

## **Dance Like Nobody's Looking, Talk Like You Have All of the Answers: Teaching Motivation through Temptation Bundling**

### **Abstract:**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to teach our students on complex concepts. Educators are challenged to bring concepts to life to distracted and overburdened students. We use temptation bundling to teach the theories of motivation. Temptation bundling cleverly combines what you like to do with what you should do. We have an opening dance party, a motivation talk show, and debrief that will leave the audience empowered in teaching the subject matter of motivation. These exercises help teams and individuals engage while learning in an innovative playful way.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Teams, Temptation Bundling, Talk show, Dance, Play, Innovation



## Introduction

“ Teaching is difficult. Teaching really well is profoundly difficult” (Tomlinson, 2017, p.vii). As we strive to be better instructors who encourage greater student learning, the exploration of varied approaches is necessary. Let’s face it, one size fits all methods of instruction are rarely effective for the diversity of learning styles, experiences, and life situations present in today’s classroom. As such, finding innovative ways of transferring knowledge (even unconventional in nature) is imperative and can produce lasting positive impacts. This paper shares unique ways of teaching motivation to students at varied academic levels in both face-to-face and online formats. We consider these approaches to be motivation in action because we apply the motivation theories we teach during the actual process of teaching motivation. So, our students *Dance Like Nobody’s Looking* as they strive to both learn about and meet basic needs, and *Talk Like They Have All of the Answers* as they learn and apply comprehensive motivation theory.

We will explore using a motivation talk show to take students from simply remembering to higher levels of Bloom’s revised taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl, & Bloom, 2001). Depending on the level of student engagement and creativity with the talk show activity, students can progress to analyze, evaluate, or even create levels.

As an opening activity we will demonstrate a dance party, which seeks to act as a class ice breaker and opportunity to meet student’s basic needs of safety (Maslow, 1943). Essentially, it acts to lower their feelings of vulnerability. Our students are more and more burdened. Many are trying to balance work, family, and school. By the time they arrive in the classroom, they are already pressured by their day to day activities. By design, the classroom is a learning

environment. Therefore, students are constantly having to learn new situations and varying interactions with others. This leads to even higher levels of vulnerability in the classroom. By doing the dance party, they are able to release some of the tension from the day and also have a group level of belonging, thus meeting some of the needs they are learning about in our class discussions on motivation (see Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Maslow, 1943). This places them in a position to receive new content and fully engage in the present moment. It opens them to expect to participate in the classroom and not be an inactive bystander. Our approach also allows students to pair something fun or attractive, a dance party and talk show, with something less attractive, the heavy theoretical content of motivation. This is sometimes referred to as temptation bundling.

### **Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications.**

Motivation and all of the related theories (e.g., process and content) can be "heavy" content. In many organizational behavior texts, the motivation chapters come toward the end of the textbook after other foundational content and theories have been established in the course. Late in the text may also mean late in the semester. One way of overcoming the combination of semester burnout and theory heavy content is to call upon the notion of temptation bundling (Milkman, Munson, & Volpp, 2014). Temptation building is commonly used in a different motivation context, the area of exercise (Kirkgos et al, 2020; Milkman, Munson, & Volpp, 2014). It's also been used in areas of writing and creating presentations (Sauders, 2018). At its core, "temptation bundling improves the attractiveness of should activities, while simultaneously reducing the guilt often experienced in the pursuit of want activities, enabling the actor to pursue both activities in tandem."(Mandel, 2020) In our example, we are pairing attractive dance and talk show activities with potentially unattractive motivation concepts,

working with a team, or presenting in class. We are also able to help develop novel behavior in the classroom by “coupling these instantly gratifying activities with activities that provide long-term benefits.” (Mandel, 2020)

## **Learning Objectives**

At the end of the session participants will:

1. Be able to enhance student learning of motivation by incorporating temptation bundling via an introductory warm up dance party followed by a motivation talk show.
2. Learn strategies to incorporate these active learning activities in varied delivery formats.
3. Develop strategies for debriefing motivation active learning activities.

Because the topic here is motivation, organizational behavior courses are most appropriate for these activities. We will discuss our varied applications of the activity in graduate versus undergraduate and face-to-face versus online course formats.

