Course Overview

Business organizations of all types face chronic management and leadership problems that pose significant challenges to them. These problems include the difficulty of designing organizations capable of coping with highly dynamic business environments, the challenge of developing strategies and structures for hypercompetitive conditions, the greater complexity of managing global enterprises, the difficult task of shaping a corporate culture, managing politics and conflict between individuals and organizational units, motivating employees who are more mobile than ever, designing attractive incentive systems, leading teams effectively, and so on. Such challenges and how leaders of organizations can deal with them are the subject of this course.

Conceptually, the course has three major components. The first is “macro” in nature. It focuses on organizational level issues and problems and how leaders should think about issues of organizational design, what strategies they should adopt, and how their decisions affect the culture of the organizations. The second part is more “micro” in nature. It focuses on employee-related challenges, such as how to a) get things done in politically sensitive environments, b) make effective decisions, and c) how to lead small groups and teams. The macro component is concerned with overall organizational performance, while the micro component is concerned with managing individual and group effectiveness. The third part of the course brings these two perspectives together through the lens of leadership and organizational change.

This course will introduce you to some of the analytical frameworks in leadership and will help you understand how to apply those theories and frameworks to analyze and address real challenges of leadership. It will also provide you with a better basis for understanding and evaluating organizations and their dynamics. An understanding of organizations and their dynamics is also important for anyone who plans to work within an organization, as career advancement generally hinges on one’s ability to accurately read and respond to the organizational context within which one operates.

In addition to providing you with a framework for dealing with leadership challenges, a second objective of this course is to teach you skills in applying those theories and frameworks to analyze leadership problems and develop appropriate solutions. Leadership skills are most effectively developed through practice. Therefore, it is essential that you have considerable opportunity to work on actual leadership problems. In order to do this we will rely heavily on case analyses. Cases and various exercises will provide the material to practice analyzing and addressing leadership challenges. You are expected to carefully analyze all of the cases, prepare your thoughts on them, and participate in the analyses in class. It is my hope that by the end of the term, you will be able to see organizational and leadership problems in ways you could not see them before. More importantly, you will leave the course more conscious of the consequences related to the choices you make as a leader in an organization.
Course Material

1. Cases and readings.

2. Additional materials to be distributed in class, as indicated in the course schedule.

Grading

1. Team case analysis, written  20%
2. Team participation (“on panel”)  15%
3. Team presentation  20%
4. Individual participation  15%
5. Individual case analysis (final)  30%

This course gives no quizzes or exams to determine whether you have prepared the material. However, preparation of the cases and participation in the case discussion is an essential part of the class—without it, the case analysis will not flow well, and the class will be weaker than it could be as a result. As such, it assumed that you will come to class having done the reading and having prepared the case. A note about readings and preparation: All readings are required, but as I know you are all very busy, sometimes cutting corners is inevitable. Therefore, I would like to make the following distinction: Though I don’t encourage cutting corners on preparation, if you do have to prioritize in any way, the cases are more important than the readings. The readings are good background material for the topic of the session (and I have kept these to a bare minimum), though not quite as essential for the functioning of the class as the cases. You must come to class having prepared the cases.

Grading Details

1. Team case analysis, written
   One week before the due date, a specific case analysis will be announced for you to analyze and hand in as a written analysis. It will be done as an analysis within your groups. The page limit for the team case write-up is 6 pages. The case must be typed (12 point font), double-spaced, with normal 1” margins. Appendices, tables and/or figures do not count toward the 6-page limit. Papers are due in class. No late assignments will be accepted.

