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TEACHING & LEARNING

Leader/Teacher Credibility and Bias in the Classroom and Workplace

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Teachers are the leaders of their multiple, semester-length, organizational microcosms, and just as leader credibility is paramount for practitioner leaders, so too do teachers prove their “cred” in every class. What should teachers know from management research about how students confer credibility on their teachers? On what can these classroom leaders focus to discretely demonstrate that they are credible? Leader credibility also develops trust among the followers, which can be undermined by intended or unintended gender bias. Issues of awareness by teachers and justice at the classroom/worksites must converge to develop optimal leader behaviors and learning.

Toward these goals, the Teaching & Learning section offers two articles with both classroom- and workplace-oriented behaviors and applications. The first article, “Enhancing Teacher Credibility: What We Can Learn From the Justice and Leadership Literature,” by Barbara A. Ritter, Patricia R. Hedberg, and Kim Gower, proposes applying actionable management research to the classroom to help students become better managers while also improving classroom teaching practices and outcomes. Citing literature, the authors present the roles of Implicit Leadership Theory (ILT) and elements of procedural and distributive justice that can influence students’ perceptions of their teacher’s classroom and professional credibility. For example, students use ILT to mentally compare, consciously or unconsciously, the teacher with the student’s perceived leader prototype. Similarly, students employ elements of justice in perceiving teacher fairness, consistency, lack of bias, accuracy, and adherence to ethical standards. Positive student perceptions of leader/teacher justice will enhance students’ perceptions of the leader/teacher character and credibility.

Our second article focuses specifically on gender bias. In their article “Revealing Gender Bias: An Experiential Exercise,” Linda M. Dunn-Jensen, Scott Jensen, Mikelle A. Calhoun,¹ and Katherine C. Ryan provide our readers with a classroom exercise designed to uncover unconscious gender bias. Using a case based on an adaptation

of an episode from the British game show “Golden Balls,” the authors provide an opportunity for students to experience how gender bias might affect their own attitudes and behavior. Stereotyping and bias can influence workplace behavior as well as management decision making. Exercises such as the one developed by the authors enable experiential learning and self-reflection that expose unconscious bias and foster personal awareness that can influence future conduct, actions, and decisions. As we seek to educate the whole person and contribute to the development of future business leaders, this classroom exercise affords management educators an opportunity to deepen student understanding of stereotyping and bias through active learning and reflection.

Finally, the co-editors thank the dozen reviewers from the Management Education and Development track for the 2016 Eastern Academy of Management conference who so graciously agreed to also become reviewers for the Teaching & Learning section of *Organization Management Journal*. As important as quality reviewers are to the professional success of our journal, strong reviewers are never more needed than when one of our own co-editors submits a manuscript for consideration. We value our double-blind review process and strive for the same objective impartiality for all submissions. Thank you so much to those who recently stepped forward to contribute to this role and to assure all authors of the equitable treatment they can expect. For any others who are interested in becoming a reviewer for Teaching & Learning, please contact either co-editor listed at the start of this introduction.

Note

1. The editor and co-editors of *Organization Management Journal* extend their condolences to the co-authors of “Revealing Gender Bias: An Experiential Exercise” and the family of Mikelle A. Calhoun, who passed away in July 2015.