

BECOMING EXTERNALLY OPEN

Teaching Note

Synopsis

Organizations often put people into situations that prime them the belief that they cannot improve their skills or personal attributes, particularly with regards to specific skills or attributes. Because they believe that they cannot improve, people in these situations often feel defensive, fear negative feedback, and try to avoid it. This can be a dangerous state, because leaders, change agents, and organizational participants in general need to pay attention to and learn from feedback in order to perform well in the complex, dynamic, and uncertain worlds that most modern organizations present. When people believe that they cannot improve their ability to perform certain activities they are more likely to quit, they stop learning, they repeat ineffective strategies, their performance decreases and their likelihood of cheating increases. This class helps students learn how to open themselves to feedback and learning in spite of situations that might encourage them to be otherwise, and to see how their beliefs about their ability to improve and grow affect their interpersonal influence, leadership, and change management efforts.

This class may be taught independently or within a six-class module¹ using the book, *Lift: Becoming a Positive Force in Any Situation*². *Lift* introduces readers to four questions that they can ask in any situation which will help them to become a positive influence in that situation and explains the science behind these questions. One of these questions helps people open themselves to learning and feedback that they might otherwise ignore or avoid: “What are three (or four or five) strategies that I can use to accomplish my purpose for this situation?”

When people force themselves to come up with multiple viable strategies, it has a number of effects. One effect is that we become curious about how well each of our strategies might work. As we try these options out, we can discard strategies that do not work, or combine and adapt strategies as we go along. We become improvisational and interested in learning. We also influence others by gaining knowledge that we can share with others, build learning

¹ Notes on the entire *Lift* module may be found at <http://www.leadingwithlift.com/teaching/coursemodules>.

² Ryan W. Quinn and Robert E. Quinn, *Lift: Becoming a Positive Force in Any Situation* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2009).

communities, free others from labels that we might otherwise impose upon them, and celebrate others' successes.

Objectives

This lesson will help students recognize factors that tend to close them off to learning and feedback. It will also help them to identify ways to open themselves to learning and feedback. As they learn how to do this, they will also see how their beliefs about their ability to learn and grow:

- enhances the positive influence they exert on others,
- assists them in managing change, and
- improves their capacity for leadership.

Class Preparation

The activity for this class is an online video game called Desktop Tower Defense (DTD; <http://www.handdrawngames.com/DesktopTD/Game.asp>). Students will play this game in the first part of class. Instructors should play this game a few times before teaching this class so that they are capable of answering students' questions about the game during class.

Before class begins, the instructor needs to ensure that:

1. students will have computers in class,
2. students' computers will be connected to the internet, and
3. separate instructions will be distributed to separate groups of students.

Instructors will need to give different students different guidelines at the beginning of class. The students will be split into two groups, with different guidelines for each group. The students should not know that they are receiving different guidelines from their peers. In order to give different guidelines to different groups of students, the instructor will need to decide in advance which students will receive which guidelines and how to send the guidelines. The first set of guidelines is designed to get students to think that their skills with respect to the class activity are fixed and cannot be improved (see **Exhibit TN1**). The second set of guidelines is designed to get them to think that their skills can be improved (see **Exhibit TN2**).

When distributing instructions, instructors should consider giving the same guidelines to students who sit next to each other. This should reduce the curiosity that students feel about why the person in the seat next to them may be approaching the activity differently. Instructors also need to decide how to distribute the guidelines. They can make copies of the guidelines and

distribute them as handouts. If they do this, they should remove the head notes at the top of the page with the name of the lesson: ‘Becoming Externally Open.’ Or instructors can distribute the guidelines in an email at the beginning of class. If the instructor chooses this option, he or she should paste the guidelines into emails, put the correct students in the separate emails’ address lines, and then save the emails as drafts. Then, when it is time for class, the instructor can arrive early, connect the computer to the internet, and send these emails at the appropriate moment in class. Emails would only work in classes with pre-assigned seating charts, however, if instructors want to minimize the number of students sitting next to each other who have different guidelines.

As with other classes on principles from *Lift*, it will be useful for instructors to try applying principles for becoming externally-open before teaching the class. Then, during the lesson in appropriate moments, the instructor can give relevant personal examples and bring the concepts to life. This is also a great way to end the lesson.

Reading and Assignment Questions

The reading assignment for this class is Chapter Nine, “Fearing Feedback,” and Chapter Ten, “Becoming Externally-Open,” from *Lift*. If you are teaching this lesson in a course on power, politics, and influence, the recommended assignment questions are:

1. Think of a time in which you were internally-closed. Why were you internally-closed? What impact did it have on the people around you?
2. Think of a time in which you were externally-open. Why were you externally-open? What impact did it have on the people around you?
3. How will your power and influence be affected if your co-workers are externally-open? What can you do to help them approach their work in an externally-open way?
4. Does an externally-open state increase or decrease your power and influence? How and in what ways?
5. Does an externally-open state make the power and influence that you exert more or less positive? How and in what ways?

