



Instructors Heed the Who:¹ Designing Negotiation Training With the Learner in Mind

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***Editors' Note:** Lewicki and Schneider argue that while our field has made great progress in determining what to teach and how to teach it in negotiation, there has been a surprising reluctance to make the move from "mass production" to "mass customization" that so many other industries have successfully adopted. "The Who" of our training has so far been addressed seriously, they surmise, by only an elite subgroup of trainers. They explain how this can and should change.*

Introduction

This book, with its forerunners (Schneider and Honeyman 2006; Honeyman, Coben, and De Palo 2009), aims to advance negotiation pedagogy into the next generation. The forward-looking progeny of the Istanbul conference and the historical overviews of the advancement of the negotiation field (see Symposium 2009) have in common their focus on particular aspects of negotiation theory – the "What" – as well as negotiation pedagogy – the "How." Unexplored up to now is a particular focus on the "Who" that we teach. This chapter addresses the important issue of whom we are teaching by first examining why we think understanding one's audience could or should matter. Next, we report the results of a non-scientific survey of some expert negotiation trainers, exploring how they assess Who is in their course or workshop, and how that impacts what and how they deliver the training. Finally, we offer several frameworks

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for thinking about the Who in negotiation and the implications for more effective negotiation training.

The development of the field of negotiation has been extraordinary over the last three decades. Early writing in negotiation focused on labor negotiations (McKersie and Cutcher-Gershenfeld 2009), international diplomacy (Babbitt 2009), and game theory (Dixit and Nalebuff 1991; Tsay and Bazerman 2009; Sebenius 2009). Built by economists, social psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, negotiation had a complex body of knowledge even in the 1960s. The move from the basic social sciences into the professional schools of law and business started with a primary focus on adversarial bargaining (which at that time characterized labor relations), purchasing and contracting, but then dramatically shifted in the 1980s to teaching integrative or problem-solving negotiation (Menkel-Meadow 2009).

Within the conversations about different approaches to negotiation, classes focused on teaching about the types of negotiation, social structural factors such as power and the dynamics of agency, perception and communication, individual differences and third parties, and any cross-cultural differences (cf. Lewicki and Litterer 1985, one of the first textbooks in the field). In the 1990s negotiation pedagogy became more interdisciplinary, introducing new theory and research about perceptual and cognitive biases and emotion, and with ethics being integrated into most classes. *The Negotiator's Fieldbook* (Schneider and Honeyman 2006), updated textbooks (Lewicki, Barry, and Saunders 2010; Menkel-Meadow, Love, Schneider, and Sternlight 2004) and the books from the two Second-Generation Negotiation Teaching conferences to date continue the effort to circulate the newest interdisciplinary research – relevant research from the “hard sciences,” for example – and teaching from around the world in order to keep negotiation knowledge at the cutting edge.

The How of teaching negotiation has also developed in the last three decades. Negotiation is rarely taught through lecture alone; teachers in all types of courses use case studies, role-plays, videos and other pedagogical tools to convey negotiation knowledge (Lewicki 2000). While role plays are the most ubiquitous teaching tool, others have argued for moving away from this method (Alexander and LeBaron 2009). Ongoing conversations about efforts to continue to improve pedagogy are common at academic conferences (e.g., the ABA Section on Dispute Resolution Legal Educator's Colloquium) and in journal articles (Honeyman, Hughes, and Schneider 2003; Schneider and MacFarlane 2003; Moffitt 2004).

As we have noted, much of negotiation teaching has focused on the What (content) and How (tools and technique). Variation of negotiation teaching for different audiences has so far occurred mostly by cherry-picking pieces of negotiation knowledge for different audiences. And so, despite efforts to create a single negotiation canon (Honeyman and Schneider 2004; Schneider and Honeyman 2006), textbooks and course packages for students vary depending on what field their degree will be in. Packages are designed to “cover” the body of content of the What, and the How is varied in order to make the course delivery more interesting, as well as (hopefully) to address the various ways people learn (Lewicki 1986). But to be honest, this has largely been a “shotgun” approach to education, hoping to hit all targets with a few pellets. This lack of focus on Who has largely occurred because the instructors live in the world of What and How, and assume that they can make a clear judgment of what pieces or components are suitable and acceptable to the Who.

