

Introduction to Information Technology

Case Study Analysis



+ Case Study

- Study at university, class room teaches you “the concept”
- But is that enough?
- As well know- that "knowing" is different from "doing." When you have an opportunity to apply your knowledge, the lesson typically becomes much more real (*and harder*).
- Adults often learn differently from children, and we have different motivations for learning.
- This means that as adults we get the best results when we are fully involved in the learning experience.

+ Case Study

- Case studies are a form of problem-based learning, where you present a situation that needs a resolution.
 - Example- a typical IT-related case study is a detailed account, or story, of what happened in a particular company, industry, or project over a set period of time.
- The learner is given details about the situation, often in a historical context. The key players are introduced. Objectives and challenges are outlined.
- This is followed by specific examples and data, which the learner then uses to analyse the situation, determine what happened, and make recommendations.

+ Why use a case study?

- A useful learning tool and it gives a feel for the complexities of the real work and how the theories, models and research being studied can be used in practice.
- They differ from lectures or assigned readings, because they require participation and deliberate application of a broad range of skills.
- One must get into details and this gives the reader a clearer understanding of how things work

+ How to get the best out of a case study? [1]

- Read the case at least three times before you start any analysis. Case studies usually have lots of details, and it's easy to miss something in your first, or even second, reading.
- Once you're thoroughly familiar with the case, note the facts. Identify which are relevant to the tasks you've been assigned. In a good case study, there are often many more facts than you need for your analysis.
- If the case contains large amounts of data, analyse this data for relevant trends. For example, have sales dropped steadily, or was there an unexpected high or low point? If the case involves a description of a company's history, find the key events, and consider how they may have impacted the current situations, but analytical knowledge is the one that matters!



How to get the best out of a case study?

- Stay with the facts when you draw conclusions. These include facts given in the case as well as established facts about the environmental context.
- Don't rely on personal opinions when you put together your answers.



Steps in analysing case studies

1. Gain an overview of the case
2. Establish what has happened (specify objectives)
3. Determine the causes
4. Develop possible solutions
5. Evaluate these solutions
6. Formulate recommendations (write up solutions).

Step 1 and 2

■ Step 1

- Often there are a lot of facts, make sure that read all of these
- Case study often mention facts and happenings in a time wise order (chronological)

■ Step 2

- Identify what has happened.
- Get a clearer picture
- Establish the who, what, where and when of the situation
- There is always at least one fundamental issue/problem in every case
- Identify that issue/problem

■ Step 3

- Consider a variety of causes/issues to see how well they are supported by the facts of the case
- How well do they explain what has happened?
- Separate symptoms from problems
- Rank the critical problems/issues

■ Step 4

- Develop several possible solutions
- Many solutions may be right- do not compare with others, have faith in your analysis
- Look for- how can the present issue/problem be contained?, how can the similar problem be avoided in future?

■ Step 5

- Consider each possible solution, detailing exactly what would need to be done to implement it.
- Solutions will likely be in line with the concepts learned in the course.
- Think of any constraints or impediments that are likely to make it difficult to implement any of the possible solutions

■ Step 6

- Recommend exactly how the solution can be implemented.
- A broad view of the situation should be taken
- Often relatively simple solutions are the best, don't go for complicated ones to start with!



Characteristic of case studies

1. Particularistic: focuses on a particular situation, event, program or phenomenon
2. Descriptive: the end product is a rich, thick description of the phenomenon being studied
3. Heuristic: the cases studies illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under study
 - brings about the discovery of new meanings
 - extend the reader's experience
 - confirm what is already known