2. Team participation, (pp presentation, “on panel”)
   In this course, you will encounter two types of cases. The first type of case will begin and end with a leadership dilemma for the protagonist of the case (in the syllabus these cases will be labeled dilemma). Examples of this type of case are Donna Dubinsky and Taran Swan; in both of these cases, these individuals are facing a challenge and must come up with a solution. The second type of case will be more of a retrospective, giving us the full account of the challenge a leader faced and how s/he approached it (these will be labeled assessment). Examples of this type of case are Franco Bernabe at ENI and Carlos Ghosn at Nissan. Our case discussions will work through an analysis of these cases. For dilemma cases, the goal will be to analyze the case and come up with an action plan for the protagonist. For assessment cases, the goal will be to analyze the case and analyze the actions that the leader took. In sessions x-x, your team will be required to use the skills and frameworks we are developing in class to come to class prepared with an analysis of the case. If you are assigned a dilemma case, your analysis should propose a plan of action; if you are assigned an assessment case, your analysis should assess the actions the leader took. Your team will need to hand in a powerpoint presentation before the session and you must be prepared to talk about your analysis and action plan during the class discussion. The teams for these projects will be your workgroup teams. These assignments are noted in the syllabus. The presentation should have two parts:

   A. Analysis
      • A summary of the surrounding industry environment, mission and strategy.
• An overview of the organization’s formal structure and systems (e.g., design, controls, HR practices, etc.).
• An assessment of the informal systems and dynamics that affect behavior (e.g., culture, leadership, power, etc.).
• An analysis of how these elements work together.

B. Recommendations/Action Plan/Assessment of Actions

• For dilemma cases:
  o Imagine that you could change critical elements of the organization. Make recommendations that would have enabled the organization to be more effective.
  o What specific steps should the organization take going forward?
  o Provide an implementation plan concerning how the recommendations should be executed, what obstacles may be anticipated, and how they may be overcome.

• For assessment cases:
  o What actions did the protagonist take to deal with the challenges s/he was facing?
  o To what extent were these actions linked to the incongruencies you identified in part 1?
  o What is your overall assessment of the protagonist’s leadership abilities and leadership style?

3. Team presentation

The logic of this course is not only about managerial effectiveness and leadership within an organization you are working in; it is also about the ability to recognize effectiveness in other organizations. The recognition of such effectiveness can lead to finding investment opportunities, finding strategic opportunities in the marketplace, or building a nonprofit organization. Your group will choose one of these three areas and build a presentation around selling your organization to a constituency that might invest in the opportunity. In the last three sessions of the semester, your team will give a presentation on one of these topics.

A. An organizational analysis of investment opportunities: Investment opportunities are often assessed based upon concept or strategy. However, organizational effectiveness, “alignment,” and leadership are also assets that might be given a value—a company might be undervalued or overvalued based on how it is set up organizationally. Groups developing this presentation are to seek out a company that you believe is undervalued (or at least a good investment) based on the structure and alignment of the organization. Examples might include Target, Southwest, or GE. It should be a publicly-traded corporation. Your presentation should be positioned as a presentation to a group of fund managers in which you are making a case for investment in the company based on organizational principles.

B. Nonprofits and funding from foundations: Just as for-profit firms are built around a concept or strategy, nonprofit organizations are often based on a concept for how to solve a social problem. They often raise money from foundations based on this idea or concept, yet, they also often fail because of poor organizational design. For this fundraising presentation, you make choose (i) an existing nonprofit or (ii) present an idea for a new nonprofit. If you choose the first approach, you should make the case for how the nonprofit can be achieve its goals more effectively based on a reorganization of the existing organizational structure. If you choose the second approach, you may spend part of the presentation making the case for why the organization is important, but the majority of your analysis should be on organizational principles. One approach to this might be to make an argument for how the nonprofit should be reorganized to be more effective; a second approach might be to make the case for why an organization is needed to aid organizational restructuring (as in the Joel Klein case of the New York City Public Schools). In either case, you must pitch the fund-raising meeting around issues of organizational effectiveness.

C. Governmental reorganization: Governmental organizations perform many necessary functions, but they are often fraught with misalignments and perverse incentives. You are set to choose a governmental organization that you believe is dysfunctional because of its organizational structure. This could be an organization in a small-scale local government, the Athens Olympics Organizing Committee, or the Department of Homeland Security. The one requirement is that it must be an organization that is dependent on a governmental budgetary allocation; in other words, you cannot propose to reorganize the government itself. But you can propose to reorganize any office that carries out a specific set of functions within the
government. You should think of yourself as being just given the job of taking over the new governmental office (as in the cases of Joel Klein or Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki), and you must decide how to reshape this organization to make it more efficient, how to create alignment in the organization, how to bring about effective leadership within this context, etc. In this case, the audience for your “pitch” is the governmental body that allocates budgets and makes appointments.