As instructors have developed their academic courses, and as the field of negotiation has grown dramatically over the last two decades, new instructors have adopted course materials and course “packages” wholesale, with little or no attention to Who may be in the seats. Perhaps this area has remained unexplored because, for professors, the Who is often defined for us by our job titles. The Who is whoever signs up for class at the law school, business school, or other type of upper level specialty seminar (public policy, conflict management, etc.) Many of the details of the Who remain relatively homogenous in a classroom setting – the students’ ages, educational background, ethnicity, even where they grew up can be relatively similar. And to be a bit more cynical about it, changes have not been made because, at a superficial level, instructors have been very successful at these courses. Negotiation courses are traditionally well rated and even oversubscribed because they create excitement, reveal students’ real personalities to each other, and create an energized classroom. Success does not breed change!

At the margin, some minor adjustments have been made. Faculty have mildly “adapted” the body of knowledge to undergraduate audiences, graduate student audiences, and executive/practitioner audiences. Adaptations have also been made for different professional groups who will use and employ the knowledge in different ways and configurations, such as business, law, public policy, labor relations, finance, purchasing and sales. For teachers who take their courses overseas, the cross-cultural elements must be taken into account, but that is still a small minority of professors or trainers.

Probably the most significant adaptation of the What/How has come in the “custom” design of negotiation skills training for execu-

tive audiences. In the design and delivery of executive education for a “custom” group (e.g., travel agents, regulatory bankers, construction managers, real estate salespeople, technical sales people, attorneys), trainers have usually spent some time meeting with representatives of the Who group to learn about their regular negotiation interactions, the people they negotiate with, their own perceived strengths and weaknesses as negotiators, and the recognized needs for training to strengthen perceived deficiencies. Trainers have usually met this challenge by cherry-picking What materials from the rich negotiation knowledge bank, and by matching training activities that emphasize knowledge and skill development in these areas (e.g., a labor simulation for labor negotiators or a power simulation for community organizers). Occasionally, client groups will also commission the development of one or more unique “cases” and/or customized role-plays that do a better job of embedding the What in the unique and specific context of the Who. If the client pays for the development of these materials, they are traditionally proprietary, not shared into the wider body of accessible tools, and hence do not contribute to a broader knowledge base of materials that are unique, specific and relevant to a particular Who.

Almost anyone in the teaching/learning or training profession would argue that effective training should be grounded in the world of Who. Yet the reality is that while our knowledge base of What continues to expand (as new research is added), and while talented educators continue to expand and explore the world of How (refinement of case and simulation materials, introduction of video models and feedback, introduction of action learning techniques inside and outside the classroom, personal diaries and journals, etc.), we have done little to create a rich and coherent lexicon and organization of knowledge of the various ways we can understand Who, and how we might better customize What and How to met their needs.

Checking Our Assumptions with Experts

In order to make sure that we were not simply “out of touch” about how expert negotiation teachers diagnosed the unique learning needs of their various Who audiences, we constructed a non-scientific interview list of questions² and presented them to several top-notch negotiation trainers.³ Our comments below are a summary of what we learned as well as our own thinking and experience in negotiation training.

Most trainings occur in response to a call from a specific client or group to bring in an expert for a particular training purpose. Our experts said that they attempt to understand Who will be in the au-

dience in several ways. First, the requested training events will often be limited by either the profession or context in which the learned skills will be applied: law, business, purchasing, sales, diplomacy, finance, real estate, union-management relations, community development, etc. (It should be noted that these same clients often send small groups of professionals to open-enrollment workshops in which the What and How will either be broadly based or already customized for a particular Who profession or industry.) More specific questions in this vein might include: “What is the management level of the audience?,” “Who are the ultimate decision makers?,” and even “What is the audience’s level of analytical competence?” (i.e., ability to understand game theory or complex analytical negotiation models). An audience can also be distinguished by some of the most visible and clear indicators: gender, culture, and national identity. But a more finely grained understanding of Who usually requires the trainer to collect more data, to get to know the Who better, and every one of our trainers asked more questions about the type of negotiations the audience engaged in:

- How and with whom do they negotiate?
- Are the negotiations internal or external?
- Are the negotiations two party or multiparty?
- How do they “think about” and approach negotiations?
- What are the major issues in a typical negotiation?
- What is their negotiation vocabulary?
- What are their most nagging challenges or problems?
- How do they typically define a successful negotiation?
- Finally, why have they brought you, the trainer, in to teach negotiation (i.e., how will training success be defined)?

