

EXAMINING BLOOM'S TAXONOMY THROUGH MARKETING RESEARCH SERVICE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Christ is very clear throughout the New Testament that we are to help others. In academia we can enable students to live out this command through the concept of service learning. Annually, my marketing research students engage in a service learning project to assist a non-profit organization. During the summer of 2004 I began background work with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod [LCMS] to understand why enrollment at many local LCMS schools was declining. In the fall, students and I worked with LCMS schools through visits to the campuses and interviews with faculty and staff to better understand their perceptions of why enrollment was decreasing. We also conducted extensive secondary research throughout the semester on the issues of home schooling, public school data, charter school data, private school data, ethnic data and population data. This information was used to develop three phone surveys which were administered to 180 people. Data was analyzed and students presented written and oral reports to members of the LCMS in December of 2004.

This experience allowed students to enhance their learning of course concepts through reflection and high levels of learning. Bloom's taxonomy, a renowned model of learning, states that there are six levels of learning which build upon each other: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The higher the level of learning, the more likely the individual will retain information and will be able to use the skills in other situations. By helping the LCMS, students were able to experience all levels of learning.

Through daily verbal reflections, class discussions, written and oral reports, and a course reflection paper, students attended to all six levels of learning. By using Bloom's taxonomy as a measure of service learning, outcomes for both students and the LCMS were enhanced as students were able to synthesize information from the multiple studies and previous courses to make conclusions and recommendations to the LCMS.

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Introduction

When students consider marketing, they often think of advertising and sales. On the first day of class I make sure they know that marketing is much more than that. Early in the semester we focus on the concept of social marketing. Kotler and Zaltman (1971) define social marketing as “the design, implementation, and control of programs calculated to influence the acceptability of social ideas and involving considerations of product planning, pricing, communications and marketing research” (p. 5). Social marketing reflects the idea that a corporation needs to consider more than profits, it should also desire to benefit the public. Servicing the public might mean assisting energy conservation programs with their marketing, helping the Red Cross understand donor behavior, or providing free or at cost marketing research to non-profit organizations.

Service Learning

Service learning is a logical extension of the social marketing concept. Academics use service learning as a means to help solve real-life human and community needs through structured educational techniques, active participation and reflection (Jacoby 1996). Some individuals outside of business have a hard time grasping that performing business services such as accounting or marketing research for a non-profit is indeed service learning. When students use their business skills to help an organization or group of people, both the group and the students benefit. The group receives a valuable service and the students are able to apply their course concepts. “Service learning goes beyond volunteering in the community. Service learning is a pedagogical strategy that combines learning outcomes and service goals. For example, learning goals such as academic content knowledge, thinking and writing skills, responsible citizenship, or ethics and values are taught through a set of experiences involving initial research or preparation, performance of a service that benefits others, and then critical analysis and reflection of that service” (Luebke, 2002, p. 3).

Bovee and O'Brien (2004) discuss the importance of viewing service learning as a transformational experience. Service learning is a process. It needs to be implemented at all levels of the college experience and needs to be supported by everyone, not just a few select faculty and staff members. O'Brien (2001) discusses a major benefit for faculty members of using service learning in their courses; service learning is able to link teaching, scholarship and service together through one experience. O'Brien also discusses the need to clearly differentiate between volunteerism and service learning because some academics might view the service learning as lowering their standards because credit is given for service. Service learning, as compared to volunteering, encompasses an academic structure, learning outcomes and a reflection component.

Serving others is also a valued practice in the business world. Dale Carnegie in his book *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1981) states, “If we want to make friends, let's put ourselves out to do things for other people – things that require time, energy, unselfishness, and

thoughtfulness” (p. 60). The idea of serving others is also espoused by Steven Covey in *Characteristics of Principle-Centered Leadership* (1991). “Those striving to be principle-centered see life as a mission, not as a career. Their nurturing sources have armed and prepared them for service” (p. 34). This last statement reminds us that in academia, we need to encourage students to serve. Service is not a form of weakness, it is a form of strength and in business is defined as a type of leadership style.

