

## Assistant Professor of Marketing Wins PACCAR Award

Dan Turner keeps a bullhorn in his office, which might seem odd for a marketing professor who isn't named "Barnum."

It dates back to his doctoral days at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management, where Turner developed a teaching habit of amplifying his delivery of key points through an improvised paper megaphone. One former executive student, a senior finance officer at an import/export company, came to appreciate those key points when she was summarily placed in charge of the firm's marketing department. She sent him a gift. "On the card," Turner recalls, "she wrote that the technique works really well but that perhaps I needed to be a little louder, so here's one of our products to use"—he switches on the bullhorn—"INSTEAD OF ROLLING UP A PIECE OF PAPER."

The bullhorn is not his only cheap trick. The assistant professor of marketing employs a panoply of unorthodox "techniques" to engage his students. He flings coins at a wall to draw attention to the concept of selective perception. He prints his marketing decision model on a Frisbee that he distributes at the end of the course. He tells corny stories in order to illustrate lessons, like the tale of his woebegone high school muscle car to demonstrate the different frameworks of marketing research.

It's all part of an effort to adapt proven marketing knowledge to inspire classroom breakthroughs. In Turner's courses, the method is also the message.

"The model of human memory is important for marketers. But it's also important for education," he says. "It's not dependent on how smart or motivated you are. People aren't designed to sit and passively absorb. They have to be engaged. My goal is to make people in my classes better management decision makers. And I'll do whatever I need to be effective in conveying that information."

It seems to be working. Turner was chosen by the School's MBA students to receive the 2005 PACCAR Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Business School's premier teaching honor that includes a \$25,000 stipend from PACCAR, Inc., a global technology leader in the capital goods and financial services markets.

The award benefactors might be pleased to know that Turner knows a thing or two about trucks. His father used to drive a Class 8—"That's a big rig," Turner explains—alongside a litany of other blue collar jobs he worked. Though the family tree was not rooted in higher education, his parents were determined to keep their oft-distracted son on academic course.



Turner worked full-time at a grocery store throughout high school and St. Louis University, where he finally saw the light. "I'm fundamentally convinced that going to college changed my life," he recalls. "Suddenly my eyes were opened to the way knowledge gives you a greater degree of control over your life."

Turner found himself wanting to learn more, which became a recurring theme in his life. Having spent a few years in grocery management during his college years, he went straight to Washington University to get his MBA, then to work for Circuit City. But he aspired to take on management challenges more global than his position, or the company, could offer. "I wanted to really step back and solve some of the more fundamental issues in marketing," he says.

After earning his PhD at Kellogg, Turner joined the UW Business School faculty in 1999. Now his services are in high demand. He teaches in the undergraduate, MBA, Technology Management MBA and Executive MBA programs, as well as Executive Education.

The "cheap ploys" he uses are aimed at much more than a quick hit. Deep, resounding learning is Turner's ultimate goal, and he tracks his success by occasional check-ups with past students. Some display their marketing Frisbee in their offices. Most recall those key points of marketing wisdom delivered via bullhorn—blaringly, but always sparingly.

"I don't just want to help people do well on a test," Turner says. "I want to make a real difference in the way they think about management and the way they think about running a business. Not at the end of the quarter, but three months from now, three years from now, thirty years from now."