In each of the above cases, your team should prepare a 15 minute presentation that focuses on the organizational structure, alignment, and leadership issues that will make the organization in your analysis most effective.

4. Individual participation
Students are expected to actively participate in class in the analysis of cases, and in exercises and discussions. Doing so will require that you read the assigned material and prepare the assigned case(s) or exercise before coming to class. Participation should be positively productive. I emphasize positively productive because I am far more interested in the quality of what you have to say than in the amount of talking that you do. Your goal should be to contribute to the class discussions, not simply to talk for the sake of talking. In order to do so, it will be necessary to listen to, and build upon, the comments of your classmates. Please don’t feel deterred if I pass over your hand or if I cut your comment short on occasion - it probably means that I think you have already contributed a lot and that others need the “air time” more. My goal is to foster a supportive classroom environment that emphasizes learning. We will all learn from each other. As such, I request that we treat everyone with respect. Because there is typically no single “right” answer for organizational and leadership problems, I encourage debate. I encourage you to experiment and take risks; there is certainly no harm in giving an answer that turns out to be ineffective or inappropriate for the issue under discussion (i.e., you won’t be penalized for “wrong” answers).

5. Final case analysis
The final exam for the class will be a case analysis.

Case Analysis Preparation Guide (see Appendix)
This guide provides some guidance for the preparation of both team cases. The guidance generally comes in the form of questions that you should think about while you are analyzing the case. Writing answers to these questions does not constitute an appropriate approach to the written analysis of cases. Dealing with the issues raised in the guide is necessary but not sufficient for an adequate analysis.

Most students initially find case analysis of leadership issues to be very difficult and uncomfortable. This is often due to inexperience dealing with the relative lack of structure that is characteristic of complex management issues. No correctly answered list of questions or mechanical process will automatically lead to the “right” answer. In fact, there is no “right” solution to most managerial problems, rather there are apt to be many “right” answers, and unfortunately, even more “wrong” answers. In fact, cases are not necessarily examples of bad management. They may be about any quality of leadership. Often it is more difficult to explain why a situation is working than it is to analyze the causes of obvious problems. Often a situation may be going well but contain the seeds of future problems. Part of analysis is to define the issue(s). Another part is to explain the mechanisms that cause the problem(s) or why things are working. Finally, recommendations must be developed that are appropriate for the situation and those who must implement them. Read the guide “Case Analysis Preparation Guide” (Appendix) for an initial guide to how to analyze a case.

A note on teamwork
One concern that some students have about working in teams, and consequently about team grades, is the issue of equity. If you work harder and do better work than your peers why should your grade be dependent on them? This view is generally a function of coming from educational environments that only ask for and measure individual performance. Your output for many of the assignments in this school will be a team product, such as a group case analysis. The reader of a case analysis cannot determine individual contribution
any more than a manager reading a group report. Some processes require groups and therefore should be evaluated on a group basis. Group tasks should be given group rewards. This means that you not only must make a direct contribution to the development of the written assignment, but that you also have an obligation to make your team work effectively.