If you are teaching this lesson in a course on change management, the recommended assignment questions are:

1. Think of a time in which you were internally-closed in the face of organizational change. Why were you internally-closed? What impact did it have on the people around you?
2. Think of a time in which you were externally-open in the face of organizational change. Why were you externally-open? What impact did it have on the people around you?
3. How will it affect your efforts at change management if the people you work with are externally open? What can you do to help them approach the change in an externally-open way?

4. How will your efforts to manage change be different if you are in an externally-open state? Will people be more or less likely to change their routines, behaviors, and practices? Will people change their routines, behaviors, and practices in more or less positive ways? Why? Are there exceptions?

If you are teaching this lesson in a course on leadership, the recommended assignment questions are:

1. Think of a time in which you were internally-closed while trying to lead others. Why were you internally-closed? What impact did it have on them?
2. Think of a time in which you were externally-open while trying to lead others. Why were you externally-open? What impact did it have on them?
3. If being externally-open is generally a good thing for your employees' performance, what can you do to help them approach their work in an externally-open way?
4. How does the externally-open state influence your ability to lead? Will people be more or less likely to follow you when you are externally-open? Will the leadership you exhibit be more or less positive? Why? Are there exceptions?

Timeline Allocation Plan

A possible timeline for this class is as follows:

5 mins.	Introduction
35 mins.	Desktop Tower Defense (DTD) activity
25 mins.	DTD debrief
20 mins.	Application discussion
5 mins.	Summary and bridge to the next class

Lesson Overview

Instructors can begin class by asking the students if they have any questions or comments from the previous class. This will help them to clarify learning and re-connect to the overall *Lift* framework.

Instructors should dive into the class activity soon after it begins, distributing the page of guidelines for the activity by email or handout. The guidelines tell the students to confirm to you that they have read the page carefully. Let them know how you want them to do this. For example, if the instructor gives them the guidelines in a handout, you could ask them to sign the handout and to return it. If the instructor sends the guidelines by email, the students could indicate that they have read them carefully by sending an email reply. Having the students read the guidelines carefully before beginning the game is critical, because it contains the manipulations that will be discussed after the game is complete.

When all of the students have confirmed that they have read the guidelines carefully, instructors can give the students the instructions for the game (see Exhibit 3), which can also be distributed as a handout or an email. At this point, tell the students that their 20 minutes of preparation have begun.

Give the students a two-minute warning at eighteen minutes and tell them to begin playing the game when the twenty minutes are up. Also give them a two-minute warning and let them know when their ten minutes are up for playing the game. Ask them to leave their final screen up from the game so that if you need to you can check their configuration and statistics. Some students may finish in less than ten minutes. They can engage in whatever quiet activity they prefer until everyone has stopped playing. If they want to play the game again while they wait, have them play the game in a different screen.

When the students finish playing the game, ask the students to write their scores on a sheet of paper. Tell them not to do this if they have played Desktop Tower Defense before because this biases the scores. The students who write their scores down do *not* need to write their names on the paper. Then tell the students that some of their guidelines told them that the game would test their “strategic intelligence,” while other students were told that the game would help them develop their skills for developing and implementing strategy. Ask those who were told that the game would evaluate their strategic intelligence to pass their scores in one direction (right or left) and those who were told that the game would develop their skills to pass their scores in the other direction (right or left). Have one student on each side collect all of the pieces of paper and sort them from those with the highest to the lowest score. Ask the student on the right side to list the scores in order on the right side of the chalkboard and ask the student on the left side to list the scores in order on the left side of the chalkboard. You might also want to ask two other students to average the two sets of scores.

After students are done recording scores, the instructor may want to ask the students to close their laptops so that they do not continue playing the game during the remainder of the class.

Once the scores are on the board, explain to them that the scores on one side of the board are the scores of students whose instructions were designed to increase the likelihood of them being internally-closed during the activity, while the scores on the other side of the board are the scores of students whose instructions were designed to increase the likelihood of them being externally-open. Remind the students what each of these states refer to. It may also be useful to discuss which belief is more accurate: the belief that skills, abilities, and characteristics can be improved or the belief that they cannot. As Carol Dweck³ explains, the brain is like a muscle: it improves with training and practice. When people are externally open, they do not believe that they can become Ludwig von Beethoven, Michael Jordan, or Albert Einstein in any activity they pursue, but they do believe that their upper limits are not known and not knowable.

