

Activating teaching through stepwise understanding of hands-on business situations under academic guidance

Applied in courses 5029 (SS 2017) and
after additional development **1345 (WS 2017/18)** titled
“Global Markets – Industry Evolution and Firm Strategy”
(focus clearly on course 1345 – WS 2017/18, as submitted to the award)

Successfully taught to students from 15 nations (Europe, Asia, America),
proving the model’s international applicability

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A) Approach of activating teaching: The stepwise model of understanding hands-on business situations under academic guidance

The applied innovative model for activating teaching (depicted below) was developed on the basis of in-class teaching experience and student feedback in the respective course evaluations between 2014 and 2016 (five consecutive semesters), consisting of three main parts, as shown below. Assignments are generally structured in a format of stepwise activating of the students with the aim of understanding real life business situations.

Many assignments are to be done in heterogeneous student's groups (high percentage of incomings etc.):

- Student's individual cultural background and knowledge adds to the group's knowledge and learning;
- However, common expectations of the new knowledge level have to be defined;
- Meeting of expectations are peer-rated at the end of the class.
- Guidance is given in this process also through clear (in evaluations high-valued) feedback including practical relevance, theory, argumentation, clarity and persuasiveness. Not least, the quality of insights that the presentation leads to for other participants forces active participation of everyone.

1) Stepwise activating motivation and deep understanding as well as sense of real-life business situations: kick-off in-class <> case study at home <> in-class reflection with practitioner

Specific Context: e.g. Global Wine & Beer Industry, under specific consideration and incorporation of students' previous knowledge and experience -- easy cases in-class as kick-off; hands-on case as a teamwork prepared for presentation; after presentation in-class the guest lecturer of the specific session acts as panelists and leads a constructive discussion.

2) Based on that, activation is possible by motivating to learn theoretical concepts and frameworks independently from the class, which is then tightened in-class:

Introduction and critical assessment of popular management and international business concepts and theoretical frameworks (e.g. resource-based view of the firm), with the possibility of actively working on the topic for participation-grade relevant points.

3) Guided active process of transferring internalized practical and theoretical knowledge to work on real-life business challenges, round-up with field-trip & practitioner

Transfer of theoretical knowledge to specific business situations in case studies situated in the more general context of the Fast Moving Consumer Goods Industries.

This overview and the model below shows the innovative character of the course. In the following, the detailed implementation of the concept is shown while presenting the course description (syllabus, aims and learning outcomes etc.).

Activating teaching with a stepwise model of understanding hands-on business situations under academic guidance

1) Stepwise activating motivation and sense of real-life business situations

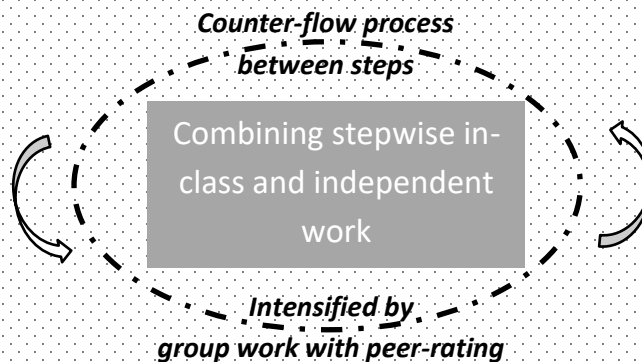
E.g. group work presented in class <> practitioner's insights

Aim: providing practical insights and relevant real-life business experience

2) Students are motivated to actively learn concepts and frameworks

E.g. actively learning at home, active class-participation

Aim: based on motivation that there is a need for theory, students get in touch with theory and deepen it in-class



3) Active process of transferring knowledge to work on other real-life business challenges (under guidance!)

Focus: Independent group work under guidance

Aim: providing skills to solve managerial challenges in real-life business situations

B) Assessment, learning outcome & aims

The assessment of students participating in this course is based on the following criteria:

- **Class participation and individual preparation:** 30 % of the grade. Given the interactive format of this course, active participation in class discussions is required. This includes evidence of thorough preparation of course materials, particularly case studies and readings. Students are expected to attend all of the classes. Hence, attendance is a prerequisite and not subject to grading. It is ok to miss one class during the semester if an emergency, illness or such means that students cannot attend.
- **Case presentation** (group assignment): 20 % of the grade. Allocation to groups will be done during the first lecture. Each group will have to prepare an analysis of one of the teaching cases guided by pre-assigned case questions and will have to present it to the class.
- **Final presentations** (group assignment): 40 % of the grade. In the final presentations students will present their own project, i.e., they will have to evaluate the strategy of an international FMCG company of their choice (outside the wine and beer industry) in light of the firm's capabilities and the industry environment. The company of their choice has to be approved by the instructor in the fourth session. The final presentation has to get a positive mark in order to pass the course. Group projects will be presented in class during the last session.

