



# **CASE PREPARATION**



# Case Prep

- Case Preparation should be split into two parts: Short Cycle and Long Cycle
  - In the Short cycle the reader should first skim the case and write down their general ideas of what the case is about
  - In the Long Cycle you must think about and analyze the case



# Case Preparation Sheet – Short Cycle

- All that needs to be added to this section is a general overview of the problem.
- Determine the players
- Determine the overall issue
- Determine whether the issue is time sensitive



# Case Preparation Sheet – Long Cycle

- All that needs to be added to this section is a general overview of the problem. Of course this can be changed after further analysis
- Your first step is define the issues in the case. You can do this by identifying the basic vs. immediate issues.
  - Basic issues are long-term issues that the company will have to be grappling with for a long time. Basic issues also tend to be common e.g. deal with eroding market share
  - Immediate issues are issues that must be solved within a specific time frame. They are also usually very specific to the firm, e.g. deciding how to escort Frank out of the office after he has just been fired.



# Case Preparation Sheet – Long Cycle

- The second step is to analyse the case data itself.
  - Identify the Cause and effect mentioned or implied in the case. Specifically those connected to issues identified in the first step.
  - Identify the constraints and opportunities that exist in the case. Again you are not just repeating what is in the case but providing insight.
- The third step is to use the analysis to generate alternatives to address the issues you identified.
  - Try to come up with creative ideas
  - Focus on the constraints and opportunities identified in the 2<sup>nd</sup> step. They may provide a good suggestions for solutions



# Case Preparation Sheet – Long Cycle

- The fourth step is to create decision criteria for your alternatives.
  - The criteria should be connected to strategy and issues identified in the first step
- The fifth step is to assess the alternatives using the decision criteria.
  - Use assumptions that are grounded in the case data
  - Remember to think about the short term and long term effects.
  - When predicting outcomes think of providing a best and worst case scenario



# Case Preparation Sheet – Long Cycle

- The sixth step is to choose an alternative.
  - This should be the easiest part of the analysis
  - All of the other steps were taken to create a “path” to this answer
  - Make sure your answer is consistent with the rest of the analysis
- The seventh step is to develop an implementation plan.
  - It should provide the details (the who what when where why and how) of the alternative
  - The specifics should be appropriate for the actions, ie. Telling me the projected 5-year sales increase by two decimal points but not informing me of the first three steps of your immediate plan is a problem



# Case Preparation - Assumptions

- You will have to make assumptions throughout the case analysis
- Context assumptions do not need to be stated. For example it can be assumed that a small company will not have a lot of capital.
- You can assume that things are working as normal as long as the case does not state it. However normal does not mean fine. If the case states that a general policy is upsetting the marketing staff then it should not be assumed that everyone else is fine with it.
- Always explain your reasoning behind “if-then” assumptions. It is fine to assume a cause and effect but explain why the assumption is reasonable
- Don’t fall into the “perfect person” assumption. This is where the analyst assumes that they can acquire the perfect employees (or sometimes tool) that will fix all problems.