³ Dweck, C. S. 2006. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Random House.

The scores of the students who were externally-open should be better on average. A good way to begin the debrief is to ask the students why experiencing an externally-open state is an advantage for this activity.

Some of the scores on the internally-closed side of the board may be as high as the scores on the externally-open side of the board. This can occur if students who received the internally-closed manipulation found a way to become externally-open. For example, they may have used the question from *Lift*: “What are three (or four or five) strategies that I can use to accomplish my purpose for this situation?” to help themselves become externally-open. If this happens, ask these students to identify their scores and to use a different color of chalk to circle their scores on the internally-closed side. This has two effects. First, it can change the averages of the internally-closed and externally-open side of the board. Second, it can create a third group, whose experience can be debriefed separately. (The three groups are the internally-closed manipulation group, the externally-open manipulation group, and the self-initiated externally-open group.)

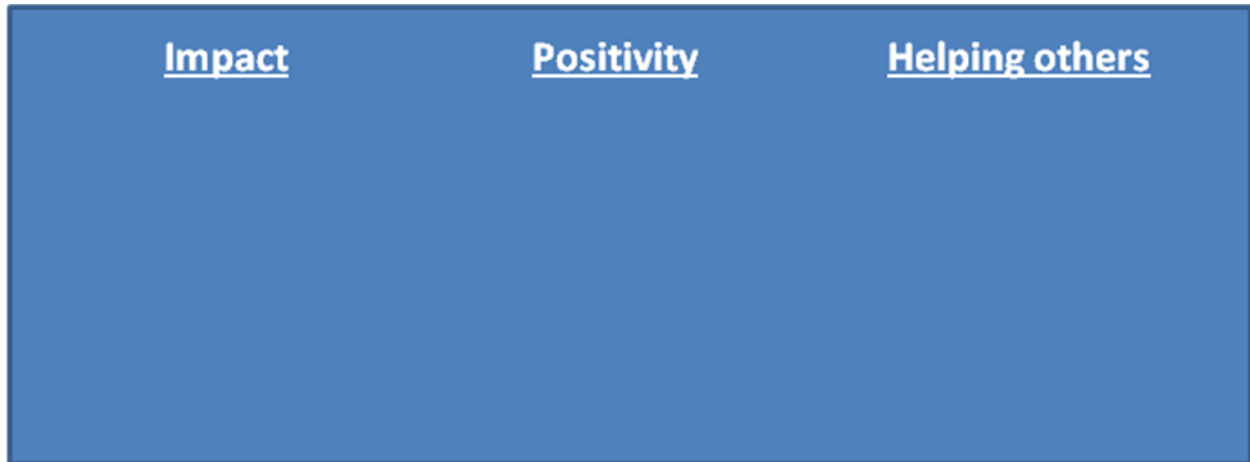
Some of the reasons that students might give for why an externally-open state is an advantage in this activity may include its complexity, the ambiguity of playing for the first time, the fact that the creeps change their strategies so students need to update their strategies as well, the students’ resources change over time, and because of the sheer number of choices available. The instructor can record these answers on the middle of the board, as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Board plan.

Front Board

INTERNALLY-CLOSED			Reasons why being E.O. is an advantage	EXTERNALLY-OPEN		
<u>Context</u>	<u>Feelings</u>	<u>Scores</u>		<u>Context</u>	<u>Feelings</u>	<u>Scores</u>
“Test”	Worried	1212	Complexity Ambiguity Opponents change strategy Resources change	Learn	Curious	1301
Charac- teristics	Frus- trated	908		Try	Fun	1237
		907		Many	Engaged	1211
Compa- rison	Confused	800		strategies	Interest	1192
Targets		489		Skills		1050
		310				984
		302			712	

Rear Board



While discussing why being externally open is an advantage, some students might want to explore if and when being externally-open is a disadvantage. This is a worthwhile discussion to have, as long as it does not go on for too long. Some possible answers to this question may be:

1. Activities that are simple, clear, and unchanging: After all, why waste time learning and coming up with new ways of doing things when the activity is straightforward? This is a legitimate answer. At the same time, students should also be aware that many seemingly simple situations are not as simple as they seem, or can change quickly—especially in the business environment.
2. Activities in which a person faces deadlines or intense time pressure. Again, this is a legitimate answer, but it is also a common rationalization for failing to reflect on precisely what needs to be achieved and how best to accomplish it. Deadlines can often be extended if we ask. Often we create time pressures for ourselves that we do not need to feel, simply because being busy is a source of power—a way of making ourselves look important or of keeping ourselves from having to do other things we do not want to do—and we cling to that power rather than let go of the time pressure to learn, consider options, get feedback and so forth.
3. Activities in which you already know the best way to do it. This answer is actually a dangerous one. When we are convinced that our way is the only or undeniably best way to do things, we can incite unnecessary conflict, blind ourselves to possibilities, and stop learning now and in the future.

A discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of being externally open can lead naturally into a discussion of why some people were externally open in the DTD activity and some were not. The instructor can list these answers on the board (Figure 1). If students have trouble answering this question, instructors can refer them to the first page of their respective assignment sheets. On the internally-closed assignment sheet, the following words and phrases may have primed students to be internally-closed:

1. “Test of strategic intelligence.” Tests are evaluations designed to evaluate a person at a specific point in time. In contrast to learning, they prime people to think about whether or not they have the “right stuff.” Many people think of intelligence as an innate, genetically fixed capability. Thus, when people are cued to think that their innate talent is being tested, they can strive so hard to prove their ability that they miss opportunities to *improve* their ability by seeking, pondering, and learning from feedback.
2. “You will be competing...”. Competitive situations can cause people to work hard, but also to waste mental resources worrying about how they are performing relative to other people. Such mental resources might be more fruitfully deployed focusing solely on how one could improve one's own personal performance – especially when the task is challenging and they have not done it before.
3. “20 minutes to...develop a strategy...Then...play the game.” This instruction might prompt people to strive to craft the master plan that signifies their intelligence, rather than adapt the more externally-open approach of learning through trial and error.
4. “...I will have the people with the highest and the lowest scores explain how they came up with their strategy to the rest of the class...” This signifies that the nature of one's strategies might be made public, thereby potentially making people defensive at the prospect of exposing them to the public praise or criticism of their professor and colleagues. Praise and criticism can get people to avoid challenging tasks on which they might learn a great deal, though only after failures that could make it seem like they have low ability.
5. “Poor performance is less than 500 points.” Defining the quality of particular levels of performance, especially during early experiences with a novel task, engages people's egos with concerns about performing well enough to not look or feel stupid. These concerns can also reduce their level of attention to feedback that can help them learn and improve. In summary, a concern with *proving* their ability can ironically undermine people's focus on learning from feedback that is critical for *improving* their ability to eventually perform to a high standard.

On the externally-open assignment sheet, the following words and phrases may have primed students to be externally-open:

1. “Develop” and “skills.” The whole point of this activity is personal development, not evaluation.
2. “Come up with at least three different strategies...” This requirement makes learning the goal of the activity—not performing.
3. “Learn by trial and error.” This makes errors legitimate and instructive, rather than a failure. Trial means action and action creates feedback, which is lacking when all people do is plan.
4. “Explore” and “Have fun.” *Exploration* is often associated with curiosity and inherent interest in something, in contrast to the idea of *analysis* which is more likely to be done in accordance with explicit guidelines and to be linked to extrinsic rewards or punishments, depending on how effectively the analysis is conducted. Thus, people might be more

externally open when they "explore" than when they "analyze" a novel task. Similarly, an instruction to "have fun" also tends to put people in a more playful, non-defensive, learning mindset.

5. There is no competition, comparison, or public display of results – Each of these can elicit the ego and performance concerns that shut people off to feedback.

As students list the cues that made them more or less likely to be externally-open, they may begin to see what kind of effect these cues had on them. This is also a great time to bring up the first two assignment questions for this class, in which students identified times when they were internally-closed and externally-open. Bringing up these experiences should enrich the students' understanding of cues that lead people to be internally-closed and externally-open. They should also help any students upon whom the activity manipulations did not work, if there were any, to see the impact of internally-closed and externally-open states.

The instructor can also ask, "How do you feel when you are being tested and compared against others, in public, in an activity where you feel that you can do nothing to improve your chances of doing well?" and "How do you feel when you are learning, trying new things, stretching your abilities, exploring, and playing?" When people are internally-closed during an ambiguous activity, they tend to feel worried, frustrated, overwhelmed or confused. When people are externally open, they tend to feel curious, interested, engaged, and playful. Instructors can write these answers on the board and draw an arrow between the context and the feelings, as depicted in Figure 1. Then the instructor can ask, "How well do you tend to perform in your work when you are worried, confused, overwhelmed and frustrated?" and "How well do you tend to perform when you are curious, interested, engaged, and playful about your work?" Another set of arrows can be drawn from feelings to their scores on the DTD game.

