

Service-Learning and Negotiation:

An Educational “Win-Win”

Amy L. Kenworthy

Associate Professor of Management

Bond University, School of Business

University Drive, The Gold Coast, QLD Australia 4229

Phone: +61 7 5595 2241

Fax: +61 7 5595 1160

Email: [akenwort@bond.edu.au](mailto:akenwort@bond.edu.au)

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ABSTRACT:

Negotiation is one of the most popular elective courses offered across tertiary educational programs today (Thompson & Leonardelli, 2004). Yet, in many undergraduate and graduate programs, the ‘practice’ of negotiation takes place solely through role plays and simulations. The purpose of this paper is to provide a “how to” template for negotiation instructors who are interested in extending their students’ experiences beyond the sole use of in-class role plays and simulations into the real world. The project described in this paper is a semester-long, undergraduate service-learning group consulting project that has been used and refined over an eight year period.

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“...The most important professing I do as a teacher involves my thoughtful choice of reading material, assignments, activities, and, most of all, learning objectives. After all, our actions really do speak louder than our words.” – David Whetten (2007, p.339)

In today’s educational environments, *action* - on the part of the instructor and students - is a critical ingredient in the facilitation of learning. An action-oriented teaching tool that has received a great deal of attention and application over the past decade in the domain of management education is service-learning (Kenworthy-U’Ren & Peterson, 2005; Madsen & Turnbull, 2006). Service-learning projects expose students to real-world problems in community-based organizations, offering students an opportunity to work with and learn from members of the communities around them. Real-world projects provide the relevance demanded of today’s university programs without compromising a theoretical and substantive context for learning (Uchida, Caldwell, Friel, & Lad, 2007). Such rigor and relevance are, arguably, important for all courses – but they are particularly critical for courses with applied content like Negotiation.

In the context of negotiation, the calls for hands-on, action-oriented learning opportunities are clear – students must experience it to learn it. Examples from the extant literature include: “Acquiring and maintaining negotiation expertise is a never-ending exercise... negotiation skills are acquired... and they should be practiced every day” (Sachs, 1998, p. 74); “Negotiation exercises have the advantage of teaching negotiation skills and engaging students in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation” (Page & Mukherjee, 2007, p.255); and “Students need to study negotiation in an environment that closely resembles life situations” (Ulijn, Dúill, & Robertson, 2004: p.42). Service-learning projects provide faculty members with a vehicle to take these calls to the next level – to move beyond “closely resembling” real life situations (via the stand-alone use

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of in-class role plays) into one where students are engaging in real life negotiations about real life projects and, at the same time, making a difference to those in need in their communities.

Negotiation, itself, is a “very complex social process” (Lewicki, Barry, & Saunders, 2007; p.3), as is the reality of engaging in a community-based real-world service-learning project. As such, service-learning projects provide a multifaceted lens through which to view the complex realities and richness of negotiation processes. In this paper, I present a semester-long service-learning project, created for an undergraduate Negotiations course. This service-learning Negotiation project has been running for eight years at the Bond University School of Business in Queensland, Australia. The project is designed to “...help students consider the connection between what they learn and how they live” (Ernest Boyer, 1990, p.104) – not an easy thing to do, but a critical component in the development of life-long learning practices.

The outline of this paper is as follows. First, the concept of service-learning is defined and a set of guidelines for embedding service-learning into university-level courses is outlined. Second, a “how to” timeline for integrating service-learning into a Negotiation course is described. Finally, a sample project, student reflections, lessons learned, and a conclusion to the paper are presented.

#### **Service-Learning Defined**

Service-learning is a teaching tool classically defined as “a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development” (Jacoby, 1996: p.5). Furco (1996) differentiated service-learning from other types of experiential education by stating that service-learning programs have the “intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring” (p. 6). Other definitions of service-learning focus on

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goals such as values development (e.g., Delve, Mintz, and Stewart, 1990), moral management (e.g., Godfrey, 1999), and civic engagement and civic responsibility (e.g., Bringle and Hatcher, 1999). Another variation of the definition is the term “academic service-learning,” which represents “a multidimensional pedagogy (a form of experiential learning) that is integrated within a credit-bearing course in the form of an organized, thoughtful, and meaningful project” (Madsen & Turnbull, 2006, p.725).

At its foundation, service-learning is a teaching tool grounded in university/community partnership projects (Jacoby, 2003) with such projects defined as those “combine(ing) needed tasks in the community with intentional learning goals and with conscious reflection” (Kendall, 1990, p.20). There are a number of recommended guidelines for designing university level service-learning projects (e.g., Boyer, 1990; Dumas, 2002; Kenworthy-U’Ren & Peterson, 2005). One representative set of guidelines, advocated by Godfrey, Illes, and Berry (2005), includes three elements for successful service-learning experiences “The ‘3 Rs’ of service-learning” – Reality, Reflection, and Reciprocity. The authors argue that service should be based in reality, with real-world connections and consequences for the students. The service-learning project should include a clearly defined reflective component, used to stimulate learning and connectedness to the course content. Finally, the project should be focused on reciprocity between the students and the community – a partnership perspective rather than a one-way “giving” of service.

The next section of this paper demonstrates how these guidelines have been applied in the design of a service-learning project in the undergraduate Negotiation course at Bond University.