The concept of servant leadership has derived from the realization that being a role model or manager does not mean just being a person of power and authority. The concept of servant leadership is a long term approach to training and modeling the importance of engaging in service to others versus self serving behaviors (Kreitner and Kinnicki 2004 and Spears 1995). Jesus demonstrated servant leadership to us by coming down from Heaven to be in the form of man. He showed us that a good leader humbles himself to meet the needs of others and he tells his disciples to follow his example (John 13:5-17). By washing the feet of others and teaching his followers that they need to do likewise, Jesus is teaching them the importance of service. While some people are given the gift of service (1 Corinthians 12:5), others need to be taught the importance and benefits of serving. At both secular and Christian universities the concept of service learning is promoted because it benefits the students, the university and the public. At Christian universities/colleges, service learning should be a widespread method of teaching and learning because it embodies Christ’s teachings.

Service learning naturally derives from the teachings of Jesus. “...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,” (Mark 10: 43-45).

Providing a service learning experience for students allows us to be part of the transformational process; we serve as role models showing them that as professors we believe serving others is important. A major benefit of service learning is concisely stated by Hagenbuch (2004), “Finally, as the course’s instructor, I also have benefited from teaching the class. Although the Sales Project takes a great deal of time to manage and its unpredictability can be stressful, it is highly satisfying to see students make connections between theory and practice, to celebrate sales with them, and to assist them in serving very deserving organizations” (p. 17).

BLOOM’S TAXONOMY

While implementing a service learning experience is commendable, service learning also has the opportunity to additionally tap into the highest levels of learning. Bloom’s taxonomy states that there are six levels of learning which build upon each other: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (Bloom 1956). The lowest level includes **knowledge** of information, recognition and recall. Comprehension tests whether an individual can understand information and interpret facts. **Comprehension** also demonstrates that an individual can identify major elements of a concept and interrelationships between/among concepts. “Tests that require students to solve problems, or explain theories in an essay form focus on this level of cognitive domain. Exams in the traditional college and the summary papers prepared by adults in the accelerated program test comprehension” (Castiglia, 2005, p. 4).

Application examines whether a person can use methods, concepts, and theories in new situations. At this level students are able to apply abstract ideas to new situations.

The top three levels of learning include analysis, synthesis and evaluation. **Analysis** “is the ability to break down material into its component parts so that its organizational structure might be understood” (Castiglia, 2005, p. 5). Analysis is the ability to see patterns and recognize hidden meanings. A student who can analyze can distinguish facts from opinions, main ideas from secondary points, and can justify conclusions. **Synthesis** is the capability to draw conclusions and use facts to generalize and create new ideas. Synthesis also includes the ability to have original thought, to create ideas and to hypothesize a relationship between two variables. At the highest level is **Evaluation** which means having the aptitude to assess theories, discriminate between ideas and assess evidence. Students can determine the value of information, determine the value of information, and make judgments about an object on a set of standards. The higher the level of learning, the more likely the individual will retain information and will be able to use the skills in other situations. Our goal as educators should be to create situations for students that arouse higher levels of learning

Literature Review of Bloom’s Taxonomy in Business

Freshmen often come into college with the expectation that they need to learn, but their definition of learning is limited to memorizing or being told what to do. Castiglia (2005) found that traditional undergraduate students enter college expecting to be taught knowledge. As they progress to their senior year, their expectations of what it means to learn changes as they experience higher levels of learning and thinking in their courses. At Castiglia’s institution, students are actively involved in research and service learning in at least one course. “In Bloom’s terminology, they have moved from analysis (answering questions) to synthesis and evaluation. Behavioral learning becomes the norm. This process, for the traditional 18-year old, requires a full four years” (p. 5). As with many institutions, Castiglia’s university has an adult learner program. She conducted a study comparing incoming traditional freshman and adult learners and found that adult learners entering school enter at higher levels of learning than the traditional freshman and therefore need different types of assessment and hence teaching. While traditional freshman need to begin learning with knowledge and comprehension, which are frequently measured through multiple choice exams, adult learners need more stimulation in their thinking and should be assessed immediately through tools such as cases analysis, values assessment and team building skills.