Another issue that may come up in this debrief of the DTD activity is its relevance to business. This is a great issue to discuss, and the instructor can guide this discussion by asking a question like, "What skills does this game require that are legitimate business skills, and what skills does it require that are not legitimate business skills? Legitimate skills may include decision making under pressure, decisions making in ambiguity, planning, updating, and analysis. Skills that would not be necessary in business might be hand-eye coordination, game-specific knowledge, or maze-building. Business-relevant skills in this game are abstract; irrelevant skills are concrete and specific. Business school is designed to help them develop abstract knowledge and skills that they can apply in whatever specific context they go to work in. Learning how to be externally-open is an abstract skill that can be useful across many contexts.

The DTD activity and debrief are designed to ground students in an experience that allows them to compare the personal effects of being internally-closed with being externally-open. The remainder of the class discussion is designed to help the students consider the social effects of being internally-closed and externally-open. This will be done from the perspective of the course topic: leadership, change management, or power and politics.

Leadership. Instructors can frame a discussion of how the externally-open state affects one's leadership ability with the assignment questions that the students were given to prepare for class:

- If being externally-open is generally a good thing for your employees' performance, what can you do to help them approach their work in an externally-open way?
- How does the externally-open state influence your ability to lead? Will people be more or less likely to follow you when you are externally-open? Will the leadership you exhibit be more or less positive? Why? Are there exceptions?

Change management. Instructors can frame a discussion of how the externally-open state affects one's efforts to create organizational change with the assignment questions that the students were given to prepare for class:

- How will it affect your efforts at change management if the people you work with are externally open? What can you do to help them approach the change in an externally-open way?
- How will your efforts to manage change be different if you are in an externally-open state? Will people be more or less likely to change their routines, behaviors, and practices? Will people change their routines, behaviors, and practices in more or less positive ways? Why? Are there exceptions?

Power and Politics. Instructors can frame a discussion of how the externally-open state affects one's power and influence with the assignment questions that the students were given to prepare for class:

- How will the strength and positivity of your power and influence be affected if your co-workers are externally-open? What can you do to help them approach their work in an externally-open way?
- Does an externally-open state increase or decrease your power and influence? How and in what ways?
- Does an externally-open state make the power and influence that you exert more or less positive? How and in what ways?

The nuances behind these questions are different, but the underlying structure is the same. Each set of questions asks about how to help others experience an externally-open state, impact, and positivity. Instructors can summarize student answers on the board in these three categories, as depicted in Figure 1. An overview of discussion points for each of these topics follows.

How to help others experience an externally-open state. If an externally-open state has a positive effect on performance at work, a logical conclusion is that we would want to help others experience this state as well as ourselves. However, as we saw in the exercise, a few very

subtle cues can quickly conspire to make us internally-directed without us even recognizing it. A useful discussion for the students, then, revolves around the question of when and how we can create cues in the workplace that encourage an externally-open state. This question is slightly different for each class topic, though. A formal leader, for example, usually has a much easier job of creating cues in the workplace to foster externally-open states than someone who much exhibit influence without authority. And sometimes creating a workplace that primes people to be externally-open rather than internally-closed is a change management project in and of itself.

The nuances, then, of this discussion will be different depending on the class, but the frame for this discussion can be the list that students generated from their instructions for the exercise under “context” on the front board. A simple way to do this is to ask the students to translate the items in this list into cues in a typical workplace. Some examples include:

1. Tests – To what extent do people in your workplace feel like they are being evaluated on a regular basis? Why do they feel this way? Do you have an evaluation system that is ever-present, or do you give employees room to develop? As a manager or co-worker, do you tend to focus on the negative? Or do you frame your interactions as opportunities to learn together? How might you be able to influence the evaluation system or change your focus?
2. Innate talent vs. skills - When you explain successes or failures, do you explain them in terms of people’s enduring traits (“You are so smart!”, “You’re a star”, and “What an A-Player”) or in terms of people’s effort and actions (“You worked hard at that!” or “I can see how you did X—that was a good idea.”). Research suggests that attributing success or failure to people’s fixed attributes makes them think that their ability is fixed.
3. Competition – Do reward systems (e.g., those based on forced rankings, and rankings with drastic consequences) pit employees against each other or encourage them to collaborate? Do you view your employees or co-workers in competitive terms? How could you change the reward system or your own behaviors?
4. Plan. How much time is spent planning and trying to achieve accuracy as opposed to trying things out and seeing what works? The following passage can serve as a good point for discussion:

“This incident, related by the Hungarian Nobel Laureate Albert Szent-Gyorti and preserved in a poem by Holub (1977), happened during military maneuvers in Switzerland. The young lieutenant of a small Hungarian detachment in the Alps sent a reconnaissance unit into the icy wilderness. It began to snow immediately, snowed for 2 days, and the unit did not return. The lieutenant suffered, fearing that he had dispatched his own people to death. But on the third day the unit came back. Where had they been? How had they made their way? Yes, they said, we considered ourselves lost and waited for the end. And then one of us found a map in his pocket. That calmed us down. We pitched camp, lasted out the snowstorm, and then with the map we discovered our bearings. And here we are. The lieutenant borrowed this remarkable map and had a good look at it. He discovered to his astonishment that it was not a map of the Alps, but a map of the Pyrenees.

