Relating to Others in Groups and Teams, cont.

2020-02-14

Course(s) Used:

- Team and Small Group Communication

  Goals and Objectives:

- Students understand the variety of forms of power and situations involving power, including the societal fantasy of equal power.
- Students know the 5 bases of power described by French and Raven.
- Students are able to list examples of people with each form of power.
- Students gain experience with coding and rater reliability, which are common techniques in Communication research.

  Rationale:

  Students bring a variety of misconceptions about power into communication classes. A more fine-grained understanding of power and its influences on people is helpful in a large number of real-world situations.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- None

  Technology:

- Classroom computer and projector

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session's content
2. Power in groups and teams works differently than we think

   A. Power is never equal
   B. Power differences are not necessarily bad
   C. Power is not constant: it depends on situation
   D. Power is not monolithic, there are different forms

3. French and Raven created the most influential way of describing the bases of power[1]

[1] French, J. & Raven, B. H. (1959). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright (Ed.) *Studies in social power* (pp. 150–167). Institute for Social Research.

A. Legitimate power
B. Expert power
C. Reward power[2]
D. Coercive power[3]
E. Referent power

4. Hands on group work: "Power Bases in Tweets"

A. Students are assigned to pairs or small groups of three
B. Groups should all analyze tweets from the same person, but on different days
C. Each group is assigned a day of tweets to look at (no more than 10 from that day)
D. Students are instructed to include original tweets only, not retweets.
E. For each tweet, the group should:

  1. Read the tweet as a group
  2. Decide individually what base of power they would categorize the tweet in
  3. Compare their categorizations
  4. Discuss and decide which categorization they believe is best
  5. Record their final determination as a group

F. Discussion Questions:

  1. How many tweets did your group have in each category?
  2. How easy was it to categorize the tweets?
  3. What base of power do they use most often? Least? Why?

5. Lesson closing

Limitations

Requires that students have access to a device capable of accessing Twitter.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities.

[2] Both reward power and coercive power represent classical conditioning in Psychology.

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