Developments in Business Simulation and Experiential Learning, Volume 32, 2005

TEACHING EXPERIENTIALLY WITH THE MADELINE HUNTER METHOD: AN APPLICATION IN A MARKETING RESEARCH COURSE

Alvin C. Burns
Louisiana State University
alburns@lsu.edu

ABSTRACT

Due to concerns about the disparity of learning and the high nonresponse rates encountered by student marketing research teams working with sponsors, the author adopted the Hunter Method to restructure his course. This method requires the use of a model onto which students can map their learning via guided practice as well as independent practice. This approach allows student teams to select different topics, but they must use identical research objectives. The author claims that it levels learning, renders learning easier for students, and enhances Instructor efficiency.

THE MADELINE HUNTER METHOD

Approximately 20 years ago, Madeline Hunter published her book, *Mastery Teaching* (1983), in which she described her seven-step lesson plan. This approach quickly became known as the "Madeline Hunter Method" or the "Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Model." This model is described in Table 1, and while accurate statistics are not available, it has been widely adopted in the United States in primary and secondary education. Toward the end of her career, Madeline Hunter received as many as 500 requests a year to speak or do workshops on her method (Goldberg, 1990).

As the adoption information denotes, the Hunter model was originally devised for a primary or secondary grade lesson plan context where the subject matter is concise and where the learning takes place in a relative short time period, perhaps a matter of 20 minutes or a series of short time periods covering a week or so. However, with a little imagination (and work), the model can be applied to higher education situations. In fact, Hunter (1985) claims that it is equally effective in elementary, secondary and university teaching. This paper describes how it is currently being used in an undergraduate marketing research class.

THE EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH OF THE MARKETING RESEARCH COURSE INVOLVED

For some time, the author has subscribed to and advocated the "project-based" approach to teaching marketing research. This is an experiential method that requires students to take on and complete a pilot marketing research study for some company or establishment. With the project-based approach, the Instructor systematically teaches the skill sets necessary to execute a marketing research study (such as: problem definition, research objectives, questionnaire design, sample size, sample method, data analysis, report writing, and so forth).

Table 1
The Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Model*

Step	Description
1. Anticipatory set	Provide a "hook" for students to see the relevance of the learning or to otherwise become receptive to learning the subject matter
2. Objectives/Standards	Identify specifically what the student will be able to do, understand, and/or care about as a result of the lesson
3. Teaching & Modeling	Provide a model or example of what is expected as the end product of the learning
4. Guided practice	Students work on activities or exercises relevant to the subject matter under the teacher's direct guidance
5. Check for understanding	Evaluate the students practice sets to make sure that they "got it"
6. Independent practice	Once students have acquired the learning, have them repeat the practice to provide reinforcement of the learning
7. Closure	Actions or words by the teacher that provide cues to students that they have learned the subject matter

*Various users shift some steps and/or divide one step into two and ascribe to 8 steps

Students are combined into research project teams, and as they learn the necessary skills involved in the various steps of the marketing research process, they apply them to each step in their team research projects. The outcome is a marketing research team report that has some value to the sponsor establishment or company. This is an experiential approach, and student learning is claimed to be greater due to the real world context, because the work has value to the sponsor, and for the reason that students see the relevance of gaining command of marketing research practices. This approach has been described by Burns (1978), Lawton (1987), Niffenegger (1982), and Richardson (1979).