“This incident raises the intriguing possibility that when you are lost, any old map will do. For example, extended to the issue of strategy, maybe when you are confused, any old strategic plan will do. Strategic plans are a lot like maps. They animate and orient people. Once people begin to act (enactment), they generate tangible outcomes (cues) in some context (social), and this helps them discover (retrospect) what is occurring (ongoing), what needs to be explained (plausibility), and what should be done next (identity enhancement). Managers keep forgetting that it is what they do, not what they plan, that explains their success. They keep giving credit to the wrong thing – namely, the plan – and having made this error, they then spend more time planning and less time acting. They are astonished when more planning improves nothing (Starbuck, 1993).

“When I described the incident of using a map of the Pyrenees to find a way out of the Alps to Bob Engel, the executive vice president and treasurer of Morgan Guaranty, he said, “Now, that story would have been really neat if the leader out with the lost troops had known it was the wrong map and still been able to lead them back.” What is interesting about Engel’s twist to the story is that he has described the basic situation that most leaders face. Followers are often lost and even the leader is not sure where to go. All the leaders know is that the plan or the map they have in front of them are not sufficient to get them out. What the leader has to do, when faced with this situation, is instill some confidence in people, get them moving in some general direction, and be sure they look closely at cues created by their actions so that they learn where they were and get some better idea of where they are and where they want to be.”⁴

5. Public. Are evaluations and social comparisons public? Is there a way to make them more private? Even if the formal ones are private, are we, as managers and co-workers, careful with information about others? Do we realize the potential dangers of setting up competitive arenas in which a few people shine, though most individuals and the group as a whole underperform owing to factors such as defensiveness, frustration, distraction, resentment, sabotage and levels of cooperation that are far less than optimal?
6. Learning goals vs. Performance goals – Do we set goals to come up with different ways to accomplish our purposes, or just goals to achieve outcomes? When our goals are focused on outcomes, do we make them unnecessarily comparative (e.g., “The top 10% performers make the *Winners’ Circle*”), or just set the goals relative to prior performance (e.g., “5% more x than last quarter”) or absolute standards (e.g., “Meet your sales target for the year”)?
7. Play. Is the workplace a fun place to be? What would make it more fun?

Impact. In a discussion about the impact of an externally-open state on the effectiveness of a person’s leadership, change management, or power and influence, the most important thing to do is to help the students see how the principles that they learned in the classroom activity and read about in their reading the night before apply to their work experience. The more they see

⁴ Weick, K. E. 1995. *Sensemaking in Organizations*, pp. 54-55. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

these applications across diverse contexts, the more likely they will be to apply these principles in those contexts. Thus, it is useful to ask them for examples throughout the discussion. You can treat these examples as mini-cases for the class to analyze.

As the students analyze these examples, they will probably see the externally-open state as improving their leadership, change management, or power and politics in situations where there are misunderstandings, conflict, uncertainty, and dynamism. For example, one of the classic arguments about resistance to change is the idea that managers should not treat resistance as an obstacle, but as an opportunity to learn new information.⁵ Managers are more likely to do this in an externally-open state than they are in an internally-closed state. They are more likely to lead their people successfully through conflict if they are externally-open because they will be more interested able to learn—including learning others' points of view. And an externally-open state will make them more powerful in uncertain situations, because their curiosity and interest in taking on a challenge will help them to move forward and learn as they go when others feel hesitant.

Students may also suggest that an externally-open state will limit their impact in situations where other people are being belligerent or when there is not time for learning. These concerns can elicit discussions like the ones raised earlier: they may be true, but if we assume a person is belligerent when they actually have legitimate concerns or needs that we do not really understand, or if we assume that we do not have time when a little extra time invested now could save time, money, good-will and other resources later, then these assumptions become problematic. In situations like these, it becomes important to temper the externally-open state with the other three aspects of lift.

Positivity. Positivity should generate a discussion similar to the discussion about impact. Students will probably see how an externally-open state can help them figure out the most positive ways to approach situations over time. But they may also see problems, such as people in externally-open states learning how to do the wrong things, learning the wrong things, or learning to do things that are positive for them and not for others. Once again, this provides a nice opportunity to help students see how an externally-open state is most positive when combined with the other elements of lift.

