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Daylight Savings Time For LINKS Instructors

The LINKS website runs on US Eastern Time. With the forthcoming daylight savings time change in the US Eastern Time zone, some current LINKS instructors might be impacted.

If your time zone has “unusual” behavior relative to daylight savings time in the US Eastern Time zone, it’s possible that your game run schedule could be one-hour off from your expectation after daylight savings time begins. Please review your LINKS game run schedule on your “firm-0” webpage to ensure that it is still correct after the change to daylight savings in the US Eastern Time.



If any scheduling adjustments are appropriate, please contact Randy Chapman (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com).

Mid-Event LINKS Enhancements

As the mid-point of many instructors’ LINKS events approaches, LINKS instructors are reminded of the potential for mid-event enhancements. Generally, such enhancements are designed to further challenge LINKS participants after they’ve mastered the basics of managing their firms. These enhancements also keep the simulation fresh, so that participants don’t think that they can simply proceed on “auto-pilot” after a few decision rounds.

The “Customizing LINKS” link in the Instructor Resources section provides convenient access to customization possibilities.

If you’d like to chat about possible mid-event enhancements to your LINKS event (via instructor-optional switches available within LINKS), please contact Randy Chapman (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com).

LINKS Train-The-Trainer Seminars March 10-12, 2009

LINKS Simulations Immersion Experience Five Teleconferences and a Four-Round LINKS Simulation Event

Registration is available for the next three-day, intensive-mode Train-The-Trainer distance-learning seminars for the LINKS simulations. Randy Chapman, the LINKS author, leads these distance-learning events for academic faculty interested in learning more about teaching with LINKS. This intensive-mode seminar format includes 5-6 hours of work per day during the three days of the distance-learning seminar.

LINKS Train-The-Trainer Seminars are offered for the enterprise management, marketing, services, and supply chain management LINKS variants.

Current LINKS instructors are invited to pass along this announcement to faculty colleagues and advanced doctoral students who might be interested in learning more about teaching with LINKS.



Experienced LINKS instructors sometimes participate in a LINKS

Train-The-Trainer Seminar to refresh their memories of LINKS details just prior to teaching with LINKS or to explore another LINKS simulation variant for a future teaching activity. Such experienced LINKS instructors may elect just to participate in the TTT's four-round simulation event, ignoring the public teleconferences included in the LINKS TTT program. (PowerPoint decks are e-mailed to all LINKS TTT participants before each teleconference, so such experienced LINKS instructors may freely choose to participate in all, some, or none of the teleconferences as per their availability and interest.)

After the March 10-12 LINKS TTT Seminar, TTT seminars will be offered in May, June, July, and August.

Details about LINKS Train-The-Trainer seminars may be accessed via these URLs:



- <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/TTT/EMttt.pdf> [Enterprise Management]
- <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/TTT/MSttt.pdf> [Marketing]
- <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/TTT/SMttt.pdf> [Services Marketing]
- <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/TTT/SCttt.pdf> [Supply Chain Management]

Presidential Review Meetings

Best-Practice Presidential Review Meetings

What?

- o Private, pre-scheduled 30-minute meetings with each LINKS team to permit the LINKS instructor to review a team's LINKS business, to answer team members' questions, and to sense the progress that teams are making in the simulation. This is one-with-a-few style of teaching/coaching, rather than the one-to-the-masses lecture-hall style of instruction.
- o "Private" due to the competitive nature of LINKS.

Why?

- o Provides a different kind of powerful teaching/learning opportunity (instructor as coach) at key points during the simulation event.
- o Simulates business review meetings with a "boss" or senior management official.

Who?

- o Instructor and all members of a single LINKS team.
- o Instructor plays multiple roles during a presidential review meeting: "firm president," instructor, coach, and encouraging/proud/supportive "parent."

When?

- o Re-assigned class time is recommended, with teams not meeting with the instructor using that time for their own private firm deliberations. In most cases, meetings will extend beyond class time, due to the number of firms involved.
- o In shorter LINKS event, a single round of review meetings might be held, perhaps just before (or no later than just after) the second decision round. In longer LINKS events, several waves of presidential review meetings might be scheduled with the second round of presidential review meetings occurring at about the mid-point of the simulation event.

Where?

- o Private meeting space is required, possibly the regular course classroom for presidential meetings scheduled during class hours.

How?