#### **Service-Learning Applied to a Negotiation Course: A Timeline of “How To” Components**

The Negotiation service-learning project at Bond University was designed to meet four criteria, originally described in an article by Kenworthy-U’Ren (2003), and later reflected in Godfrey et al.’s (2005) three elements described above. The four criteria are:

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- (1) a focus on real-world learning,
- (2) a course-based, professional-level foundation,
- (3) reciprocity between the student and the community, and
- (4) carefully designed reflection.

The project is called a “Group Consulting Project” and is presented to the students as a tool for real-world application of theoretical concepts to a community-based organization in need of assistance. It is a semester-long, 13 week project, embedded and applied to every concept discussed throughout the course. Over the eight years that this project has been running as a part of the Negotiation course at Bond University, a number of developmental adaptations have occurred:

- The project is now described in terms of providing an opportunity for students to not only satisfy the requirements of the course but also develop the University’s espoused graduate attributes, competencies, and skills.
- There is a far greater onus placed on the students in terms of identification, selection, contact, and communication with non-profit organization representatives than there was in the earlier versions of the course; this is deliberate to encourage independence and autonomy, responsibility, leadership, and creative thinking in the students.
- The project is now clearly discussed as a real-world application of every topic covered in the Negotiation course; in earlier versions of the course, there was less focus on deliberate and consistent contextualization and application and more random student-driven connections being made. With a clear and consistent application of the project to the course concepts, there are far fewer questions raised by the students about the legitimacy of the project itself.

Finally, it should be noted that although this project has been designed for use in a Negotiation course, the fundamental project tenets (i.e., the student service-learning-based consulting project framework itself) could certainly be applied to other disciplines and courses. The project timeline, as was run during the 2008 course sections, is as follows:

Day 1: Introduction to the Course

During the first day of class, the project is contextualized in terms of the objectives of the Negotiation course, both in writing in the syllabus as well as through a lengthy discussion of the project. This occurs in two primary ways. First, the students are asked to read through a description of the project in their syllabus. The excerpt, as seen in the January 2008 course syllabus, can be seen in Appendix 1. At this point, I answer any questions the students have about the project. Usually, the students are primarily interested in continuing with the overview of the course and do not ask many questions.

Second, the project is contextualized into the course through a discussion of how the course design is aimed at developing students' overall skills and capabilities. It is in this part of the first day's overview that the group consulting project is fully integrated into the students' overall degree-program level experiences at University. At Bond University, there is a set of capabilities that students are expected to develop as part of their overall degree program; these capabilities are called "Graduate Attributes" and have six components (knowledge, citizenship, leadership, communication, initiative, teamwork). The Negotiation course is designed to assist the students in developing five of the attributes, and the group consulting project is clearly framed in the syllabus as key component of the course in developing these attributes. Please see Appendix 2 for the excerpt from the syllabus describing how the service-learning consulting project will assist the students with their graduate attribute development.

At this point in the class, I show students examples of past projects – ensuring that there is a variety of media used (e.g., video-based projects, internet-based projects, hardcopy tangible projects, large-scale projects impacting thousands of people and small-scale yet very targeted and high quality projects impacting a small number of clients). The final interactions on day one are when I ask students for their initial thoughts about the project (the continuum of responses typically runs from “excited and ready to go!” to “overwhelmed and mildly scared”) and for any questions they have at that point. Students typically ask questions about how their groups will be formed (answer: see Week 2 below), if there are existing non-profit organization contacts (answer: I always have contacts ready to go for groups that need them), when the projects start (answer: next week, week 2), and how often they are expected to meet (answer: every week, I give them time in class each week but they will also need to establish an outside of class schedule or other mechanism for meeting). My last comments for day one are to encourage the students to think about what type of organization or community need area they would be interested in working with (e.g., homelessness, children’s needs, sports and recreation programs, elderly, poverty, food/shelter programs, micro-lending organizations) as that will determine the groups I assign them to.

### Weeks 2 & 3: Group Formation and a Discussion of Reflection Components

In week 2 of the 13-week course, each of the students is asked to identify at least three community issue areas that s/he is interested in. Then I group the students into consulting project teams based on their community issue area preferences. Student teams then work to identify local non-profit organizations in need of assistance; I occasionally help students with this process as do some of the University administrative staff who are in frequent contact with external organizations in terms of non-profit organization identification (note: the initial contact and subsequent negotiation(s) are, however, always done by the students). During weeks 2 and 3, the students are

asked to negotiate intra-team, to agree upon outcomes related to the use and development of their skill sets (e.g., who will be in charge of and involved in particular tasks/components of the project) and personal expectations for the project, as well as ideas for feasible projects, overall scope, and duration of the project. These early discussions are critical to the success of the group, and must occur before any contact is made with external organizations. At the end of these discussions, most student groups have one or two identified non-profit organizations they would like to work with (usually through a network of one of the group members) and some ideas about what they would like to do for the organization in terms of product or service.

At this point, an introductory contact is made with the organization and if the response is positive, the students set up a meeting to discuss the project, if it is negative, the students then contact another organization. Once the organization has been confirmed and the initial intra-team discussions and negotiations have taken place, the students are required to produce a “pre-negotiation journal” before they have their project focus and scope discussion with the organization representative(s). The focus of the journal is for the students to prepare for their real-world negotiation in a professional manner – including well-researched and agreed upon goals and goal parameters for the project, questions that should be asked of the organization representative(s), and concessions that could be given if necessary. The process of negotiating a realistic yet impactful project produces, for many of the students, significant learning in terms of their preferred negotiation styles and tendencies. This is the first part of a semester-long journey of integrating theory into real-world practice and self-reflection. The template for the consulting project pre-negotiation journal can be seen in Appendix 3.