Athanassiou, McNett and Harvey (2003) discuss students’ lack of an “ability or willingness to frame interesting questions” (p. 534) and questioned whether giving students more control of their learning by providing frameworks would help them assess their progress and improve their learning. They had students not fully understanding what distinguishes an excellent (A) from an average (C) paper. Students said “just tell us what to do and we’ll do it.” They did not understand that they were the ones who needed to demonstrate that they could think originally, not just follow directions. Students needed a better communication tool for understanding what creative and developmental thinking actually was. Athanassiou, McNett and Harvey (2003) determined that providing students with a clear description of Bloom’s Taxonomy and gave the students the framework needed for them to assess their own performance. They also determined

that clear feedback was essential for students to enhance their learning, thinking and performance.

In addition to using Bloom's Taxonomy as a tool for developing self-assessment, it has been used to teach students self-management skills (Athanassiou, McNett and Harvey 2003, Balda 2005, Brookhart 2001 and Harvey 1988). Bloom's Taxonomy has also been used as a discussion point for creating and enhancing curriculum (Abrami, d'Apollonia, & Rosenfield, 1997). Niehoff and Whitney-Bammerlin (1995) created activities for utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy in Total Quality Management training. They suggested that "The taxonomy can improve the following steps in TQM training: 1. Perform a needs assessment to find out where the participants are in the taxonomy. 2. Use the taxonomy to sequence the activities and design checkpoints during the session. 3. Target the activities to hit multiple levels of learning and information processing" (p. 39).

Kourilisky and Carlson (1996) found that students engaging in an entrepreneurship simulation found that "Students whose learning can progress beyond the application levels are able to deal with successively more sophisticated issues. These issues can range from the pros and cons of intellectual property rights and their impact on product competition and product pricing – to evaluation of various types of business regulatory policies. Students who experience the highest levels of the cognitive domain grow to realize that many times issues are neither clearly right nor clearly wrong – but are often dependent on one's point of view. They also realize that having a point of view and understanding the ramifications of one's actions and decisions are an important part of being a productive member of society." (p. 14).

Andrews and Wynekoop (2004) created a three dimension model of the taxonomy in an information systems course. "The x-axis represents the targeted population by major. The y-axis uses Blooms taxonomy (Bloom, 1956) to indicate how the learning takes place. The third dimension represents the topical areas of IS (Andrews and Wynekoop page 437). Most of the topics covered in the basic IS course focused on comprehension, while successive courses focused additionally focused on application, analysis and evaluation. This study not only revealed the core concepts taught in courses, but also the appropriate methods needed to teach the courses at higher levels such as using case analysis and designing and developing an IS application.

METHODS

During the summer of 2004 I began background work with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod [LCMS] to understand why enrollment at many local LCMS elementary and middle schools was declining. I began by interviewing top members of the Educational Southwestern District of the LCMS. Three schools were chosen to examine and an additional school with increasing enrollment was used as a benchmark. One group of students studied an inner-city, ethnically diverse campus, one group studied a very-white school in the suburbs and one group studied a school that was in between downtown, the suburbs and inner city with slight diversity. The various types of school were chosen so that other schools in the Twin Cities area with similar demographics might find the results useful.

Due to the depth of the project (students engaging in massive secondary research, personal interviews and phone surveys), I conducted secondary research on multiple topics related to private school enrollment such as home schooling, public school enrollment, charter school information and population shifts. I then compiled tables of information for students and provided them with copies of some basic articles on the topics previously mentioned as well as information provided by each school involved in the project.

At the beginning of the semester several individuals from the LCMS spoke to my students about the enrollment problem. While LCMS academic members did not suspect that population and demographic shifts might be a problem, I showed them and the students some data that indicated it might be and asked the students to expand on the research. While Concordia University is an LCMS school, not all students come from a LCMS or even a Lutheran background. Due to this fact, we needed to spend some time talking about the history of the LCMS educational system, its politics and its practices. LCMS professors from campus and individuals from off campus served as additional contact points for students.

