

Resistance is Futile: Using Team Based Learning (TBL) to Teach Change and Create an Idea Champion Collective

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Change is inevitable, yet resistance to change is common. Studies show that people will selectively focus on data that enables maintaining the status quo, even when overwhelming data indicates the need for change. Those who are resistant to change in their organizations often cope by ignoring the need for change or removing themselves from the organization, thus putting themselves and their organizations at a disadvantage. The ability to engage in and lead change is a practical skill set and, as such, can be taught. This workshop demonstrates how TBL is a solution to the challenge of teaching and facilitating change.

INTRODUCTION

This workshop addresses the usefulness of Team Based Learning (Michaelsen, 2012; Michaelsen, Knight, and Fink 2012) for empowering faculty to address change successfully in their classrooms by both creating and sustaining an institutional culture that encourages experimentation in the classroom and teaching skills associated with innovative problem solving. In this workshop, participants will be guided through three distinct phases which are similar to the Team Based Learning (TBL) process. Phase One will convene a discussion on the need to address change in the classroom, the commonality of resistance to change, and how TBL can help to both overcome resistance to change and encourage creativity. Building on this, Phase Two will demonstrate the importance of positive attitudes with respect to embracing change. In this phase, participants will be actively engaged in a prototyping activity that focuses on a problem requiring innovative solutions. Phase Three will address the fact that widespread change is facilitated within an organizational culture that is open to change. Studies suggest that resistance to change is best overcome through communicating the logic of change, increasing participation in change, building support and commitment, developing positive relationships, and implementing changes fairly (cf. Damanpour, 1991; Monge, Cozzens, & Contractor, 1992; Westerman, McFarlan, & Iansiti, 2006). Just as students engage actively in the learning experiences with TBL, faculty

engage in changing how they teach. Participation in an innovative and active teaching strategy, while supported by a community of practitioners, will be more likely to lead to a culture change in the institution.

Participants will engage in a mindmapping exercise around how TBL can be purposefully designed and implemented to include development of the community, creating peer Idea Champions to reduce faculty and administrator resistance to change in course design (cf. Day, 1994; Schepers & van den Berg, 2007). Upon completion of this workshop, participants will have acquired a turnkey prototyping activity for adoption into their own teaching, and a mindmap for building a TBL Collaborative with Idea Champions in her or his own academic institution.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The specific learning outcomes of this workshop include generating classroom activities using a prototyping activity and designing a local TBL Collaborative to include Idea Champions. It will also facilitate engagement in discussion and collaboration with peers. This workshop considers applications and impact of TBL to effect innovation and change in teaching and organizational cultures. The intended audience includes faculty, administrators, and Instructional designers.

After a discussion on how TBL is a solution to the challenge of both teaching and facilitating change in the classroom, participants will engage in two distinct application exercises: one designed for participants to use in their own courses, and another to help further develop local change movements and organizations at individual institutions. First, participants will be guided through a prototype creation exercise, which involves using Play-Doh to apply concepts on innovation and creativity. A handout detailing this exercise will be provided to participants, for their own use in the classroom. Second, participants will be asked to more specifically apply the information about effecting change in an organization through engagement in a mindmapping exercise around how TBL can be purposefully designed and implemented to include Idea Champions, in order to reduce faculty and administrator resistance to change in course design. TBL is one method that can be used to encourage and develop a local change movement/organization.

The implications for entrepreneurship education are many. TBL facilitates change (in student thinking, in course design, in content areas, etc.). We've all heard it, "change or be left behind". There is a need for change, but there is often resistance from a variety of sources. It is possible to overcome resistance to change via: communicating the logic of change, increasing participation in change, building support and commitment, developing positive relationships, and implementing changes fairly.

TBL is relevant: Team building is an element of organizational development that can decrease resistance to change. Studies have shown that teams that are strongly motivated by learning about and mastering tasks are better able to adapt to changing environments. Using TBL, students actively focus on decision making and improve problem solving skills, they achieve a more in depth understanding of the course concepts, and are more likely to continue learning about the subject matter after the course ends. It is also important to create an environment that encourages students to act as change agents. Higher positive emotions have been correlated with higher levels of commitment to the change, so make education fun.

Entrepreneurs operate in an ambiguous environment and must solve problems relating to new and creative ideas (e.g. innovation). Starting with a hands-on exercise can be used in classes as a fun way to teach innovation or creativity. Furthermore, it is vital to build a change organization/movement at educational intuitions because there is a need for idea champions across colleges and universities.

Establishing a change organization/movement may reduce resistance by communicating the logic of change to faculty and administrators, increase participation in change efforts, develop positive relationships by creating networks, and build support and commitment for change efforts. TBL is one method that can encourage and develop local change organizations/movements.

WORKSHOP AGENDA/TIMELINE

The first part of the workshop includes a presentation of the rationale and a discussion on the importance of a culture of change. Participants will then complete a TBL exercise using Play-Doh to create a prototype. Following the template of Team Based Learning, participants are formed into teams based on the concept of resource wealth distribution. This ensures a diverse and balanced team. After the creation of prototypes, participants will participate in a gallery display of the prototypes and vote on the best prototype that meets the criteria stated in the handout explaining the prototyping exercise. Next we wrap up the learning activity with a guided discussion on prototyping. The next phase of the workshop is a collective discussion on how local TBL Collaboratives can be a catalyst for change. At this stage of the workshop participants will complete a TBL exercise, involving mindmapping, exploring how to incorporate Idea Champions in local TBL Collaboratives. Participants will then participate in a gallery display of the mindmaps that were created during the exercise. This is followed by a wrap up discussion and a call to action for participants to inspire change at their institution.

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