### Week 4 and Beyond: Continuous Reflection

As an academic endeavour, service-learning projects only add value if they increase learning. Reflection is one way of assessing learning. Cobb (2000) highlights the importance of

reflection in negotiation classes, “As the field of negotiation moves to address interpretative and non-linear processes, our focus is increasingly on the nature of the inquiry that enables reflection” (p.317). In terms of this Negotiation course, encouraging active student reflection is a clear way of assessing continuous learning. Reflection takes place using both formative and summative assessment methods (see Brookfield, 2006 for a discussion of formative methods). In terms of formative (or developmental) assessment, every week the students are given time in class to debrief each other and the instructor about how their service-learning group projects are progressing and how the projects relate to course concepts. Every three weeks during class, each student group formally “meets” with the instructor to relay information and ask questions about the consulting project. Finally, at the end of the semester, the student groups are required to do two forms of summatively assessed reflection: (1) a group presentation about their projects and (2) an individual student reflection paper assessment of the overall consulting project experience. The reflection paper provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate, at an individual level, connections made between theory and practice as well as personal insights about the service project. Appendix 4 shows the description of the individual reflection paper as listed in the January 2008 Negotiation syllabus.

Students are encouraged to be honest about their experience, and to include negative or challenging interactions and reflections as well as positive ones. Most students are able to effectively highlight difficulties in the negotiating process, either with respect to intra-group decisions or interactions with their organization representative(s). For all of the students, the macro-level reflections about the project are positive. They appreciate the real-world experience, responsibility, and challenges associated with consulting for a local organization in need.

In terms of “how to” operational issues that tend to arise as the semester progresses, there are a number of activities I engage in to support the projects. First, I always contact the

organization representatives after the student consulting groups have finalized their negotiations (in terms of securing agreement and buy-in for their projects as well as negotiating contributions from each side as well as the logistical and operational details of the product or service). I find that contact from me, typically in the form of a brief phone call, often helps to clarify the goals of the project for the community agency representative, as well as sending a clear signal of the level of professionalism of the project in terms of the amount of supervision and quality control that I do with each student group. I also write a number of validating letters every semester to the different community organization representatives, for them to use as a sign of “evidence” when they approach their boards of directors, administrators, and/or membership groups. I have a standard letter that I personalize specific to each student group and community organization (see Appendix 5 for a sample letter).

Second, when the students provide a service to the organization, I require at least one thorough run through of the presentation, discussion, focus group, or other service activity (where possible) from my students in front of me before the actual event takes place. I also attend the actual events themselves; I find my presence adds an extra layer of pressure for the students. If the students produce a product, it must be approved by me before being given to the community organization.

Third, I frequently comment, edit, adapt, and offer suggestions about each of the students’ projects. In my mind, the projects not only reflect the students themselves but also the University and me as a professor. More importantly, the community organizations have invested time, energy, and other resources into the projects as partners in this educational endeavor – as such, a high quality project output is required.

Fourth, I often secure gifts from the University for the students to use with their projects. For example, I get Bond University pens, travel mugs, and certificates from the marketing team in

our Business School to give to the students as thank you presents for external people who contribute resources and/or support to their projects. I also secure copies of executive-style negotiation books (e.g., *Getting To Yes*, *Getting Past No*) for students to donate to the libraries or resource centers of organizations they are working with, where applicable.

Finally, these projects are as they appear... In basic “how to” terms, these negotiation course-based student service-learning projects are a lot of work. No one ever said that service-learning was easy, but in my experience it is rewarding at a level that I have been unable to match with any other teaching tool. As a testament to that statement, and an illustration of this teaching tool, the next section of this paper provides an overview of a 2008 student consulting project.

### **Sample Project**

In terms of student projects, over the past eight years, student consulting groups have worked with a wide variety of non-profit organizations including local schools, outdoor adventure programs for at-risk youth, microenterprise training programs, surf safety initiatives, local City Council industry groups, animal shelters, homeless youth centers, healthy eating programs, environmental awareness groups, and national/international service organizations like The Red Cross and The Cancer Fund.

As an example of a recent project, one of the January semester 2008 student consulting groups organized a mock car crash at a local high school for over two-hundred and fifty 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. As part of the project, my Negotiation students had to negotiate with the following people (as well as their weekly negotiations with me for project approval and any assistance they required from me). I have highlighted the term negotiation in the prior sentence as these were negotiations; the students were not asked to do this for the school or the other organizations – this project was my students’ idea and, as such, they had to persuade others to allow them, and to assist them, with its planning and execution. Each of the negotiations listed

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below was a real-world negotiation with people and organizations who did not ask for help, making them even more difficult in terms of negotiating an acceptable outcome than one in which the organization was asking for assistance. Student team negotiations took place with the following people and groups (please note, this list is followed by a brief description of the car crash itself):

