

EXPLICIT NORM STRUCTURING WITH MARKETING SIMULATION TEAMS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

Sandra Mottner and Ken Keleman, College of Business and Economics, Western Washington University, MS 9073, 516 High Street, Bellingham, WA 98225, (360) 650-2403; Sandra.Mottner@wwu.edu

ABSTRACT

Experiential learning using marketing simulations with competing teams of students is generally recognized as aiding learning. Similarly, the dynamics of functional teams are fairly well understood and rely heavily on a foundation of communally held norms that are formed and understood by group members. Therefore, this research seeks to understand the role that an explicit norm structuring intervention with newly formed teams prior to their participation in a marketing simulation plays in team functionality, and further how that functionality directly affects the students' perception of learning and perception of their simulation performance. Indirect relationships between the intervention and perceived learning and performance, as well as actual performance measures are identified. Research testing took place at one school over a 3 year period. Overall, it was found that the explicit norm structuring tool has a direct and positive effect on team functionality and that this functionality positively affects performance as diagrammed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Model of Norm Intervention, Team Functionality and Performance

