**EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT FEEDBACK:**

**PEDAGOGICAL APPLICATIONS FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR CLASSROOM**

Emotional intelligence is an important skill in the workplace (Goldman, 1995; Tan, 2012) and an increasingly common topic in educational curriculums (e.g., Harvard Extension School, n.d.). Essential practices such as navigating change (Bisoux, 2015), building better teams (Druskat and Wolff, 2001), and creating more inclusive organizational cultures (Barsade and O’Neill, 2016) all depend on emotional intelligence for achieving positive outcomes. Recent shifts to virtual settings both at work and in the classroom have accentuated the need for emotional intelligence (e.g., Agovino, 2020; Wilkie, 2020) and providing opportunities for students to develop this skill is timely. Therefore, in this Roundtable Discussion we discuss the different ways of teaching emotional intelligence and share our approach of integrating emotional intelligence into the organizational behavior classroom. Our focus is on improving student abilities to use emotional intelligence when communicating and specifically while giving and receiving feedback. Our emphasis on emotionally intelligent feedback stems from both student requests to learn more about this skill and our premise that emotional intelligence is core to effective communication and problem solving.

Our intended outcomes for this Roundtable Discussion are to explore the following questions/issues and to co-create a set of best practices for developing emotionally intelligent feedback skills.

1. What are the best ways to introduce and teach emotionally intelligent communication and feedback skills to students?
   1. Discuss strategies for introducing emotional intelligence and gaining students’ attention about the topic (e.g., self-assessments and reflection, current examples of emotional intelligence in action). Outline key communication and feedback skills and interaction flow/problem solving template. Discuss which strategies resonated with Generation Z students.
2. Discuss pedagogical applications of developing emotionally intelligent feedback within organizational behavior contexts/topics such as Goal Setting, Teamwork, Change Management, and Conflict Management.
3. Share data on student reactions.
   1. Which dimension(s) of emotional intelligence and aspects of feedback do students want/need to develop the most? How did student attitudes about giving and receiving emotionally intelligent feedback change from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester? What value or utility did students place on being skilled at emotionally intelligent feedback?
4. Co-create best practices for integrating emotionally intelligent feedback activities into the organizational behavior classroom.
   1. What teaching techniques increase students’ interest and motivation to learn (e.g., discussion threads, Zoom chats, hands-on activities, online self-assessments)? Were some techniques more applicable to developing certain dimensions of emotional intelligence? How useful did students find the different activities?

Our target audience for this Roundtable Discussion is any educator interested in discussing how to integrate emotional intelligence into their course design with an emphasis on emotionally intelligent feedback. This Roundtable is also applicable to any management educator interested in specific teaching techniques and activities for improving communication and problem solving through emotionally intelligent feedback.

**Theoretical Foundations and Teaching Implications**

This proposed session is grounded in the emotional intelligence, management communication, and interpersonal skills theoretical foundations. Below we briefly outline emotional intelligence and the ways it has been incorporated into the classroom followed by a brief overview of effective communication and feedback skills principles. Our teaching implications focus on the interaction flow framework and a sample of summaries of the situations that were used to develop students’ emotionally intelligent feedback skills.

Emotional intelligence is described as the ability to recognize and manage your own emotions and understand how your emotions affect others (Institute of Health and Human Potential, n.d.; Mayer and Salovey, 1997; Salovey and Mayer, 1990). Typically, emotional intelligence is categorized into two competencies, personal and social. Personal competencies consist of self-awareness and self-management. Social competencies include social awareness and relationship management. Emotional intelligence is a topic regularly found in organizational behavior textbooks (e.g., Robbins and Judge, 2018) and has been explicitly applied to teaching effectiveness (e.g., Schmidt, 2008). Emotional intelligence is proposed to reduce stress in students (Houghton, et al., 2012) and has been taught in a variety of ways (e.g., through poetry and visual arts: Morris, Urbanski, and Fuller, 2005). Brown (2003) developed a series of activities for developing emotional intelligence. Others have taken that a step further by integrating emotional intelligence into a management skills course (e.g., Clark, Callister, and Wallace, 2003). In this Roundtable Discussion we build and extend on these approaches by targeting specific organizational behavior topics and focusing on developing students’ skills in giving and receiving emotionally intelligent feedback.