1. The Principal and Head of the high school to gain approval for the project and access to the students and parents,
2. The high school students who were selected to role play in the car crash, as well as their parents (for parental permission of underage minors to participate in the mock car crash),
3. The local fire, ambulance, and police teams to enlist their support as well as volunteers to participate in the simulation on the day (this included the use of an ambulance, fire truck, and police car),
4. A car wreck yard owner (they negotiated the free donation of a car that had previously been in a real car accident for use in the simulation),
5. A tow truck owner (for the free delivery and return of the above mentioned car from the car yard),
6. A team of professional make-up artists (for the free donation of their time as well as products to make three of the four role playing students look injured and the fourth student to look dead),
7. A professional film producer (for the free recording, editing, and production of a video of the simulation for use in later years at the high school as well as at other schools via regularly scheduled police officers' talks),
8. The local media (the students negotiated that any publicity about the event had to recognize the voluntary contributions of all associated organizations),

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9. A local coffee house manager (for free coffees for all participating volunteers – fire, police, ambulance, film, make up team, school administration), and

10. A local doughnut store manager (for ½ price snacks for all volunteers – the students paid for the other ½ using their own funds and made the owner mark on the receipt that they “negotiated their way to ½ price” – so they could show me their negotiated outcome).

On the day of the mock car crash, two-hundred and fifty 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students watching the simulation. The high school students stood on the side of the road, silent, for 40 minutes as the simulation took place – all that you could hear were the police/fire/ambulance volunteers acting out their parts as well as some students who cried intermittently throughout the simulation – the mock car crash appeared real. The Negotiation students ran a full debrief following the event, with the help of the fire, police, and ambulance volunteers as well as the high school’s Principal and a high school counsellor (the latter to assist with any emotional reactions from the participants or the observing students). The next morning, the story appeared on the front page of the local newspaper; it later appeared in three other papers and on the radio. The simulation was particularly impactful as the region that the high school is located in has the highest car crash fatality rate for teenage boys of any region in the State. Numerous parents wrote the School’s Principal to thank him for his involvement. One parent stated:

“Yesterday's initiative by the Bond students has certainly left a big impression on my girls.

Please pass on my thanks to all involved, especially the Bond students and the services who gave their time. It is an important part of education these days... unfortunately.”

In one of the newspaper articles, a senior government official was quoted as saying that “mock car crashes, like the one staged at Lindisfarne School in Terranora, New South Wales last week, should be made part of the State’s curriculum.” He was also quoted as saying that he would

personally lobby the State's Roads and Traffic Authority to come up with the funds to support running this type of program annually.

The Negotiation students were quoted in the newspaper articles saying things like "The way we look at it, if this simulation stops one young kid from drunk driving in the future, then it was all worth it." The idea for this project crystallized for the Negotiation students in the first few weeks of classes when two of the student members shared that they had friends and family members killed in car accidents and another student had graduated from a high school in the high fatality region I described above (located about 45 minutes south of the University's campus). In my opinion, one of the reasons this project was so successful was the deep intrinsic motivation that the collective group of students had to target this particular issue – drunk driving. It is a classic example of why I require students to identify their interest areas and ask them to brainstorm about potential organizations before meeting with me.

### **The Service-Learning Advantage: Students "Giving Back" to the Community**

One of the advantages of using service-learning is the opportunity for students to experience the challenges, motivations, and resultant pride associated with creating positive and sustainable contributions to their communities. This type of learning, about one's own role as a citizen and community member, is an often overlooked yet critical component of personal development and adult learning. As a way of measuring the students' desire to *give back to the community*, in the students' final group project reports, they are required to include a pre-negotiation journal for the initial negotiations they did with their organization representatives that includes a list of their collective goals for the project. Of the 25 hardcopies of reports that were still in the author's office, two did not include a mention of giving back to the community as a goal, three had giving back to the community listed as a goal prioritized below getting good grades, and the remaining twenty had giving back to the community listed as one of the top two

goals for the project (the other most common goal was “gain real world consulting experience”).

Coding was done independently by the author and one other department member; there was 100% agreement as to the goals falling into the “give back” category. Examples of “give back to the community” goals include:

- “To gain satisfaction from seeing the kids having fun while playing with a game that we designed and developed to help combat bullying” (this group worked with a day care center to design and produce a professional-quality game targeting issues related to bullying and conflict resolution. Note: the University received numerous requests for additional copies of the game from other centers)
- “To produce a usable resource kit to assist students and teachers at the elementary school we are working with to prevent conflict” (this group produced a video slide show, bookmarks, posters, and an entire interactive series called “STAR” using data and quotes from children enrolled in a local elementary school).
- “Our main goal is to create a DVD that will educate high school students on the potential dangers associated with ‘Schoolies’ spring break events” (this group worked with the local government to create a safety campaign that was integrated into the orientation for students at a major spring break destination region).

When asked to identify if their goals had been met in terms of project outcomes, 100% of the student groups with “giving back to the community” stated “yes.” Some illustrative quotes related to learning and motivation, taken from the students’ individual reflection papers, include:

- “The real motivation for this project for me wasn’t the grade or because it was required in this class. The real motivation for me was that I truly wanted to be involved in a group that could make a difference... to actually have the chance to give back to the community and help in ways where so little can mean so much, to have our client truly satisfied with the

end product, and to contribute positively to our community... even just the feeling of accomplishing something by helping others with needs. I feel like we truly reached out to the community... I would never have done this otherwise.”

