



Service Knowledge Gained from Service Learning in an Undergraduate Sales Class

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Background

Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984)

- Learning is constructed rather than transmitted
 - Concrete Experience
 - Reflective Observation
 - Abstract Conceptualization
 - Active Experimentation

Kolb and Kolb (2005) Combined with learning spaces

- Built on Lewin (1969): Behavior is a function of person and environment
- Longitudinal across a university
 - Feeling
 - Acting
 - Reflecting
 - Thinking

Service Learning

- Five factors that most strongly motivated service-learning use by university professors
 - “increased student understanding of course material,
 - increased student personal development,
 - **increased student understanding of social problems as systemic,**
 - **provided useful service in the community, and**
 - **created university/community partnerships”**

From McClerran and Irlbeck (2015) quoting Abes, Jackson, and Jones (2002).

Situation

- Capstone course for Seniors in sales and marketing
- Follows intro courses in both topic areas
- 28 students
- Assignment:
 - Create a sales presentation on United Way
 - Receive peer and instructor feedback from role-play
 - In pairs, contact companies who weren't giving
 - Making at least two calls

Methodology

- Pretest on understanding of United Way and community needs
 - Purpose and value of agency
 - Top needs and poverty (levels and percent)
- Training by United Way, Agencies, Purdue UW Rep
- Tracked efforts to set appointments, call reports, outcomes
- Reflection after each call, end of semester
- Posttest on understanding of United Way and community needs
- Debrief with United Way and Purdue Rep

Useful Service in the Community

- Raised \$1,740 for United Way from 9 companies
- 32 “sales calls” on companies
- “United Way is a tremendous organization that helps members of the community have a better life.”
- “A lot of people would like to donate, but do not know where. United Way takes the hard part out of donating.”

Understanding of Social Problems

Poverty		Pre		Post		
N=19	%	Indiv	Fam	%	Indiv	Fam
MEAN	25.4	20.6	22.0	30.7	21.1	27.7
STDEV	12.4	6.5	5.4	13.3	7.6	3.3
Actual	22.1	16.6	33.9			
			Up	10	11	3
			Down	3	7	2
			Same	6	1	14

Understanding of Social Problems

	Top 3	
10	School Readiness	22
9	Food	16
5	Housing	19
5	Assistance	
5	Health	3
5	Financial Aid	2
4	Transportation	
3	Clothing	
3	Jobs	
3	Childcare	2
2	Athletics, Environment, Volunteers, Anti-Violence,	1
1	Community, Animal Shelters, Ethnic Support, Veterans Support, Anti-Drug	

Lessons Learned for Educators

1. Level of support needed for students is high
2. Perceptions of a dollar among students varies
3. Wide variation in community response
4. Community understanding of United Way probably matches students
5. Learning was huge
 - a. Community
 - b. Course content
6. Would make a great club service activity