An infrequent problem associated with group projects is a team member who does not do his/her share of the job. You are urged not to let problems develop to the point where they become serious. Everyone in this class is expected to carry an equal share of the team workload. I will not supervise the process any more closely than would most managers in similar circumstances. Rather, you are expected to get the work done and to manage each other. Groups often ignore problems wishing that they just disappeared. They typically don’t – they just get worse. Try to set up clear procedures regarding how the team cases will get done at the beginning of the semester (i.e., how the group should work together in very concrete and explicit terms). You are expected to solve any problems among yourselves. If you really can’t, bring it to me. However, I am extremely reluctant to intervene except in extreme circumstances, as I truly believe that making your teams work is part of the learning experience for this class.
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<th>Nov. 8</th>
<th>Introduction to the Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>Read:</td>
<td>“What Makes a Leader?”</td>
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<td>Prepare:</td>
<td>Erik Peterson (A and B) (9-494-005) (9-494-006) (dilemma)</td>
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<td>Assignment Questions:</td>
<td>1. What are the problems facing Erik Peterson?</td>
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<td>2. What are the underlying causes of these problems?</td>
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<td>3. How effective has Peterson been in taking charge of the Hanover start-up?</td>
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<td>4. What, if anything, should Peterson have done differently?</td>
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<td>5. What actions should he take now? Be specific.</td>
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<td>Prepare:</td>
<td>IBM Network Technology (9-402-012) (dilemma)</td>
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<td>Assignment Questions:</td>
<td>1. What had Chris been asked to do by John Kelly in March 1999?</td>
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<td>2. By July 2000, how has Chris done?</td>
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<td>3. Why did Kelly choose Chris for this job?</td>
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<td>4. Why is Dave Balkin so frustrated?</td>
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<td>5. What actions should Chris take in September of 2000?</td>
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<td>Franco Bernabè (9-498-034) (assessment)</td>
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<td>Presentation groups 1-3</td>
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<td>Assignment Questions:</td>
<td>1. What is your assessment of Bernabè’s actions in taking charge of ENI? How effective was he in providing leadership? Why?</td>
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<td>2. What were his key moves? Of the many steps he took, which struck you as the most important?</td>
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<td>3. What challenges remain? What should his priorities be as he moves forward?</td>
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<td>4. In many respects, the CEO’s assignment was thrust upon Bernabè in the midst of a growing crisis. What’s your feeling about the commonly quoted statement, “Leaders are born, not made?”</td>
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<td>Prepare:</td>
<td>Donna Dubinsky at Apple Computer (9-486-083) (dilemma)</td>
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<td>Assignment Questions:</td>
<td>1. What are the problems facing Donna Dubinsky at the end of the case?</td>
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<td>2. How did they evolve?</td>
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<td>3. What actions would you take at the end of the case? Why?</td>
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| Ses 4 | Nov. 29 | Workgroups |
(Re-)Read: “A Note on Analyzing Workgroups”

Prepare: The Slade Plating Department (9-496-018) (dilemma)
Written analysis due, all groups

**Assignment Questions:**
1. How would you describe the culture of the Sarto group? Be specific.
2. How has it evolved? What impact has it had on the effectiveness of the group?
3. What are the determinants of social status and influence within the plating department? The Sarto group? The Clark group? Be specific.

**Important information:** Exhibit 5 is available as an Excel worksheet on Blackboard. The 1996 starting salary in the Slade Plating Department was $8.00; Tony Sarto’s hourly wage was $12.00. The average wage for semi skilled workers in the U.S. was $12.00. Firms similar to Slade in the Michigan area, such as suppliers to the auto industry, paid an average hourly wage of $14.70. United Auto Workers working at the Big Three (General Motors, Chrysler and Ford), earned starting salaries around $13.00 an hour and earned on average $19.00 an hour. The minimum wage in 1996 was $4.25, raised to $4.75 on October 1, 1996.

### Ses 5  Dec. 6  Teams and Individuals

#### Prepare: Taran Swan at Nickelodeon Latin America (9-400-036) (dilemma)
Presentation

**Assignment Questions:**
1. Describe the culture at Nickelodeon. Be specific.
2. How did Swan go about building that culture? (Consider the interrelationships among Nickelodeon’s context, design factors, culture and outcomes.)
3. Describe Swan’s leadership style. What impact has it had on the culture?
4. What are the challenges that Swan faces at the end of the case? What actions should she take?
5. Compare and contrast the leadership styles and talents of Swan and Petersen.