- “I knew that in order for me to pass this class I was going to need to get this project completed to a reasonable standard, and to do this I drew my motivation from the fact that if I did not get this project done then I was going to fail the class. As the project got underway and more and more group members got involved, I starting finding motivation in other places such as the simple fact of helping an organization that runs primarily off of volunteers and donations. It is all too easy to sit in this university bubble and forget that it is exactly that – a bubble, and outside of this bubble are serious issues that need to be addressed. After remembering this, I found it easy to draw my motivation simply from the work we were doing. We made a difference.”
- “Although learning and getting good grades are always the main motivation for me throughout my university degree, I saw this assignment as a good indicator as to whether or not I could achieve success outside of the classroom in the real world. Therefore, my main motivation was to create a successful product. In my eyes, a successful product would fill a need in the community, would benefit a larger segment of the community than just a few individuals, and could be implemented as a long term initiative. Achieving these goals was my main motivation... and we accomplished them all.”

### **Lessons Learned**

As with any educational endeavor, there are differing degrees of success in terms of student projects every semester. Over the years, there are a number of lessons that I have learned that have helped to slowly increase the quality of student projects to the point where I now always have

a number of very highly successful initiatives, a few moderately successful ones, and no failures (and this has held true for the past five years). My lessons learned are as follows:

1. Be optimistic yet realistic. Service-learning projects run using this format (i.e., semester-long, full course based) take a lot of time to effectively supervise. The amount of work will vary every year, but you should be realistic in terms of other projects you take on during your teaching semester. I used to try to “cram” too many other tasks (e.g., journal submissions, conference presentations, campus seminars) into my teaching semester and I always felt that the only result was that everything was compromised. Teaching a course with these projects in it will invariably take up a fair amount of time at different points throughout the semester – as such, be realistic and at least for the first year or two have as few other major commitments as possible during your Negotiation teaching semester(s).
2. Select readings and videos carefully. Many of us who teach negotiation require our students to read not only textbooks but also additional readings and videos. We select the additional readings and videos for a number of reasons, but mainly to complement the information that is presented in the text with current, applied concepts and information. I would suggest adding one dimension to the criteria for selection if you choose to integrate a service-learning project into your course. Select readings and videos that are readily applicable to the students’ service-based negotiations – not at the expense of quality, but rather as a component of enhancing the overall quality of the students’ experiences in the course. A sample article and video that I use are listed below:
  - a. In 2008, one of the articles I used was “Investigative Negotiation” (Malhotra & Bazerman, 2007). In this article, the authors put forth five principles for effective negotiations (e.g., “Principle #1: Don’t just discuss what your counterparts want – find out why they want it.” p. 74). I challenged the students to connect each of the five principles to their consulting

- projects. How have they utilized the principle effectively or how could they have utilized it in a more appropriate way with their community-based negotiations?
- b. In another example, every semester I show my students Robert Cialdini's (2001) video "The Power of Persuasion." In that video, Cialdini describes six universal principles of persuasion (Reciprocity, Scarcity, Authority, Consensus, Consistency, Liking). I break the students up into the consulting project groups and ask them to relate each of the principles to the work they are doing for the non-profit organization. This usually helps the students to reframe what they are working on in terms of new ways to approach positive outcomes for the organization.
3. Integrate the project throughout the entire course. Students are smart... this is particularly true when they are enrolled in advanced elective courses (as Negotiation courses often are). They want value for every minute, every assignment, every reading, basically for everything they do (as they deserve). If the service-learning project is not fully integrated into the entire course, then the students may well see it as an unimportant "charity focused" add-on component, and their work will most likely reflect a low level of commitment. I have found that discussing the service-learning consulting projects provides a level platform for all students in terms of real-world experience-based discussions (whereas, with undergraduates, there is always a varying level of professional work experience that students can draw upon for in class examples creating the "haves" and the "have nots" for class discussions). With these projects, every student has an experience to share, a point to consider, and an example of a negotiation topic that was used in their work. I connect the students' projects to every article they read and to every concept I cover in class. I challenge them to draw connections between theory and experience, and to discuss their insights with other members of their respective consulting groups. Everything we do in my Negotiation course is about bringing theory to life through

experience and reflection. As an example of “how to” draw connections between service-learning projects and course concepts please see Table 1, which includes an overview of how seven negotiation concepts (e.g., BATNA, framing) relate to project application and difficulties associated with each project – with illustrative student quotes provided for each concept.

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Insert Table 1 about here

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4. **Believe in the project.** Similar to the above, if you do not believe in the power and potential of a service-learning project to enhance students’ learning in your class, then the students will not believe it either. Faculty members have been described as the “hub of the wheel” for service-learning projects (Kenworthy-U’Ren, 2000), meaning that if they are not fully convinced that service-learning projects provide students with higher levels of applied learning than traditional classroom-based learning techniques do, the projects may very well fail.

### **Conclusion**

Effective negotiation is complex and multifaceted; it requires skills in the areas of communication, persuasion, strategizing, and cognitive processing (Lewicki, 1997). Service-learning projects provide students with opportunities to develop skills in each of these areas, as well as increasing their understanding of, and potential commitment to, the communities around them. Students who participate in these projects are able to experience, first hand, the chaos and difficulties associated with real-world projects and programs as well as the complexities and nuances of engaging in real-world negotiations. The consulting focus of these projects is on developing products or services that relate to negotiation, persuasion, or conflict resolution skills – and as the old adage goes, there is no better way to learn about something than to teach it to others.

