DESIGNING DISPUTE RESOLUTION SYSTEMS FOR ORGANIZATIONS

Southern Methodist University
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Designing Systems for the Effective Management of Conflict
Nancy H. Rogers (The Ohio State University)
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Frank E. A. Sander (Harvard University)
Craig A. McEwen (Bowdoin College)

Pre-class Assignment: Read Parts I, II and III

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Executives and community leaders are facing an ever increasing number of organizational disputes in the form of customer complaints, employee grievances, charges of discrimination, contractual disagreements, law suits, and unhealthy competition within and between work groups. Organizations are inclined to handle these conflicts on a case-by-case basis or use adversarial approaches that often escalate the situation and result in expensive solutions later on. An effective dispute resolution system can offer a constructive approach to managing a wide range of organizational conflicts. These systems provide an integrative and comprehensive way to minimize conflict and resolve disputes when they arise.

This course is based upon the instructor's extensive experience in the design of dispute resolution systems with clients such as: United Airlines, MediaOne, Levi Straus and CO., U.S. Department of the Interior, and The Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

This course is designed for executives, human resource personnel and graduate students who are seeking systematic, successful ways of handling internal and external conflicts.

Key Learning Objectives	How Achieved
1. Students will learn a practical approach for analyzing sources of disputes, evaluating effectiveness of current procedures, and involving the key people	Students will review case studies and engage in exercises which illustrate different procedures and their varying degrees of success.

in the organization in assessing the need for change.	
2. Students will learn a step-by-step process for developing an appropriate system.	A close examination of case studies along with a specific design process will enable students to become familiar with the requirements and strategies for designing a system.
3. Students will learn how to incorporate a variety of dispute management procedures into a dispute resolution system including peer review boards, the ombudsman model, process consultation teams, mediation, advisory mediation and arbitration.	Students will examine several ADR procedures and then form small work groups and, using a simulation, begin the process of designing a dispute resolution system.
4. Students will learn how to identify potential problems or conflicts, and match the problem to the appropriate dispute management procedure.	Students will learn and practice matching specific conflicts to specific ADR strategies through class exercises and discussion.
5. Students will learn procedures and techniques for monitoring/evaluating the results, and fine-tuning the system.	Students will divide into groups and develop an evaluation and monitoring plan for the system they have already designed using principles and models reviewed in class.
6. Students will learn how to overcome organizational resistance to change, build support, and handle ethical dilemmas during system design and implementation.	Students will work through several scenarios and exercises, designing several strategies for coping with change.
7. Students will learn practical strategies to persuade organizations to implement new systems	The instructor will provide several steps and strategies for effectively marketing system design services and students will develop a preliminary marketing plan in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade will be based on:

50% class attendance and participation
50% final essay

Attendance: Attendance will be taken each day of class. Due to the amount of material covered, have another student take notes on any portion of the class that you will miss. If you *miss* more than three hours of class *(out* of forty hours of class) your grade will begin to be effected. If you anticipate missing more than six hours of class, please drop the class as you can no longer receive credit.

Final essay: You will be required to write an essay (no less than ten pages in length, double-spaced) on an existing dispute resolution system or on a system which is in the development stage. Your grade will be based on the following:

The clarity of your presentation and critique of the system
The quality of your research (Your paper must cite a minimum of three sources in addition to your own experience/expertise.)
Demonstrated knowledge and application of systems design.

Note: Creativity and individual thinking is important as is spelling and grammar. The overall clarity and style of your writing is also important and will be taken into consideration.

Essays must be delivered via e-mail to the instructor by 7:00 A.M., October 1. Essays must be in Word Format, not in PDF. Extensions will be granted only in extreme emergencies. The email address is: judy.mares-dixon@earthlink.net