

THE VALUE OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE TO ENHANCE THE SPORT MARKETING CURRICULUM

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and cooperative learning in order to better prepare future employees, and to further develop a student's cognitive, communication, interpersonal, critical thinking, problem solving, and self-directed learning skill. It is noted that the current business environment explicitly demands these additional skill which experiential and cooperative learning activities reportedly enhance (Corbin & Glynn, 1992).

Methodology utilized was qualitative analysis (Gilgun, 2011) of 39 graduate student term papers. The term paper guidelines asked students to reflect on the experience and state which of the learning objectives and the "reciprocal learning" goals were enhanced by the experience. Guidelines also stressed to tie the ancillary benefits and learning objectives to specific components of the experience.

Results indicate that students prefer combining experiential learning over a strictly traditional lecture format, and they felt that this style further enhanced their classroom learning. Moreover, the results indicate a support for the findings from Lawson (1995), Motsching-Pitrick & Derntl (2002), and Orejan et al (2005) and that students overwhelmingly prefer this method of teaching to traditional methods. Further discussion of student specific comments regarding the abovementioned benefits and learning objectives will be shared in the presentation.

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to evaluate experiential and cooperative learning as it applies to the sport marketing classroom in order to assess the value of this teaching format by students. Ancillary benefits from engaging students in the practical learning process will be looked as well. The information ascertained can be used by sport marketing educators and other disciplines to develop experiential and cooperative techniques in order to enhance student learning outcomes. The complete student learning experience included classroom instruction and learning activities as well as the experiential learning activity.

Students were given a series of cooperative and experiential learning activities during a school year at several American universities. The students were challenged with managing, marketing, and organizing special events as part of their learning process. Meanwhile, the instructors utilized traditional teaching methods in the classroom. Student's perceptions were measured to determine the effectiveness of pre-determine learning objectives.

- Problem solving
- Organizational skills
- Analytical skills
- Oral and written communication skills

Experiential learning can be defined as an experiential education approach that is premised on "reciprocal learning" (Sigmon, 1979). According to Bringle and Hatcher (1996), the student should be actively involved and make all the primary decisions on what should be learned. Additionally, Jacoby and Associates (1996) noted that five principles should be integrated into experiential learning.

1. Positive interdependency
2. Individual and group accountability and personal responsibility
3. Promotion of face to face interaction
4. Interpersonal and small group skill
5. Group processing.

This mode of learning generates an environment where students are encouraged to think critically, and be actively engaged in problem solving. According to Floyd & Gordon (1998), Kunkel & Shafer (1997), and Siciliano (2001), business recommend changes in higher education curriculum that integrate real world experiences

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