To return to the words of one of our modern-day management education sages, David Whetton, from the *Journal of Management Education's* "Wisdom From Our Sages" special issue "... it is through meaningful application that lasting comprehension takes place" (2007, p.347). As I hope I have shared with you throughout this "how to"-oriented article, in my opinion, there is no better medium for students to individually, collectively, and meaningfully apply the skills learned in a university-based negotiation course to real life experience than through service-learning projects.

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## **APPENDIX 1: PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The required group project has been designed as an opportunity for you to use the concepts you will learn in this course by applying them to a real-world organization. Groups of 4 or 5 students will serve as consultants working with a local non-profit organization. The organization you select should be based on your personal networks, interests, and areas of commitment. Student groups are expected to negotiate their way to an effective group experience – this “team” project has been incorporated based on the increasing use of teams in the business world and the move toward community partnering across all sectors. Each group will produce a tip sheet, brochure, game or other useful product on conflict resolution, persuasion, or negotiation. The projects are to be of the quality that will be immediately used by the non-profit organization. In assessing your projects I will look at the level of positive impact your project is contributing to the organization and its members. *Please note: you must have the organization and project approved by me.*

This project will benefit everyone in a number of ways: (1) the organizations you are working with will receive a usable product designed to meet a current organizational and community need, (2) each of you will attain consulting experience applying negotiation theories to real-world conflict situations and (3) each group member will be able to incorporate the final product into his/her resume portfolio.

The graded components of your group project include a report on the group project and an individual reflection paper about what you learned from doing this project. The group project report should include three sections: (1) your group’s strategy (pre-negotiation) for the project negotiation, (2) a description of your research and development of the product and (3) quotes, comments and reflections from your group members and the non-profit organization staff & clients about how the product will benefit the organization. A sample of your product should be attached.

## **APPENDIX 2: GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES**

All courses at Bond University are designed to develop students' graduate attributes. The attributes that will be developed as part of this Negotiation course include:

### **1. Knowledge**

I will look for a demonstrated increase in your individual capacity to apply knowledge of this subject to both understand and examine negotiation outcomes. As part of our discussions, I will ask you to continuously integrate your experiences in your real-world project, as well as those from your other classes and personal experiences, into our discussions of negotiation theory and practice. Negotiation is an art that requires continuous reflection and integration from all aspects of personal and professional life.

### **2. Initiative**

The group project for this course will require you as a member of a team to develop your entrepreneurial vision and implementation skills. The projects are self-selected by each team. I will assist you in any way possible, but the end result of the project will be a result of your vision and implementation skills. To succeed in this real-world consulting project, you will have to demonstrate effective critical thinking and problem solving skills. There is no one right way or correct path for consultants; your skill set and problem-solving abilities as a group will ultimately determine your success. Similarly, to create a real-world product or service that will be immediately implemented (and is focused on reducing conflict or increasing persuasion skills), you will engage in creative idea generation.

### **3. Citizenship**

Your real-world project will require working with individuals from the local community. As such, you will be exposed to issues and needs that may not be a part of your daily life (e.g., homelessness, bullying, neighborhood disputes). You will need to remain focused on diversity awareness and sensitivity, and should also be developing your understanding of issues related to civic and social responsibility. Finally, to effectively interact with real-world businesses will require a very high level of professionalism.

### **4. Communication Skills**

Your final consulting project report and the product or service you produce for your real-world organization partner will need to be at a professional level of written and/or verbal communication appropriate to the profession.

### **5. Teamwork**

The success of your consulting group will be determined by your abilities to demonstrate effective intra-group conflict resolution and decision-making skills. These skills will not only stem from the discipline-specific theory we discuss each week, but also apply to every group experience you will have in your personal and professional lives. A large part of being a successful negotiator is understanding how to positively utilize conflict in groups (conflict in groups is inevitable, creating something positive out of it takes awareness, understanding and practice).

**APPENDIX 3:  
CONSULTING PROJECT PRE-NEGOTIATION TEMPLATE**

**(1) Goals**

- a) Ours (i.e., what would be the best possible outcome for us, what's the most likely outcome, and what's our BATNA).
- b) Those of the person/people I am negotiating with (what's our best guess).
- c) What do we want to get out of this (e.g., learning, consulting experience, feeling good about helping a non-profit community organization)

**(2) Information**

- a) Information we seek,
- b) Information that will most likely be sought from us,
- c) Our strategy for seeking information (e.g., questioning, trading, etc.),
- d) Our strategy for disclosing information (e.g., be open, trade information, refuse to disclose information),
- e) Materials/information/resources we should bring to the table, and
- f) Materials/information/resources we will ask for during our negotiation.

**(3) Negotiation Strategy**

- a) What's our approach going to be?
- b) How much time will we have for the negotiation meeting?
- c) Who will speak during the negotiation (e.g., designated speaker, everyone, different team members for different aspects of the negotiation)?

