Case Method Teaching Workshop
Center for Teaching Excellence

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Roadmap

1. Self-Reflection and Group Discussion: Dilemmas and Challenges in Teaching the Case Method
2. Discussion: When is the Case Method Appropriate / Effective?
3. Brief Demonstration: Amelia Rogers Case
4. Some Principles of Effective Case Method Teaching
Amelia Rogers Case Discussion
Learning Objectives—Amelia Rogers Case

- **Conflict Management:**
  - Push vs. Pull Tactics
  - Negative Attribution Cycle

- **Sources of Power:** (1) personal; (2) positional; and (3) relational

- **Interpersonal Alliances:**
  - When feeling powerless, think about your network (relational sources of power)
  - Alliances based on resource exchange / mutual benefit
  - We have a wide range of resources available for exchange
Push vs. Pull Approaches to Influence

**PUSH**
- Stating
  - Proposing
  - Dictating
- Pressuring
  - Stating expectations
  - Evaluating
  - Using incentives

**PULL**
- Attracting
  - Finding common ground
  - Visioning
- Bridging
  - Involving
  - Listening
  - Disclosing
When to Use Push vs. Pull Approaches

**PUSH**
- Have clear authority
- Have credibility
- Have trust / respect
- Part of majority coalition / strong power base
- ‘Answer’ is clear or straightforward
- One-off transaction

**PULL**
- Unclear authority
- Limited credibility
- Limited trust / respect
- Part of minority / weak power base
- ‘Answer’ is ambiguous or multifaceted
- Expect repeated interactions

Beware of push vs. push—especially if you seek to build a long-term relationship
Resources Available for Exchange

**Task-related**
- Helping others get the job done; e.g., colleague joining from another organization

**Status-based**
- Enhancing others’ standing; e.g., trumpeting others’ accomplishments

**Relational**
- Building others’ social capital; e.g., making key introductions

**Personal**
- Enhance other's sense of self worth; e.g., brief note of appreciation

**Inspirational**
- Provide meaning to other's work; e.g., linking others’ work to customer success
Some Principles of Effective Case Method Teaching (1 of 2)

1. Supply a summary of basic case facts so students can focus on analysis, rather than on regurgitating those details

2. Focus the discussion on 2-3 specific points of tension in the case that illustrate general learning objectives ("pastures")

3. Develop a board plan that is tied directly to the pastures; plan for and send clear signals about transitions across pastures

4. Push students to put themselves in protagonist’s shoes and to develop a specific action plan that is supported by case facts ("I would do X, Y, and Z for these reasons" rather than "She should get buy-in from others")

5. Gently “police” the discussion to maintain high quality—e.g., vague arguments; repetitive comments; tangential comments; claims not supported by evidence; case facts stated without a clear argument; complex comments with multiple points that need to be unpacked
Some Principles of Effective Case Method Teaching (2 of 2)

6. Identify 2-3 students who “anchor” differing perspectives and encourage direct debate among them; invite others to take a side, propose an alternative, integrate these perspectives, or bring in their own personal experience (consult face page before class to identify students with relevant background)

7. Build in time for reflection / internalization—at the beginning to motivate the topic and at the end to examine relevance to students’ own situation or to current events in business world

8. Develop a time management contingency plan—e.g., “back-pocket” questions to fill time or pastures that can be skipped

9. Strike balance between sticking to game plan and following the energy of the discussion; embrace the uncertainty about how it will flow

10. Provide closure: What did the protagonist do? What was the result? What would you have done (without suggesting it is the only “right” answer)?