Video Killed the Biblio Star: The Impact of Digital Media on Student Learning Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

The Millennial generation has been raised with extensive social networking. The intent of this study is to determine if students have a more effective learning experience if they are required to utilize social networking skills within the classroom. The major term project requires student teams to teach a concept or two from their assigned chapter using appropriate videos. One author, who is teaching one of the course sections being studied, is utilizing the identified video project approach. The second author is teaching one of the sections in the same manner and his other section is being taught in the traditional manner of requiring teams to examine a company and present their findings and recommendations to the class without the use of video technology. The two authors are utilizing similar exams, and to date, there is not a statistically significant difference in the results. However, this is not surprising, since the students have not had the opportunity to present their final project. The real test will come if the results on the final exam are better in the two sections utilizing the video-presentation approach versus the traditional approach.

INTRODUCTION

The Millennial Generation, born between the years of 1987 to 1998, has been raised with extensive utilization of social networking and video technology (Thielforldt & Scheef, 2004). Thielforldt & Scheef (2004) state that Millennials like to socialize, are team-oriented and enjoy working in groups.

As educators, our mission is to provide an excellent learning experience for our students and to facilitate learning so that students, with diverse learning styles, can have the opportunity to learn and to develop knowledge and needed skills (Hyland, 2010; Thompson, 2007). Each of us has a cognitive and an affective learning style. The cognitive style deals with how we process, store and receive information; whereas the affective style deals with personality, attention and motivation (Cornett, 1983). For true learning to take place, it is not enough to simply present information to students; but it is essential that students understand why the information may be important to them (Hyland, 2010). The student's cognitive learning style can provide him/her with the ability to encode and process information; whereas, the student's affective learning style provides the motivation and drive to internalize and retain that information. Consequently, the approach to teaching which worked well in the past may not be suitable for the current generation of learners (Addison, 2010; Cornett, 1983).

Lord David Puttnam claims that, in today's society, access to information by students via the internet is so readily available that an environment of this nature represents the greatest societal change since the invention of the printing press (Addison, 2011). Puttnam (Addison, 2010) contends that learning and education need to be not only interesting but also entertaining.

How information is accessed and how it is disseminated are significantly different today than it was a decade or two ago (Birkinshaw, 2010). For previous generations, when information was required, hours were spent searching in encyclopedias, dictionaries and libraries to obtain the appropriate information. Today's students can obtain needed information in minutes via the internet through Google, Wikipedia or other search tools.

Businesses are taking advantage of this new technology by utilizing crowdsourcing to answer customers' questions (Dess, Lumpkin & Eisner, 2010; Howe, 2008). Dess et al (2010, Pg 19) define crowdsourcing as "the practice wherein the internet is used to tap a broad range of individuals and groups to generate ideas and solve problems." Birkinshaw (2010) indicates that information obtained via crowdsourcing has a much higher level of believability

than if the information were provided by company personnel.

Boscia & Stickney (2009) indicate that students today have a preference of communicating information via video clips and other forms of social media. They argue that the use of video clips in the classroom can significantly help students understand and remember course concepts (Boscia & Stickney, 2009). Since students are adept at finding information, the intent of this study is to provide a group project that can capitalize on skills the Millennials have refined since their childhood.

Hypothesis 1: The active use of electronic media by the professors and the students during a semester will result in an increased level of student understanding and performance.

LOOKING FOR DIFFERENCES

In this paper, the authors test the hypothesis that the use of digital media in a classroom setting can improve student learning outcomes (see Attachment 1). With respect to the three sections of management fundamentals being used in the study, one section, with an enrollment of 42 students, is being taught by one of the authors; the other two sections, with enrollments of 41 and 39 respectively, are being taught by the other author. Both instructors have taught this course multiple times over the years. In previous course administrations, each professor had a group project for the class involving student teams investigating a publically traded organization and coming up with problems and recommendations. Typically students put together an Organizational/Company File project as suggested by Kirby & Kirby (1996). Each project team consisted of either four or five students. Findings from each project team were then presented to the class at the end of the semester.

During the fall 2010 semester, one section is being taught in the traditional manner. The other two sections are being taught using the electronic media approach. In these two sections, the class begins with each professor presenting and discussing a video with the class. On the major project, students within each team are required to collaborate with one another to find videos that can increase not only their comprehension but also the comprehension of the other class members of the concepts covered in their assigned chapter of the management book. Using the skills they have developed and refined since their childhood, their task is to teach a concept or two from the assigned chapter using not only power point slides but also any team-selected appropriate videos (see Attachment 3). The student presentations are promoted as great vehicles to assist students studying for the upcoming final exam. Course chapter reviews are carried out during the last few weeks of the course, with the students making use of material from, YouTube or Hulu or selected movie or television show clips.

Standardized exams are being used in all sections. Part way through the fall semester, there were no statistically significant differences in the performance results of the students on the two midterms. These results were true whether the second professor compared one section with his other section or whether results from the first professor were compared with the results from the second professor. These findings were not unexpected, as the students had not yet completed or presented their major term projects.

