MOBTS OCEANIA Conference 2024

Experiential Exercise Session Brief

Introduction

This exercise is useful to help surface the varied ways of understanding knowledge and the assumptions that students may enter the learning environment with. It empowers them to bring their complete selves into the learning space, highlighting the significance and appreciation of their cultural capital. This fosters a safer environment where they can authentically belong (Boon-Nanai et al., 2017; Matapo & Baice, 2020; O'Shea, 2016). This experiential exercise cultivates a strong sense of social connection among students. It prompts them to reflect on the diverse influences that have shaped their identities and fosters an empathetic awareness that others have experienced their own unique set of stimuli. Appreciating and understanding these differences forms the basis for building tolerance and empathy within the class (DeTurk, 2001). Furthermore, it underscores that diverse knowledge bases and approaches to understanding can be potent tools, offering alternative viewpoints in decision-making processes. This, in turn, leads to more favourable outcomes for learning, contributing to a heightened sense of trust and belonging (Gehlbach, 2004; van Bel et al., 2009).

I implement this exercise with foundation business students, both at pre-undergraduate and undergraduate levels. The class format emphasises engaging, applied learning. Activities are experiential, with theory used for analysis and reflection on applied exercises. The course employs a flipped-class and Team-based learning approach. This experiential exercise is scheduled for week two, allowing students to begin building class dynamics. Despite their initial acquaintanceship, they are still in the process of getting to know each other. This session, characterised by high energy and intensity, leaves a lasting impression on students for years to come.

Theoretical Foundation/Teaching Implications
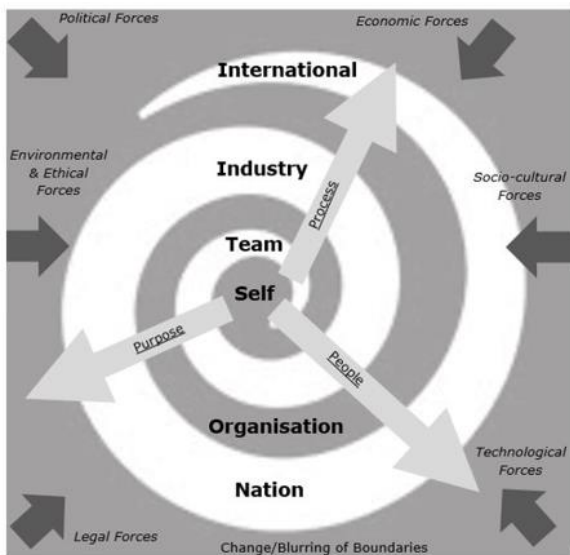
The course follows the learning map/model to the left. This model by Ashton et al., (2021) relies on the fundamental tenants of the learning spiral and sensemaking. Below is a quick overview of how they inform the model.

The Learning Spiral, a heuristic and multidisciplinary concept, assumes that knowledge is never final and must be continuously updated by all participants (Blindenbacher & Nashat, 2010). Grounded in constructivism, the learning spiral is a framework for instructional planning as it acknowledges students' natural curiosity about their world and that they seek opportunities to satisfy this curiosity by making sense of and placing gained knowledge and experiences within it (Dever & Hobbs, 2000). Essentially, it aims to synchronise educational experiences with real-life learning (Dewey, 1938). It is relevant to this model as it can accommodate change in learning content and the environment surrounding it.

The learning spiral involves students progressively deepening their understanding of a topic by revisiting and expanding upon core concepts with more complexity (Beghetto, 2016; Brauer & Ferguson, 2014; Glăveanu, et al., 2019; Osborne et al., 2019).

To reinforce the importance of New Zealand's unique environment and to acknowledge, incorporate, and align with the special relationship that New Zealand has with Māori and our rights and responsibilities that arose from the formalised agreements that settlers had with Iwi and Hapu throughout Aotearoa, such as Te Tiriti o Waitangi and He Whakaputanga, the Declaration of Independence that acknowledged Māori as Tangata Whenua of land, this spiral of learning is symbolised using a Koru. The koru is a spiral shape based on the appearance of a new unfurling silver fern fond. It is considered an important symbol in Māori which indicates creation, new life, growth, strength, and perpetual movement that radiates from the point of origin and as a point of return (Te Ara, 2013).

In our business education concept model, business literacy's core concepts are termed process, people, and purpose (Samson et al., 2014). When pared back to its most basic premise, most business disciplines, areas, and frameworks can be referenced to three core ideas:

- Ways of communicating and to whom,
- Ways of organising and what, and
- Where do we need to be and why.