The connections between impact and positivity of the externally-open state, and the other three elements of lift can provide a perfect segue from the discussion in this lesson to the final class, which focuses on integrating the four elements of lift into a single approach for leadership, change management, and influence. Instructors can share a story or example that summarizes the principles for this lesson. Then they can use the discussion about the other elements of lift to tell students about what will happen in the next and final class in the module on *Lift*.

Summary

⁵ Lawrence, P. R. 1969. How to deal with resistance to change. *Harvard Business Review*, 47(1): 4-12.

A lesson on becoming externally-open helps students learn how to approach situations with the belief that their skills and characteristics can be improved. It also helps students to see how this belief affects others as well as affecting their own motivation and performance. As instructors capture insights from students, they can tie the back into the broader concepts from *Lift*. They can also identify practical takeaways to use in their leadership, change management, and interpersonal influence.

DRAFT

Exhibit TN1

BECOMING EXTERNALLY-OPEN

(student email or handout)

PLEASE READ THESE DIRECTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CAREFULLY:

When you finish reading this page, please confirm to me that you have read this page carefully. It is critical that you understand these guidelines. Once you have confirmed to me that you have read this page carefully, I will give you a URL for the activity we will be participating in, and instructions for the activity.

In a technological world that becomes more sophisticated every day, there are some video games that are sufficiently complicated that they can be used to test a person's strategic intelligence. I have selected one of these video games to use in class today: "Desktop Tower Defense" (DTD). This game requires players to analyze a situation, weigh tradeoffs, make decisions about allocating scarce resources, anticipate competitive responses, and plan for them accordingly.

You will have 20 minutes to read the instructions for this game and to plan a strategy. Your strategy should address what towers you will buy, when you will buy them, where you will place them, and when you will upgrade them. After your twenty minutes of preparation, you will have ten minutes to play the game. The quality of the plan that you develop during your twenty minutes of preparation will determine your performance in the activity.

When you play this game, you will be competing against your classmates. When everyone has played the game, I will have the people with the highest scores and the lowest scores explain to the rest of the class how they came up with their strategy. Generally speaking, poor performance is less than 500 points. Moderate performance is 800 points or higher. Good performance is 1,000 points or higher. Excellent performance is over 1,200 points.

Please do not speak to any of your classmates or look at their work and please turn the sound off on your computer so as to avoid disturbing them. If you have participated in this activity before, please keep that to yourself for now and we'll address that issue after everyone is done. Your preparation time begins when I give you the URL for DTD.

Exhibit TN2

BECOMING EXTERNALLY-OPEN

(student email or handout)

PLEASE READ THESE DIRECTIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITY CAREFULLY:

When you finish reading this page, please confirm to me that you have read this page carefully. It is critical that you understand these guidelines. Once you have confirmed to me that you have read this page carefully, I will give you a URL for the activity we will be participating in, and instructions for the activity.

In a technological world that becomes more sophisticated every day, there are some video games that are sufficiently complicated that they can be used to develop a person's skills for developing and implementing strategy. I have selected one of these video games to use in class today: "Desktop Tower Defense" (DTD). This game requires players to analyze a situation, weigh tradeoffs, make decisions about allocating scarce resources, anticipate competitive responses, and plan for them accordingly. Each of these skills can be honed by this activity. Indeed, whenever we focus our minds enough to learn, new connections are formed in our brains that in a sense make us "smarter". Our brains are thus like a muscle that is developed with rigorous training and use.

You will have 20 minutes to read the instructions for this game and to prepare to play the game. Then you will have ten minutes to play the game. The best way to prepare is to skim through the instructions that come with the game and then to begin trying to play the game as soon as possible. Try buying different towers at different times, putting them in different arrangements on the screen, and upgrading them at different times. Come up with at least three different strategies you can try. Learn by trial and error. Explore the website to help you find clues for playing. Have fun! After your twenty minutes of preparation, you will have ten minutes to play the game.

Please do not speak to any of your classmates or look at their work and please turn the sound off on your computer so as to avoid disturbing them. If you have participated in this activity before, please keep that to yourself for now and we'll address that issue after everyone is done. Your preparation time begins when I give you the URL for DTD.

Exhibit TN3

BECOMING EXTERNALLY-OPEN

(student email or handout)

Instructions for the Classroom Activity

Your purpose in this game is to earn as many points as you can. You earn points by “killing” the “creeps” that try to cross your screen.

Click on or type the URL <http://www.handdrawngames.com/DesktopTD/Game.asp> into your internet browser to play DTD. When you arrive at this web site, you will see a brief Flash™ introduction. When the introduction is complete, you will have six options: (1) Scenarios, (2) Sandbox, (3) Sprint Modes, (4) Multiplayer, (5) Options, and (6) Credits. Click on “Sandbox.”