Our expert trainers also differed on the amount of customization – and hence detail needed – about the audiences. For those trainers who are hired for either a specific audience or who only do general training, detail was not as necessary. For others, who might construct a customized case or want to tailor the materials more specifically, questions like the audience’s level of perspective, conceptual ability, level of education and experience, language issues, or whether there are participants from different levels in the company, all became relevant. Most trainers seemed to fall in the middle range, employing a general repertoire of expertise and content matter that was incorporated into almost any training experience, while also fitting their materials and exercises into learning events that made sense for the audience.

Organizing Knowledge in the World of Who

The reader might assume that we are suggesting that to be effective, every negotiation teaching and training event should be customized to the unique and specific Who (the client or receiver of training). But clearly, such an approach would be highly inefficient, because it would require extensive and time-consuming interaction with a specific Who in order to gain access to their world, and elaborate design of training for each unique individual and each unique group. Moreover, it is not clear that the What and How require extensive tailoring to be accessible to different groups of Who. Instead, as we listened to our experts and thought about our own teaching experiences, we believe that (beyond the already-accepted customization for culture, gender, etc.) the design and delivery of negotiation education can be thought of in terms of three different levels of “sophistication” to address the needs of the Who.

The first level is when negotiation education is mass-delivered in pre-designed packages of content, and through several pre-designed methods (a combination of readings, lectures, several short role-plays or cases). Learners accept the package as delivered, and there is seldom opportunity to modify the package in any way. Pricing for the package is relatively fixed. (This is the most common model used in academia.) The next level is when negotiation education has a fixed menu of options, but there are considerably more items on the menu, and some modification of options is permissible by the learner. The highest level is when negotiation education also has a reasonably fixed menu of options, but each of the options is assembled elegantly, with great care and thought to the needs of the learner. Such a trainer is normally thoroughly versed in the wide range of What and How, so much so that if the Who has a unique and distinctive set of learning needs, the trainer is able to invent and reinvent learning experiences to meet their needs. The client (the group of learners) becomes a full interactive participant in the decision-making process at the design and delivery stages. The extreme example is probably an experience of our colleague Carrie Menkel-Meadow, who in the 1990s was once retained to design and present a short course in mediation to the Attorney General of the United States and her senior staff. Not surprisingly, the preparations to teach even a short course in this environment were extensive (and very sensitive), as the student in question attempted to mediate some major conflicts immediately thereafter!

This kind of differentiation is not unique to our field, and some comparison to other kinds of services may be helpful. Let us offer two sets of examples to illustrate these differences: one from the food industry, and a second from the world of auto repair. In each

case, the metaphor may not be completely suitable, but it should suffice to explain the differences. Also be aware that while we have reduced these options to three possibilities, there are clearly a larger number of discrete possibilities that lie along a dimension from “simple and basic” to “complex and unique” in What they do and How they do it.

It is lunchtime, and I am hungry. I am deciding where to eat. I have three basic choices:

- *Fast food restaurant.* Fast food outlets have a limited menu. There are 25-30 items on the menu that the restaurant can efficiently and effectively provide, given that low price and quick turnaround in the transaction are two of the most important criteria for market success. “Packages” of options (e.g., a “value meal”) are offered at discount prices. I enter the restaurant, look at the complete menu posted on the wall, and order either separate elements or a component package (burger, fries and a soft drink). While I might be able to modify the package slightly (no pickle on the burger), I cannot order what is not explicitly on the menu (e.g., an apple).
- *Family restaurant.* Family restaurants have a more expansive menu. There are 50-100 items on the menu. Again, packages may be offered (e.g., a three course dinner or each item a la carte), and the cook may be able to modify the preparation of any item on the menu. So, for example, I can order the pasta without garlic, even though the menu does not say that. Or if I want scrambled eggs and toast with jam for dinner and scrambled eggs do not appear anywhere on the menu, the chances are the cook can be convinced to prepare this for me even if it is a nontraditional request for a dinner meal.
- *Gourmet restaurant.* Gourmet restaurants are the most expensive. The menu is often less expansive than the family restaurant. The food is delicately and elegantly prepared, and many of the dishes are “unique” to the chef. Moreover, at least in the United States, the menu specializes in food of a specific type and from a specific origin or location (fish, nouvelle cuisine, steak, Italian, etc.) The uniqueness of the restaurant is grounded not only in the quality and thoroughness of food preparation, but also in the sophistication of preparation and the ability of the chef to “invent” new food combinations and preparations almost “on the spot.”

