



Case Based Learning



WHAT IS IT?

Case-Based Learning (CBL) is an instructional strategy that engages students in exploring real-life complex scenarios through the analysis and discussion of detailed case studies. This method helps to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application by immersing students in situations that mirror real-world challenges. Benefits of Case-Based Learning are Application of Knowledge, Development of Critical Thinking Skills, Enhanced Engagement.

WHY USE IT?

Key Characteristics of Effective Case Studies (According to Davis, 1993):

- ♣ Real and Engaging Story
- ♣ Thought-Provoking Issues
- ♣ Elements of Conflict
- ♣ Empathy with Central Characters
- ♣ Lack of an Obvious or Clear-Cut Right Answer
- ♣ Encouragement to Think and Take a Position

HOW DO I DO IT?

- Write/ source or adapt a narrative based on an authentic situation or case. Students are required to reach a concrete outcome such as a conclusion, recommendation, or prediction based on their findings.
- Write a series of guiding questions for small group discussion. Pay careful attention to the sequencing of the questions, for example:
 - Early questions: ask students to make observations about the facts of the case.
 - Later questions: call for comparisons, contrasts, and analyses of competing observations or hypotheses.
 - Final questions: ask students to take a position on the matter should not be answerable with a simple yes or no.

(Adapted from: Centre for Teaching and Learning, Queen's University)



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WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER?

- Give students ample time to read and think about the case. This can be provided before class.
- Introduce the case briefly and provide some guidelines for how to approach it.
- Create groups (ideally 3-6 students) and monitor them to make sure everyone is involved.
- Have groups present their solutions/reasoning.
- Ask questions for clarification and to move discussions to another level.
- Synthesise issues raised. Be sure to bring the various strands of the discussion back together at the end. Ask groups to summarise their findings and compare group responses. Help the whole class interpret and understand the implications of their solutions.

(Adapted from: Case Studies, Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence & Educational Innovation, Carnegie Mellon University)

WHAT IF I WANT MORE?

Resources

[The Case Method-Harvard Business School - YouTube](#)

Considerations

- Case-based learning requires a lot of preparation
- The lecturer takes on a facilitator's role to guide
- The classroom or face-to-face sessions focus on Active learning, Problem solving and discussions

REFERENCES

- Davis, B. (1993). Tools for Teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, C. & Wilcock, E. (2003). Teaching Materials Using Case Studies. Retrieved from <http://www.materials.ac.uk/guides/casestudies.asp>
- [Using Case Studies to Teach | Center for Teaching & Learning \(bu.edu\)](#) (Using Case Studies to Teach, Centre for Excellence and Innovation in Teaching, Boston University)
- [Case Studies - Eberly Center - Carnegie Mellon University \(cmu.edu\)](#)