2022 GSSI CONFERENCE - PEDAGOGIC SESSION
NEW INSIGHTS INTO SALES EDUCATION

Enhancing sales negotiation skills with role-playing situations combined with the CIT

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THE CRITICAL INCIDENT TECHNIQUE

- CIT : identification of behaviors leading to success or failure in accomplishing a specific task (Ronan and Lathan, 1974).
- CIT : record of these behaviors from those in the best position to make the observations and evaluations (Flanagan, 1954).

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

- Relational and contextual nature of negotiation = challenge to students.
- Reassess interpersonal persuasion behaviors.
- Unlearn old and ineffective behaviors and learn new ones (Lewicki, 1986).

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

- Becoming an effective negotiator = practice in role-playing situations (Core et al., 2006).
- Transformative capacity of role-playing increased with CIT.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

Role-plays involving two students

= scenarios

with a “seller” and a “buyer”.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

Role description of the "seller":

"*The Miele Turbowash washing machine which is on special offer at the moment, includes a range of special features including special cold wash cycle and is only €319,-. (€26,60 per month for 12 months).*

You can offer the customer interest-free credit terms."

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

Role description of the "buyer":

"*You want to buy a new washing machine. Visit the electrical appliance shop and see if the sales assistant will offer you a discount.*

You are budget-conscious, and would respond positively if interest-free credit terms are offered.

You can afford up to €50,- per month on credit payments."

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

- For Master's Degree courses : "*The Cinnamon Case: Sales Negotiation Role Play*" (H.B.R. web site).
- Other role descriptions / cases may be used.
- Role descriptions / cases must fit with the level of the course.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

During and / or after the role-plays,

critical behaviors

(i.e., contributing or being detrimental
to the success of the sales negotiation)

reported by students

on an observation form.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

Questions to be answered on the observation form:

- What were the seller's behaviors that contributed to the success or to the failure of the sales negotiation?

- What were the buyer's behaviors that contributed to the success or to the failure of the sales negotiation?

- Concerning the seller, what specific behavior(s) could have increased the success and the value of the sales negotiation, in a win-win approach?

- What could the seller have done to foster even more the buyer's positive behaviors and purchase decision, in a win-win approach?

- Any special additional remark about what was detrimental to the success of the sales negotiation and about what can be improved?

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

Debrief the role-play:

- ask the two “players” to answer verbally (in a reflexive way) the questions;
- ask other students to answer these questions using the completed observation form;
- summarize the answers given and provide additional advice.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

- Process used also for online classes or hybrid settings.
- Role-plays can be done online by the students on their own.
- In pairs, after the class, using ZOOM or any other software.

TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

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TEACHING SALES NEGOTIATION WITH THE CIT

- Students record their role-play and watch their sales interaction.
- While watching, they complete the observation form.
- Teaching perspective = reflexive.

EXTENDING THE CIT TO ILLUSTRATE NEGOTIATIONS IN A CUSTOMER SUCCESS ROLE

CUSTOMER SUCCESS (CS)

- Customer success = new frontline role prevalent in SaaS companies.
- Customer success professionals tasked with arresting churn as well as cross-selling and upselling (Hochstein et al. 2020; 2021).

CIT FOR CS

- Two critical incidents created based on feedback from a participating company.
- 1) customer churn, 2) an opportunity to upsell after a review meeting with a client.

ROLE-PLAYS

- Both role-plays created together with a sponsoring company.
- The role-plays are presented to the students who are then required to choose one of the scenarios.
- Specific evaluation criteria for each role-play.

DEPLOYMENT-STAGE 1

- To help students prepare for the role-plays, given the novelty of the area, a recording is made of the role-play with the instructor acting as the CS Manager and a company CS Rep acting as the customer.
- The students are then told to evaluate the roleplay of the instructor, reflecting on how they would do things different.

DEPLOYMENT-STAGE 2

- Similar to the CIT for sales, the students then do the role-play in class in teams of 4.
- There is a student playing the CS, there is a student playing the customer, and two observers.
- All of the students need to record observations.
- One volunteer is chosen per team and debriefs in class with the lecturer.