



Refresh Teaching Impulse: Case based teaching: The D-MTEC approach

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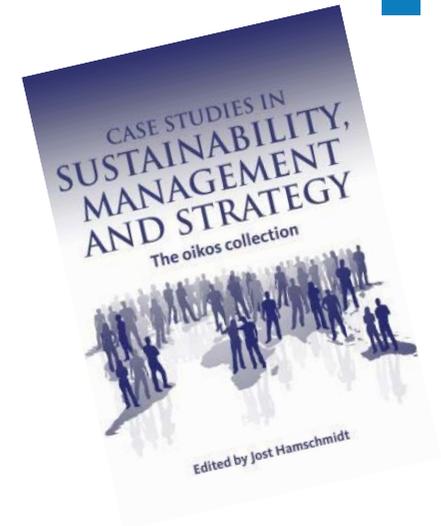


Case based teaching: The D-MTEC approach

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- Characteristics of effective teaching cases
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- Resources

Introduction: My background

- PhD in Management (2002)
- HSG Lecturer: Integration seminars for start-ups: e.g. GreenTEG AG, UrbanFarmers AG, LemonAid, South Pole Carbon Asset Management AG
- Visiting Scholar Harvard Business School 2007-08: Teaching Case on South Pole Carbon Asset Management (2009)
- Founding member of HUB Zurich Association (2011)
- Managing Director, Academic Director, oikos foundation ('02-'13): oikos Global Case Writing Competition
- Coordinator of Studies at ETH Zurich, Department Management, Technology and Economics (since 2013)
- Main Interests: Teaching Innovation, Sustainability & Strategy



oikos

HUB zürich

ETH zürich

Introduction: The D-MTEC Vision

Our vision is...

... to understand, shape and relate the interactions between technology, organizations and society and their impact on the sustainable use of natural and human resources.



Role of case based teaching: Enabling critical thinking

- **Sensitizing** ETH students for differences between theory and practice
- **Creating learning processes on different levels** — students are forced to struggle with exactly the kinds of decisions and dilemmas managers confront every day.
- **Case studies help reflecting the reality**: Student values and goals are systematically challenged. Uncertainty is key: students are asked what they think, how they would act, and what challenges they feel are important.
- **Leadership and Teamwork**: The use of a case study should create a learning environment in which students perform by exercising the skills of leadership and teamwork in the face of real problems. Facts, figures and theories play an important role; but contexts, emotions and value judgments have a large influence, too.

Characteristics of effective teaching cases (1)

- **Real, Relevant, Ambiguous:** The case should tackle a decision situation with impact on the future of an organization and implications for corporate strategy
- **An engaging story.** It should have an interesting plot that relates to the experiences of the target audience. It needs a hero, a dilemma and a solution. The solution may not exist yet; it will be what the students need to supply once the case is discussed.
- **Clear teaching goals and a teaching note.** It should be explicit which audience is being addressed with the case. Undergraduates have a different background compared to MSc students. What does the case do for the course and the student? Which theories are employed? How should the students be involved (e.g. group works, student preparation, class interaction).

Characteristics of effective teaching cases (2)

- **Interactive.** Cases can be choreographed with role-plays and/or voting. Students need to be systematically challenged to argue. Excellent cases provide suggestions for frameworks and literature for faculty and students.
- **Up to date.** To appear real the case should have the trappings of a current challenge. If a student has just seen the problem mentioned in the media, so much the better.
- **Relevance.** Cases should be chosen that involve situations that the students know or are likely to face.
- **Debate-provoking.** Cases should provide food for thought and should leave room for different interpretations. They should fuel the debate on an issue.