**APPENDIX 4:  
INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION ASSESSMENT PAPER GUIDELINES**

The content of your individual reflection assessment papers should include reactions/responses to the following:

- Examples of how the project related to course concepts (e.g., skills and strategies for negotiation/conflict management, tools for negotiating, group negotiations in your project groups, stepping into others' shoes),
- What motivated you to do this project (e.g., grades, required component of the course, feeling good about helping others, wanting to be a productive / contributory part of your community, ability to learn about the community around you), and
- What you learned from doing this project (e.g., about yourself, about your team mates, about the interconnectedness of community and your current and future roles in it, and about the non-profit organization staff and clients).

NOTE: The bulk of your writing should be focused on what you learned (section 3 above). However, all three of the sections listed above should be addressed in your assessment.

## **APPENDIX 5: LETTER TO COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**

February 28, 2008

Superintendent  
NSW Police  
address here

Dear Superintendent xxx,

My name is Amy Kenworthy and I teach the advanced elective subject titled Effective Negotiation (MGMT 13-321) at Bond University. As a component of the subject, my students are required to team up with a local organization to create a usable product or service designed to meet an unmet community service need that is targeted toward conflict resolution, persuasion or negotiation.

I encourage my students to identify sectors of the community that they are interested in learning about and working with. The students who have approached you to work with Lindisfarne high school (names here) are very interested in creating a powerful, informative and reusable scenario (to be videotaped for future use) to assist young people in learning about the dangers associated with driving under the influence.

As you probably know by now, student name here is one of xxx high school's former students as well as a long-time local community member. As a member of this Bond University project group, (student) has been a persuasive advocate of your local community region. The project his group is undertaking is a direct result of all of the wonderful things he has said about his experiences at Lindisfarne high school and his commitment to the local community in the Terranora region.

Please know that I will be working closely with the students to ensure that the product you assist with is of a very high quality. The students are extremely excited about working with the local community to create a community-based, impactful and high quality product.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me directly at phone here or email here. Thank you for your interest in working with my students on this project. I am confident they will do an outstanding job and that the students at Lindisfarne will be positively impacted by the result of their work.

Yours in learning,

Dr. Amy Kenworthy  
Associate Professor of Management  
Bond University School of Business

**TABLE 1:  
NEGOTIATION CONCEPTS AND SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT APPLICATION, DIFFICULTIES, AND  
ILLUSTRATIVE QUOTES**

<b>Negotiation Concept</b>	<b>Service-Learning Process and Concept Application</b>	<b>Potential Difficulties Faced By Students</b>	<b>Illustrative Student Quote From Individual Reflection Papers</b>
<b>BATNA</b>	- As the students self-select their organizations based on personal self interests and community contacts, they often end up cold-calling organizations to set up meetings/negotiations. As a result, the agency representatives have not usually expressed a desire for assistance or help from the students. This raises the organization's perceived, and quite possibly actual, BATNAs in the eyes of the students.	- Some student groups overestimate their own BATNAs, assuming that (a) their first choice organization will desperately want to work with them and (b) if that does not work out, there will be another organization ready and willing to partner with them immediately. This is a very important lesson for students in terms of understanding the realities of a BATNA, their own egos as students, and their skills as negotiators.	“When we initially met with the organization managers, we had in mind what we wanted to offer them for our project. However, our plans were quickly revoked and we had to begin with what suited them best. This process required a lot of back-and-forth negotiation, but we had to remember that we did not have as high a BATNA as they did (particularly given that we started late and were working to a tight deadline).”
<b>Positions vs. Interests</b>	- I have found that the distinction between positions and interests is a difficult one for many undergraduate students to grasp. Often, they think that by stating their position on something, they have explained their interests. I have also found that very few of my students have been trained to explore others' interests, at least	- For some students, the transition between stating their position and exploring own and others' interests is a very difficult and time consuming transition to make. - In my weekly discussions with the groups, I spend a great deal of time talking about how they will approach their negotiations with	“When dealing with the operations management people at the organization, we learned quickly to ‘step to their side’ in terms of focusing on their interests. We started by presenting our drafts to them (our positions on what the brochure should look like), which didn't work. We then realized that they

	<p>to the depth required for successful collaborative outcomes to be achieved in projects like these (real-world, resource-dependent, timeline-based, group-driven, and demanding).</p>	<p>the agency staff and/or clients, helping to illustrate that a focus on interests is critical to successful outcomes in these projects. I am often direct with students about the severity and frequency of their positional statements (i.e., here’s what you said and how it may well be interpreted), which they usually find difficult at first but are thankful for as the semester progresses.</p>	<p>wanted to have input into the design process (their interests) so we began asking them about their thoughts and ideas before we created a new version and presented it to them. This worked very well and everyone felt involved and contributory.”</p>
<p><b>Dual Concerns Model</b></p>	<p>- One of the benefits of real-world service-oriented negotiations is that students often make assumptions about how much the service providers need and/or want their assistance. As such, students tend to overestimate the weight of their own outcomes over those of the agency representative(s). These projects offer a very real platform for discussion about the five points in the dual concerns model – and how hard it can be to create “collaborative” agreements in real life with restricted resources to contribute and concrete outcomes required.</p>	<p>- Poorly prepared or overly nervous student groups tend to either default to a group “yielding” or a group “contending” position if their negotiations with agency representatives do not go as the students had originally planned. In either of these scenarios, I am usually brought in as a “mediator” to assist in the negotiation as a third party with a vested interest in setting high-quality, yet realistic, goals for both sides.</p>	<p>“This project made me realize that negotiation is often not about winning or losing, but about compromise. At one point, after we had met with our agency, we felt really overwhelmed because we thought they were asking way too much of us for an eight week project with limited monetary funds. When we all calmed down and looked at the situation rationally, we realized that they weren’t asking too much and there was a way for us to control the situation without backing out on them. We reduced some of our expectations and asked them to reduce some of theirs.”</p>