The next major task to explain to the students was the complexity of having real life clients for a marketing research project. I provided the students with an example of a consulting log (a requirement for the project to ensure they are tracing their time as they would in the “real world”) and informed students they would need to keep an updated log of all their activities as it would be needed for an end-of-the semester reflection paper. The Southwestern Director of the LCMS provided the class with an abundance of data from 18 categories for a 14 year time period (enrollment figures, number of faculty, turnover, etc). The tables compiled by I as well as some articles and web-sites were discussed as beginning points of data collection and analysis for the students.

In class, daily discussion of the project was required. No matter what the service learning project is, students are similar in their early comments, “What are we supposed to do.” For many students, this is one of the first times they are not being “spoon fed” information, they have to not only find it themselves, they have to determine what they need to find. Students said they felt overwhelmed in the beginning. Even though there were 13 due dates on their syllabi, they still felt the project was too “disorganized” because they did not know what to do every single day at a precise time. Overcoming this perception is huge. As a professor, it is a bit frustrating to hear that the project requirements are not clear when much work has been put into a project in advance, but it is necessary to realize that students are not used to this type of project (the students are often used to being told every detail of a paper/project requirement). This is usually students first experience with a real life project that works with clients and respondents. The work and research evolves as more data is gathered and more information is analyzed. The more students interact with the clients, the more they begin to understand the complexity and fluidity of the project.

Students began the semester by searching the Internet, library and databases to find information on private/public/charter/home schools, population trends, education trends and ethnic population distributions. I have to reorganize presentation of textbook chapters slightly in order to provide students with the knowledge of the marketing research concepts before applying them. Students need to engage in evaluation as they peruse websites and databases to determine which

sources are reliable and valid. Data from various sources are discussed each day in class so that the students may share information with groups working to help a different school.

Students began analyzing their secondary data findings approximately one month into the school year. The data search includes synthesizing information from their “Consumer Behavior and Marketing Communications” and “Principles of Marketing” classes as they need to determine what type of information to search for. Frequent in-class discussion validated that their work was heading in the right direction. Their secondary analysis papers were graded and returned with many comments. The students were nervous at first and believed this meant they received a bad grade. I point out to the class (and must remember) that this is a learning experience and that students lack the skill in writing a research report for an outside client (which means much more editing for grammar, semantics, etc.) I give students multiple opportunities to edit their reports for further analysis and revisions.

In class we made lists of the key findings and used this as a discussion point for creating personal interview questionnaires for the three schools we were assisting. Additionally, we examined data provided to us from the school president’s on enrollment data. Based on the information, I developed an interview questionnaire for faculty and staff at the three schools with the input of students. At this point in the semester, the students had not been through questionnaire development in their textbooks. Students were trained in interviewing techniques, practiced in class, and pre-tested the questionnaires on others outside the class. After some revisions, the questionnaires were finalized. The questionnaires were qualitative in nature containing mostly open-ended questions. Students went to the three schools (two suburban, one urban – each with very different demographics) to conduct the interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes to one hour. As each school had a relatively small staff size, we were able to interview 70-100% of the faculty and staff at each school.

Students used analysis from these interviews to focus their continuous collection of secondary data research for several weeks. Because the focus of this paper is on Bloom’s taxonomy and not on the results, the results will not be discussed here. Due to the large amount of information obtained, we determined a basic outline for presenting the information so that readers (and the audience at the presentation) would see a similar flow in all the papers. At this point, questionnaire development and some data analysis techniques had been discussed. With this information in mind, students analyzed all the data they had to that point to create phone surveys. The phone surveys combined closed and open-ended questions. Phone surveys were turned into me for editing as many times as was needed. Time in class was allocated to phone survey development so that the I would be there to assist with questions.

Principals from the three major schools under study assisted with choosing different phone books from the Twin Cities, Minnesota as Sample Frames (realizing there is a bias for those who are not listed). The qualifying question asked respondents if they had children between the ages of 3 and 14. If not, they were thanked and told they were thanked for their time. Respondents were very eager to answer the surveys as the students said it was a senior project about education in Minnesota. The fact that it was close to election time might have helped our response rate (about 90% - much higher than usual for this class). Because of the large amount of work I was asking

students to perform, I asked each group to interview only 60 respondents. Students kept call record sheets, and collected, entered and analyzed data via SPSS.

