

Where Do Great Cases Come From?

Great cases come from colorful, inspiring characters in interesting companies facing difficult decisions, decisions of the sort that their peers are also likely to face at some point. In other words, people like you! Consider whether there's a decision you've recently faced that would provide the basis for a great case, especially if the decision point occurred a few years back so there's the opportunity for participants who study your case to know what happened afterwards. If the setting in which your dilemma occurred is one that fits a topic your instructor wants to teach, he or she may well be eager to develop a case on your company.

If that happens, you'll find that being the subject of a well-researched case will open your eyes to things you had never thought of when you were in the throes of making your decision. And you'll find that attending a case session in which a difficult decision you and your company faced is discussed by a group of intelligent and experienced peers – or even a group of relatively inexperienced undergraduate or graduate students – is both a humbling and richly satisfying experience.

Best of all, if you have a case written on you and your company, you'll be “giving back” to the education of tomorrow's business leaders. I hope you'll be as generous with them as the case protagonists you will study have been with you!

John Mullins, Associate Professor of Management Practice, London Business School, prepared this note as a guide for case-method learners. It is not intended to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of classroom teaching and learning.