To teach emotionally intelligent feedback skills we integrate the principles of effective communication and feedback outlined in Table 1. These different principles compliment and overlap with each other and showcase the integrative nature of positive problem-solving. We also present students with an interaction flow framework (Keleman, Garcia, and Lovelace, 1995) that serves as the template for giving and receiving emotionally intelligent feedback. Table 2 provides the student worksheet we use for the skill building activities. This worksheet consists of the interaction flow, practice/sample communication and feedback, and identification of emotional intelligence and communication and feedback (C&F) concepts.

**Table 1: Principles of Effective Communication and Feedback**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Principles of Supportive Communication** (Whetten & Cameron, 2015) | **Effective Feedback** (Robbins & Hunsaker, 2009) | **Interaction Outcomes – “Wise” Solution** (Fisher & Ury, 1983) |
| * Problem-oriented * Congruence * Descriptive * Validates * Specific * Conjunctive * Owned * Listening | * Focus on Specific Behaviors * Keep Feedback Impersonal * Keep Feedback Goal-oriented * Well-timed * Ensure Understanding * Controllable by Recipient * Tailor to Fit the Person | * Serve the Interest of Both Parties * Take Community Interests into Account * Durable, Lasting, and Will be Carried Out. * Tied to Objective Criteria * Maintain or Improve the Relationship |

**Table 2: Interaction Flow Framework – Activity Worksheet**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Interaction Flow** | **Emotionally Intelligent Communication and Feedback (C&F) Examples** | **EQ and C&F Concepts** |
| Opening |  |  |
| Meeting Frame |  |  |
| Role 1’s Perspective/Needs |  |  |
| Role 2’s Perspective/Needs |  |  |
| Mutual Solution Development |  |  |
| Action Items (if any) |  |  |
| Closing, Summary |  |  |

Students work in teams to complete the worksheet by developing mindsets, approaches, dialog, and rationales to problem-solve in a manner that demonstrates emotionally intelligent communication and feedback. Examples of how we have used this in the organizational behavior classroom include the following:

**Goal Setting and Prioritizing:** Students read a short role-play scenario of a team leader and team member that targets the team member’s recent underperformance, which began with the onset of the pandemic and remote work.

**Teamwork:** Students are presented with a scenario of project teamwork in an organizational setting and respond to a situation in which a team member has not completed his/her fair share of the work.

**Change Management:** Students participate in a change management simulation and explore how to manage a situation in which someone who is part of your team is resisting change.

**Conflict Management:** Students complete a self-assessment of their preferred conflict management strategies and connect these results with the practice/principles of emotionally intelligent feedback. Students role-play how to manage conflict with a co-worker in three scenarios: person-focused conflict, process conflict, and task conflict.

**Session Description – Timeline: Roundtable Discussion – 60 minutes**

**0-15 minutes:** Introductions and brief overview of session. Discuss the increased attention on emotional intelligence and its value for improving work relationships during current times.

**16-40 minutes:** Discuss strategies for introducing emotional intelligence and gaining students’ attention about the topic. Share pedagogical applications of developing emotionally intelligent feedback in the organizational behavior classroom. Engage in an activity to provide hands-on teaching examples.

**41-50 minutes:** Discuss student feedback - which dimension(s) of emotional intelligence and aspects of feedback do students need to develop the most? How did student comfort/confidence with emotionally intelligent feedback change from the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester? What value or utility did students place on being skilled at emotionally intelligent feedback?

**51-60 minutes:** Co-create best practices for integrating emotionally intelligent feedback activities into the organizational behavior classroom. Summarize session and identify which techniques and activities participants can use in their classrooms.

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