

MBA Education: Exploring Negotiation Self-Efficacy Development Utilizing Role-play Exercises

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Introduction

The use of multimedia including videotaping in the classroom has been shown to positively impact students' learning experiences (Buckley & Smith, 2007; Discenza, Howard, & Schenk, 2002). Additionally, learning environments enabling students to participate in negotiation exercises and receive input on their performance can be helpful to increase individual negotiation self-efficacy (Gist et al., 1991; C. K. Stevens & Gist, 1997). Activities which support the development of knowledge, skills and competencies involved in the negotiation process could support greater success in goal achievement (Miles & Maurer, 2012). Therefore, educational pedagogies which employ videotaped role-plays that are utilized in a debrief session could potentially support the self-efficacy of student negotiation skill development.

Self-efficacy is a prominent concept and component of social learning theory (A. Bandura, 1977). This construct has been utilized for years in a multitude of research studies to evaluate pedagogical effectiveness (Brady-Amoon & Fuertes, 2011; Celuch, Kozlenkova, & Black, 2010; Pollack & Lilly, 2008; Sargent, Borthick, & Lederberg, 2011). This study will address the development of negotiation skills with MBA graduate students through the utilization of role-play exercises to increase negotiation self-efficacy. This research will endeavor to respond to the questions that follow:

1. Can the utilization of role-play exercises performed in the classroom and studied during the debrief session increase negotiation self-efficacy across key success factors including: Likelihood of achieving goals, and confidence?
2. What are differences between two-party and multiparty team negotiations?
3. Are teams more likely to engage in competitive (distributive), hardball strategies and unethical behavior than individuals engaged in dyad negotiations?
4. Upon completion of the course are students more inclined to utilize collaborative (integrative) and/or distributive strategies?

The Negotiation Course

Judith Richards developed a negotiation class in 2008 that has been offered to students in the MBA program at California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, CA.

The curriculum included a videotaped role-play exercise, Coalition Bargaining, from the textbook *Negotiation: Readings, Exercises and Cases* (Lewicki, Saunders, and Minton 2010). The role-play was performed during class and the video was studied during a debrief session. Students randomly engaged in a drawing to determine their placement into one of three teams. The efficacy of negotiation education can be improved when individuals work in teams to pursue exercises that require analytical and communication skills (Plumly et al., 2008). They were asked to study the rules associated with the Coalition Bargaining negotiation exercise (Lewicki,

Saunders, and Minton 2010). Students signed media release forms providing approval to the university for videotaping.

The objective of the role-play was to have the participants experience: Planning, competition with unequal resources, the usage of collaborative and competitive strategies plus the experience of winning or losing (Lewicki, Saunders, and Minton 2010). Time constraints were imposed during each of the four rounds of bargaining between teams.

There was only one issue to be negotiated, which consisted of forming a coalition and according to the rules; only two of the three teams would be eligible. Contracts were provided to each team and collected by the instructor upon the conclusion of the exercise. Teams had to stipulate if a coalition had been formed plus the division of funds between the two teams in the coalition (Lewicki, Saunders, and Minton 2010). Research Methods and Research Designs

The instructor has amassed 25 videos over a nine-year period (2008-2017) of class sessions. After studying the video and engaging in a debrief session, students were required to write a paper discussing: Factors influencing the ultimate settlement between teams, ethical considerations plus differences between two-party and multiparty negotiations. Over 150 papers will have been submitted by December 2017.

Further, a pre and post survey was integrated into the class over a five-year period (2012-2017) across seven courses. This study included the participation of 160 students on the pre and 141 students thus far on the post survey. The methodology utilized for the surveys provides a structure to determine the effectiveness of the role-play exercises in the course towards supporting negotiation self-efficacy. In addition, the research included a self-efficacy scale shown in Appendix 1 and 2 (Bandura 2006a). Self-efficacy has proven to be a strong force impacting negotiators' performance regarding improved outcomes when competitive or collaborative strategies are employed (Sullivan 2006).

The authors were surprised to find that in the majority of the Coalition Bargaining role-plays, one team employed unethical tactics to lead a counterpart team to the false conclusion that a coalition had been formed. This dishonest behavior appeared to be motivated by an attempt to receive the best possible deal while securing a coalition. If accepted by the MEA Conference, video clips of mock student negotiations will be shown during the presentation to support the analysis and conclusions.

References

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8. I would attempt to exchange concessions with my opponent (Churchman 1993).								
9. I would try to understand the situation from my opponent's point of view (Churchman 1993).								
10. I would appear patient during the negotiation (Churchman 1993).								