CASE STUDIES AS A TEACHING-LEARNING TOOL IN ECONOMICS, FINANCE AND QUANTITATIVE COURSES
An Instructor’s Perspective

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IIUM PRESS
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
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Case Studies in Decision Science

Nur Anisah Abdullah

Introduction
It would be useful for each chapter (theory and concept) be supported with at least 1 case study. Case studies enhance student appreciation of circumstances and scenarios with theories and concepts in Decision Science. Instructors ought to play the facilitator role when it comes of group case assignment. We have to move away from the “talk and chalk” method to providing supervision and expert advise to students to enable them to benefit more learning from case study. It is always appropriate for students to work as a group for case study assignment especially when the work required for case study is normally too heavy for student to work alone.

Objectives of using cases
I specify three (3) objectives in using cases in Decision Science course:

1. To develop knowledge and skills in students by actively engaging students in learning process based on topics that demonstrate theoretical concepts in an applied setting to bridge the gap between theory and practice.
2. To provide a platform for the development of key skills such as communication, team working, critical thinking, problem solving and resourcefulness in searching for information and relevant materials outside the usual classroom environment;
3. To shift from the monotonous-one-way ‘talk and chalk’ method to active learning with opportunities for collegial discussions and exploration of open-ended, multiple interpretations and solutions for any given case/scenario.

Relevance of the cases with theory and practice
There are a number of ways case studies were developed. Some were developed based on the instructors’ research of which is supported by in-depth knowledge and interests in the topic, while others were developed based on experience gained from industry. Both approaches could potentially encourage active student learning on theory and practice

Materials developed from both approaches would generally be grounded on real situations requiring more realistic solutions. Students could benefit from gaining better understanding of business environment. With the sufficient and skillful supervision and guidance from facilitators, students could potentially learn application of theories and concepts onto circumstances closer to their known environment.