Managing Confrontations
MBA 5061-503
Fall 2014

Spears School of Business
Oklahoma State University

Instructor:

Dr. Bryan Edwards, Associate Professor of Management

Contact Information:

Office: 310 Business Building
Email: bryan.edwards@okstate.edu
Phone: 405-744-8331

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Site: Desire2Learn (Online Classroom): http://oc.okstate.edu

Technical and administrative support: Spears School of Business Distance Learning Office, 108 Gundersen, spearsdistance@okstate.edu or call (405) 744-4048.

Technical Assistance for Video Lectures:
http://ra.okstate.edu/stw_ssb/cepd/VideoHelp

Overview of the Course

This course focuses on increasing your comfort and success confronting others that do not meet your expectations. We all know someone who has violated expectations, broken promises, or performed poorly but most of us do not like confrontation and have experienced confrontations that went badly. You will learn to hold someone accountable face-to-face by making a clear and direct connection between action and consequences. By so doing you will be more confident and motivated to improve results and relationships by effectively confronting broken promises and violated expectations.

The overall goal of the course is to help build commitment and accountability towards closing the gap between expected and actual performance. We all know someone who has violated expectations, broken promises, or performed poorly but most of us do not like confrontation and have experienced confrontations that went badly. You will learn to hold someone accountable face-to-face by making a clear and direct connection between action and consequences.
Crucial confrontations directly addresses gaps between expectations and performance with a model that ensures individual and team effectiveness. Learn to hold people accountable, master face-to-face performance discussions, motivate without using power, enable without taking over, and move to action. It will improve the quality of your life and of your organization.

Course Prerequisites

None

Course Objectives and Goals

Most organizational failures, team disasters, and family discord are the natural result of chronic problems people have either failed to confront or confronted poorly. Most people have a negative reaction to confrontation because it is seen as unpleasant, scary, or threatening. This course will teach you to approach confrontations in a different and hopefully more encouraging way. You will learn to hold someone accountable face-to-face by making a clear and direct connection between action and consequences. By doing so, you will be more confident in such situations and motivated to obtain better results and outcomes. Learn to rapidly improve results and relationships by confronting broken promises and violated expectations.

The overall goal of the course is to help build commitment and accountability towards closing the gap between expected and actual performance. By the end of the course, the students are expected to be able to:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Program Learning Goal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hold anyone accountable—no matter the person’s power, position, or temperament.</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Leadership</td>
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<td>• Decision analyses</td>
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<td>• Critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master performance discussions—get positive results and maintain good relations along the way.</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Leadership</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Decision analyses</td>
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<td>• Critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motivate without using power—clearly and concisely explain specific, natural consequences and permanently resolve problems.</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Leadership</td>
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<td>• Decision analyses</td>
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<td>• Critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enable without taking over—creatively help others avoid excuses, stay on track, and resolve performance barriers.</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Leadership</td>
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<td>• Decision analyses</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Critical thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Move to action—agree on a plan, follow up and engage in good reporting practices, and manage new expectations.</td>
<td>• Teamwork and Leadership</td>
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<td>• Decision analyses</td>
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<td>• Critical thinking</td>
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Texts and Supplementary Materials

Required Text

Crucial Confrontations Participant Toolkit. CEPD will purchase the text and make arrangements to get it to you.

Description of Course Requirements

Three (3) sequential work-through papers (75 points each) = 225 points
Final Examination = 275 points
Total = 500 points

Grading Policy

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90%-100%</td>
<td>Outstanding work</td>
<td>448-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80%-89%</td>
<td>Very good work</td>
<td>398-447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70%-79%</td>
<td>Acceptable work</td>
<td>348-397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60%-69%</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
<td>298-347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60%</td>
<td>Unacceptable work</td>
<td>Less than 298</td>
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Detailed Explanation of Course Requirements:

Sequential Papers:
It is important to note that the information delivered in this class are skills that take practice to master. As such, it is my expectation that you complete all the exercises in the participant toolkit. However, most of these exercises are for your own learning experience and you do not have to turn them in to me. I do, however, want you to turn in three (3) papers for credit that reinforce the skills in crucial confrontations. These papers will be based on some of the exercises in your participant toolkit.

I want you to “practice” the elements of managing confrontations in your everyday life. As such, the projects are designed to have you develop a plan revolving around the principles we are going to learn in this short course. The goal here is to prepare you to hold a crucial confrontation to help enhance your relationships and fulfill your expectations.

1. First paper – The first paper you need to turn in completes the following exercises in your workbook: My Acid Test on page 15, In Summary: Choose What and If on page 34 and My Acid Test on page 35. Begin the paper by answering the question: What is a crucial confrontation? Then, please describe a potential
confrontation that has been particularly troubling for you or that you have failed to address. Be sure to address the relevant details described on page 15 and page 35 regarding your Acid Test. Please describe the situation. What are the consequences of not confronting this person? Unbundle with CPR, distill to a single sentence, and honestly choose if you are going to confront the person and how you came to that decision (i.e., use the material on page 34 as your guide). The instructions ask you to pair off with a learning partner but you are not going to do so for this exercise or for any of the papers.