Examples of D-MTEC teaching formats

- 1) **Teaching cases:** Used in a number of courses to illustrate specific industries, technologies, business challenges, tools and concepts.
- 2) **Real Case Challenges:** [Entrepreneurial Leadership Seminar](#), [Sustainability Start-up Seminar](#), [Design Thinking Seminar](#)
- 3) **Simulations:** used in Negotiation and Conflict Management and Corporate Sustainability courses (MTEC core courses)
- 4) **Personal cases:** Seminar Strategic Career Development (Understanding and aligning personal skills, values and career objectives, including invited speakers from practice)
- 5) **MTEC Career Talks** (Lunchtalks with HR Professionals) Provide opportunities to learn about corporate cultures and expectations from future employers
- 6) **Executive-in-Residence Program:** Joint courses provided by top management representatives. 2015: M. Neuhaus (Chairman, PwC Switzerland) and C. Grieder, CEO, Buhler Group.

Examples: Entrepreneurial Leadership Seminar

- 1) **Exclusive Setting:** Selected Students interact with Top Management of Partner company (e.g. Bühler, Georg Fischer, Swisscom)
- 2) **Strong Coaching and Reflection:** 5 Professors involved, peer to peer coaching, real cases
- 3) **Feedback received:**

«We got a lot of feedback from the students and it was fantastic what they presented to us.»

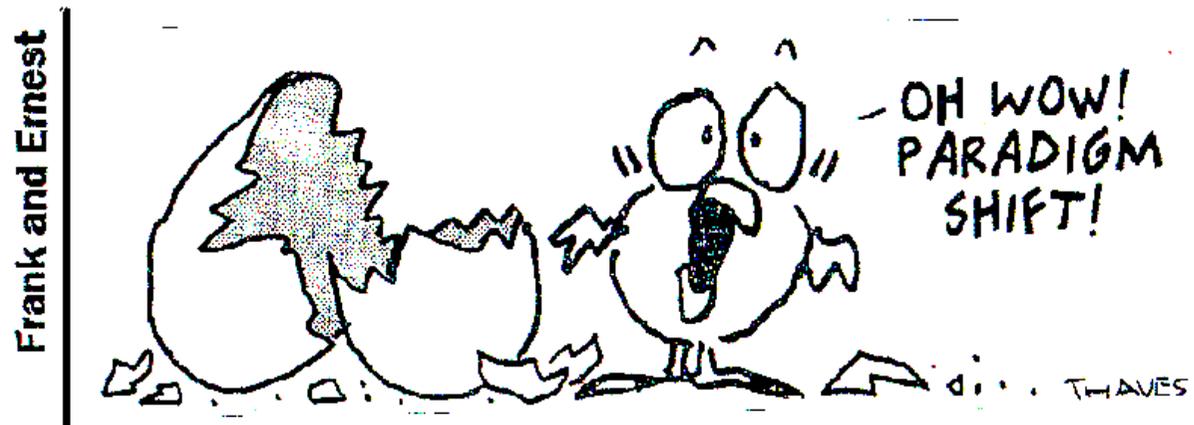
Roger Wüthrich-Hasenböhler,
Head of SME, Swisscom AG

«The intensity is extremely high. You learn a lot about group dynamics, new topics and working as a consultant. Never before had an ETH course such a depth and so much social intensity. I was astonished to see how much impact we could create!»

Raffael Bühler, MTEC student, ELS Swisscom

Final words of wisdom....

- “wisdom can’t be told”
- Teach cases on issues and topics you are passionate about...
- Experience casewriting and teach your own cases...
- Bring the case protagonist into class or create other direct links to the portrayed phenomena (e.g. site visit)
- Identify patterns – cases should provide new insights, useful generalizations and clear take-aways



Resources



Linked-In group: Higher Education Teaching and Learning
<https://www.linkedin.com/grp/home?gid=2774663>



The worlds largest teaching case collection
<http://www.thecasecentre.org>



CasePlace.org – offers cases, syllabies and other material on training critical thinking in management education www.caseplace.org

Thinking of writing your own teaching case? PennState offers a short comprehensive Introduction into case writing.

<http://www.schreyer institute.psu.edu/pdf/casewritingguide.pdf>