#### Prepare: Rob Parson at Morgan Stanley (9-498-054) (dilemma)

**Assignment Questions:**
1. What is your assessment of Rob Parson’s performance? Should he be promoted?
2. Using the data in the case, please complete the Evaluation and Development Summary presented in Exhibit 3 of the Rob Parson (A) case.
3. If you were Paul Nasr, how would you plan to conduct the performance appraisal conversation? What would your goals be? What issues would you raise and why, and how would you raise them?
4. If you were Rob Parson, how would you conduct yourself in the performance evaluation meeting? What are your goals? Be prepared to role-play the appraisal conversation in class as either Nasr or Parson.

### Ses 6  Dec. 11  Organizational Transformation

Assignment Questions:
1. What challenges did Jager at Proctor and Gamble in the 1999?
2. Evaluate Jager’s actions in taking charge.
3. Why do you think Jager failed?
4. What approach should Lafley take to succeed where Jager failed?

Prepare: Chrysler: Iacocca’s Legacy (assessment)

Assignment Questions:
1. What are the reasons for Iacocca’s initial success at averting the crisis confronting Chrysler?
2. What caused Chrysler to slip after its initial recovery?
3. What lessons about leadership can you draw from the rise and fall of Chrysler?
4. If you were Eaton, Iacocca’s successor, what would be your strategy?

Ses 7 Jan 14, 1:45-3:45 pm Leadership in the Non-Business Context

Prepare: Gianna Angelopoulos-Daskalaki and the 2004 Athens Olympic Games (A) (2-407-050) (assessment/dilemma)

Assignment Questions:
1. What type of situation is Angelopoulos inherit in her takeover of the Athens Olympics preparation committee?
2. What does she need to consider in deciding whether she can successfully handle this turnaround?
3. What issues are special about this particular case?

Prepare: Joel Klein and the NYC Public Schools (dilemma)

Assignment Questions:
1. How does the make the business case for leadership development in the nonprofit sector?
2. What constituencies does Joel Klein face?

Ses 8 Jan 14, 4:15-6:00 pm Sustaining Excellence

Prepare: GE’s Two Decade Transformation: Jack Welch’s Leadership (9-407-065) (assessment)

Assignment Questions:
1. In what ways did Jack Welch’s leadership evolve over his 20 year tenure at GE?
2. Could Welch have obtained a similar outcome if he had followed a different sequence of change?
3. Does Jack Welch deserve to be considered one of the greatest business leaders of the 20th Century?
Appendix

Overview of Case Analysis

Department of Management and Organizations
Leonard N. Stern School of Business

Many students find case analysis to be difficult due to the relative lack of structure of most management problems. No correctly answered list of questions or mechanical process will lead to the “right” answer. In fact, there is no “right” solution to most managerial problems. When analyzing a case, remember that there are many possible approaches and solutions. The goal is not to figure out “the answer” but to sharpen your analytic, problem-solving, decision-making, and leadership skills. The following steps outline the basic approach that you should follow when analyzing a case, whether for class discussion or in preparation for a written analysis.

First, read the assigned reading material and review the relevant documents if any have been posted. The material in the reading and accompanying documents will likely play some role in your analysis of the case. Remember that case analysis in this course is cumulative. Thus material from earlier classes may be relevant and should be applied even if it means using concepts that were not discussed for several weeks.

Second, read the case and the assignment questions on the syllabus. Take notes about the important issues that the case raises and the text material that seems to apply. The questions provided should be considered a guide to issues that you must consider but you will need to go beyond merely answering the questions.

Third, analyze the case. You should be able to identify outcomes in the case and/or issues that the organization faces. These outcomes may be bad (e.g., shrinking market share, hostile employees, conflict among departments, inability to control operations), or they may be good. There may be numerous problems and issues. The goal of analysis is to explain the underlying mechanisms that are producing the outcomes or problems that you see in the situation. This process will require you to distinguish between symptoms and causal mechanisms. Consider the following example: You go to the doctor with the “problem” of a cough or a fever. It may be easy for the physician to treat the cough or fever with a number of medicines much like we could treat worker dissatisfaction by paying higher wages. However, it is important for the physician to determine the causes of the problem. If the cause of the cough is tuberculosis then only treating the cough is apt to lead to serious long-run consequences because the underlying disease process will still be at work. Clearly the cough is just a symptom of a deeper underlying problem, the disease of tuberculosis. Good analysis cleverly weaves symptoms into a causal map that gets to the underlying root of the situation. What I look for in the case analysis is the cogency of your explanation of the process leading to the symptoms. At the outset you are likely to struggle with this. It is a difficult and time-consuming process to develop clinical skills.

