CASE STUDIES AS A TEACHING-LEARNING TOOL IN MANAGEMENT COURSES
An Instructor’s Perspective

Yusof Ismail
Department of Business Administration
Kulliyyah of Economics and Management Science
International Islamic University Malaysia
Email: yusof_iu@yahoo.com

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CHAPTER 2

Case Studies in Business Ethics

Suhaimi Mhd Sarif

Introduction

The first time I studied management subjects (to name a few such as Principles and Practice of Management, Organizational Behavior, Human Resource Management, and Strategic Management) at my undergraduate level, I have been educated to analyse short and long cases. I continued the same teaching methodology to Business Ethics. I believed that case-based teaching provides the students and me to explore Business Ethics as wide as possible within the learning outcomes of the subject. This approach of learning is called student-centred learning when teachers are not the focal point of learning, instead students are provided with conditions for learning. The case studies provide the avenue for students to learn the events in the cases with theory and practice. At the same time, students can explore the case through the discussion and preparation for oral presentation and written report, during and after the presentation. Students also can build their soft skill such as public speaking, handling argument wisely, time management, and flexibility.

Objectives of using cases

Business Ethics is a reading subject that requires students to comprehend theories, concepts, and cases. Students are expected to be able to explain the concepts, values, sources, and applications of Business Ethics from conventional, non-Islamic and Islamic references. Then, students are expected to deduce the principles of moral and ethical values from various business ethical behaviors and different contexts of business stakeholders. Based on this background, I use cases in Business Ethics to achieve three objectives: firstly, to deduce the principles of moral and ethical values from the cases; secondly, to integrate theory and practice; and, finally, to make good judgment based on art and science.

1. Deduce the principles of moral and ethical values. I use cases as samples of the real life ethical problems so that students could deduce principles of moral and ethical values. The ability to deduce principles of ethical values from real life cases (although historical in nature) is essential to guide them to differentiate between right and wrong behavior.

2. Integrate theory and practice. Students learn a lot of theories in Business Ethics. Without applying the theories into real life situations, students would not appreciate the theories. The integration requires students to have full grasp of understanding of theories before they can integrate with the practice. I think the case studies may create the curiosity to learn and to know more from the cases.