Implementing Meeting Agendas into a Health Management Course

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The purpose of this article is to share methods of teaching health education management students on the importance of time management and learn how to conduct a meeting within a health education management course and eventually in a professional setting.* **Methods:** *The assignments used in the course are current-event relevant and easy-to-teach for students pursuing a profession in health education. The purpose of the project was to assess the application of time management, team building, and organization and decision-making skills.* **Conclusions:** *This topic resonated with students, motivating them to see things differently and thus deepening their learning.*

Key Words: *meeting agenda, undergraduate learning, management, minutes*

INTRODUCTION

Health education students and professionals have been taught primarily through lectures and other forms of didactic education designed to impart knowledge and information. Learners have generally been evaluated by testing knowledge through written and oral examinations given during schooling and periodically throughout professional careers. The movement toward competency-based (CB), experiential learning has created the need to rethink assessment and evaluation tools, as the use of knowledge-based tests and continuing education credits are not sufficient to assess competence in a given area. For example, assessing proficiency in a specific competency may be difficult without evaluating actual experiences (e.g., managing change processes, teams, and individuals; developing and presenting budgets and strategic plans,

conducting an effective meeting) related to that competency. Additionally, effective meetings are not only integral to achieve team goals and successful completion of tasks but also are reflective overall of team functioning (Heinemann & Zeiss, 2002). Whether they are conducted in real-time or asynchronously, in-person or by a remote conference, team meetings are important tools for managing team tasks and productivity. Effective team meetings allow for open conversation that draws upon knowledge, skills, and perspectives to solve problems and to support one another in achieving the team's collective goals. The purpose of this paper is to present a set of templates and directions that (a) guide writing an effective agenda and meeting minutes, (b) provide resources for icebreakers and team building, (c) provide health care related meeting topics and (d) provide a template to create formative assessment pertaining to the meeting topics.

TEACHING METHOD

Running an effective meeting assignment group project

This lesson comes from a 300-level undergraduate health care management course utilizing the basic concepts of health care management, including foundations of effective management; ethics and legal issues; cultural diversity decision-making; planning and organizing; motivation, teamwork and communication; delegation, hiring and managing employees, conflict leadership, time management; and budgeting and program assessment. The assignment is the culmination of Bloom's Taxonomy higher-level learning methods. This assignment has students break down and analyze the necessary components of running an effective meeting with a health care focus.

Design, Procedure and Implementation

Students gained knowledge and understanding of key areas regarding the step to conducting an effective meeting. The goal was to a) Seek input from team members; b) Select topics that affect the entire team; c) List agenda topics as questions the team needs to answer. Groups were provided with a list of topics based off the course syllabus. (Topics include the differences between leaders and managers; customer service and privacy and confidentiality; strategic planning and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis; cultural diversity; human resources which includes recruitment, interviewing and employee selection, the orientation and training of new employees, correction of behavior problems, conflict and confrontation, staff development; delegation and empowerment; policies and procedures; safety and workplace violence; decision making and problem solving; and complaints, grievances and appeals); d) Note whether the purpose of the topic is to share information, seek input for a decision, or make a decision; e) Estimate a realistic amount of time for each topic. This serves two purposes. First, it required groups to calculate how much time the group would need for introducing their assigned topic, answering questions, resolving different points of view, generating potential solutions, and agreeing on the action items that follow from the discussion and decisions; f) Propose a process for addressing each agenda item. The process identifies the steps through which the team will move together to complete the discussion or make a decision; g) Specify how members should prepare for the meeting. Distribute the agenda with sufficient time before the meeting, so the team can read background materials and prepare their initial thoughts for each agenda item ahead of time; h) Students were required to identify who is responsible for leading each topic. Someone other than the formal meeting leader is often responsible for leading the discussion of a particular agenda item. This individual was responsible for providing context for the topic, explaining data, or may have organizational responsibility for that area and finally; i) End the meeting with a positive. Your team meets regularly, two questions from a simple continuous improvement process: What did we do well? What do we want to do differently for the next meeting? Investing five or ten minutes will enable the team to improve performance, working relationships, and team member satisfaction. Here are some questions to consider when identifying what the team has done well and what it wants to do differently.