- Presentations will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria: relevance of content; application of course concepts; arguments given to support conclusions; clarity and persuasiveness; usefulness of recommendations for managers. In addition to the above criteria, presentations will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of insights that the presentation leads to for other participants.
- **Peer rating:** 10 % of the grade. Each group member's participation in team work will be assessed by peer group members. Each team member is required to submit a peer rating form. This form is to contain an evaluation of each team member. The form will be kept in strict confidence.

Learning outcome: The aims of this course in terms of key skills are:

- The ability to analyze cases which approximates closely to the rapid analysis of global business situations.
- The ability to understand global markets and conduct a strategic analysis in specific industry contexts.
- The ability to research material related to companies and business context, structure ideas and presentations both as individuals and work in teams as members of a group.
- The ability to transfer learnings from one context to others.

C) Special resources for active learning

The course is enriched through combining instructor's feedback processes (see above and also below in the assessment section) as well as practitioner's views in addition to their input in-class (guest lecture, but also role of a guest panelist = discussant & coach). These have to be chosen carefully to reach the courses aim. As an example, the list below shows the chosen practitioners (guest lecturers and coaches) for the specific topic of the course, which means that it should be avoided to invite routine-blinded guests. Below, the mission statement of the lecturer's background rounds up the holistic combination of human resources for teaching a course while applying the concept of stepwise activating students.

INVOLVED GUEST LECTURERS & COACHES (also acting as guest panelists to coach discussing student's presentations)

Matthias Hofmarcher, BA (host of the field trip)

Graduated from the IMC Krems in Export-oriented Management, Master Program „Product and Innovation Management“ at AMU
Current position: Export manager Ottakringer Brewery AG, tasks: Development and implementation of the corporate export strategy, sales initiatives to achieve economic goals, customs clearance and formal documentation in the daily export business, negotiation of contracts with foreign agents / consultants / clients, involvement in the product development process for the export business

Judith Mehofer, MA

Master in International Wine Marketing (University of Applied Sciences Burgenland)
Current position: Winery Mehofer, expertise: Deep experience in craft beer and hence connecting both industries

Barbara Waxenegger, MA

Graduated from University of Westminster (Master of Business in Events and Conference Management)
Current position & expertise: Austrian Wine Marketing board, Head of Department Markets Western & Southern Europe, The Americas, Africa

Ing. Mag. Joachim Skoff, CEMS MIM

Graduated from WU Vienna (WU-Mag. and CEMS-Master), Ingenieur (practical experience, education)
Current position: CEO Vifocs GmbH, Leibnitz / Styria, Austria, expertise: Winemaker assistant at Concha y Torro / Chile (Teaching case on this winery), winemaker assistant at Zorgvliet / South Africa & Seifried / New Zealand, board member: Winery Walter Skoff, Styria

Dr. Anne Hoenen

Doctorate in International Business (WU Vienna; Copenhagen Business School)
Current position: Red Noses International, expertise: Industry experience in the Global Beer Industry (Carlsberg)

LECTURER & COACH

Ing. Karl Brindlmayer, MA MSc

Current position: Research and teaching associate at the Institute for International Business; active in parent's winery
Master's degrees in Economics (WU Vienna) and International Wine Marketing (University of Applied Sciences Burgenland)
Bachelor's degree in Business Administration at WU Vienna, specializations in SME Management, Accounting, and Tax Law.
Expertise from outside the specific industries (several years in market analysis of big finance firm) and inside: extensive practical experience in parents' winery and with **several firms in the wine industry in Austria and Italy**. "Ingenieur" because of education (HBLA Klosterneuburg) and practical working experience in the wine industry and more (officially recognized exam which is a requisite for tasting wines at awards and for approving quality wines, involved with **creating and leading cooperatives**).

D) Concept outline in detail: an innovative 3 step-approach for activating teaching

In the following, this 3 step-approach is shown via citing the course booklet (see appendix), which is the bracket of the teaching concept. This is reflected in the way of showing the innovative concepts and their connections.