2. Second paper – Please answer the questions on page 44 (The Impact of Stories on Crucial Confrontations) and on page 53 (In Summary: Master my Stories). Next, to apply the information learned in Lesson 2 please complete the exercise on page 54 and page 83 (these refer to your Acid Test on page 15). Be sure to reflect on what you wrote for the first paper and integrate this crucial next step with that material. Again, ignore the instructions to pair off with a partner.

3. Third paper – This paper is another extension to your Acid Test on page 15. Please answer the questions on page 125 and page 155 (again, ignore the instructions to pair off with a partner). This last paper is a culmination of the course and skills you will need to efficiently confront the problem you identified in your Acid Test. As such, I want you to describe your action plan – what you plan to do in confronting the person. This includes all the information from the previous papers as well as addressing the questions on pages 125 and 155. You may also include potential problems you might encounter during the confrontation and what you plan to do about each (e.g., might other issues crop up such that you have to place a bookmark, do you anticipate having to restore safety?). There really is no right or wrong answers with this assignment. I will be looking to make sure that you have put some thought into your Acid Test and that you have learned some of the skills taught in the course. So, it is not necessary to address ALL skills; only the skills that are relevant. For example, you may already know with certainty what the problem is and that it is a problem worth confronting; so, you don’t have to explain in detail your thought processes for deciding What and If.

There is no page limit for the assignments but I expect everyone can answer the questions within 2 pages of text. Most students do the assignment in 1-1.5 pages. I don’t care if you use single or double-spaced text but please use 12-point font. You are also welcome to write it in bullet form, outline form, or in paragraphs but please use complete sentences and proper grammar, spelling, syntax, etc. Because each assignment builds on the previous assignment, the second may be longer than the first and the third assignment will probably be the longest. But, you can certainly borrow text from your previous assignments. Please retype the questions you are answering or use headers so that it is easy for me to see what you are addressing. I have no example assignments for you because you should address each assignment
within the context of your own personal confrontation (i.e., your acid test). Remember - you are doing this to practice your skills. I will grade these more or less as pass-fail. The only way you might lose points if you turn in an assignment is if you don't answer all the questions or if you do not provide complete answers (e.g., an entire assignment that is only 5 sentences). There are dropbox folders in D2L where you can turn in your assignments. You may do the assignments in any word processor.

**Final Examination:**
The final examination will be posted to D2L and it is due by midnight on the due date below.

**University Policy**

**Drop Policy**
Information about university drop policy and dates is at this website: 
http://registrar.okstate.edu/
Click on “class schedules,” and “short, internet, and outreach courses”
To drop this course, contact the Registrar’s office, (405) 744-6876, or drop through SIS (Student Information Services).

**Academic Integrity**
Oklahoma State University is committed to the maintenance of the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct of its members. This level of ethical behavior and integrity will be maintained in this course. Participating in a behavior that violates academic integrity (e.g., unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, multiple submissions, cheating on examinations, fabricating information, helping another person cheat, unauthorized advance access to examinations, altering or destroying the work of others, and fraudulently altering academic records) will result in your being sanctioned. Violations may subject you to disciplinary action including the following: receiving a failing grade on an assignment, examination or course, receiving a notation of a violation of academic integrity on your transcript (FI), and being suspended from the University. You have the right to appeal the charge. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs, 101 Whitehurst, 405-744-5627, http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/.

**Accessibility**
Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact the instructor as soon as possible, so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunity. For more information about OSU Student Disability Services, please go to: http://sds.okstate.edu/
Tentative Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction; Choose <em>What</em> and <em>If</em></td>
<td>Lessons 1 &amp; 2; First paper</td>
<td>August 24 by midnight CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>Master my stories; Describe the Gap</td>
<td>Lessons 3 &amp; 4; Second paper</td>
<td>August 31 by midnight CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>Make it Motivating; Make it Easy</td>
<td>Lessons 5 &amp; 6; Third paper</td>
<td>September 7 by midnight CST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>Stay Focused and Flexible</td>
<td>Lesson 7; Final Exam</td>
<td>September 10 by midnight CST</td>
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Internet Netiquette Guidelines

A melding of the words "network" and "etiquette", netiquette refers to the manner in which communication is conveyed in an electronic environment.

Here are some guidelines for communication within this course:

- **REFRAIN FROM USING ALL CAPS.** It is considered SHOUTING when communicating online.
- Do not post or forward offensive or racially insensitive jokes or comments.
- Be careful with humor and sarcasm.
- Don’t respond to personal attacks: Contact the instructor for action and referral.
- Always add in the subject line a concise statement describing the email or discussion post.
- Respect others’ opinions. If you disagree with what another has said, post your thoughts in an objective, respectful manner. Do not make remarks that can be taken personally.
- Reflect upon the text you have entered before posting.
- Keep the discussion within the scope of the course material.
- Communication should be grammatically correct. Adhere to correct sentence structure, grammar, and spelling conventions. Proofread for errors before posting a message.
- Before you respond to a threaded message, read all the messages related to that message that have been previously posted.
- Send out an email to a group using the blind carbon copy field – BCC does not allow your recipients to view who was sent the email.