## **Exercise Overview (logistics, flow, debriefing)**

The session will begin with an overview of the activities. Instructions provided to students will be shared. Session participants will be allowed to complete a version of motivation in action. Zoom breakout room capabilities will be needed. The ideal class size is 25-50 students. After an activity debrief, the session will end with a comparison of the use of the activity with different groups (undergraduate vs graduate), different delivery formats (face-to-face vs. online), and with differing levels of student preparation (preparation as homework vs. preparation in class) will be offered.

## **Session Description (including timeline and participant involvement)**

**Opening: Welcome, Context, Definitions, and Expectations (5 minutes)**

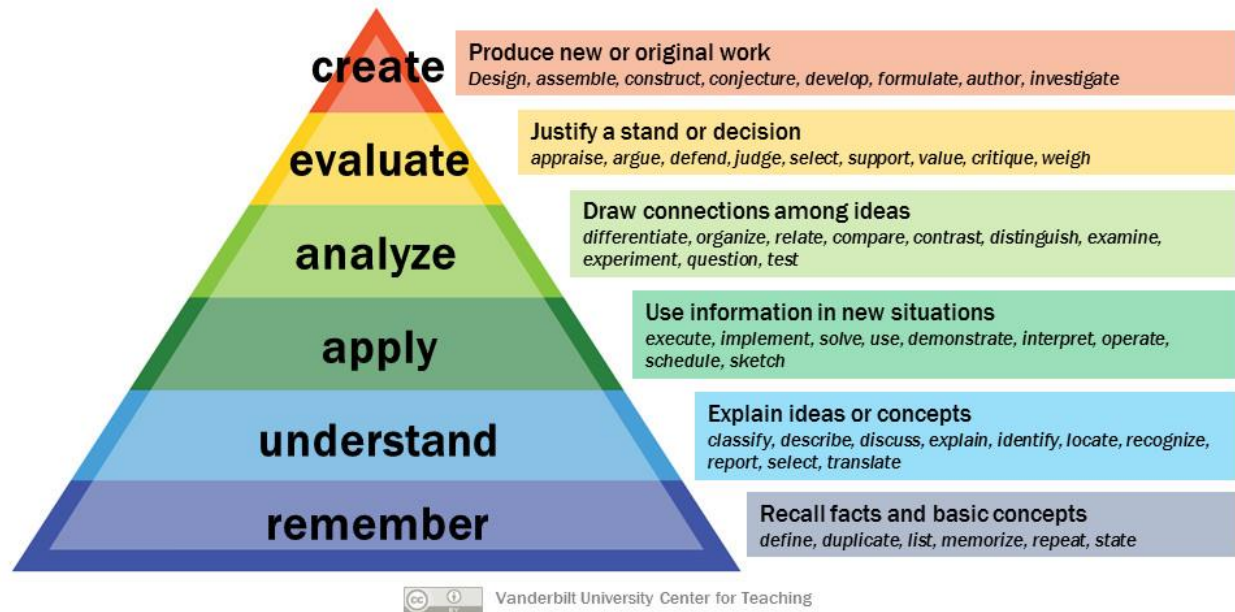
The session will start with a welcome and introduction of the facilitators. The foundation of temptation bundling and other key elements of the session will be discussed. Participants will be encouraged to share what motivation-related active learning activities they use.

### **Motivation Talk Show Activity with Dance Party Introduction (35 minutes)**

Participants will Dance like nobody's looking and talk like they have all of the answers. Session participants will be guided through a dance party ice breaker prior to being provided talk show roles and placed in Zoom breakout rooms to prepare for the talk show. A condensed version of the talk show will be completed during the session. A debrief of the activity will follow. Debrief questions:

1. What concepts of motivation in action did you observe?
2. What did you learn about your teammates?
3. What creativity and related innovation were present? Did this aid in learning the content?
4. How would you describe student learning relative to Bloom's Revised Taxonomy?

# Bloom's Taxonomy



(Anderson, Krathwohl, & Bloom, 2001)

5. What challenges do you expect to encounter implementing this activity in your class?

How can the challenges be overcome?

6. Which application of this activity do you think would work best? Undergraduate vs. graduate? Face-to-face vs. online? Preparation as homework vs. preparation in class?

## Overview of Previous Uses of Motivation in Action and Feedback (10 minutes)

We will provide examples of how this activity has been used previously in different settings with the related feedback. Logistics, challenges, and successes will be presented.

## Session Closing: Questions (10 minutes)

The session will end with feedback, questions, and sharing from the participants. Sixty (60) minutes is being requested for this session, however, the session timing can be adjusted based on conference needs.



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