Each team wrote an extensive final report. In total, the teams each wrote four drafts of their reports, with each report building on the previous both in content and editorially.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN MARKETING RESEARCH

Professor's Perspective

Levels of learning in marketing research are not only able to be measured through the course project, activities and exams, but also through frequent class discussion and a course reflection paper which asks students to comment on how learning was exhibited at all six levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Following is my evaluation of how students exhibit learning at each level as well as comments from their course reflection paper.

The following will provide a comprehensive perspective of not only a semester devoted to the LCMS enrollment project but also years of having students engage in service-learning projects in Bloom's Taxonomy. Additionally, student and alumni comments on each level of learning will be provided.

Knowledge is an absolute essential in a Marketing Research course. The subject matter of this course is not intuitive as our concepts in some other courses such as Consumer Behavior. Students need to understand the difference between a Likert and Semantic differential scale, a nominal and ratio scale, how to code open-ended questions, how a questionnaire should flow, and what types of data can be obtained from different types of scales. If they do not have this knowledge, they will not only create bad questionnaires, engage in sloppy focus groups, conduct inadequate interviews, but they will also not necessarily have the information needed for valid and reliable analysis (whether qualitative or quantitative).

For students, knowledge needed for a marketing research project can be frustrating. They want to know exactly what to do. This is not possible with a developing project. As professors, we sometimes hear "tell me what to do and I'll do it". Students are unaware that they are asking us to have them engage in low levels of learning when they say this. It is very difficult for many students to grasp having a project that evolves based on information as it is obtained. While students often have every day knowledge of concepts in Consumer Behavior or Advertising, they seldom have such knowledge of Marketing Research Concepts (especially data analysis techniques). Teaching students the basics of statistics and using a statistical program such as SPSS may be intimidating also, but absolutely necessary. Running drill sessions with data they are already familiar with (such as an evaluation form on professors) will help with their understanding. It is essential these concepts are taught thoroughly as the basis for all other work in a service-learning project.

There are four major **comprehension** concepts in this type of project: taking book learning and putting it to use, time management, e-mail management, and communication with group members. Students are used to demonstrating their comprehension abilities through multiple-

choice and essay exams, but might be apprehensive when asked to perform higher level statistics such as ANOVA or Factor Analysis. One way to deal with ANOVA is to use it with Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior as the dependent variable in teaching the technique. By using something familiar, students seem to grasp it more easily. When they come to analyzing project data via SPSS, some will easily find the numbers they need, but will not be able to understand what the number means. “Is a p of .85 good or bad?” To implement any type of study and analysis, students must have a firm grasp on marketing research concepts.

Even if students are told that time management is essential, they do not always “get it” right away. As drafts of project sections come due, time management skills becomes evident. It is important to have frequent deadlines on the syllabus and give students time in class to work on projects. This will also help the professor as students often have similar questions and your time can be minimized answering some questions as you tell the entire class at one point.

Time management is essential to working in groups and is directly related to communication. Students need to schedule group time outside of class to meet. They need to understand they can not put things off. While students will ask questions in other courses, when a service-learning and/or client based project is involved, they must realize that asking questions as they arise is essential. To do this, they need to understand the importance of e-mail. They need to learn to check e-mail frequently (even on weekends) and create and manage folders for a project. Failure to do so will result in missing information. After the first deadline, most individuals realize that time management, e-mail management and communication between group members, with the professor and the client is essential.

A service-learning project is ripe with **application**. Students must know to actually use textbook concepts such as developing semantic and likert scales, determining how many and what type of questions to use, deciding how long the questionnaire should be, knowing how to interview people, and learning how to probe and how to clarify.

Analysis constantly occurred as students collected and examine data from a 14 year period. They had to determine patterns that existed in geographic shifts of different population groups. Students needed code open ended questions and find common themes. In the student reflection paper, I ask students to comment on (1) what their expectations were for the project versus what actually happened, (2) how it is different working on a real life project, and (3) to reflect on how mistakes helped them. Students overwhelmingly say that this project was much more work than they thought it would be (even when they are told this will happen). They enjoy interactions they have with outside clients and appreciate the experience it will give them on their resumes. Students are very surprised at how in-depth the comments are on their papers, but realize this is needed for them to make corrections for an outside client. Comments such as “bad grammar and poor semantics” are not enough for a paper such as this. Students need to determine what is specifically what is wrong and how to fix it. Students have a new experience when they analyze output from SPSS. They must not only perform the correct analysis, but also correctly analyze the output.

