

MGMT 353 - Organizational Behavior

Group Case Analysis

Instructions for Leading the Class Discussion

Instructions

1. Lead discussion from the front of the classroom
2. Your main purpose: get the class to make comments. The 20 points associated with your group presentation will be based mainly on your ability to facilitate a discussion and direct it toward the points you believe are important to analyzing the case.
 - I don't want to hear just what your group has for the answers. I will find that out when I read your paper. For the presentation, you need to get the other members of the class to share what they think.
 - In order to do #2 above, you will need to spend some time thinking of questions that will bring out a dialogue among the class members. In other words, you will need to ask more questions than simply those listed at the end of the case (although those questions are valid ones for you to ask the class). Avoid questions that can be answered by "yes" or "no."
 - Be specific in your questioning. Even if a question at the end of a case is fairly broad in nature (e.g., Which influence tactics are illustrated in the case), you should focus the class on specific elements of a concept when you ask the question (e.g., regarding influence tactics: Was retribution used? Was reciprocity used? Was reason used? Which was most effective? Why?)
 - Avoid asking two questions in one (e.g., Which influence tactic was most effective and why?). It is better to ask the "why" portion as a follow-up question, otherwise you might find that your classmates only focus on the first part of the question.
3. Be prepared to exchange dialogue with classmates. For instance, if asked a question you need to respond as best you can. Also, have good "follow-up" questions if the responses you receive are too short or lack depth. I have you in front so they will direct questions to you rather than me.
 - Try to keep the conversation flowing. This can be done by something as simple as acknowledging each comment from a student.
 - Don't simply let someone answer a question and then ask for other responses. The conversation then becomes a one-way dialogue, with the burden being laid too much upon the class. In most cases, the class won't keep the flow of the conversation going by themselves.
 - Your classmates need you to "validate" what they are saying by agreeing with their comment, making add-on comments, etc. This style of leading a class discussion requires that you are comfortable with the material in the case and can actually "interact" with the class, rather than simply reciting a list of questions and expecting this alone to create an atmosphere of dialogue.
4. Organizing the class' comments on the board by some method of categorization may be helpful, but not necessarily essential in helping you direct the discussion.
 - One thing you don't want to do is "overuse" the board. This can be done by writing too much information on the board (the class will generally not care about all of the details you write on the board) or by simply hesitating to think about how you will reword what a student has said (when this is done several times during a discussion, the class tends to become impatient as they wait for the group to figure out what they are going to write on the board). In either case, these actions tend to "kill" the conversation.

5. Call on specific groups to answer questions.

- It is best to ask a question to the entire class. That way, you give everyone a chance to respond. However, if responses are few or non-existent, then call on specific groups.
- It is also good to call on specific groups if a few people are answering most of the questions
- Do not call on specific people. This often results in only one person responding to the question.
- Likewise, don't ask follow-up questions of the group that answered the original question. This will result in one group answering a series of questions and the rest of the class will simply watch.
- Avoid the temptation to vent your frustration on the class for not responding. It is better to prod the class into a discussion by calling on specific people or groups than to coerce them into a discussion by telling them how poorly they are doing in answering your questions.