

# Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 22, 1995

## THE VIDEO PROJECT

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### ABSTRACT

Modern organizations in the public and private sector are facing great challenges at both the domestic and international level. To maintain a competitive posture, organizations must have manager and nonmanagers who can utilize new technologies and organizational behavior skills in daily operations. To enhance the operations in this competitive environment, many private and public organizations are relying extensively on self-managed teams. By use of a video project, graduate students use video technology to enhance research projects while experiencing the concept of self-managed teams.

### INTRODUCTION

Business students often find that the same technology used in daily business operations can be used to prepare and enhance their course research projects and presentations. The use of technology is popular among graduate students enrolled in MBA programs as many of them are working or have worked in business organizations supported with technological devices.

#### Course Project

The organizational behavior (OB) course, part of the core curriculum in the MBA program at Southwest Texas State University, allows students to both experience and study various dimensions of human behavior at the individual, group and organization levels. A course project requires teams of students to organize primary and secondary information and to present the results both as a written report for the instructor and as a taped video presentation for the class. The requirements are that the presentation for the class be entirely or in part a student-produced video tape that presents and enhances the research report.

#### Student Guidelines

While some of the students may have had experience or be associated with people or organizations involved in video production, many students find this to be a first opportunity to produce and present a research video. As a

primer for students who are new to video technology, arrangements are made for an orientation at the university media center which includes a television studio and production facility. Printed guidelines and tips for preparing video projects are provided to the students by the media center. In addition, students are encouraged to review popular publications that discuss video production techniques for non-professionals.

Most students have access to camcorders and related video equipment. A limited amount of equipment is available through the university media center for student use.

#### Student Presentations

The video projects are played in class as a part of the presentation. A follow-up session includes an open forum during which time the team responds to questions from the audience. The questions may be related to the research topic, the process of self-managed team and group dynamics, or the production of the video.

#### Added Benefits of Video

One of the most significant benefits of this project is that all students must be actively involved in the effort and the final product. Unlike the traditional research project in which subsections can be "farmed out" to individual members and later pieced together into a single paper or presentation, the video project requires all members to be actively involved in all aspects of the project from the beginning to the end. Students learn about OB when they develop their self-managed team to write the script, arrange and conduct interviews, search secondary sources, rehearse presentations, critique and edit taped materials, as well as learn some of the mechanics of video tape production. This active involvement allows the students to experience OB in a real-time environment.

The students learn about themselves by seeing and hearing themselves on the video screen. This is valuable for those individuals who have never seen themselves on video. In addition, each individual has opportunities for a private and personalized self-critique.

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Errors, glitches, and other distractions that often occur in many oral presentations can be avoided by editing. The video presentation can be refined until the final product is the group's best effort. This allows the students to focus on the quality dimension, which is a primary concern in organizations emphasizing total quality management.

### **Student Reactions**

While some students are skeptical of the assignment at the outset, the reviews are very positive at the end of the course. The students indicate that the project serves a genuine purpose in broadening their knowledge and communication skills, especially at the MBA level.