- o Meeting Scheduling
 - Pre-scheduled meetings, normally permitting students to pick their own times from a range of available meeting times.
 - Classroom-hours meeting times might be rotated around all teams, if multiple presidential review meetings waves are held. With a single set of presidential review meetings, classroom-hours meeting times might be randomly assigned.
- o Instructor Preparation: Bring printed firm results output to the meeting, to reference during the discussion.
- o Meetings Format Options:
 - No Student Prep [Not recommended]: Just discussion and Q&A.
 - Some Student Prep [Recommended]: Team members collaborate and submit (via e-mail) questions/issues to be discussed. Submissions are due at least 12 hours before the scheduled presidential review meeting to permit the LINKS instructor time to review and prepare.
 - Substantial Student Prep [Optional]: SWOT Analysis. Submissions due at least 24 hours before the scheduled presidential review meeting to permit LINKS instructor review and prep.
- o Some Instructor Questions To Pose During the Meeting:
 - What are the largest problems that your firm faces?

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- What's been your best and worst team decision to date?
- Who is the best performing competitor in your industry? Why?
- To customers, what differential advantage does your firm offer compared to competitors?
- How is your firm currently organized (e.g., by function, by region, as a committee of the whole)? Is this organization "best" for the current problems/challenges faced by your firm?

Likely Outcomes Arising From Presidential Review Meetings

For Students:

- o Greater emphasis on research study needs going forward.
- o More attention to prioritization of issues.
- o More focus on the really important issues.
- o More systematic attention to division of labor and responsibility assignments.

For Instructors:

- o Deep appreciation for team and individual-student progress.
- o Ideas for in-class discussion and in-class tutorials, based on common issues and concerns arising across teams.
- o Follow-up meeting scheduling for "lost"/"deeply troubled"/"unprepared" teams.

Variations on Private, Single-Team, Scheduled Presidential Review Meetings

- o With many industries in very large courses, schedule joint meetings with each firm 1 from all industries meeting with the LINKS instructor simultaneously. Repeat for firm 2, etc. Note that non-competing teams are jointly meeting with the LINKS instructor.
- o In distance learning, use teleconferences for meetings.
- o Automatic presidential review meetings must be scheduled immediately by any firm with two successive rounds of losses (negative net income).

Did You Know?

The Graffiti section on the LINKS website has a number of interesting links...
...such as the history and true story of Murphy's Law.

<http://www.murphys-laws.com/murphy/murphy-miscellaneous.html>

-- or the "How Stuff Works" link which has interesting and perhaps even useful tips such as:



Top 5 Everyday Items You Can Repurpose in a Survival Scenario

Explore the LINKS website and remember...

If someone giving you directions says,
"You can't miss it," be assured that you will.

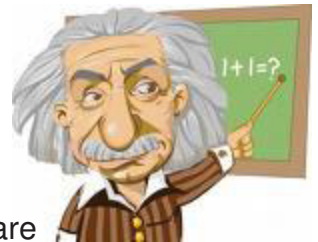


LINKS Spotlight

All of the LINKS Simulations: Marketing, Services, Enterprise Management or Supply Chain Management and their respective editions have similar advice for the participants in the simulation.

Top Ten Tips for Success

- 1) Read and reread the manual.
- 2) Check the FAQ's for the edition you are using.
- 3) Follow the tips and reminders.
- 4) Consult the Tutorials if you need a refresher on any of the topics specific to that edition.
- 5) Keep general management principles foremost in your mind when you are planning your decisions.
- 6) Base your decisions on facts.
- 7) Monitor your competition.
- 8) Learn and improve as you go on.
- 9) Expect to devote 1.5 to 4 hours on your research, review and decision process per quarterly input.
- 10) You can learn from both success and failure in this process. Take the lessons learned and apply the knowledge to future decisions.



We encourage you to enjoy this novel learning experience in a low-risk, competitive environment. There's the real world out there and you will be better prepared for it with the knowledge and experience you gain.



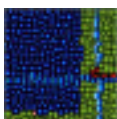
Worksheets Accessible on Variant-Specific Sub-Webpages

Each LINKS participant's manual contains worksheets (e.g., "Pricing Worksheet" and "Judgmental Sales Forecasting Worksheet") to assist students in their analysis, planning, and management efforts. These worksheets are also accessible on the variant-specific sub-webpages on the LINKS website. For each LINKS variant, a "Worksheet" link accesses a Word doc file containing all of a variant's worksheets.

