

Modifying Case-Based Teaching to Successfully Meet Students' Needs

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Abstract

Through management education research, training, conferences and peer-to-peer sharing management educators have readily expanded the focus of management education to include a primarily facilitative role for the educator and an active-engagement learning role for students. Currently, the foundation of management education is solidly based on the use of non-traditional forms of teaching through internship, cooperative and service learning activities (Alavi, Yoo & Vogel, 1997; McCarthy, Tucker & Dean 2002; Meyer, 2003; Sabine, 2002) and arts-based learning (Nissley, 2002). Case-based teaching, a staple in management education, is still generally used following the traditional case analysis format with the occasional inclusion of role play activities (Baruch, 2006). However, the use of cases can be extended into a non-traditional format which increases students' engagement in classroom learning. The extension of the case-based method allows students/teams to develop their own case scenarios and present the case scenarios and the application of theoretical material using varied theatrical forms. This case-based approach provides opportunities for students to explore, develop and improve essential individual and team skills such as, creativity, critical thinking & analytical skills, and communication skills in various forms and at different stages of case-project activity.

The case-project activity is split into three major stages to ensure active student engagement and learning. Stage I of this assignment involves Project Discussion and Information Sessions. During this stage students are provided with the instructions for the project. Stage II is the class/team/student preparation stage which involves in-class preparations (includes training sessions on theatrical forms) and out-of-class preparations for presenting the case and its application. At Stage III student teams present the case. The design of this project allows students to evaluate material provided by the instructor based on a specific chapter or topic. The evaluation entails relevant application of the material to real-life situations. Once the students complete this phase they are required to develop a case scenario that would allow them to demonstrate the relevance of the theoretical material. Student teams submit the case scenario to instructor for grading before moving on to the next stage(s).

This session is especially designed for the management educator who is looking for ways to expand the use of traditional case-based teaching in the management classroom. The value of the method will be presented through discussion by the instructor which will include elements on designing syllabus and classroom activities, grading method and student evaluations.

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