team in our CAO classroom design. Participants will be greeted by the presenters, asked to read a brief handout related to a team they are assigned to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The following process is scalable depending on the number of participants in the workshop (there is no maximum).• Ideally, we would hope to have twelve people, which would mean two people in each team. If the session attracts fewer than 12 participants, we would run it with fewer teams.
0-10 minutes 0:00 - 0:15	<p>Welcome and Framing of Workshop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our Journey With CAO<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Started with XB - compliments to Roger Putzel• Pool metaphor: deep end v. shallow end• Moving away from XB - but appreciate it's 'ready made' structure.• Writing a book with David Bright - identifying key principles for 'moving beyond experiential learning' to do CAO with minimal carnage• CAO design principles<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student empowerment• Peer accountability• Kolb's learning cycle• Overview of an emerging model
5 minutes 0:15 - 0:20	<p>Individual Reflection and Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants review the one-page handout describing their assigned team. 2 min• Participants write a paragraph in their own words, summarizing their understanding of the team's role in the organization. 3 min
15-20 minutes 0:20 - 0:40	<p>Team Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The team has a brief discussion to clarify their understanding with one another. The output of this discussion is to agree on the key bullet points to be presented back to the larger group. (7 min.)• Each group will give a 2-minute description of their department to the whole group so that everyone has an overview of the structure of the CAO. (8 - 12 min.)

<p>35 minutes 0:40- 1:05</p>	<p>Feedback and feedback on feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn to a partner and give them feedback based on the feedback handout of their contribution to the group discussion first person 2 min, second person 2 min. (7 min). • Now take the time to fill out the quantitative measure on that person's feedback (3 min). • Each partner gives feedback on the feedback (8 min.) <p>Debrief: (12 min.)</p>
<p>25 minutes 1:05 - 1:30</p>	<p>Group discussion on peer feedback and/or CAO for the leadership, management or OB classroom</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your observations about the peer feedback process? • How could this enhance the student's learning in leadership, management and OB? • In your team discuss what your questions are about how CAO works and find one or two questions that many of you have in common. • Each team takes turns asking a question that can be answered by the presenters, or move into a discussion with the whole group.

The above process is fast-paced and messy - that's management and leadership. The facilitators are experienced in managing a chaotic classroom, confident the key learnings can be achieved, and comfortable adapting in the moment. We believe in this approach wholeheartedly and would welcome the opportunity to co-create the above learning experience with our participants.

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