In the written report students continuously need to **synthesize** data. Students must bring together data from many sources on many topics and determine the best way to present it. In class we

share information on topics such as on charter and public schools. Each group must choose which pieces of information it will include in its own report. Students need to incorporate information into their paper from previous courses; such as promotional concepts, cultural issues and values. Students need to integrate every piece of information they have obtained and analyzed and make valid conclusions. From the conclusions students must demonstrate that not only can they ascertain problems or possibilities to the research objectives, but that they can also propose recommendations for marketing strategies or tactics to give the client a differential advantage.

Students demonstrate their ability to **evaluate** also on a continuous basis. At the beginning of the project, students need to ascertain what was expected out of the LCMS educational system, what the current situation was, and what the future held. Through their secondary research, they must determine what information is relevant and if the source is reliable. Once they have determined the data is indeed reliable and valid, students need to ascertain what information is significant to the research and the clients. Students need to determine the best format for presenting the data for the level of knowledge of the client. Is information presented in a textual format, chart, or a table? Do terms need to be explained? How much background information must be explained about a study? Do the students believe the client already knows the information?

In the personal interviews, students need to assess the interviewee's response and body language to determine if the person is relaxed and giving them depth answers, or is just rushing through the interview. The students must also be able to appraise their own abilities in interviewing (via in person or by phone) to determine if they have done enough probing and clarification. When creating the phone survey, students must judge which questions are relevant and if the survey will provide sufficient information.

Student and Alumni Perspective

All students are asked at the end of the semester of their project to reflect on their experiences. I familiarize students at the beginning of the semester with Bloom's Taxonomy and provide them with a one page handout on the taxonomy. Following are excerpts from students' papers from fall 2004. Additionally, I e-mailed my alumni, included Bloom's Taxonomy, and asked them to tell me as a working person, out of college, what learning occurred for them at the different levels. Alumni were more likely to discuss higher levels of learning and integrate their discussion of the levels of learning. Because of the size of our school, I am only providing the quotations and no description of the person giving the statement. A "C" indicates current students, an "A" indicates alumni.

Knowledge

C- "First off we had no clue about what was really going on, all that we knew was that it was a big project and we would have to type a little bit in order to achieve positive results... the paper turned out to be a whole lot of writing."

C -"I had never received so many messages in one semester. After the first week alone it was apparent that not only did I need to enact Outlook's filter option but I also found the need to create folders in order to better manage what was coming in."

C - "I was not able to look at past examples but my group took them into great consideration when looking for format and what was to be included in order to get a good grade on the paper."

C - "I had to know what kind of information I was searching for, I needed to know the school and the community I was researching, and knowledge of the main goal of the project." - C

C - "My knowledge of the whole private Lutheran school sector increased throughout the project. I can fully comprehend the statistics we performed and the interviews we completed." –

A - "Our study asked the market what they know about the Red Cross and it's services. The study found the most of the people surveyed didn't know the variety of services the Red Cross provided."

A – "The first step required that we obtained knowledge of systems and of how to conduct the actual research."

A - The Red Cross Marketing project made me understand the concepts involved in determining or predicting future trends by studying the current consumers. Marketing research has to do with gathering information about all aspects of the market: competitors, trends, structure... Our study asked the market what they know about the Red Cross and it's services. The study found the most of the people surveyed didn't know the variety of services the Red Cross provided."

Comprehension

C - "With all of the people there had to be near flawless communication. It made me realize how many more things have to come together in order for a real project and paper to come together. Not only that, but also the amount of time and work that is required to achieve results."

C- "I think the most critical factor for me when dealing with a real project was that the information collected and distributed once again needed to be of the utmost truth in order to really draw in a crowd to listen to what you have to say."