As explained above, this frame is taught and expanded by being introduced and made relevant to the student's understanding of self. As the students grow, develop, and practice their knowledge skills and attitudes, they are able then to start to make sense of both their place within a larger/broader context as well as develop and apply skills learned about themself to wider settings (over time) such as:
- Participating in teams,
- Contributing to organisational goals and living good citizenship behaviours.
- Adapting and then adding to industry knowledge,
- Contributing to the national economy
- Performing on the international stage

Therefore, the spiral takes their perspective from the starting point of self, then starts to enlarge so they can then actively build holistic self-awareness and understanding that then allows them to engage better and contribute to objectives set in teams, which in turn helps create an understanding of the organisation, industry, the national platform, and through to the international stage.

Notably, the model acknowledges that knowledge cannot be successfully taught nor practised by being divorced from reality or placed in a vacuum. Therefore, against a constant background of change, this model acknowledges that decisions, strategy, and reality are impacted on and shaped by drivers or forces that can be explored and understood to increase the efficacy of their knowledge and help support nuanced and contextual decision-making. The academic model draws upon the environmental model of PESTLE to help facilitate this (Needle, 2015).

Because of the sacred, important, and instrumental nature that Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi Te Tiriti o Waitangi has to New Zeland's positioning and understanding of our unique external landscape (New Zealand Government, 2020), the treaty also needs to overlay any external environment framework we use to help create an understanding of this fast-changing world. In these cases, Te Tiriti o Waitangi can be seen as a lens through which Māori and Non-Māori peoples look together. This means that Māori and Tikanga Māori are not simply a dimension to diversity but rather a

foundation of culture, traditions, and world view, which are pivotal to New Zealand's own unique derived mental model and collective milieu (Geare et al., 2005; Merelo, 2019). Therefore, Te Tiriti has both a contribution to make in all areas of PESTLE and the holistic intersections and overview of the environment in its entirety.

Furthermore, because the model incorporates the blurred boundaries and increasing rate of change of the contemporary world, it allows the student to build knowledge and resources and practice fundamental coping mechanisms of resilience and a growth mindset akin to constructivism. Evans and Wall (2019) state that resilience is not a simple by-product of the experience. Teaching and learning design should consciously develop experiences where students develop the capacity for resilient sensemaking in their decisions and how to respond resiliently when facing adverse circumstances. This approach is powerful because individuals are motivated to make meaning of the world around them, and now more than ever before, students are required to gain an understanding of where certainty is fleeting and adaptive (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002; Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). the experiential exercise focused on in this submission is designed within the brief established above.

This exercise has the ability to draw from different areas of theory as the exercise and the following assessment or surfacing of knowledge by reflecting on the experience can be customised.

For the Foundation Business Course, this exercise is seated in a week about Professional (employability) skills. The students have already undergone preparation and application of knowledge that helps them understand themselves. This covered concepts such as emotional intelligence, resilience, empathetic listening, and integrity. These skills were selected as they often feature in the top ten list of what skills employers want graduates to possess when entering the workforce (Danao, 2023; Karzunina et al., 2023). This session focuses on morality and the moral compass. In the next session, the students start to lean into teamwork theory. The moral compass exercise is a good bridge between what has already been done in the course and what is yet to come. This sequencing provides scaffolded learning where learning and assessment build on previous work and study and aligns with the learning map and pedagogy this course was designed on.

This exercise also provides students the ability to relate to each other and to start to get to know each other in a structured way. It is a highly relational exercise whereby a very good amount of directed energy is created by a shared exercise that generates trust. This implicit learning outcome tends to academic transition needs where students need to make connections to feel like they belong in order to successfully craft their learner identity (Bourdieu, 1978; Briggs et al., 2012; Carrie, 2017; Farrington, 2013; Kift, 2009; Mulla et al., 2015; Pownall et al., 2021; Richards, 2022).

Learning Objectives

Demonstrate an applied understanding of how an individual's moral compass influences the collective decision-making process within a team.

