The Role of Action Learning in Future Business School Curricula

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Curricula Developments

- Everything that can be flipped will be flipped.
- Online asynchronous courses will be available.
- Distance technologies will lead to many off-campus offerings.
- Time periods on campus will shrink.
- Established forms of action learning such as projects will expand.
- New forms of action learning will be created with corporate partners.
- Action learning will be more integrated with concepts in core courses.
Steps in Action Learning

- Concrete experience
  - Do we vet the experience as much as we could?
  - Do we have a partner who can give access?
  - Is it challenging enough?
  - Is it perceived as enough work to challenge a team?

- Reflection
  - Is it formal and rigorous?

- Conceptualization
  - Do students tie their ideas and skills to other parts of the curriculum?

- Active experimentation
  - Is there a mechanism to change as conditions change?
  - Is there a tie back to traditional core curriculum?
  - How much assessment of learning is carried out?
Learning

- Faculty are experts in their fields but not necessarily experts in learning.
- Faculty could be as good as anyone at supervising experiential events but they have to get used to it to accept it.
- Traditional class coverage is efficient on a cost per class hour basis, but we are not sure how relevant the theories and generalities are.
- Practitioners and other non-researcher can add a lot to a course and they often seem to work well in action learning episodes.
- The effectiveness of faculty or others in action learning is not well understood.
Future Role of Faculty in Action Learning

- Should research faculty teach in areas where they do not have depth?
- Will research faculty be part of action learning’s future?
- Will research faculty be in need of action-based components?
- Will research faculty get involved to any extent in “macro” episodes of experiential learning?
Assurance of Learning

- Do students learn what their programs promise?
- Do programs communicate their learning goals and accomplishments?
- Do assessments of learning improve programs?
- Can action learning play an important part in a program’s attempts at assessment of learning?
Advocate for Action Learning

- Be a resource for action learning.
- Know more than most about learning and outcome assessment.
- Become an ambassador for action learning.
- Create connections between action learning and concepts taught in the core.
- Involve research faculty in action learning.
- Create small scale action learning episodes for faculty to augment digital delivery of material.