Remember that specific cases are assigned because they present good opportunities to practice using frameworks we will be developing in the course. Therefore, you know in every instance that some theory in the assigned chapter and possibly other theories from earlier chapters must be applicable to the case. You will likely find the frameworks and ideas we examine in the course to be helpful in supporting your analysis. You should view the theories as a way to explain the underlying causal mechanisms contributing to the outcomes in the case, and as a way to organize and justify your arguments. Avoid the tendency to throw in course terminology merely as “buzzwords.” If it does not advance your analysis, don’t use the ideas.

Recognize that some cases do not have problems as such. The organization may be doing quite well. Cases are situations, not necessarily examples of bad or even good management. Don’t make up problems when
none exist. Take the situation for what it is rather than approaching it with a point of view. Be alert for the danger that some information in some cases is coming from biased participants and therefore must be taken with a grain of salt.

A characteristic of cases is that you never have all the information that you want and there is often considerable information that is irrelevant, trivial or even obfuscating. The absence of essential information may force you to make one or more assumptions. Assumptions should always be clearly labeled and explicitly state as such, they must be necessary and they must be realistic.

Assume that I have read the case and that I am aware of all the facts. If the assignment is a written analysis (as with the group analysis or final exam), do not describe events in your written analysis. This is merely a waste of space. Rather, you should use material in the case to support your analysis or to provide examples to back up your arguments. Remember, your objective is to explain, not describe or report.

At the conclusion of each case analysis, you will need to offer recommendations or an action plan, or a recommendation for how the situation could have been better handled. The action plan part of the analysis is often where students falter the most. My sense, over the years, is that students spend most of their time analyzing the situation, but then give limited space to their plan of action. Remember that analysis is meaningless if it cannot be translated into a plan of action. This view has two implications. First, you should give as much time to developing an action plan as you do to developing your analysis. Second, the action plan should flow directly from the analysis. In other words, every issue you discuss in terms of implementing an action plan should flow directly from your analysis of the problems the organization is facing. This last point is very important: it makes no sense to analyze and diagnose a problem and then make a set of recommendations that do not relate directly to that analysis. Also keep in mind that recommendations typically have both positive and negative consequences. For example, a solution may eventually work but be very costly, difficult to implement and take a long time to have a significant impact. You should develop the recommendation that has maximum positive impact and minimum negative consequences.

Recommendations should logically follow from the analysis and they should be feasible. For example, firing the boss and replacing her/him with a better manager may be a good “theoretic” solution but it may not be feasible in a given set of circumstances. Recommendations must be effective and efficient. Killing a fly with a bomb is effective but not efficient. Keep in mind that recommendations or solutions will represent 50% of your grade. The remaining 50% will be based on your analysis.

Finally, if you are working on a written analysis, make sure that your paper is well-written, clearly organized, and has a logical flow. It usually helps to provide a brief summary statement and “roadmap” at the beginning of the analysis to orient and guide the reader. Also make sure that any recommendations you provide follow directly from your analysis of the problem, and that your overall conclusions are consistent with your analysis.

PARTICIPATING IN CASE DISCUSSIONS

1) Keep in mind that there is usually more than one right answer. A case is a problem-solving situation, and managerial effectiveness often depends upon seeing different solutions.
2) Offer your ideas, substantiating them with facts from the case and course material.
3) Adopt an open-minded stance, entertain new ideas from others and consider how your recommendations might change in light of these new insights.
4) Listen to your classmates and build on what they have to say. Resist the impulse to focus so strongly on what you want to say next that you lose track of where the discussion has moved.