# Course Title: C.3.3 Case Writing

# Abstract:

Learning from examples is an effective learning technique for business students. Although most students are familiar with case studies as a teaching method because they have worked with and solved case studies before, they have little or no experience with writing case studies for business students themselves. This interactive lecture is an introduction to case writing for students. It is directed to (groups of) students who have worked together with a company on a real business problem. It is the students’ task to transform the experience and knowledge they have gained while solving the company’s business problem into a case study for teaching at higher education institutions. The aim of this lecture is twofold. First, it introduces students to the basic characteristics, types, components, and quality criteria of teaching case studies. Second, it is a step-by-step guide to writing a case study. This lecture comprises two (in-class) teaching blocks of 90 minutes that are each followed by assignments (self-study/group work). It draws on a mix of interactive sessions and class discussions, short presentations by the lecturer, and self-study. (Interactive exercises are in blue font, self-study in orange.)

# Learning Objectives:

* Learning Objective 1: Students reflect on the core business problem of their company case and possible solutions from a different perspective by writing a case study and teaching note for students
* Learning Objective 2: Students get to know basic characteristics and types of case studies as well as the different components of case studies and quality criteria
* Learning Objective 3: Students learn how to apply theoretical tools, e.g. Porter’s five forces, SWOT analysis, etc. while working on their case study
* Learning Objective 4: Students train their assessment skills by giving each other peer feedback on the case study introduction
* Learning Objective 5: Students train their project management skills by developing a work breakdown structure for their case study
* Learning Objective 6: Students train their (creative) writing skills by developing a story line for their case study and writing the introduction of their case

# Assessment Method:

* Three written assignments: 1) defining the overall subject, appropriate theoretical tools, target group and learning objectives of the case study, and developing a story line; 2) developing a work breakdown structure; 3) writing the case study

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| Session #  | Session Content | Method(s) | Learning Objectives of Session | Material | Time (mins) | Comments |
| 1 | **What is a good Case Study** | **70** |  |
| **Warm up:**1. Who has worked with case studies before?2. Which problems/issues did these cases tackle?3. How were the cases structured?4. What were your tasks?5. Did you enjoy working on a case study? If yes, why? If no, why?Introduction to working with cases: video of how cases are used at Harvard Business SchoolPresentation of the structure, aims, and outputs of the lecture | Q&A with studentsOptional: collect answers to questions on white boardPresentation | Students reflect on their own experiences in working with case studies and learn how the case method is used to enhance students’ learning at higher education institutions | Pen and whiteboardPPT slide 2PPT slides 3-6 | 30 |  |
| **Why write a case study?**The rationale of writing a case | Presentation | Raise students’ interest | PPT slides 7-8 | 5 |  |
| **What is a case study and what are its core components?**Present basic characteristics and types of casesPresent the five components of a case study | Presentation | Students gain an overview of case characteristics, types, and components | PPT slides 9-17 | 15 |  |
| **What are quality criteria of case studies?** | Think-pair-share: Step 1: students think of quality criteria for case studies individually Step 2: students discuss these quality criteria with their neighbour Step 3: collect quality criteria for case studies on whiteboardPresentation | Students train their assessment skills by reflecting on and developing quality criteria for teaching case studies | Whiteboard & pensPPT slides 18-20 | 20 | Short video on the think-pair-share method: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wW87rihT38I |
| 5 | **How to write a case study?** | **170** | **11,5 hrs self-study** |
| 5.1 Four basic questions to get started/the storyline of the case | Presentation Open brainstorm on theoretical tools |  | PPT slides 20-25 | 20 |  |
| 5.2 Assignment 1: Getting Started *(self-study/group work)* | Students answer questions 1-4 and develop a storyline for their case and visualise it Students present their storyline and concept to the class | Students set the main parameters of their case study | Cards/flipchart paper and pens to structure and visualise ideasPPT slide 26 | 60-90 | Lecturers should plan ca. 40 minutes for the group work and ca. 10 minutes per group for the presentation of the storylineCould also be done as self-study time |
| 5.3 Recap, open questions, and plan for the second part of the lecture | Presentation |  | PPT slides 27-28 | 10 |  |
| 5.4 Case study introduction | Presentation of the core components of a case study introductionClass discussion: Students read the two case study introductions Compare the two case studies and discuss with students which introduction they like better and why | Students know which information to include in the case study introductionStudents reflect on what makes a good case study introduction | PPT slides 29-31PPT slide 32Case study introductions 1 and 2  | 30 |  |
| 5.5 Further case study components:Body of the caseConclusionTeaching noteReferences | Presentation of the further components of a case study | Students gain an overview of the core components of case studies | PPT slides 33-47 | 25 |  |
| 5.6 Consulting report vs. case study | Class discussion: How does a case study differ from a consulting report? | Students reflect on the difference between a consulting report and a case study | PPT slides 48-49 | 10 |  |
| **Tips for writing a good case study** | Presentation | Students become aware of common pitfalls | PPT slides 50-55 | 15 |  |
| Assignment 2: Work breakdown structure*(self-study/group work)* | Students develop a work breakdown structure for their case study  | Students train their project management skills  | PPT slide 53Interactive H5P presentation | 90 | Lecturers should give students feedback on their work breakdown structure |
| Assignment 3: Writing the case study and teaching note*(self-study/group work)* | Students write their case study and teaching note | Students train their writing skills | Case writing guide & check list for studentsReadings:Farhoomand (2004). Writing Teaching Cases: a quick Reference Guide. *Communications of the Association for Information Systems, 13,* 103-107.Yue, Tao. (2016). How to Write a Good Teaching Case. *Rotterdam School of Management Case* Development Centre: Rotterdam.The Case Centre. (2018). Guidance on teaching notes. URL: <https://www.thecasecentre.org/educators/submitcases/guidance/teachingnotes> [13.07.2018].Case study examples  | 10 hours | The guide and checklist for case writing, the readings, and the example cases provide additional information for students to guide them through the process of writing their case study |