Step 1: Stepwise activating motivation and sense of real-life business situations

To get insights into the broad concept, the course focuses on a small number of very specific real-life business fields, where the students are able to easily access the topic and find interest in it. The probability of a deep initial interest of the students should be high and not least is to be checked in the very first session. Finally, one should highlight that the relevance of the chosen specific real-life business fields should be clearly highlighted at the beginning of the course. The aim is to make the students “experts” in this field with an “in-depth understanding”. As a result, the course concept secondly enables student to experience tools and theories useful for problem solving in this area (which is firm strategy in connection with industry evolution in the case of the course).

Implementation

- Lecture presentation (based on different streams of theoretical background in the field, instructor as expert in the field, e.g. in this course through first-hand insights with several years of practical experience)
- Student’s teaching case presentations (with case questions on theoretical background)
- Guest lecture(s), also acting as panellists in discussions after group presentations (additional expert information and connection with real-life business and possibility for discussions)
- Field trip with guide and expert (guest lecture) (additional expert information from the guide and deeper connection with real-life business touring through a real company)
- Additional readings (including recent reports, journal articles with theoretical as well practical relevance, hand-outs of real life folders)

Therefore, we will focus on two particular industries only (global beer and wine) to make students experts in these industries and to allow an in-depth understanding. Specifically, the design of this course will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of two specific global markets: global beer and wine. These two beverage industries share interesting commonalities, such as dominant, but rather stagnating or even declining per capita consumption in Western markets with volume growth coming from emerging markets, trends for more convenience and at-home consumption, and increasing health and environmental consciousness (low calories, organic and natural products). At the same time, these two global markets are fundamentally different: the beer industry has experienced unprecedented change where a burst of corporate M&A activity that began in the early 2000s led to the emergence of a small group of top players that dominates the industry on a global level: AB InBev (Belgium), Heineken (the Netherlands) and Carlsberg (Denmark). The global wine market, on the other hand, is still highly fragmented hosting a multitude of diverse producers and wine companies and is characterized by huge regional differences.

Step 2: Students are motivated to actively learn concepts and frameworks

Methodologically, the teaching design starts with a very popular and important concept in the field of the “SBWL”, which is globalisation in this case of the SBWL “International Business”. Moreover, above all, the course concept is aimed at learning about tools and theories useful for problem solving in this area (which is firm strategy combined with industry evolution through the case of the course).

Implementation

- Lecture presentation with many interactive elements (based on different streams of theoretical background in the field, instructor as expert in the field; additionally to traditional lecture of theory with participation, active assignments in-class where all students are included are conducted (e.g. role-playing of different shareholders)
- Guest Lecturers also acting as *panelist* after student's presentations for discussion
- Readings with many active elements (based on different streams of theoretical background in the field, see appendix): quiz at beginning of class as well as possibility to actively formulate multiple choice question and short essays on a practical case of the student's choice in connection with the reading at home

The course is concerned with global markets, i.e., we look at global industry contexts, industry evolution, regional differences, etc. and their implications for firm strategy. The increase in global competition and the corresponding erosion of national boundaries has spurred an unprecedented surge in foreign direct investment, mergers & acquisitions, and cross-border alliances allowing firms to internationalize rapidly and gain access to global pools of capital, new markets, and resources. The course concept is aimed at discussing and experiencing the tools and theories in a profound and applied way.

Step 3: Active process of transferring knowledge to work on other real-life business challenges, under guidance

On that foundation, the perspective can be broadened. The knowledge ("analytical tools and learnings") can be transferred to other cases. This is near to a real-life job situation where academic learnings have to be used in another context.

Realization

- Coaching (individual group coaching sessions)
- Final students presentation (including the definition of the questions)
- Rounded up by field trip at a relevant company including practitioner's insight (e.g. export manager)

At the end of the course, we will broaden our perspective and transfer our analytical tools and learnings to other fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industries. Objective and learning outcome: Students gain knowledge as well as awareness in global markets in connection with the stress field of firm strategy & industry evolution. First-hand management experience is covered with academic background through an interactive course format (in-class discussions & presentations, guest lectures & field trip). Students improve their know-how on analyzing the firm's resources & capabilities as well as an industry & its evolution. Furthermore, their understanding of differences between industries and regions will improve, not least through working on real-life management case studies. All in all, mentioned aims are likely to be reached, with a strong impact of having activated students.

E) Additional materials

For additional insight, the attachments comprises the following course evaluation (Winter semester 2017/2018), showing clearly that the aims of the framework were also reached in the first applications; feedback per Mail includes "thank you very much for the pleasant course" and "thank you very much for your feedback. The course was fun and I learned a lot". In addition, the course booklet, which guides through the whole course, is included in the appendix.