Exercise Overview

The exercise is as follows. First, there is a quick theory recap This connects students to their flipped classroom preparation and readings. Next students are asked to reflect on the make up of their own moral compass before being tasked with deciding a rescue order of people who have been in a bus

accident. The participants rank who will be rescued from first to last. Participants are provided basic descriptive information about the people on the bus to assist this. After completing the individual task, each student is asked to make/join a team of six. This team then comes to an agreed team rescue order list. The purpose of completing the individual exercise first is it helps the student to consider what is important to them and why. It also anchors their answers, so they are more likely to engage to try to convince other members that their perspective is right. Teams often realise they need a strategy to reach an agreement before the timer goes so discuss the rules of engagement and establish how they will make the choices. During this part of the exercise, the facilitator works the room, listening, supporting, and creating momentum by monitoring the remaining time and providing suggestions to help any teams that are not progressing. After all teams have completed their list (and usually there is some facilitator encouragement to get the task done so the people on the bus have a greater chance of survival) each team selects a member to put their team results up on the class whiteboard. The facilitator goes through and quickly adds up all the ranks scores, so a class rescue order list is surfaced. The facilitator then leads the class in a discussion to surface learnings, challenges, and reflections on how the process went. When used in class, the students are tasked to write an academic paragraph that draws on some of the theory learnt over the week. In this course it was emotional intelligence, empathic listening, resilience, and moral compass. This is where the tone and shape of the exercise and what the applied knowledge you would like surfaced can be adapted. While we use moral compass theory, others might choose teamwork theory, the big 5 personality characteristics, the decision-making theory, solution finding theory, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, the global project … and the list goes on.

Session Description

The purpose of this 45-minute session is to engage the participants in taking a student role in the class to experience the experiential first-hand. It will draw on their own moral compass rationale, throw them into working with others, and then reflect on the experience to see if they could adapt to their own teaching and learning needs. Teams will be provided butchers paper and pens to work face-to-face. The slides for the session are provided as an attachment.

3minutes: Author to introduce the topic and set the scene
3 minutes: Connection with anchoring theory
5 minutes: individual reflection
5 minutes: Individual Task
10 mins: Team Task
10 minutes: Surfacing team exercise reflections
7 mins: Considering how and why exercise could be adapted to be used in others teaching and learning.
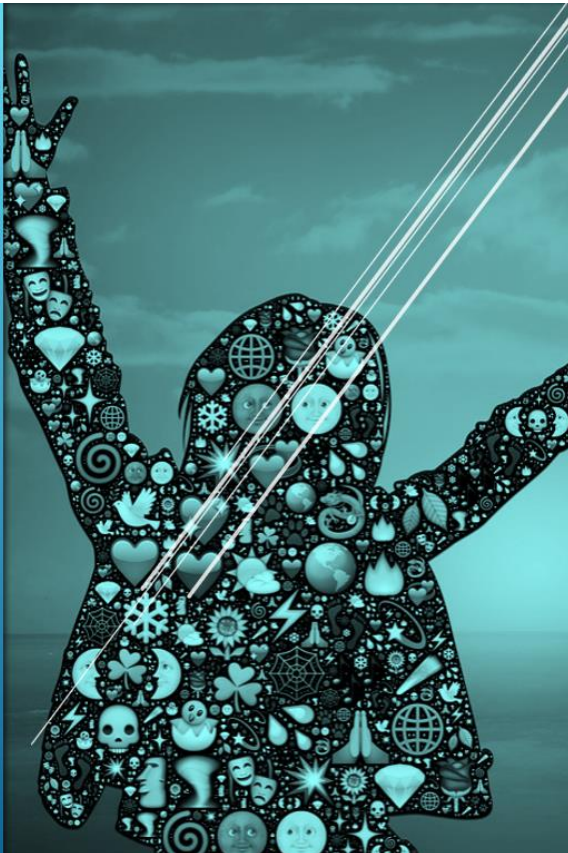3 minutes: Concluding comments

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Appendices

Please find session slides below.

Morality can be seen very broadly as a set of norms, principles, values, and virtues that are governed by an orientation towards the good. As such, they reflect concerns for oneself and for other entities (persons, animals, environment) and are embedded in a justification structure (Tanner & Christen, 2014).

A moral compass is a person's ability to judge what is right and wrong and act accordingly (Marques, 2017)

Therefore, it is the **reference system containing one's** (either existing or newly formulated) **moral standards, values or convictions** which provide the basis for moral evaluation and regulation (Tanner & Christen, 2014).

It is both about your beliefs and your actions. So it is how authentic you are about walking your talk.

MORALITY AND YOUR MORAL COMPASS

MORALITY AND YOUR MORAL COMPASS

▶Your moral compass be seen as a **"navigation tool"** we rely on to help guide when making decisions (Lennick & Kiel, 2005) .

▶It is built on our values, convictions, ethical principles, religious beliefs, personal goals, self-related beliefs as well as behavioral scripts, societal laws, organizational rules such as school and work, and family behaviours.

▶Each of us have built an unique understanding of what is right and how to act.

