

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

COME ON DOWN

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ABSTRACT

COME ON DOWN is a quiz-game format for introducing early contributors and presenting their contributions in the basic management course.

INTRODUCTION

A variety of activities can be used to energize the principles of management course. One activity that has been used for several years with success and a positive reception by students is COME ON DOWN.

Foundations of Management

Several of the current popular principles of management textbooks devote one of the first few chapters to the historical development of management thought. The contributions of Taylor, Fayol, and other early and important contributors are identified and described as a foundation for the material that will follow. The names and contributions of these contributors are important in the course as a foundation for understanding the environment in which management evolved. Also, throughout the course, reference will be made to the theories, models and research of these early contributors. Students gain when they are familiar with the early contributors and contributions.

The Challenge

The chapter and classroom presentation on early contributors and contributions can be a challenge for the instructor. As it is early in the semester, students may still be adding the course and some may be attending for a first time even though it is beyond the first class session. Students who have been attending classes may be neglecting early assignments as they are preoccupied appraising their various courses and classroom cultures in order to prioritize and establish study habits. Even those who are studying the assigned chapters and preparing for the principles of management course may be unfamiliar with what and how to study for the class. Serious students, off to an early start on the course, may be uncertain as to the importance of the various contributors and how to best prepare for this important part of the course.

The challenge for the instructor is to devise a method

of instruction that recognizes the importance of the material, the realities of the students as described in the preceding paragraph, and the time of this chapter/unit in the course and semester calendar. A response to this challenge is an opportunity for the students to COME ON DOWN.

THE ACTIVITY

COME ON DOWN is an in-class activity in which students are invited to come to the front of the room and identify the person best associated with a statement taken directly from the textbook. It is a combination of a quiz-game format where teams compete for points and a discussion/lecture. This activity has been used for several years with success and positive reactions from the students.

Objectives

This activity has been designed and modified to meet specific objectives. These objectives are:

1. Cover the material in the textbook with additional comments, lecture and chalkboard explanations.
2. Have the students involved and participating in the activity.
3. Offer a different and fast-paced method of presentation.
4. Encourage preparation for future class sessions.
5. Build rapport with the students and an enthusiasm for class participation.
6. Prepare students for exam questions related to early contributors and contributions.
7. Encourage students to develop presentation skills.

Preparation

Several items are prepared before the class session begins. The six items are described below.

1. Name/team identifier. Pieces of paper (approximately 3x5) which will be used to assign

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students to their respective teams. If there will be seven teams, the pieces of paper are numbered consecutively from one to seven and the series repeated to have a name/team identifier for each student.

2. Answer key. A consecutive list of numbers (1 to 50) is used to develop the answer key. When a statement from the textbook is prepared and selected for the activity, it is assigned an available number on the answer key. The name of the individual contributor associated with the statement and the textbook page reference is entered next to the number on the answer key.

3. Statements. The chapter from the textbook is photocopied. Specific statements about a contributor are cut from the photocopied pages and mounted to a sheet (8 1/2 by 11) of paper. Direct references to the person are removed, and the statement is assigned a number from the answer key. The number from the answer key should be written in bold numbers next to the statement so that the instructor can see the number from a distance while the statement is being read by a student.

After all of the statements are prepared, they can be photocopied. This is advantageous if the exercise will be used in several sections of the course. The photocopied statements can be cut into strips. The individual strips are folded several times and placed in a container that will be brought into the classroom.

4. Bonus statements. Two or three bonus statements can be prepared on the same paper that is used for the activity. These statements give the team one or more game points just because the student came down and was willing to participate in the activity.

These statements will be folded after the exercise is described in class. When folded and mixed with the other statements, all of the pieces of paper should be similar in appearance.

5. Container. A container (a box or box lid) that can be used for mixing the statements and reused for mixing the name/team identifier.

6. Name card. An alphabetical listing of the names of the contributors who are discussed in the chapter. Other names can be included as distractors.

Instructions to the Students

At the start of the class period each student receives a name/team identifier. Each student is asked to print

his/her name on the form next to the number. The forms are collected and placed in a container.

The instructor writes the team numbers at the top of the chalkboard and explains how game point totals for each team will be kept under the team's number. All students on the team with the highest number of game points will receive grade points in the gradebook.

The instructor describes how a student's name will be selected and that person will be invited to COME ON DOWN. The student who comes to the front of the room will be asked to select one of the statements and identify the person in the chapter who is associated with that particular statement. The student, trying to earn game points for the team, is to select one name from the name list and indicate the number of game points (0, 1 or 2) being attempted. If the student is correct, the points earned are added to the team's total. If the student is incorrect, the points attempted are deducted from the team's total.

Each statement and person is discussed in relation to management and the chapter.

REACTIONS OF STUDENTS

The reactions and responses by students have been very favorable. Informal surveys and written statements support this activity as an interesting and effective technique for presenting the chapter. Probably the most meaningful comments come from students at the beginning of class sessions when they tell how they studied the assigned chapter and are ready to COME ON DOWN.