A second example could be when we need to have our car repaired. Depending on what the need is, we can go to one of three basic types of mechanics.

- *Quick repair shop.* Like fast food, a quick repair shop offers a limited menu of services for a fixed price. Oil change, lubrication, tune up, muffler and exhaust system repair, tires rotation and change, brake service, etc. Prices and “packages” of services are fixed. The customer buys and accepts the package as is.
- *Full service mechanic.* Full service mechanics offer a more expansive portfolio of services. There may be a list of broad services posted in the garage (e.g., a tune-up, oil change and lube, tire rotation and balancing, etc.) and the mechanic may be able to modify the work that needs to be done on any item on the menu. So, for example, I can order the oil change with special quality oil, even though the menu does not say that. Or if I want minor repairs to scratches on the car door, the mechanic may have the capacity to do touch-up paint.
- *Specialized mechanic.* Specialized mechanics are the most expensive. The menu of service options, again, is actually less expansive than the full service garage. The repair work is done with the highest quality parts, tools and sensing equipment. Moreover, the services are usually customized and unique to certain high-end brands of cars or clusters of high quality automobiles. The uniqueness of the mechanic is grounded not only in the quality and thoroughness of repair, but also in the sophistication of preparation and the ability of the mechanic to invent new procedures for cleaning, tuning and improving the performance of the automobile almost “on the spot.”

	Level One	Level Two	Level Three
Food Service	Fast Food	Family Style	Gourmet
Car Repair	Quick Repair	Full Service	Specialized

Negotiation Training	Pre-packaged content; open enrollment; collection of “basic content and skills” suitable for any audience; content, training design and applications selected to highlight expertise of the instructor.	“Semi-customized” program for audiences in a broad occupational field, profession, industry group. Broad fixed menu of What and How options; trainer works with client to “mix and match” a suitable package.	Fully customized program to suit the unique training needs of the customer, audience, needs, etc. Specific training events designed to address customer’s critical needs, skills and deficiencies. Individualized coaching of key clients a likely component.
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Table 1: Market Segmentation and Sophistication

As we can easily understand this rough “market segmentation” approach to selling dinners and repairing automobiles, it is also clearly applicable to the way that the negotiation training marketplace has been segmented as it has become a mature industry. Indeed, as shown in Table One, the design and delivery of negotiation education can be thought of as being delivered at three different levels of “sophistication”:

Level One: Negotiation education is mass-delivered in pre-designed packages of content, and through several pre-designed methods (typically a combination of readings, lectures, and several short role-plays or cases). Learners accept the package as delivered, and there is seldom opportunity to modify the package in any way. Pricing for the package is fixed.

Level Two: Negotiation education has a fixed menu of options, but there are considerably more items on the menu, and some modification of options is permissible by the customer. Materials are usually “semi-customized” to fit a particular occupational group (agents), profession (attorneys or hospital executives), or industry (health care, industrial chemicals, etc.). The trainer understands enough about the customer group to “mix and match” a package of What and How to meet their needs.

Level Three: Negotiation education is presented as a broad menu of options, and each of the options is assembled elegantly, with great care and consideration to the needs of the learner. The trainer spends significant time studying the customer’s environment from a negotiation perspective, and is so thoroughly versed in the wide range of What and How that if the Who has a unique and distinctive set of learning needs, the trainer is able to invent and reinvent learn-

ing experiences to meet their needs. The Who becomes a full interactive participant in the decision-making process at the design and delivery stages, while the trainer often maintains a long-term relationship with the Who in order to assure effective skill improvement and training implementation.