To elaborate, depending on the textbook used, the marketing research process is comprised of a variable number of steps. For example, Burns and Bush (2005) stipulate 11 steps: (1) establish the need for marketing research , (2) define the problem, (3) establish research objectives, (4) determine research design, (5) identify information types and sources, (6) determine methods of accessing data, (7) design data collection forms, (8) determine sample plan and size, (9) collect data, (10) analyze data, and (11) prepare and present the final research report. The project-based approach requires that the instructor cover every step and task his/her students to learn the basic concepts and skills involved with each step. For example, to define the problem and set research objectives, students must learn how to interrogate the client as to symptoms, probable causes, and reasonable courses of action that the client can implement to solve the problem. With design of data collection forms, students must learn about measurement scales, question flow on questionnaires, and coding systems. With data analysis, students are required to master some statistical analysis software and to interpret descriptive analyses, differences tests, associative analyses, and, perhaps, regression. To write a coherent research report, students are taught the various report sections and their flow in the report, use of graphical presentations, proper tabular representations of findings, and skills such as cogent interpretation and summarization of findings.

On the surface, the project-based approach appears to be an excellent real-world laboratory where students apply their learned marketing research skills under the direction of the Instructor and where they acquire valuable practical experience that validates their learning. However, those who have used the sponsored project-based approach repeatedly know that it is inherently unbalanced in the learning that takes place across students. That is, one team may have an exceptionally easy project such as determining a demographic and life style profile of the sponsor's customers. Another team may have a difficult and challenging project such as assessing the market potential for a complicated and technical as-yet-undeveloped product, and a third team may research the relative attractiveness and impact of two alternative advertisements. The unevenness of the project experience and the experiential learning that accompanies it invariably leads to a situation where the Instructor must apply the identical grade to teams who have may have had dramatically different learning experiences because each team has satisfied the client's agreed-upon research objectives.

MORE BACKGROUND THAN YOU WANT TO HEAR ABOUT

In the past 5 years, the sponsored project-based approach to teaching marketing research, as reported by others (Burns (1978), Lawton (1987), Niffenegger (1982), and Richardson (1979)), is near-to-impossible in our present-day marketing research environment. To be specific, the refusal rates for surveys have skyrocketed, and even students who identify themselves as university students performing a marketing survey as a required aspect of a course they are enrolled in find it extremely difficult to obtain a target of as few as 100 completions. In short, whereas cold-call telephone surveys worked reasonably well as the data collection vehicle for student marketing research projects in the past, this approach is now problematic at best. In this author's experience, it just does not work because the progress of student projects comes to a near standstill in the data collection stage. Students become discouraged as the project stalls while they make a great many phone calls most of which are flat refusals. Given this situation, the author decided it was time to adopt a new approach that would smooth out the experience unevenness across teams and avoid data collection frustrations. In his search for a new approach, he adopted the Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Method.

ADOPTION OF THE MADELINE HUNTER METHOD

In this author's opinion, there are two critical aspects of the Madeline Hunter Method that must be resolved in order to apply it to a semester-long situation such as the marketing research team project one described here. These issues are intertwined and they are: uniformity and the development of a model.

THE ISSUE OF UNIFORMITY

An essential element in the Madeline Hunter Method is the use of a model, exemplar, or end product of how the learning is to be used by students. This aspect of the Method became a central concern as the author mulled over the remake of his undergraduate marketing research course into the context of the Madeline Hunter Method. In this deliberation process, there emerged the reality that in order to apply the Madeline Hunter Method to this course, the author had to develop a learning situation that was universally applicable to his student teams. In other words, it became apparent that a single team project assignment

should be developed, and each student team must be assigned the same task, namely, to execute a marketing research project that mapped directly onto the model. However, this author believed that motivation and student enthusiasm would be heightened if each student team had some degree of uniqueness that allowed the teams to pursue knowledge about the topic of their own choice. That is, the topic of the project could differ from team to team, but the research objectives and constructs needed to be constant. This revelation effectively removed the sponsor from the team research project: different sponsors have different problems and different research objectives and therefore are contrary to uniformity. Instead, it was necessary to use a single model that assumed the same research problem with the same research objectives, and the constructs would also be constant across teams. As can be seen in the "Team Project Topic Assignment" provided in Exhibit 1, team chooses the business establishment (restaurant, retail store, bar, or service provider) to research, but the questions and constructs remain constant across teams.