In the sandbox, there are many settings. Ignore the settings, and simply click on “GO.” Then, click on “Play.” After you click on “Play” you will see the game screen.

This game screen has four major components to it:

1. **The game space** is the large rectangle on the left side of the screen with the cross in the middle. When you push start (in the lower right corner), “creeps” will enter the breaks in the rectangle at the top and on the left. The creeps that enter from the top will try to exit through the bottom break in the rectangle, and the creeps that enter from the left will try to exit through the right break in the rectangle.
2. **The performance monitor** can be found across the top of your screen. Your score is the white number next to the word, “Score.” The yellow number next to the yellow square with the picture of a coin in it tells you how much money you have. The red number next to the pink square with the heart in it tells you how many more creeps can pass through the break on the right side or on the bottom of the game space before your game is over. The white number next to the gold square with the clock tells you how many seconds are left until the next wave of creeps comes.
3. **The schedule** of creeps is on the bottom of the screen. It tells you what kinds of creeps will be entering your game space and when. The name of the type of creep is in large print, and a description is in small print. The types of creeps entering the game space is important to know for developing your strategy because different kinds of towers do a better job of slowing down or killing different types of creeps. For example, creeps that move on the ground have to walk around towers, suggesting that towers can be set up as obstacles, walls, and mazes to impede walking creeps. When flying creeps enter, though, having anti-air towers can be very helpful.
4. The types of **towers** that you can buy are on the right side of the screen. These towers are also squares with pictures in them. There are two rows of towers, with five in the top row and four in the bottom row. If you scroll your mouse over one of the towers, the features

that the tower has to offer will appear below. For example, in the following screen, the mouse scrolled over the third tower in the top row:

The nine towers, in order from left to right, beginning on the top row, with each of their features, are:

1. Pellet tower (fires pellets)
 - a. Cost (How much money does it take to buy one of these towers?) – 5
 - b. Damage (How much will this hurt one of the creeps when it hits them?) – 10
 - c. Range (How far can this tower shoot?) – 60
 - d. Speed (How quickly can this tower shoot again after it had shot once?) – 1.5
2. Squirt tower (Quick firing)
 - a. Cost – 15
 - b. Damage – 5
 - c. Range – 70
 - d. Speed – 6
3. Dart tower (Damages creeps in area where it hits)
 - a. Cost – 20
 - b. Damage – 8
 - c. Range – 90
 - d. Speed – 1
4. Swarm tower (Shoots flying creeps, four missiles at a time)
 - a. Cost – 50
 - b. Damage – 10
 - c. Range – 60
 - d. Speed – 1.5
5. Frost tower (Slows creeps by freezing)
 - a. Cost – 50
 - b. Damage – 10
 - c. Range – 50
 - d. Speed – 1.5
6. Bash tower (Damages ground around it and might stun creeps)
 - a. Cost – 100
 - b. Damage – 60
 - c. Range – 40
 - d. Speed – 1.3
7. Ink tower (Shoots blobs of ink to slow creeps)
 - a. Cost – 60
 - b. Damage – 12
 - c. Range – 70
 - d. Speed – 6
8. Snap tower (Fires once, damages area)
 - a. Cost – 50
 - b. Damage – 100
 - c. Range – 65
 - d. Speed – 0
9. Boost tower (Near towers increase damage)
 - a. Cost – 100
 - b. Damage – 10%
 - c. Range – 42
 - d. Speed – 0

You begin the game by buying towers, placing them in the game space, and, when you are done buying the towers that you want to start the game with, clicking “START.” You buy towers by clicking on one of the squares under “Towers,” moving your mouse to the location in the game space where you want to place the tower, and then clicking on that spot. The squares under “Towers” are bright if you can afford them, and dull if you cannot. For example, in the following

screen the player bought one dart tower, two squirt towers, and three pellet towers for a cost of \$65.

If you decide that you do not want a tower after all, you can click on it and type “S.” If you have not started the game yet, you will get back the full value of your tower. If you have started the game, you will only get part of the value of your tower back (depreciation). You can also upgrade the capacity of the towers that you have already bought and placed. You do this by clicking on a tower and typing “U.”

Once you are ready to start the game, click on “START.” After the game starts, the creeps will begin to enter your game space. When the creeps come within range of your towers, your towers will shoot them. Once your towers have done sufficient damage to the passing creeps, the creeps will “die.” When they die, you get points and money, which is displayed as numbers with “+” signs next to them as shown in the screen below. With the money you earn, you can continue to buy and upgrade towers. As long as you have enough money you can buy and upgrade towers. The game continues until 20 creeps have passed through the right or bottom breaks in your game space. Good luck!

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