Meeting Agenda Assignment

The initial step of the lesson requires each member of a group to collaboratively develop a meeting agenda. The objectives of the assignment include: having students learn and explain what an agenda and meeting minutes are, and why they are useful; identify the key components of agendas and meeting minutes; indicate strengths and weaknesses of sample agenda items and meeting minutes; and to prepare a set of meeting minutes. The instructor provides a mini lecture titled: *How to Write Agendas and Meeting Minutes* (Appendix A) and hard copies of an example agenda. Students were provided with an example agenda format as a guide. The template includes the team name, an agenda topic, the date of the meeting, the time of the meeting, the location of the meeting, and contact information of the facilitators. The body of the agenda includes reviewing the minutes of the previous meeting, an icebreaker activity, lecture notes and reading for the meeting. Finally, it was recommended for students in the group to print out the meeting minutes prior to the meeting for accountability.

The Icebreaker Activity

The first required activity for the health education meeting assignment is the icebreaker activity. The concept provides an effective way of starting a meeting, and to help students to get to know each other and understand the purpose

of the meeting. Finally, this activity allows students to practice conducting an activity in front of a large group. Groups began the assignment by researching appropriate icebreakers provided by the instructor. The activity requires approximately 10-15 minutes of class time. Groups were required to submit the activity to the course learning management system prior to the meeting assignment. Students must include the group's number, the list of names of the group members, the title of the icebreaker, a detailed explanation of what is included for the icebreaker so that it can be replicated, materials required if any, and a simple diagram on how to set up the icebreaker. Students were assessed on the knowledge and understanding of the activity, the level of inquiry, how they communicated the activity and the application of the activity. Appendix B provides a basic outline of the icebreaker activity.

Lecture and Readings

As part of the implementing meeting agendas into the health education management course lesson, students were required to present on an assigned health education topic and to provide two ancillary articles to support the topic. Groups were required to find and evaluate one peer-review and one current article, and to find one credible website. Students were provided with a rubric to evaluate websites to ensure credibility of the site. Students were also provided a CRAAP evaluation tool for websites (Morrow, 2016). It is highly recommended that students provide the reading in advance so their peers in the course can review and participant in the lecture.

Student Quiz Question Assignment

The final component of the lesson required students to create ten quiz questions based off of lecture material and readings pertaining to the group's assigned health education topic. Questions were required to be in various formats such as true-false, multiple choice, matching and filling-in-the-blank, with two short-answer essay questions. It is recommended that students download the example template to use as a guide for formatting the questions. Additionally, students were required to provide an answer key, which was uploaded to the course learning management system for the instructor's use. Questions without answers were provided to students within the course to use as a guide while listening and engaging in the lecture presented by the group. Appendix C

provides a basic outline of the student quiz question assignment.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND EVALUATION RUBRIC

This course has been taught in this manner for one 15-week Winter Semester term and was critical to the overall grade for the course. Feedback from students on the experience varies. The majority of the students thought the approach were beneficial to their learning. Some students raised concerns about individual and group member responsibility and the task of others "not carrying their workload." These instances were used as avenues to demonstrate "real world" group behavior. Thus, problem solving and conflict resolution strategies were presented and these experiences were utilized to facilitate group dynamics.

A surprising positive outcome has been the development of student-directed strategies to address personal accountability and responsibility. As part of the assignment students are required to keep minutes of group meetings. Absences from group meetings and other participation issues are documented. Furthermore, the documentation has been used by the instructor in the assigning of individual grades for the project. The understanding that the group project grade might vary depending upon an individual's level of participation served to further develop the evaluation component. Furthermore, students have been known to reprimand group members for incomplete assignments or the shirking of responsibility.

DISCUSSION

Managing an effective meeting is an increasingly complex role of the health care administrator. Students in undergraduate programs must acquire the ability to incorporate various techniques and strategies into their repertoire. Faculty who teach health care education students must develop new and innovative methodologies that provide experiences that go beyond the traditional lecture. It is through activities such as the weekly student-led meetings and group promotion projects detailed in this article that students learn the "real world" skills of the health care meeting.

