

Student Guide Case Discussion

Kodak (A) case

The Kodak case may be old, but is still fresh as it weaves together themes that are super relevant to the diffusion of new emerging technologies. Just think about:

1. How companies must recognize and react to significant technological shifts, ensuring they remain relevant in changing landscapes.
2. The necessity for companies to internalize and act upon the reality that sometimes the biggest threats can be opportunities, and vice versa.
3. How the intersection of technological innovation and evolving consumer behavior can redefine industries, requiring businesses to be proactive rather than reactive.
4. The need for companies, regardless of their size, to remain agile and responsive, being able to pivot strategies based on market insights.
5. The challenges and potential pitfalls of entering new market areas without a clear and well-thought-out strategy.

These themes will come up in the class discussion of the case materials in the most interesting way: Together, we will discover all sorts of viewpoints by sharing our thoughts and insights on the case. I'm looking forward to hearing your ideas and I am counting on your diverse backgrounds and viewpoints to get a full, 360 degrees view on possible solutions and strategies.

In case discussions, there are no right or wrong answers. There is only how the case actually happened and our well-reasoned alternatives. If you bring alternatives to the table, we will develop the reasoning together. This way, you will learn what it feels like to deal with the messy real-world issues of diffusion. At a later date, we will apply Kodak's lessons to quantum technologies, so let's dive in!

In the next pages, you will find some pointers for case analysis and homework questions. The pointers will help you to prepare for the case discussion and make you feel free to jump into the class discussion. The questions will focus your analysis. Please note that your answers to the questions must be uploaded to **BrightSpace before Wednesday, October 4th at noon.**

Looking forward to reading and hearing your thoughts!

Preparing for Business Cases

1. Reading the Text

Preparing for a case is more than just reading and pondering it. Typically, you should read most cases multiple times to truly uncover the core issue and devise a thoughtful approach. During your initial reading, use the following checkpoints to familiarize yourself with the case scenario:

- Who is the decision-maker and what decision do they need to make?
- What are the objectives of this decision-maker?
- Who are the other significant stakeholders and what are their goals?
- What are the primary points of contention among these stakeholders?
- What is the decision-maker's current situation? How does this empower or limit them? What opportunities and challenges are present? For instance: Which market or product does this pertain to? What's the competitive landscape? Are there constraints in terms of finances, time, regulations, or other resources?
- What options are available to the decision-maker, and what are the consequences of each choice?

On your second reading, gather evidence supporting or opposing your proposed solutions: Which arguments back your approach? Which ones challenge it? The key to preparation is to see things from the decision-maker's perspective. What actions would you take? What do you need to know before making a choice? And what implications will you face if you're wrong?

2. Utilizing Evidence and Data

The hardest part of the preparation is differentiating between main points and secondary details amidst the influx of information. Cases often involve opposing views with their respective arguments. As in real-world scenarios, it's crucial to discern and prioritize the right pieces of evidence.

Be critical of the rationale provided in the case. Consider alternative interpretations that could arise from the same set of facts. Utilize numerical data when doing so. Make decisions based on these numbers regarding what is or isn't important. Assess if solutions are scalable or how profitable they might be. If exact numbers aren't provided in the case, make educated assumptions and calculations. When calculating, remember to:

- First, determine the purpose of your calculation.
- Outline the various steps involved in your computation.
- Ensure units are consistent.
- Reflect on your results – are they surprising? If so, why?
- If your findings are unexpected, double-check your calculations before proceeding.

3. Preparing Discussion Points

The objective of discussing the case is to collaboratively explore and evaluate different ideas, thereby offering participants a comprehensive and deeper understanding of the case's subject. The role of a moderator in such discussions is distinct from that of a lecturer.

Instead of presenting evidence, arguments, or answers, I primarily guide the discourse. I ensure that your contributions build upon one another, gradually clarifying the central issue of the case. Periodically, I'll summarize the ongoing discussion and pose follow-up questions,

ensuring all facets of the case are addressed. The discussion concludes with a brief recap of the main learning points.

The quality of the discussion relies entirely on your preparation and engagement. The better you are at convincingly arguing your proposed approach, the more rewarding and engaging the case method becomes.

4. Homework

Please answer these questions to help you prepare for the case discussion in class. Please upload your answers to BrightSpace before Wednesday, October 4th at noon.

1. Evaluate Kodak's strategy in traditional photography. Why has the company been so successful throughout its history?
2. Compare traditional to digital imaging. How have the value creation and value appropriation changed in digital photography relative to traditional photography?
3. Evaluate Kodak's response to Sony's introduction of the Mavica in 1981. Was it appropriate?
4. How would you assess Fisher's attempt to transform Kodak? Why did it fail?

Wishing you good fun with the case prep and discussion and looking forward to seeing you October 6th.

Barbara