

Ethan Burris

Associate Professor, Department of Management at The University of Texas at Austin, McCombs School of Business

Austin, TX, US

Workplace culture, innovation and idea sharing, negotiations, and team dynamics

Biography

Ethan Burris is an expert on the human behaviors that impact the productivity and creativity of organizational teams. He is a negotiations expert, and studies management behaviors that encourage or discourage innovative idea sharing. Why do some organizations encourage and act on fresh ideas while others promote only silence and conformity? How can organizations and managers more effectively handle conflict?

Burris is an assistant professor of management at the McCombs School of Business, The University of Texas at Austin, and the co-director of the school's Center for Leadership Excellence.

He teaches at the undergraduate and graduate levels, and is also a popular corporate trainer with Texas Executive Education, helping to foster workplace cultures of innovation and creativity. He has an appointment to work with Google on creativity and employee voice (summer 2015).

His research has appeared in several top management and psychology journals, such as Academy of Management Journal, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Experimental Social Psychology and Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, and has been covered in major media outlets such as the Harvard Business Review and the Houston Chronicle.

Dr. Burris has collected data from and served as a consultant for a variety of professional firms, including a Fortune 100 insurance company, and a Fortune 500 company in the casual dining industry.

Availability

Keynote, Panelist, Workshop

Industry Expertise

Training and Development, Management Consulting, Human Resources, Business Services, Research

Areas of Expertise

Decision Making, Organizational Behavior, Employee Voice, Organizational Learning, Leadership, Innovation & Creativity, Negotiations, Office Politics, Workplace Communication, Conflict in the Workplace

Affiliations

Academy of Management Journal: Editorial Review, Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes: Editorial Review, Organization Science: Editorial Review, Administrative Science Quarterly: Editorial Review, Journal of Applied Psychology: Reviewer

Sample Talks

When Managers are Insecure, Employee Voices Aren't Heard

In a study, Burriss and his fellow researchers tested the theory that getting people to practice self-affirmation can mitigate threats to their egos. The researchers asked study participants to think of, and then write about, a deeply held personal value. That simple act had impressive results. Regardless of whether that personal value related to the manager's job, "they felt more comfortable with who they are — and then they were more likely to solicit voice," Burriss said. His research offers a lesson for managers. "It doesn't matter how competent or incompetent you actually are," Burriss said. "It matters how competent you feel."

Event Appearances

When Managers Are Insecure, Employee Voices Aren't Heard

Texas Enterprise Speaker Series

The Value of Voice to Managers

Academy of Management Annual Meeting

Voice Champions: How Advocates and Advocating for Others Influence Performance

Academy of Management Annual Meeting

Speaking Up Versus Being Heard

Wharton Organizational Behavior Conference

Education

Cornell University, S.C. Johnson Graduate School of Management

Ph.D. Management

Cornell University, S.C. Johnson Graduate School of Management

M.Sc. Management

Washington University in St. Louis

B.A. Psychology, Organizational and Human Resources

Accomplishments

Teaching Excellence Awards

MBA Applause Award, 2012, 2013

Hank & Mary Harkins Foundation Award for Effective Teaching in Undergraduate Classes, 2011-2012

ING Professor of Excellence, 2011

Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award, 2010-2011

Trammell/CBA Foundation Teaching Award for Assistant Professors, 2009-10

Preferred Professor, Mortar Board Senior Honor Society, 2009

Faculty Honor Roll for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching, 2008, 2010, 2011

Finalist, Texas Exes Teaching Award, 2006-07

Best Symposium Award, OB Division

Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Philadelphia, PA.

Best Paper Academy of Management

When does voice prompt action? Constructing ideas that trigger attention, importance and feasibility. Annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Montreal, Canada.

McCombs Research Excellence Grant

Awarded by the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin for "Speaking sideways to speak up".

McCombs Research Excellence Grant

Awarded by the McCombs School of Business at the University of Texas at Austin for "Employee voice and (missed) opportunities for learning in credit unions".

Testimonials

David Wenger

Ethan Burris is one of our most relevant and quotable experts, because every human being has experienced some level of organizational conflict, or has struggled with the challenge of fostering new ideas within a group. Burris lends scientific insight to topics of human productivity and satisfaction, explained in terms we all can understand.

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