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Appendix A
Health Education Management
Meeting Agenda
Worth X Points

Each member of a group will write an agenda for a group meeting and will lead a course session using the agenda that he/she has prepared. Remember that all team members should receive the agenda for the meeting a minimum of 24 hours ahead of time.

The purpose of this part of your team assignment is for you to write an agenda for a team meeting that helps your team to accomplish its goals. This will also allow students to have the experience of leading a team meeting and using an agenda.

Agenda Format:
1. Use a memo/email format
2. You must include the following basic information (at minimum)
    a) Team/Group or Hospital Name
    b) Title of assignment (Agenda)
    c) Date of the meeting
    d) Time of the meeting
    e) Location of the meeting
    f) Facilitator for the meeting, including contact information

3. The body of the agenda should include the following:
    a) Review of minutes from the previous meeting. It is recommended for students in the group to printout the meeting minutes from the prior meeting for accountability.
    b) Open issues carried over from the previous meeting.
    c) New issues to be discussed for the first time during this meeting.

4. Background information that is necessary to effectively accomplish the goals of your meeting (e.g. if your goal for the meeting is to review/edit a draft work plan - the agenda should include that draft as an attachment).

5. Preparation expected of participants.

6. Materials team members should bring to the meeting copies of the required articles for the Expert of the Day portion of the lesson.

7. Complete sentences are not necessary.

8. All agendas should be typed, neat, and easy to read.

Appendix B
Health Education Meeting
Icebreaker/Energizer Assignment

PURPOSE: To practice your ability to conduct an activity in front of a large group.

EXPECTATIONS: Activity should last 10-15 minutes**.** A word-processed document outlining the activity must be submitted to the learning management system by [insert date]

The activity document must include:
1. Your group number
2. A list of group member names
3. The name of icebreaker/energizer
4. An explanation of what is included
5. The materials required
6. A simple diagram of classroom set-up (Chairs in a circle? Tables spread out?)
7. The source of your icebreaker/energizer

Evaluation: If you are unable to present on your assigned day, you must inform the class with enough time to make alternate arrangements. If not, a mark of zero will result.

Knowledge/Understanding (Worth X Points)   **Points Earned _____**
Activity is appropriate for group
Proposal is well thought out and complete

Thinking/Inquiry (Worth X Points)   **Points Earned _____**
Activity is creative
Activity is well organized
Student demonstrates "on the spot thinking"

Communication (Worth X Points)   **Points Earned _____**
Clarity of voice
Appropriate body language
Source is sited
Referred to classmates by using names

Application (Worth X Points)   **Points Earned _____**
Student was prepared and ready to go
Everyone was involved
Positive and encouraging rapport with peers

Format (Worth X Points)   **TOTAL Points Earned: _____**

Appendix C
Student Quiz Question Assignment

For this assignment groups will create 10 questions. The questions need to be in a variety of formats. Questions can be true and false, multiple choice, matching and fill in the blank. Two questions must be essay questions. Questions must pertain to the content within the group's presentation. This includes the chapter reading and required article readings.

Directions:
1. Download the template
2. Save the file as Group # Questions (i.e. Group 2 Questions)
3. Develop 10 questions
- Two questions can be true or false
- Two questions can be multiple choice
- Two questions can be fill in the blank
- Two questions can be multiple response
- Two question must be a critical thinking essay
4. Create a key and save the file with the group number Answer Key (i.e. Group 2 Answer Key)
5. Upload the question sheet and answer sheet to Blackboard.
    a. Quiz Questions without answers
    b. Quiz Questions with answers
6. Each group will provide copies of the questions without the answers to the class so they can be answered during the presentation(s).

Appendix D
AHS 340 Health Care Management
Group Presentation Questions
Worth X Points

Group Number: _____
Group Topic: _____

Questions:

1. True False. Add question here
2. True False. Add question here
3. Multiple Choice. Add question here
4. Multiple Choice. Add question here
5. Fill in the Blank. Add question here
6. Fill in the Blank. Add question here
7. Multiple Response. Add question here
8. Multiple Response. Add question here
9. Essay. Add question here
10. Essay. Add question here