C - "Mistakes hurt, they are flaws and little annoyances that drive me to finding out the right way to do things so that I to can succeed as many have before me. I like to dissect problems and then figure out the best way to get things done accordingly. The best part about this project was that there was more than one chance to get it right (students wrote first drafts and edited their papers multiple times). We had many opportunities to get our papers to their final print and I think without knowing that we could make mistakes to learn from, the entire process would have been a whole lot less stable as well as nerve racking for all involved."

C- "It was necessary for me to comprehend all that I read in order to discuss the project with respondents and translate questions and find possible solutions."

A – "I have a hard time remembering what the exact concepts of the course were, but I DO know that it made us put the teachings of developing a research plan into action. Definitely served as an example for how to develop an applicable questionnaire, how much you needed to do research just to develop that questionnaire and how your sample size influenced your surroundings."

Application

C – "Application was actually using the information that I have retained, and putting the information into the project."

C - "I needed to apply my knowledge from past classes and reading in order to analyze the projects findings and draw conclusions on the research."

A - “A key takeaway was how much you really need to dig deep into the workings and mission of the company. It showed how much you need to understand what their goals are, how they function as an organization and where THEY feel like they need to change. Then you can really tailor your research to answer the questions that they need to have answered because you understand them as well.”

A - “We brought in people for focus groups for in-depth exploratory purposes. The focus groups allowed us to see what was known and important to the market.”

A - “The class used qualitative and quantitative forms of research. We brought in people for focus groups for in-depth exploratory purposes. The focus groups allowed us to see what was known and important to the market. From there we could write a survey to gather more information in greater numbers. The quantitative surveys touched as many people as possible to determine perceptions of the public.”

Analysis

C - “When we were analyzing our phone interviews we had to interpret the numbers. We would see certain patterns as to what factors parents think of when it comes to their child’s education.”

C - “I had to interpret data from SPSS and our interviews. Our group also had to take all of the information and data, analyze it, and make realistic recommendations. We had to analyze the problems that the LCMS were having with enrollment and make a professional conclusion and realistic recommendations.”

C - “We had to analyze the problems that the LCMS and LEA were having with enrollment and make a professional conclusion and realistic recommendations.”

C - “Analysis was taking the information and organizing it. Doing the project required a lot of analysis, for example doing the data tables, and describing them.”

C - “When we were analyzing our phone interviews we had to interpret the numbers. We would see certain patterns as to what factors parents think of when it comes to their child’s education. This project dealt with a lot of analysis of data.”

A - “After analyzing our focus group discussions, we could write a survey to gather more information in greater numbers.”

A - As far as the Red Cross project goes, we had to seek to understand the business as a nonprofit and how they worked. We next had to find out who the key players were in terms of where their funding was coming from. After we did that, we had to analyze the situation and find, through our research, who we would market to and what other markets were still untapped. The project then required us to integrate the information we found and come up with action steps and solutions of how we could move into those markets.”

A - “After gathering all the information, we analyzed and graphed data via SPSS.”

A - “We gathered as much information as possible and analyzed data via crosstabs and correlation correlate to find as many trends as possible. That project was tough especially for a student, we worked real hard on it and gave it all we could.”

Synthesis –

C- “Synthesis is representative of the recommendations and conclusions section of our presentations where we showed what we had found and elaborated on ideas that others were doing in a way that reflected possibilities for our respective schools (the one the team was studying).”

C - "I needed to take all of the secondary research and compile it into a paper where everyone can read it and understand it."

C - "While writing this paper, it had to be completely unbiased and everything needed to have evidence to support it."

C - "Synthesis was used to evaluate the facts and stating them. It was also used when coming up with recommendations for School A."

A - "We generalized the answers that were given to us from our interviews, made a theoretical conclusion, and the groups expanded their information with each other to make overall recommendations."

A - "We gave the Red Cross ideas on how to reach their target market, we determined what their name meant from a branding standpoint, how effective/ineffective their marketing was. All of our research was broken down by demographics to help them target subjects they were missing."

A - This a "real life" project that required is to have direct contact with over 200, mostly unwilling participants. We had to put all of our schooling or training together to get the number of participants needed to obtain credible information. We had to do everything from write the survey with a catching opening line to hook the respondent to chart the 200 answers."