Exhibit 1
Team Project Topic Assignment

Topic Selection

Select any business (for example: restaurant, store, service provider) and investigate the consumer behavior of (INSERT UNIVERSITY NAME) students with respect to this establishment. Note: It is best to select a topic where there is "variability" across students, meaning differences of opinion about, amount of use of, and variety to the topic.

Descriptive Research Objectives

1. How much do they use it?
    a. How often?
    b. How much spent (individually)?
    c. How much spent on that category?
2. What of it do they buy/use? (Select at least 5 categories of the establishment's offerings)
3. Overall, how satisfied are they with it?
4. How do they rate its performance on its various aspects? (Must have a minimum of 12 different aspects)
5. What advertising do they recall, and/or where do they recall advertising? (Must have a minimum of 5 advertising items, subject to the actual advertising of the establishment)
6. What are the market shares of the various competitors in the establishment's category? (Based on purchases in the most recent relevant time period.)
7. Additional card objective –up to you – one or two additional constructs
8. Obtain a demographic profile of the sample
9. Obtain a general life style profile of the sample.
10. Obtain a category-specific life style profile of the sample.

Example Project
Example topic: Papa John's Pizza

Descriptive Research Objective	Example
1. How much do they use it?	How many times to you buy from Papa John's Pizza in a typical month? About how much do you spend at Papa John's Pizza on a typical purchase? How much do you spend on pizza delivery stores in a typical month?
2. What do they buy?	Do you typically purchase Papa John's…? • Regular pizza (any size)? • Thin pizza? • Breadsticks? • Cheesesticks? • Chickenstrips? • Drinks?
3. How satisfied are they with it?	Overall, how satisfied are you with Papa John's Pizza?

4. How do they rate its performance on its various aspects?	Rate Papa John's Pizza on: • Pizza taste • Pizza freshness • Variety of pizza types • Thin pizza • Competitive prices • Quality of pizza ingredients • Variety of toppings • Ease of telephone ordering • Ease of online ordering • Speed of delivery • Nutritional information • Breadsticks • Cheesesticks • Chickenstrips • Etc. (will require background research)
5. What advertising do they recall, and/or where do they recall advertising?	In the past month, do you recall Papa John's Pizza advertising… • Flyer • Coupon • Store sign • Internet ad • Etc.
6. What are the market shares of the various competitors in the establishment's category?	Which of the following pizza delivery services have you used in the past month? • Domino's • Papa John's • Pizza Hut • Other(s)
7. Additional objective	(*This varies by each team*) Example: social context When you order/eat Papa John's Pizza how often are you… • Alone? • With roommates? • With friend(s)? • Having a party? • Studying? • Watching TV?
8. Demographics	Gender, Classification, Work status, Off/On campus dwelling, In/Out-of-state student, US/Foreign student, Racial/ethnic category, Other
9. General Life Style	Minimum of 5 college student life style dimensions • I study more than the average student. • I have a lot of free time. • I enjoy going out. • I usually go along with the crowd. • I am pleased with my life right now.
10. Category-specific Life Style	Minimum of: 5 pizza-specific life style dimensions • Pizza is a large part of my diet. • Ordering a pizza gives me time to do more important things. • Pizza's help me stretch my wallet. • I don't worry about calories in pizzas. • I usually order my pizzas from the same place.

As noted above, the team marketing research project requires a number of steps, and the culmination of the project is the project report. Of course, every step is essential to the success of the research project; however, the uniformity requirement meant that some steps had to be preordained by the Instructor. Specifically, the Instructor: (1) established the need for research (assigned the team research project as 20% of the final grade), (2) defined the research problem (research some business or establishment used by fellow college students), (3) specified the research objectives (determine usage, performance, ratings, satisfaction, advertising recall, market share, target market, etc.), (4) determined research design (do a survey), (5) identified information types and sources (other college students as respondents), and (6) determined the method of accessing data (most teams use Websurveyor). In addition, the Instructor decided the sample plan (convenience sample) and size (100 respondents, minimum), plus the data collection method was predetermined due to the questionnaire design software used in this course.

