

March 8, 2022

Observed: Bob Mackalski's RAIK 341

Observer: Steve Cooper

Class held face to face in the Great Hall. 35 students in attendance (1 came in late)

It's immediately clear that Bob has a great relation with the students. The students have a good comfort level with Bob and with his class. Bob's voice is loud and clear.

Bob started class with initial setup for an activity: Starting with paper towels and hand sanitizer. Optional lab with food (for those comfortable). Students selected 2 cups per student. There was a good deal of curiosity about what would be doing in class.

Bob then started the class with a review of marketing topics, where the class has come from and where it is now:

What customer wants vs what the firm can offer.

Product, price, place, promotion as a marketing bridge

Dividing customers into subgroups (segmentation)

Segment size, structure (supplier/buyer powers, entry barriers, etc.), strategy

Identifying the target market

I thought the slides Bob was using were very visual and appealing.

I had a hard time seeing the slides due to the lights being on in the front of the room. I recommend turning off the lights in the front of the room.

I really liked how Bob referred back to IP class the students took as freshmen reminding them where they had seen some of the ideas previously.

Bob then clearly provided objectives for the lesson.

He then reviewed the definition of a product.

I really liked the next aspect of the class, where Bob divided the students into groups of 3-4 where they were given the task to develop a concept for a children's sugary breakfast cereal.

While the groups were discussing, Bob continued preparations for the activity: Passing out 2 canisters of coffee.

Student teams then reported out, with Bob calling on students by name and writing their suggestions onto the white board in an organized manner – note that I found his black ink on the board easy to read. The students had lots of fun and creative ideas, and the groups of students built off of one another.

Bob wrapped up describing all the information about the product itself, including the title, packaging of the box, ingredients of the cereal. He provided a slide that summarized the key elements of the product.

Bob provided his own example of a product: Express VPN, and covered the “product”

Bob then provided a sample image of an apple with a bite taken out that has a worm coming out of it. He showed that we focus on the “bad” – students notice the worm more than the bite taken out of the apple.

The next focus of the lecture was on product vs brand:

Bob covered the definition first (students proposing specific brands for specific products)

Students then tried out the two coffees (and wrote down their tasting notes and preferences)

It was good when Bob wandered through the room chatting with students as they take notes

Students vote: 17 prefer A and 14 prefer B

Paul self-identified as connoisseur, and provided initial explanation for choosing B over A

Other students chimed in

Bob writes down student comments at the front of the room, cleverly grouping them.

Note: Lots of students were joining in the conversation! This was great to see. Everyone seemed engaged. (Note: While several students had their computers open, I did not see students doing non-class related activities on their computers. They were all engaged!)

Bob described historically taste tests. Famous study of identifying beers. (heavy vs light taste, and high vs low quality) Different results when brands weren't provided (all were together in terms of perceived quality). Brand equity – when consumers prefer a given brand.

Example were provided of art and cars.

There was a fun class exercise with image of 2 people: Tim vs Bob

At the end of the class, I asked for 10 minutes to talk with the students where Bob wasn't present. I first asked students to identify strengths of the class and of Bob's teaching t=of the class. Students noted that:

For several, this is their favorite class.

Bob always includes daily objectives, and it is easy to stay focused.

Students love how Bobs sets up an environment where it is easy to be engaged with the lecture (students are graded on participation, but it doesn't feel like it).

Students find Bob to be energetic and excited all the time.

Bob's set-up of lectures is a lot of fun. Bob always hits with a point at the end.

Students like that Bob does activities with the students. There is a great application of concepts

Students note that they never feel ill-prepared for class

Bob engages with students when working in groups. Students like the interaction.

Bob provides tons of examples, which students like.

Bob knows all the students' names.

Bob focuses on applications rather than just memorization.

Students also had some recommendations:

One student noted that marketing was presented linearly when it is more fluid and subjective.

That student would like less structure. Other students disagreed with this point.

Students would like reminders about upcoming due dates during lecture. Bob includes due dates in the syllabus, but students would like reminders.

Students would like earlier reminders about when they have to read case studies.

Students would like more feedback on midterm. The midterm questions were open-ended, and more feedback was desired.

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