

The Virtual Passport An Interdisciplinary Business Tool

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Abstract

The technology revolution in our global society has brought about a myriad of electronic tools to enhance communication in Business Education. Although a passport is required to physically travel to foreign lands, technology has enable us to travel by means of virtual experiences. This paper focuses instructional strategies using aspects of quality control techniques in which videoconferencing (virtual passport) can be used as an interdisciplinary business tool with respect to underlying social changes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Videoconferencing offers a viable means to develop a framework for addressing social changes impacting Business Education. Concerns such as travel safety, costs, and time could impede trips for interviews, visits to potential job sites and conferences designed for intellectual exchanges as well as professional affiliations. Videoconferencing can reduce such barriers; moreover, cultivate an interactive link evolving to renewed contingencies.

Our country's social changes must mirror the manner in which we address technological changes. Specifically, we must make strategic decisions as to the most effective and efficient managerial recourse to change. However, where does one begin in a discussion of social or technology changes? Musing unforeseen social changes that have occurred and numerous technological development over the past forty years is difficult to recapitulate. Moreover, for Business Educators preparing students who may assume leadership roles in business or considering foreign employment the aforementioned can be complicated regarding variables involved.

Subsequently, the timely discussion of videoconferencing and its practical application is worthy of analysis as an interdisciplinary business tool. This paper focuses instructional strategies using aspects of quality control techniques in which videoconferencing (virtual passport) can be used as an interdisciplinary business tool with respect to underlying social changes.

II. THE USE OF VIDEOCONFERENCING IN THE CLASSROOM

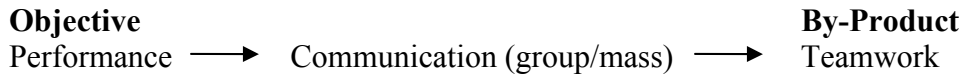
A student in a course using videoconferencing may develop multi-tasks practical abilities. Traditional lecture and lecture discussion methods are used when appropriate, but more interactive approaches are used to prepare students' managerial skills. These approaches are designed to emphasize the importance of quality control when using videoconferencing. Examples include: group-centered discussion, collaborative discussion with team building exercises and simulated videoconferences.

The overall objective is framed using a Total Quality Management approach in which the goal is not the final by-product but the blend of continuous teamwork depicting commitment to enhance multi tasks abilities before, during and after a videoconference project. Four dimensions

of quality: plan, process, participation, project are used as instructional strategies to allow student to interact with/in a videoconference.

Plan

Planning a videoconference prepares students to develop multi-task skills such as: setting objectives, determining alternatives/restraints, evaluating alternatives/restraints, implementing, follow up, and reevaluation. Through the use of simulated videoconferences, students engage in collaborative discussion.

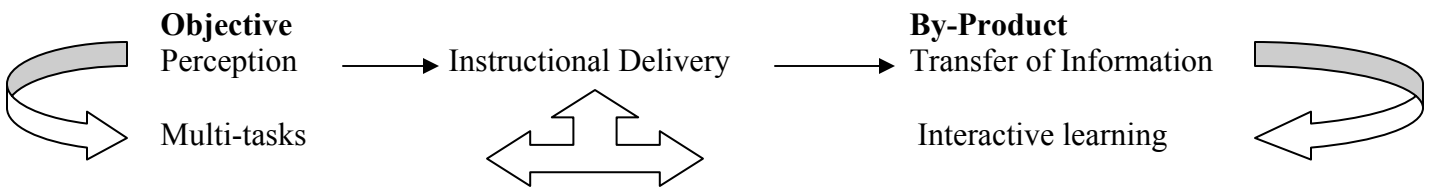


The assessment means of each objective is evaluated by student outcomes (by-product) as it relates to comprehension, contribution and application of concept rather than simply partaking in the course for a grade. An example of percentage distribution for performance is (25%) with indicators for assessment being:

- 1) Communication: Understand and be able to establish support systems inside (group) and outside (mass) the site.
- 2) Time Management: Understand, develop and use time management in determining alternatives and restraints given the course time and site availability.
- 3) Evaluation: Understand and use multifaceted skills to determine accomplishment of objective(s) and provide continuous reevaluation of practical applications.