Evaluation

C - "I think that communication was also a key to making this project a success. There were always those points where non-verbal communication played a huge role in both interviews as well as in group time. Being able to recognize these signals helped me to know when to probe and when to let things be as well as when to be extra nice to my group-mates as well as my interviewees."

C - "Evaluation occurred throughout the project every time that we came together as groups with different ideas on how the format of our research should be as well as when we compared what we had found with other groups."

C - "We compared our school to school X (benchmark school) to see what they were doing that our schools were not."

C - "I used evaluation to draw final conclusions and develop sound recommendations."

C - "This goes along with our analyzing. Through our data and research, we evaluated the problems and issues that the schools were having. We compared our school benchmark school to see what they were doing that our schools were not."

C and A - "Writing is graded more strictly" C and A (approximate statement)

A - "It helped me learn how to apply things learned in a book to real life. Actually, I wish we could have done the project earlier in our college career. I remember feeling really good about turning in our focus group papers and when we got it back with a bunch of red marks I was really glad we had the chance to re-do it. Because it was our first time, even though we had an outline, it was hard to put that paper together and make ideas clear and concise. What I had thought was a really good paper turned out not to be and it made me evaluate things a little bit more the second time around"

A - "Doing the project on our own, with only the general concepts to follow, really made me learn more. We didn't have anybody to rely on for the "right answer" and it made me work harder to get it right; especially because it was a real thing, not just a class project that would not affect anyone." - A

A – “We gave the Red Cross ideas on how to reach their target market, we determined what their name meant from a branding standpoint, how effective/ineffective their marketing was. All of our research was broken down by demographics to help them target subjects they were missing. All of these points seem to be a huge part in marketing and research needed to be done to help their marketing campaign. After this project we understood the importance of all these concepts listed above.

A – “Having a MR project really planted a seed for me and gave me what I needed to plant my roots and grow. When I got in a real life project, I felt that I was prepared for it and felt that I had already had my roots planted and was already starting to grow. I feel that the only things I wasn't able to do successfully the first time was synthesizing and evaluation. I think that these two aspects become much more clear with experience. It's like the more exposure you get from it the stronger you'll grow. Nothing can really prepare you for the real world but I think that the marketing research project that we did in class gave me the tools I needed to not only survive but to succeed in the real world.”

A – “Reflecting on my project for marketing research...I have definitely been able to use the hands-on information that I learned from conducting focus groups and interviews. By conducting a focus group in college, it prepared me for my current job in many ways. I deal with a wide variety of clients in the building industry and one of the biggest tasks is trying to figure out what my client "wants". In order to envision and create the end result, I have to research my clients goals through listening and probing. The ability to come up with various alternatives and present them to my clients definitely mirrors the steps used in providing a marketing research project to a specific company. Also, I feel that I am better at solving problems now then prior to completing my marketing degree because I am creative and can think outside the box to come up with solutions that will benefit my company and my clients.”

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As can be seen from the student comments, students are not fully able to distinguish between each level of Bloom's Taxonomy. This year in all of my courses, I am incorporating Bloom's Taxonomy into my syllabi. I plan to discuss the taxonomy in depth up front, to give students a better idea of what high level thinking is – and hence what my expectations are for “A” and “B” papers. I am not as concerned that students do not categorize each learning experience into the correct category, as I am with the fact that they need to understand that I want them to learn at higher levels. In addition to making this change in my courses, I also have changed all my tests to move away from simple knowledge and comprehension to higher levels of learning.

Future research has many possibilities. All disciplines in business have potential to do service learning projects and apply Bloom's Taxonomy. Upper level accounting courses could help low-income people with their taxes, finance students could form a finance club actually invest money (or simulate it), management students could work with student government to make processes on campus work more efficiently and effectively, and marketing students have many possibilities to assist non-profit organizations with free marketing services.

It is significant that we encourage students to learn to analyze, synthesize and evaluate. We need to teach them to think and make decisions for themselves, not to rely singly on their professor for what they are supposed to do. While some jobs require little imagination, most of the jobs our students desire will demand they perform at higher levels. It is our responsibility to prepare them for it!

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