

How to Approach a Case

1. ***Read the case through***
 - Do not make value judgments or "take sides"
 - Keep an eye open for "mood," *e.g.*, fear, stress, calm, anger, excitement, etc. Try to identify these as they may help with identifying solutions later.
2. ***Re-read the case***
 - Underline all "important" information
 - Judge whether "Could this possibly be important to the case?"
3. ***Develop an organizational chart***
 - Who reports to whom
 - Area of responsibility
 - Formal communication lines
4. ***State problem or problems***
5. ***Consider the objectives of the institution, department, or individual***
6. ***Identify solutions***
 - Be innovative and creative
 - Brainstorm
 - Include everyone (within reason)
7. ***Determine possible consequences and evaluate options***
8. ***Prioritize solutions***
 - Especially the first three or four
 - Provides backup solutions in case the number one solution is turned down or does not work
 - Saves going back and analyzing everything from scratch

What students can expect from the group facilitator?

- There are many or no "correct" answers to the case studies and the facilitator's role is to help your group find a well-reasoned approach to the issue.
- The facilitator will encourage discussion and will keep the group focused both on the case problem and on the process being followed.
- The facilitator may ask questions of the group or of individuals to encourage all members of the group to participate in the discussion.
- At the end of the discussion, the facilitator may share some relevant experiences in his/her career.
- The facilitator will ensure that the discussion moves along efficiently to finish in the time allotted.

Student Cases

- You will be assigned to a small group for case study discussions and be informed of a time slot so you will know when you will present your case
- You will each present your case in your discussion group which will act as a sounding board and sort of consulting group for you.
- **All discussions are to be kept strictly confidential, as the cases may involve sensitive matters and deep feelings.**
- Your facilitator will work with your group to ensure that all cases have been distributed, to determine an order for presentation, and to set expectations for the approximate amount of time allocated for each case.
- You will be asked to start by describing the facts of the case and to respond to questions from the group. Then the group will move into brainstorming and will propose possible options and solutions for consideration.