Process

The course is design with emphasis on a diverse workforce that requires student outcomes to be interdisciplinary (multi-tasks), which provide behavioral (transfer of information) and cultural (interactive learning) regardless of discipline. Lecture discussion and group-centered discussions are used to increase team building.



Students’ activities include process improvement through the use of simulated case studies requiring analyzes and problem solving techniques with various sources inside and outside their groups. During this phase students experience are designed to extend comprehension of concepts such as: communication (group/mass), time management, and evaluation with expected outcomes being contribution and application.

Participation

Multi tasks development are essential for successful student outcomes outlined in course objectives and expected work place applications. Student outcomes are measured using the

practice of Total Quality Management. This quality control technique requires continuous analyses to improve the process (videoconference) measure participation pre, during and post. Therefore, student participation can be measured at three phases (pre, during, post).



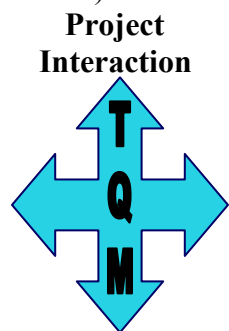
Moreover, students are able to develop a holistic understanding of course objectives and how the practical application can be transferred to the workplace. An example of indicator assessment at this phase reflects the continuous dimension of Process Management. An example of each indicator percentage distribution for student evaluation is (25%):

- 1) Performance (teamwork): Understand and be able to establish support systems inside (group) and outside (mass) the site.
- 2) Perception: Understand the overall process and functions requires in coursework as it relates to practical application and case studies.
- 3) Life Cycle: Understand and use multifaceted skills to determine accomplishment of objective(s) and provide continuous reevaluation of practical applications.
- 4) Service: Understand, develop and use time management in determining alternatives and restraints given the course time and site availability.

Students evaluate: performance (teamwork/objective), perception (transfer of information), life cycle (process management/case studies -determining, evaluating and implementing-alternatives/restraints), and service (process control/ implementation, follow up, reevaluation).

Project

The model depicts each phase and how Total Quality Management techniques can be used to assess indicators. This phases targets transition from instructional strategies (coursework) to the practical application (videoconference).



Objective		By-Product
Performance	Communication (group/mass)	Teamwork
Perception	Instructional Delivery	Transfer of Information
Life Cycle	Pre/During/Post	Process Management
Service	Videoconference	Process Control

III. Assessing the Value of Videoconferencing

Although the above approach has negative outcomes such as reluctance to utilize technology because of perceived practical application problems, this paper shows advantages of videoconferencing as an instructional strategy for social and business change. A major advantage discussed is how videoconferencing can be used as an interdisciplinary tool to foster interaction with presenters and viewers to enhance understanding of communication by electronic transmission. Moreover, this approach allows for continuous improvement in instructional strategies that include enhancing student outcomes such as multifaceted decision-making and intra/inter communication, skills needed in the twenty first century workforce.

IV. SUMMARY

Students can utilize skills require to obtain a *virtual passport* for preparation and competition in our global workforce. Students are made aware of the course objectives and how linkage referencing courses performance should mirror work practices relevant to their professional degree. Additionally, students become aware and capable of utilizing multifaceted skills acquired to increased productivity regardless of academic discipline.

Instructors using videoconferencing in the classroom provide students with an opportunity to strengthen professional skills through the use of cutting edge technological and business experiences. Thus, with respect to this discussion, the continual linkage of business and technology is necessary and worthy of consideration in address social changes.

V. REFERENCES

Townsend, A., DeMarie, S. and Hendrickson, A. (1998). "Virtual Teams: Technology and the Workplace of the Future," *Academy of Management Executive*, 3(12), 17-29.