<p><b>Framing</b></p>	<p>- The students quickly realize that they need to carefully prepare for their initial negotiations with the agency representatives. Word choice, in terms of framing, is something that I spend a great deal of time with them on during the first part of the semester. All students must prepare examples of frames they will use during their initial negotiations with the agency representative(s) and practice them for me during one of our in-class weekly update sessions.</p>	<p>- Students tend to initially devalue the importance of framing questions and statements in a negotiation. I find that the real-world aspect of their service-learning projects (i.e., the students are approaching the agencies initially, not the other way around) magnifies and clarifies the need for effective preparation on the students' parts.                  - One of the major difficulties in this area is that there are always students who do not prepare well and, as a result, are unable to negotiate a project with their first choice organization.*</p>	<p>“The thing that the group and I really concentrated on with our agency (Animal Welfare League) was framing. Things such as using the loss frame to demonstrate product scarcity, choosing sentences carefully to ensure reciprocity through an aspiration frame, and a consensus-oriented frame to persuade the other party that what we were offering was in demand by others.”</p>
<p><b>Inventing Options for Mutual Gain</b></p>	<p>- As with many real-life projects, there are numerous examples of student projects that require a great deal of adaptability and change. The ability to look past perceived obstacles and invent options for mutual gain is a definite skill that I find many of my students develop during their service-learning projects.</p>	<p>- Rigidity in terms of timelines and student expectations can be an issue when difficulties arise in students' service-learning projects.                  - One of the questions I continue to ask groups who have obstacles that arise (e.g., contact person leaves, representative does not like their first drafts), is how can you invent an option here that will meet both sides' needs? What ARE your options for mutual gain? This tends to help students refocus on a positive outcome,</p>	<p>“We thought our project was going to be a total and complete disaster. When the high school pulled out with one week to go, we were convinced that there would be no way we could use all of the materials we created. When you sat us down and said, let's refocus on what we <u>can</u> do here, the positive processes kicked in. Thanks to your contact at the other high school, and the Principal's willingness to share her needs and expectations around</p>

		<p>rather than the easier and more readily accessible route of focusing on the things that have gone wrong.</p>	<p>their curriculum with us, we tailored our presentation and materials to her school’s students, inserted role plays and Q&amp;A to meet their needs, and the day was a huge success! Over 150 high school students participated and we all learned a tremendous amount – talk about mutual gains for both sides!”</p>
<p><b>Persuasion</b></p>	<p>- Students are required to apply Robert Cialdini’s six principles of persuasion to their service-learning projects. For many of the students, this is the first application of these concepts to real-life negotiations. Most of the student groups are able to successfully leverage each of the principles into positive project outcomes.</p>	<p>- Students may become too rigid in their use of these concepts, with some student groups only using pre-prepared phrases and ideas in their negotiations, thus restricting their abilities to change their approach with the ebb and flows of the actual negotiations (e.g., the realities of the agency representative’s timeline; the organization’s actual versus hypothesized needs).</p>	<p>“External parties were more willing to negotiate to our terms once they knew of the project’s concept of helping prevent drunk driving. An example of this was Donut King where our initial persuasive approach was to use consensus to get donuts (i.e., the Police are involved, the tow truck company is involved, the make up team is involved). Once we found out that the manager was finishing up her high school degree, we switched to scarcity (a rare opportunity for her company to really help the school with a worthy project) and liking (how much the students were just like her). It worked!”</p>

<p><b>Goal Setting</b></p>	<p>- Students must set SMART (i.e., Specific, Meaningful / Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound) goals for themselves and their project before they negotiate with the organization representatives (e.g., what things can they realistically provide to the organization in the allocated timeframe, given their resource pool and the constraints of the project?)</p> <p>- Students often use the concepts of SMART goal setting in their products or services as a key component of conflict resolution, negotiation, or persuasion.</p>	<p>- Some students set unrealistic goals and then agree to unrealistic outcomes (e.g., promising too much, saying they can deliver projects our outcomes that they do not have the skills to produce and do not have the contacts to acquire through others).*</p> <p>- Alternatively, some students set rigid goals as they believe that they already “know” what an agency representative will need or want for his/her organization and, often, these students are wrong.*</p>	<p>“Relating negotiation concepts which we practiced in class to the job interview guide we produced was not a stretch. We chose to pay specific attention to goal setting and prioritization. This fit our target audience very well as one of the issues our agency wanted us to cover in the interview kit materials we created was controlling myths about disabled employees’ needs and how to identify when you (the disabled interviewee) are asking for too much consideration.”</p>
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\* In situations where there are difficulties or “no deal” outcomes with the non-profit organizations, I always make a point of contacting the agency representative to discuss what happened and to reaffirm my and the University’s thanks for taking the time to meet with our students. I have never had anyone who was upset about the interaction with the students, only people for whom the project did not meet their needs or timelines. To a person, every agency representative I have talked with was thankful for the personal follow-up call.