

Rubric for Case Reports

Case reports aid strategic decision making and provide a means through which market intelligence can be disseminated within organizations. The more you write case reports, the better you will become at prioritizing problems, identifying and evaluating alternatives, and making well-reasoned, actionable recommendations. Leveraging this rubric, which defines five criteria that exemplary case reports excel on, to self-assess your ideas and peer evaluate your classmates' case reports will help you hone your critical thinking skills and attack business decisions with greater confidence. Internalizing this rubric will also help you prepare for the midterm and final exam, which will be graded along the following lines:

	Exemplary (Grade: A)	Proficient (Grade: A– to B+)	Satisfactory (Grade: B to B–)	Unsatisfactory (Grade: C+ or lower)
Problem Identification What decision needs to be made, and why?	One or two high-level problems are stated concisely. Cogent reasoning explains why these problems are the most urgent and important in the case. Long-term, detrimental implications of inaction are argued concretely.	One or two high-level problems are stated. Reasoning explains why these problems are urgent and important, but it lacks clarity, logic, or rigor at times. Long-term, detrimental implications of inaction are argued abstractly.	One or two relatively low-level problems are stated. Reasoning explains why these problems are urgent and important, but it often lacks clarity, logic, or rigor. Long-term, detrimental implications of inaction are argued unconvincingly.	A number of low-level (or no) problems are stated. Little, no, or seriously flawed reasoning explains why these problems are urgent and important. Long-term, detrimental implications of inaction are not discussed.
Analysis What data and analytic methods are informing your decision?	Convincing reasons explain why certain data are given priority. Red herrings (e.g., lies) are disqualified convincingly. The variables, methods, and provenance of the data used to make decisions are extremely well described.	Semi-convincing reasons explain why certain data are given priority. The variables, methods, and provenance of the data used to make decisions are described with some clarity, completeness, and credibility.	Certain data are given priority, but unconvincing reasons are given. The variables, methods, and provenance of the data used to make decisions are described unclearly, incompletely, and insufficiently on a number of occasions.	Red herrings (e.g., opinions and hearsay) lead the analysis astray. The variables, methods, and provenance of the data used to make decisions are described poorly most of the time.
Alternative Identification & Evaluation What solutions exist and how would you evaluate them?	Obvious and sensibly creative alternatives are identified concisely. Decision criteria relevant to solving the prioritized problems are defined/ranked cogently. Alternatives are subjected to the decision criteria rigorously, such that the decided-upon action plan appears very well reasoned.	Obvious alternatives are identified concisely. Decision criteria relevant to solving the identified problems are defined/ranked. Alternatives are subjected to the decision criteria adequately, such that the decided-upon action plan appears fairly well reasoned.	Obvious alternatives are identified. Decision criteria relevant to solving the identified problems are defined adequately. Alternatives are subjected to the decision criteria vaguely, such that the decided-upon action plan is at least loosely based on reason.	Mostly infeasible alternatives are identified. Irrelevant decision criteria are defined and not ranked. Alternatives are not subjected to decision criteria.
Action Plan What solution should be implemented?	Covers relevant elements of the marketing mix seamlessly and concretely. Fully discusses what needs to be done (i.e., who, when, what, where, why, and how). Fully sets SMART goals ¹ and outlines expected results. Adheres to time and resource constraints.	Covers relevant elements of the marketing mix, albeit abstractly. Discusses what needs to be done, sets SMART goals, and outlines expected results in some detail. Mostly adheres to time and resource constraints.	Disregards some relevant elements of the marketing mix. Discusses what needs to be done, sets SMART goals, and outlines expected results with minimal detail. Fails to account for many time and resource constraints.	Disregards many relevant elements of the marketing mix. What needs to be done, SMART goals, and expected results are largely unclear. Time and resource constraints make the action plan unfeasible.
Style & Grammar	Writing style exceeds all of the expectations set in Communication. ² Exhibits and figures are formatted properly, and their major takeaways are described in the text. References are all cited in the text and formatted in the bibliography correctly. Sentences are all correct grammatically and flow together naturally. Report is free of spelling errors.	Writing style meets the expectations set in Communication. Exhibits and figures are formatted properly. References are all cited in the text and formatted in the bibliography correctly. Most sentences are grammatically correct and flow together. Report is clearly proofread and spell-checked.	Writing style meets most of the expectations set in Communication. Most of the exhibits and figures are formatted properly. Referencing is mostly free of errors. Most sentences are grammatically correct and flow together. Report is proofread, but contains minor spelling errors.	Writing style does not meet the expectations set in Communication. Many of the exhibits and figures are formatted improperly. Some references are missing and/or contain significant formatting errors. Spelling and/or grammatical errors occur throughout the document, making it hard to follow at times. The report was not proofread carefully.

¹ SMART goals (see Miller [2017]), are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. They may relate to consumers' attitudes, emotions, and actions, as well as to the triple bottom line (i.e., profits, people, and the planet).

² Expectations set in Communication include, but are not limited to, the following: BLUF writing, SAS headings/tables/figures, and SEC plain English.