DECIDING ON AND CREATING MODELS

In applying the Hunter model as a learning platform across marketing research project student teams, three steps in the marketing research process are critically important. These are: design data collection form (questionnaire design), data analysis, and report preparation. Arguably, these three steps are the most important phases of the marketing research process, so, in theory, the crux of the learning takes place for the most critical aspects of the process.

To implement the model requirement of the Hunter Method, it was decided to create a class team with the Instructor as the team leader. This team (aka the author) executes all of the steps in the team project at an accelerated pace, and its work is posted on the Blackboard course management system adopted by the university in the teamspace set up for the whole class team. Specifically, as can be seen in Exhibit 1, in the fall semester of 2004, the Instructor selected Papa John's Pizza as the focal business. The first model developed was the questionnaire for the Papa John's Pizza team marketing research project. The University has a site license for Websurveyor, and after students in the author's class learned basic measurement and questionnaire design principles, the Papa John's Pizza questionnaire was created in a class exercise. The Instructor finalized the Websurveyor questionnaire, published it to the Web, and students in the class were required to respond to it as well as students in other classes to fill the sample size quota of 100 minimum. Table 2 describes how each of the steps in the Hunter Method is implemented in the questionnaire design step of the team marketing research project.

After the questionnaire design step is completed, the various parts of the project report become the relevant models. That is, the project is divided into sections (frontmatter, executive summary, introduction, research objectives, research method, findings, conclusions & recommendations, and appendix). The author writes the report section-by-section and posts each section as a draft on the class teamspace. Students are required to inspect each section and to find errors and/or make suggestions for improvements. After a short amount of time, the section

Table 2
The Madeline Hunter Direct Instruction Model Applied to the Questionnaire Design Step of the Marketing Research Project

Step	Description
1. Anticipatory set	Students are told that questionnaire design is a vital step in the marketing research process.
2. Objectives/Standards	Students are informed that a questionnaire must be developed for the team marketing research project, and the questionnaire must be up to professional standards.
3. Teaching & Modeling	Measurement scales and questionnaire design principles are taught. The Papa John's Pizza team project Websurveyor questionnaire is designed in class and published for students to respond to online.
4. Guided practice	Assignment #3 is an individual assignment where each student must design a questionnaire for a case in the textbook.
5. Check for understanding	Assignment #3 is discussed in class, and individual student questionnaires are graded.
6. Independent practice	Each student team designs a Websurveyor questionnaire for its team marketing research project.
7. Closure	The Instructor requires that each team's questionnaire be submitted to him for evaluation and okayed before data collection is allowed.

draft is replaced with a final copy. As one would expect, the introduction section varies across the teams as it requires each team to perform some background research on their business, so the author includes business website information, recent articles on the company and industry, and digital photo(s) of the location(s) near campus. Student teams must perform background research on their businesses to write their report introductions; however, the class team project introduction serves as a template or model.

The research objectives are dictated and research method is almost always an online survey with a convenience sample, so these sections are the easiest models for students to use. However, the findings subsections require extensive work on the part of the student teams as they must perform the appropriate data analyses on their team project data sets, insert and modify tables and figures as necessary, and provide correct interpretations of their findings. In other words, the analysis section (comprised of several subsections: sample profile, differences analyses, relationship analyses, etc.) independent practice is undeniably the most challenging task for the student teams. Prior to independent practice, teaching and guided practice is provided in the forms of two class sessions in the college of business' pc laboratory where students practice on data sets provided by the Instructor. In addition, the Instructor uses two individual data analysis assignments (one for basic descriptive analysis, statistical inference and difference tests, the other for associative analysis and predictive analysis) where students are provided yet different data sets and research objectives. Finally, as teams complete drafts of their various data analysis subsections, they can submit them to the Instructor for constructive criticism.

