

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
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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
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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
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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
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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
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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)?
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