

Sameer B. Srivastava (CTE Workshop on Case Method Teaching)

Example Case Preparation Guide: Amelia Rogers Case

Guy Johnson = Muffler World marketing director

Dave Burns = creative director on account

Sally Tassani = founder and CEO of TC

Jim Paglia = COO / EVP; Rogers' boss

Robin Sparkman = prior account director for Muffler World

Mary Stewart = Account Exec (Rogers' subordinate)

Cold Call = _____

Students with Ad Agency Experience = _____

Board #1: What is the context?

Strategy:

- Integrated marketing communication; need to coordinate activity / decisions across departments
- Trying to professionalize from an entrepreneurial base

Challenges of Strategy Implementation:

- Organizational structure: separate departments w/o P&L; account direct leads team (but w/o reporting relationship)
- Tension: provide high touch / customized services to clients but also manage costs (resources stretched thin)
- Division of responsibility between Tassani (bus dev) and Paglia (internal operations)
- Paglia as central actor: "creative clearinghouse"

Note: Potential for political conflict rising: (1) resource scarcity increasing; (2) level of interdependence across units increasing; and (3) diversity of perspectives increasing (e.g., old blood vs. new blood)

Muffler World Account:

- High stakes client; opportunity to go national
- Transition from Sparkman to Rogers

Presenting Problem: Free-Standing Insert (FSI) with illustration proposed by creative team; initial interest by Johnson but then cold feet; Burns then calls Johnson directly; Johnson calls Rogers to complain. Rogers calls Burns – hears voicemail recording.

Board #2 / Pasture #1: What should Rogers do?

- Leave voicemail for Burns?
- Meet one-on-one with Burns? Push Burns to stop calling client? Ask Burns why he thinks this is so important?
- Involve Paglia?
- What to say to Johnson?
- How to involve Sparkman and Stewart?

Board #3 / Pasture #2: Assess Rogers' sources of power early in her career

- Personal:
 - a. Relevant knowledge / skill; has been account supervisor before
 - b. Attention to detail
 - c. Effective communicator: “hub of a wheel”
 - d. Direct / willing to challenge
 - e. Has insight into the creative process and good judgment
- Positional:
 - a. Account Director for Muffler World – supposed to be single point of contact for client
 - b. Responsible for three other accounts (resources)
- Relational:
 - a. Personally recruited by Sally Tassani
 - b. Has a solid relationship with Jim Paglia
 - c. Has a good working relationship with Burns (though there are tensions at times)
 - d. Has access to Sparkman and Mary Stewart

Board #4 / Pasture #3: Who are Rogers' potential allies? What resources does she have to potentially exchange with those allies for support? What would alliance with Sparkman / Stewart / Burns look like?

Sparkman:

- Gives: (1) advice about how to be general purpose Account Director; (2) advice about how to navigate Tassani; (3) (potentially) access to other accounts in portfolio; (4) network—introductions to Tassani and Paglia; (5) success on Muffler World so Sparkman is not pulled back into the account
- Gets: (1) insight into Muffler World organization; (2) perspective on whether Johnson can be influenced and, if so, how; (3) knowledge about how advertising in automotive industry works

Stewart: similar to Sparkman but can also give mentorship / development on transitioning to Account Director role + opening up one of Rogers' own accounts

Burns:

- Gives: (1) another opportunity to make his case to Johnson; (2) support for his team; (3) insights about how to be more effective / influential with Johnson (by bringing together Sparkman and Stewart)
- Gets: (1) commitment to stop calling the client now; (2) commitment that he will involve Rogers earlier on when a situation like this arises again