AN EVALUATION OF THE MADELINE HUNTER METHOD AS APPLIED

While the author has used this approach for only three semesters, and no rigorous comparison of the learning under this method with alternative methods has been undertaken, the author has some observations to share with those who might consider following in his footsteps. These are: (1) leveled learning, (2) easy learning, and (3) instructional efficiency.

Leveling of the learning field is most certainly the earmark of the Hunter Method. It is best suited for situations where the Instructor has specific content or behaviors he/she wishes his/her students to learn. Because the Instructor uses a model, teaches specifically to that model, and restricts learning to the production of that model, all students learn the same content or skill set. That is, the variance in student learning is minimized, and likewise, the variance in student performance is curtailed on the achievement side as once a student clears the learning hurdle, so to speak, the student stops. Granted, a clever Instructor may create incentives that inspire students to jump higher, but this author is not that clever.

Easy learning is a bit of a shock to students. In fact, it is not uncommon for a student to question how appropriate it is to use the class project model that is provided. To be sure, a few sections are almost verbatim copies of the whole class team project report; however, the analysis subsections, conclusions and recommendations sections are always substantially different. True, the format and form of these report sections are standardized, but students must work at interpretation and cogent communication of their findings. It seems to this author that when students sweat over interpretation and communication rather than spinning their wheels building tables and figures, they are learning the right thing.

Instructional efficiency refers to the fact that a single model suffices for all student teams. In the sponsored project approach, there is a very general model such as an outline of the sections of a marketing research report and descriptions of what goes into each section, but the Instructor must hover over every research team to assure that it is on track with the sponsor's research objectives and to ensure quality control. Because each team faces a unique set of research objectives, the Instructor must work closely with each team to guide it toward completion of its unique model. In other words, there is scant efficiency of the Instructor's time. With the Hunter Method, however, there is only one model (the final report for the whole class project), and this model is very detailed. Furthermore, the need for tight quality control is relaxed, and, in fact, the quality of each team final project report can be used as an assessment component. Consequently, the Hunter Method affords a much more efficient use of the Instructor's time.

REFERENCES

Burns, Alvin (1978). "The Extended Live Case Approach To Teaching Marketing Research," Exploring Experiential Learning: Simulations and Experiential Exercises, Volume 5, (March), pp. 245-249, available in the Bernie Keys Library, 4th edition, published by the Association for Business Simulation and Experiential Learning (electronic archive).

Burns, Alvin and Ronald Bush (2005). *Basic Marketing Research: Using Microsoft Excel Data Analysis*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Goldberg, Mark (1990). "Portrait of Madeline Hunter," Educational Leadership, February, 41-43.

hunter, Madeline (1982). *Mastery Teaching*, El Segundo, CA: TIP Publications.

Hunter, Madeline (1985). "What's Wrong with Madeline Hunter?" Educational Leadership, February, 57-60.

Lawton, Leigh, (1987). "Using A Joint Project Involving MBA Marketing Management and Undergraduate Marketing Research Students To Teach Marketing Research," Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 14, (March), pp. 129-132, available in the Bernie Keys Library, 4th edition,

published by the Association for Business Simulation and Experiential Learning (electronic archive).

Niffenegger, Phil (1982). "The Small Group Research Project: An Experiential Learning Approach For Undergraduate Marketing Research Students," Developments In Business Simulation & Experiential Exercises, Volume 9, (March), pp. 49-53, available in the Bernie Keys Library, 4th edition, published by the Association for Business Simulation and Experiential Learning (electronic archive).

Richardson, Neil (1979). "Debugging and Implementing the Live Case Approach To Marketing Research In The Australian Environment," Insights into Experiential Pedagogy, Volume 6, (March), pp. 7-10, available in the Bernie Keys Library, 4th edition, published by the Association for Business Simulation and Experiential Learning (electronic archive).