It should also be noted that different levels of instructional design and delivery skill, as well as general knowledge in the field of negotiation, are likely tied to each of these levels. Delivery of Level One programs can be accomplished by trainers with only the most rudimentary training in conflict and negotiation, and usually by working from a predesigned or “canned” curriculum. Level Two programs are more likely delivered by faculty with some formal post-graduate training in negotiation dynamics, while Level Three programs are traditionally reserved for academics and practitioners who have both an extensive academic background and significant training experience.

Given that the “World of Who” in negotiation training – at both the university, workshop and customized levels – has been informally segmented in this manner, what implications can be drawn for understanding the next generation of negotiation training?

Implications of Thinking About the Who for the Delivery of Negotiation 2.0

If this analysis is correct – i.e., that there are roughly three levels of “adaptation” or sophistication in diagnosing and understanding the needs of the Who in negotiation education – there are several major implications for the future development, design, and delivery of negotiation training. First, more precisely and completely diagnosing the Who is a necessary first step in training. Furthermore, focusing on the learner’s needs will help to clarify the What that exists across disciplines. Second, teaching to the Who (uniquely adapting the content and methods to the needs of a specific learner population) will improve teaching overall (see Avruch 2009 on educating versus training and Wade 2009 on defining success in training). Third, more precise teaching to the Who will even improve teaching in larger classrooms. Finally, perhaps most interestingly, teaching to the Who has the potential to change the way we organize and access the How and What. In this remaining section, we amplify on these implications.

1) Focusing on Who Clarifies the What

We believe that making the diagnostic process explicit would have several beneficial impacts. First, it would help us all to understand how various elements of the field’s knowledge base (the What) are

being addressed across the levels of negotiation training and across disciplines. Among the variety of negotiation educators who practice in fields of law, business, diplomacy, community relations, etc., we should acknowledge that there is a negotiation knowledge base constructed on the specific learning needs and practice implications within each professional domain. To some degree, this understanding has already happened, as educators within each discipline talk more to each other, prepare textbooks and case materials that are most relevant to each discipline, and develop both university-based courses and practitioner-based programs for each audience (see Honeyman and Schneider 2004, outlining the overlapping areas of negotiation training versus the discipline-specific negotiation elements). But the bases and organizing principles for these aggregations are often not explicit and are based simply on the contexts/background settings of various cases and role-plays. Making the discriminating criteria explicit – not only within the discipline but to others outside the discipline – would facilitate a better understanding of the key skills, capabilities, and practice applications required *for each discipline*, and would also further the opportunity for better integration and refinement of the What and How *across disciplines*.

Second, more explicit diagnoses by all trainers may help to increase the quality and effectiveness of those diagnostic tools currently being used by educators to design unique and customized programs for Level Two and particularly for Level Three. For example, the differences in diagnostic questions asked by our small focus group of negotiation educators revealed strong differences in the type and depth of diagnosis that they performed before working with a Level Three client.

2) Teaching to the Who Will Improve Client Training

We believe that a considerable “stratification” of negotiation educators has already begun. Given the growth and demand for negotiation educators across various dimensions of Who (professional schools, university courses, community and technical colleges, training institutes, web-based seminars, etc.), no single trainer or training entity has the knowledge and capability to effectively address the needs of every Who audience, or master the broad range of What and How that can be brought to bear. Those who wish to expand their capabilities to become more sophisticated in delivering education to meet the needs of Who might consider several strategies.

First, there is a need to acquire more concepts by expanding their own repertoire of What – i.e., developing a broader understanding of the complex knowledge base of negotiation theory and

dynamics. Second, the educator might acquire more tools in the scope of How; this would require learning how to deliver the concepts in new ways, such as through orchestrating more complex simulations, writing training materials, learning how to “model” key negotiating behaviors, etc. (see Schneider and MacFarlane 2003; McAdoo and Manwaring 2009; Nelken 2009). Finally, educators might become better diagnosticians of the clients, so as to learn how to adapt to clients who have unique needs and do not want to be “turned off” with an education program that they consider to be simplistic in either content or design. To do so, educators must develop sophisticated client-centered diagnostic and listening skills. They must know how to use the insights from their client interviews to draw links between their expanded knowledge of What and How, so as to become a “Level Three Educator,” the unique chef who can use old tools and knowledge in new ways. We hope that surfacing these diagnostic questions will help all of us.