Once the standardized final exam has been administered, it is expected that students in the section that had the opportunity to have chapter reviews completed by their peers during the team project presentation will perform at a higher level (i.e., score higher) than the students in the section where the students complete the traditional analysis/presentation on an organization.

The cumulative final exams will be administered during the week of December 6, 2010. The results of the investigation will be analyzed immediately thereafter and presented at the upcoming ABSEL meeting.

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APPENDIX A
Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Objectives: Students who complete this course will be able to:

- Recognize the nature of management activity and practice, as well as the systems and contingency approaches to management.

- Discuss the impact, on the management decisions and actions, from forces within the industrial and international environments of an organization.

- Comprehend the nature, operating principles, activities and theories that form the basis for controlling the management functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading and controlling.

- Recognize the organizational obligations regarding social responsibility and ethical behavior.

- Describe the decision-making conditions, approaches, concepts, and techniques associated with managerial decision making.

- Discuss the importance of creativity and innovation to the U.S. economy and organizations.

- Examine the contributions of organization design and how the processes of human resource management impact effective goal accomplishment.

- Recognize the challenges to organizations and management practice emanating from the globalization of business.

- Develop and refine one's managerial style and philosophy.

APPENDIX B
Company File Requirements

Organization File Project includes PERT & Presentation PPT (175 points)

- For project details see organization/company file ideas below to include and examine a publicly traded or not-for-profit company to analyze and comment on:

    1. The mission, vision and culture of the organization; Explain the major strengths & weaknesses of your organization; Discuss external opportunities & threats your organization faces, & How would you characterize your organization's overall strategy? (Chap 3,5)

    2. How the organization is managing the general environment; Describe major elements of your company's task environment. List and describe the major elements of your organization's general environment; Describe the level of uncertainty facing your company. What are the implications of this uncertainty facing your organization? (Chap 1,3,5)

    3. How well the organization is managing the competitive environment; Make an assessment of the company's culture; How would you describe your company's level of globalization? Explain why.

    4. Excluding the U.S. (unless your company operates only within U.S. Borders), describe the key environmental factors of the country your company operates in; What do you believe to be the underlying values and beliefs of the organization; Is it important to your firm's strategy and operations (Chap 1,2,3, 4,5,6)

    5. How they are undertaking their ethical and social responsibilities; Describe an ethical dilemma, currently facing the organization; What is a correct response to the dilemma identified above; On what assumptions are you basing your answers (Chap 4)

    6. The strategy of the company is utilizing. (Chap 6 section 4.2 & 4.3)

    7. Examples of innovation the organization is employing to remain competitive (Chap 7)

    8. How they are organized; Describe your company's formal organizational structure (tall or flat); Describe the organization's structure (functional, divisional, matrix, team, network); Draw an organizational chart of your organization (Chap 9)

    9. Whether the company has a good reputation in attracting and retaining employees; Describe a HRM issue currently facing your organization; Discuss its impact; Given your knowledge of the company, if you were HRM director, what qualities would you look for in an individual during the selection process?; Focus on the general fit with the organization goals and not specific job characteristics (Chap 11)

    10. The name and reputation of CEO and their top management team; Provide examples on how well the top management team is performing (Chap 16, 18)

    11. The types of control they are utilizing (Chap 16, 18):

    12. What is organization's disaster plan? What needs to be addressed?

- Each team makes a classroom PowerPoint presentation
- Organization/Company must be approved by the professor
- Presentations should no more than 15-20 minutes
- All members should participate in topic preparation & presentation
- Schedule of assigned presentation dates are in Course Schedule; Teams select team dates
- In the project development, prepare a PERT Chart to show team's plan to complete project
- The organization should be within the team's major & where you may want to work after graduation.

APPENDIX C
Video Project

Project & Team Journal (175 points)

As a team, you are required to teach one or two principles (concepts) in the chapter you have been assigned. The teaching must be done by using various forms of multi-media (youtube, or similar source). The video must be suitable for all audiences and not contain crude language or other inappropriate behavior. Using youtube.com or other video providers, come up with appropriate videos that explain some of the subject material in the chapter you have been assigned and then be prepared to lead a discussion on why you believe that video clip provided some useful learning material. In addition to utilizing various video clips, you will need to create power point slides that focus on the content of that video or videos.

-Selection of Chapter and topic must be approved by the instructor by Sep 16.

-All projects are due on Nov 16. At that time I require:

- Copies of your power point slides, including notes that can accompany slides that are not self-evident. In addition, please ensure you include a bibliography.

- A link to the video clip/clips

- A team journal of all team meetings. This document needs to provide a summary and details pertaining to specific team member assignments, deadlines given and comments on whether deadlines were met.

A 10% reduction per day will be made on all late papers. Be prepared to take fifteen minutes to present this information to the class. Five (5) points will be deducted for every minute you go over the assigned time limit. Additional information on project requirements will be provided within class and via e-learning.