

I am a life-long learner and my teaching philosophy is to create an environment that brings out this quality, whether pebble or boulder, in my students. Having worked over 25 years in corporate America, I value the uniqueness of individuals, while concurrently requiring a level of conformity to the objective of the class. I once heard ~ Tomatoe or Tamatoe, just make sure when you are talking to the tomatoes the tamatoes understand ~ I love this anecdote because it expresses the idea of unabashed uniqueness and accepting the need to use various forms of communication, while getting to a common state understanding. My goal for learning is to have all of my students share similar thoughts to this student's statement, 'I am taking a management role in my company and so much of what you taught me is going to be put into use.' I want my students to be able to remember, apply and embed learning from my classes in their work lives.

Moving from the corporate environment into the field of management academia feels natural, organic and exciting. I am drawn to teaching, because I love to see sparks of knowledge! If I am able to affirm confidence with students in their new knowledge, I can witness comprehension, and at times application! I want students in my class to feel just as excited in making the opposite transition – going into the business world from a life thus far of academia. The difficulties in both worlds, academia and business, are challenging, and I will help students learn to meet that challenge. I draw on my experiences as an African American woman with a successful career, ability to be an active part of my local community and raise my daughter as a single parent. Challenges point to our diversity – diversity of thought, diversity of background, diversity of experience, and diversity of being. I welcome uniqueness into my classroom – international students, first generational college students, and various majors - because the wide majority of students will one day be employees and employers, and my classroom creates a safety environment to discuss our uniqueness simulated in the workplace.

My teaching approach is best characterized in a quote from Barak Obama, "we did not come here to fear the future, we came here to shape it." I want my classes to prepare students for the complexities of the workplace, for them to shape their roles in positive ways as employee or employer. I use simulations in the classroom to not only create potential situations they may encounter, but also have them use what they learned as tools for reflection, which allow students to be mindful of the impact of their behavior, regardless of intent. These opportunities allow for learner-learner connections, as they teach, motivate and learn from each other. I value the content, context and experience I can bring to my students in preparation for the next steps in their work life, however being able to learn from their peers in a critical and reflective way, with the expectation to actively accept feedback, is the most important way I can contribute to shaping my students future.

The pedagogical approach I use is experiential learning, using their own authentic experiences to jump start student learning. I emphasis recognition and acceptance of diverse thought, working through the challenges of 'different,' and discuss best practices which create meaningful and lead to problem resolution. We use their experiences and challenges as students (in teams and as individuals), as employees (with peers and supervisors), to make learning concrete, in a real-world context, and allowing students to connect the dots beyond the classroom.