▶Despite the relevance of the moral compass as a navigation tool, standards alone do not instigate action. It is a strong sense of moral commitment that determines whether people act in the way consistent with what they have learnt and practiced.
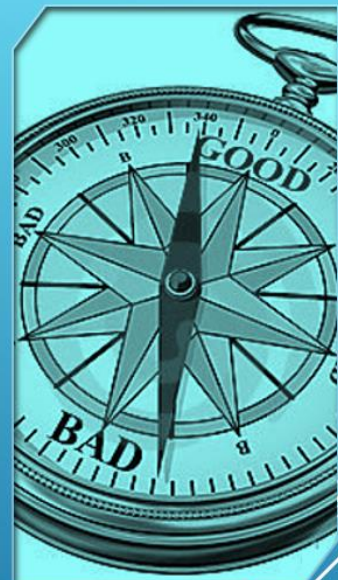
SELF–REFLECTION EXERCISE

▶Quickly consider and make a few notes of what has contributed to your own moral compass for each of the following? For example – a few details such as…

- ▶ Family circumstances and cultural identity(s)
- ▶ School rules
- ▶ Religious or spiritual beliefs
- ▶ Work experience of policy and procedures and organisational culture
- ▶ Societal laws
- ▶ National identity

Timer: You have 5 minutes to complete this task.

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

SCENARIO: A BUS HAS CRASHED ON THE MOTORWAY AND IT IS A PRETTY DIRE SITUATION AS IT IS PARTLY HANGING OFF THE NEW MARKET OVERPASS WITH A HIGH POTENTIAL FOR HARM FOR ITS OCCUPANTS. A NUMBER OF PEOPLE ARE TRAPPED INSIDE THE BUS. **ON YOUR OWN**, QUICKLY COME UP WITH A RANKED LIST OF WHO GOING TO BE RESCUED FIRST? BE PREPARED TO JUSTIFY YOUR DECISIONS.

The people trapped in the Bus	
Lily Smith	Lily is 66, a grandmother, who has a PhD in Biological Science and whose current research is looking for a cure for cancer.
Suoali Smith	Soali is 38 , a father of four, who owns and runs a company employing 50 staff. He is active in his church, community, and with his wife, provides respite foster care for children in vulnerable families.
Hayden Parker	Hayden is 7, who likes Hot Wheels, Disney Princesses, and Harry Potter. He is crying for his Mummy.
Paige Dupoint	Paige is single, 25. She is an artist of international repute, who has just received a government award for services to people with disabilities and the elderly in the community.
Tamati James	Tamati is 18, has just gotten engaged and has been accepted into medical school by attaining an Allbright Scholarship. Part of the conditions of acceptance for his medical school are that he will work in lower socio-economic communities in rural New Zealand.
Yuan Kim	Yuan is 75. He has six grown children and fifteen grandchildren. An affluent retired business man, he now uses his time to coach the NZ badminton team who are expected to take two medals at the next Olympics.
Ross Campbell	Ross is a 32, gay, and has two children. A much-loved son and brother, he is a well-respected primary school teacher. He has just received a lung transplant and will need his anti-rejection drugs within 2 hours or he will become seriously ill.
Cheryl West	Cheryl West is the head of a notorious crime family well known by police in West Auckland. She is trying to actively change her and her family's life by going 'straight'. She has previously served time for manslaughter, contempt of court, and assault.

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

YOUR TEAM NOW NEEDS TO REACH AGREEMENT IN WHO GOING TO BE RESCUED IN WHAT ORDER? YOU SHOULD DISCUSS YOUR RANK WITH YOUR TEAM TO REACH AN AGREED TEAM LIST OF RESCUE ORDER. **BE PREPARED TO EXPLAIN AND JUSTIFY YOUR DECISIONS.**

The people trapped in the Bus	
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Timer: You have 10 minutes to complete this task.

0   2   4   6   8   10

SESSION EXERCISE 1

- Once your team has made their decisions, elect a team member to write the agreed rescue order list on the whiteboard.

- Quick, handy focusing and concluding tool for adding value to helping others with their team decision-making tool

- Let's have a quick session discussion to surface the insights you have gleaned from the process that you could apply to working in teams in other settings.

Timer: You have 10 minutes to complete this task.

0   2   4   6   8   10

SESSION EXERCISE 2

– Now that you have participated in the exercise, let's have a quick session discussion to surface the insights have you gleaned from the process that you could apply to working in teams in other settings?

– Share with one or two others your first thoughts about how and why you might adapt this exercise to your own teaching and learning.

Timer: You have 5 minutes to complete this task.

| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

ANY QUESTIONS?