3) Teaching to the Who Will Improve Classroom Teaching

One of the implications of developing an increased sophistication of the learning needs and competencies of Who is that it may also be possible to enhance the application of these practices to traditional classroom populations. Most university-based classrooms simply accept all students who enroll, and present them with an undifferentiated curriculum of What and How. Occasionally, an “advanced” course might “pre-require” the associated entry-level course, but in and of itself, it again offers an undifferentiated curriculum of somewhat more esoteric and specialized What, usually combined with somewhat more complex application exercises (How). But the students in these classes are often of different ages, genders, cultural identities, specific negotiation experience, and comfort with the negotiation process. Thus, it should be possible to apply an increased sophistication of our knowledge of What and How so as to offer more specialized educational products and packages to different subgroups within the larger heterogeneous classroom. Negotiation educators should be doing a better job of assessing how much people *are* learning in these contexts, so that further fine-tuning can occur.

For example, one of the experts we interviewed noted how he tries to conduct the negotiation training more like a typical consultant. He uses the diagnostic questions not only to set up the training, but then to help set goals and implementation plans with the company. After the training, specific targets are set, software is adopted, and negotiation success is measured as part of the service to the client. Thus, as educators, we should strive to attain a more complex understanding of all these different identities in the room, and to

attempt to meet them in an instructional design that meets the learners at their current level of understanding and sophistication. We should also determine whether learners who bring different levels of understanding and sophistication learn “better” or “more” when they are mixed together, or when they are grouped more homogeneously – an unanswered question at present. As educators, we need to assess better how much we can rely on the learner to extrapolate effectively “what they need” from the portfolio of What and How that we present to them, or whether we should be working hard to customize the design and delivery of this content across different levels of learner need and sophistication (cf. Alexander and LeBaron 2009).

4) Focusing on Who Might Help Develop a Better How and What

Finally, for the most part the negotiation knowledge base of What is organized around a grammar and syntax derived from fifty or more years of research on negotiation processes. So, for example, in negotiation, educators in this field teach about distributive or integrative negotiation processes. Each of these approaches has a distinct and very complex knowledge base about how we conduct such negotiation, as well as a complex set of interrelated skills that are taught as part of the “package” of a unit, for instance, on distributive negotiation. Training in distributive negotiation requires novice negotiators to learn how to conceptualize a distributive strategy, determine target points and resistance points, frame an opening offer, respond to the other’s counteroffer, consider and make concessions, read and incorporate the other’s negotiation verbal statements and concession behaviors, determine how many concessions to make, determine whether to use various tactics to enhance the other’s concessions, etc.

Similarly, if we are training in the skills that permit more collaborative negotiations, we require negotiators to work on active listening, asking questions to find out what the other side’s point of view might be, thinking creatively about possible solutions, etc. If a learner is deficient in one or more of these component elements, as teachers we seldom do more than point out that deficiency, but what we typically do *not* do is invent customized micro-training events that would “rehearse” or do remedial drills on one or more of the core elements of this complex skill set.

Imagine, instead, that in Negotiation Teaching 2.0, our training processes were categorized around a rather long but complete dictionary of simple “core skill” elements (setting a goal, setting a Resistance Point, understanding a bargaining range, making a first

concession, making inferences from the other's negotiation behaviors, asking questions, listening actively, brainstorming solutions, selling your case most persuasively, etc.). Skill development might not be using a repertoire of Hows (simple or more complex negotiation scenarios), but more "micro" knowledge/skill units that are taught/drilled and practiced, and then used as building-blocks to create the talent to execute more complex negotiations. Another advantage of teaching negotiation in this way is that it may be easier to assess the effectiveness of negotiation training, because we could create assessment tools and activities to determine whether any given individual is competent in that skill area. We can even imagine the construction of specific trainings and training centers to do that work.