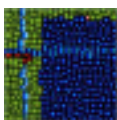
New LINKS Paper

A new LINKS white paper has joined the evolving “LINKS Papers” collection in the Instructor Resources section of the LINKS website: “Practice Rounds in LINKS Events”

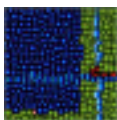
The full set of LINKS white papers includes:



1. “Best-Practice Teaching With Business Simulations”
[<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/PAPERS/Best-Practice.pdf>]



2. “Extreme Customization With LINKS Simulations”
[<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/PAPERS/Extreme.pdf>]



3. “Practice Rounds in LINKS Events”
[<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/PAPERS/PracticeRounds.pdf>]



The “LINKS Papers” collection includes articles, presentations, and white papers about the LINKS simulations.



The LINKS-Simulations Newsletter is a monthly newsletter for current and prospective LINKS instructors and for LINKS friends. Please e-mail questions, comments, suggestions, and other contributions (e.g., LINKS teaching tips) to Winkler@LINKS-simulations.com.



Editor: Cyndy Winkler

Access this edition: <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/newsletter.pdf>

Access previous edition: <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/newsletter-previous.pdf>



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Reminders

LINKS Passcode Retrieval:

Convenient LINKS passcode retrieval for a LINKS participant (student or instructor) is possible via the “Retrieve LINKS Passcode” link on the main LINKS webpage (<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com>). Executing the “Retrieve LINKS Passcode” operation e-mails the firm’s passcode to the participant’s official e-mail address as currently recorded in the LINKS Simulation Database.

E-Mail Address Management:

LINKS instructors submit their students’ e-mail addresses (grouped into teams) as part of the information-set provided to initialize a LINKS industry. Often, these are institutional rather than personal e-mail addresses. Since some participants prefer to use a personal e-mail address rather than an institutional e-mail address for LINKS, it’s possible for participants to update their official e-mail address as recorded in the LINKS Simulation Database.

Participant updates of official e-mail addresses as recorded in the LINKS Simulation Database are possible only after initialization and publication (via e-mail to all team members) of each LINKS firm’s passcode. Using their LINKS firm’s passcode, LINKS participants may change their official LINKS e-mail address after LINKS initialization via the “E-Mail Address Management” button in the LINKS Simulation Database. Confirmations of e-mail address changes are e-mailed to the old and new e-mail addresses.

Student Payment Timing:

The published LINKS price (the discounted price) is in effect until the first round of LINKS is complete. Then, the price is increased 25%. This means that we can initialize your LINKS simulation event (and advance LINKS through to its normal starting point) and students can continue to pay at the discounted price until the first scheduled round is run. Before initialization can occur, we do need to receive your game-run schedule and the students’ e-mail addresses (grouped into teams).

It is not necessary for your students to pay before LINKS begins to have access to the discounted LINKS price. Students must only pay before the first official game run on your game-run schedule to receive the discounted price. Thus, student payments can occur simultaneously with the beginning of your LINKS simulation event.

Student payment with a personal credit card is via the “Pay For LINKS” link on the LINKS webpage.

As a practical matter, a final warning/reminder will be e-mailed to those students who haven’t paid by the first game run, before implementing the non-discounted price.

LINKS Website Resources:

LINKS website (<http://www.LINKS-simulations.com>) links provide convenient access to all LINKS simulation variants, to the LINKS Simulation Database, to passcode-protected instructor resources, and to user interaction contact points such as “Pay For LINKS”, “Payment Questions?”, and “Retrieve LINKS Passcode”.

Some LINKS Resources:

- **Printed Manuals:** All LINKS manuals are freely available for download via the LINKS website. However, some LINKS instructors prefer to have publication-quality printed manuals provided for all of their students, rather than relying on their students to individually download/print the participant’s manual from the LINKS website. We’re happy to provide this service for LINKS instructors. The all-inclusive additional cost for participant manuals varies from \$18/student to \$28/student depending on the LINKS simulations variant. We normally need three weeks advance notice to arrange for production and shipping (to the instructor) from our on-demand printer.

- **What’s New Document:** Please access the following document at the case-sensitive URL <http://www.LINKS-simulations.com/WhatsNew.pdf> to obtain a detailed listing of new updates/enhancements to LINKS. Experienced LINKS instructors should access this document several months before their next usage occasion, to review the updates/enhancements to LINKS since their last usage occasion.

- **LINKS Instructor Resources Access:** You may access the evolving LINKS Instructor Resources via the LINKS webpage. Contact the LINKS author, Randy Chapman (Chapman@LINKS-simulations.com), to obtain the relevant access parameters (username and passcode).

