

**CASE STUDIES AS A TEACHING -LEARNING
TOOL IN MANAGEMENT COURSES**

An Instructor's Perspective

Yusof Ismail

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INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA



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CHAPTER 8

Utilizing Management Case Studies from a Learner's Perspective

Md. Mahfuzur Rahman and Yusof Ismail

Introduction

In the previous chapters, the book has shared the experiences of individual instructors in using cases for a course each. This chapter is however different. It relates the experience of the first co-author in using case studies in a number of *Management* related courses, including one that he studied under the second co-author. Together, the co-authors discussed the exposure that the first co-author has gained out of his experience during his undergraduate years.

Objectives of using cases

In our opinion, case study upholds several objectives: It (a) helps develop skills of finding the actual reasons for the problem and feasible solution, (b) helps to apply theories and concepts in real life application, (c) provides opportunity to think differently and see the problem in different angles, (d) helps to give practical knowledge compared to the textbook based knowledge, and (e) helps develop analytical skill, and others.

The purpose of case study is therefore to understand the real life problems and their solutions. During undergraduate years, Mahfuz finds most of the theories are based on many assumptions, which create barriers to bring the reality in picture. When he tries to find out the relationship between price and quality of a product, he has with him certain assumptions, i.e., all other things remain constant. But in practical life all the variables move together and thus all of the assumptions in this regard are invalid. Besides, he went through many theories and concepts in his courses that are not relevant to today's world. In addition, many new theories, concepts, and models have replaced the established old ones, thus the old theories, concepts, and models are not relevant anymore. However, as a student he still studies those irrelevant concepts in his courses. Those ideas may enrich our knowledge but they do not help to solve the real life problem. It is impossible to include facts of daily life in a book immediately. Thus, as a student he continues to learn from textbooks some issues that do not reflect our daily lives. However, he found that my instructors used case studies in his classes to fill up the gap between textbook and practical knowledge. Cases help to give a better picture of the real world problems and various viable techniques to handle the problems.

Benefits of using case studies

Mahfuz is relating his experience in using case studies in three courses that he completed approximately two years ago, i.e. *Principles and Practice of Management* (PPM), *Organizational Behavior* (OB), and *Human Resource Management* (HRM)