Conclusion

In this paper, we challenge the development of negotiation pedagogy by indicating that it has extensively attended to the growth and importance of pedagogical content (the What) and begun to develop more sophistication in the delivery of that pedagogy (the How), but has thus far generally neglected anything more than the most primitive understanding of the nature of the learner (the Who).

We point out that the "packaging" of negotiation education has roughly differentiated into a three-tier marketplace, but that even in this context, the diagnosis of the specific skills and needs of the learner has not kept pace with the field's capacity to diagnose and customize negotiation education, a state which was reasonably confirmed through interviews with several of the field's teachers and trainers. At best, almost all of design and delivery of the teaching of negotiation concepts has achieved Level Two in our three level approach. We do not blame anyone for this problem, but do believe that as negotiation educators, we may have become a bit too "comfortable" with the success of the status quo. We then pointed to several important implications of this state of affairs, and offer observations and suggestions for future development initiatives that may provide a richer understanding of learning needs and adaptation of content and pedagogy to meet those needs.

If our assessment of the current state of negotiation education is correct – that the field has reached some reasonable state of "maturity" on the What and the How – the Who may be the "next frontier." Many basic textbooks in the field of management training and development (e.g., Noe 2008) begin with a complex needs analysis of the training population. This needs analysis can include three major components:

- An assessment of the “organization” in which the skills are to be utilized and the appropriateness of the training for this organization and its key managers. In the context of negotiation, this analysis would differentiate labor negotiators from purchasing managers from diplomats from community organizers.
- An assessment of the “tasks” that are required, that is, the important knowledge, skills and behaviors that need to be emphasized for trainees (negotiators) to perform well.
- An assessment of the “persons” who will be part of the training. This would include an assessment of their current performance capabilities and deficiencies, and an assessment of the specific knowledge or skills that are required to build the desired level of capabilities.

Based on our analysis of the current state of negotiation teaching, there is work left to do. With regard to the organization level, the various disciplines that teach negotiation (law, labor relations, business, government and public policy, etc.) have broadly specified the nature of the organization context, although as recent work by Movius and Susskind (2009) has shown, considerably more work can be done at the organization level to assure that negotiators receive the kind of organizational acceptance and support they require. At the task level, as we have pointed out, the knowledge base has received considerable attention, but in fact the skill development approach may be underdeveloped. Rather than simulate and rehearse “whole” negotiations through simulations, perhaps trainers should be diagnosing and rehearsing more “micro” skills such as listening, discerning interests, inventing options, packaging trade-offs, etc. Finally, the person analysis is clearly where the most work is required. The development of assessment centers to diagnose current knowledge and skills, and the construction of training approaches based on that assessment, represent the “next frontier” in negotiation education.

Much has been done, but much remains to be done. To again paraphrase our muse in the writing of this article, Dr Seuss, “Imagine all the places we will go!”

Notes

¹ With apologies to Ted Geisel, “Dr Seuss.” We also considered the title “Honeyman Hears a Who” but decided that hearing isn’t his strength.

² The questions are listed in the attached Appendix.

³ Thanks go to Max Bazerman, Leonard Greenhalgh, Sheila Heen, Chris Honeyman, Deborah Kolb, Marty Latz, Deepak Malhotra, and Bruce Patton for their time and willingness to share their expertise.

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Appendix

Below are the questions that we sent out via email to our interviewees and then asked in phone interviews to discuss their answers:

Generally,

- when you are asked to design training or teaching for a specific audience, what characteristics of that audience are important to you that influence the way you design the training?
- do you have a specific set of questions for all customers, or are your questions unique and different for each customer?

Specifically,

- do you ask questions about the general occupational and educational backgrounds of the potential customer? What questions do you ask?
- do you ask questions about the types of negotiations that the potential customer is engaged in? What questions do you ask?
- do you ask questions about the specific negotiation training needs or deficiencies of the potential customer? What questions do you ask?
- do you ask questions about the organizational rank and seniority of seminar participants of the potential customer? What questions do you ask?
- what other diagnostic questions do you ask?

Finally,

- once you have learned something about the indicated “needs” of a potential customer, what processes do you use to distill this information and decide what specific training content or activities will be used?

