**How to Write a Case Analysis**

By

*Charles Warner*

Read a case at your normal speed without stopping to take notes. Read the assignment at the end of the case (if there is an assignment), and then carefully read the entire case again, taking notes as you read. Your task is to summarize the facts in the case, identify problems in the case, formulate recommendations to solve the problems you have identified, and to anticipate what the implications of your recommendations might be. Write your analysis with the following four headings:

* 1. **Summary** (of the facts presented).
	2. **Analysis**(of the problems).
	3. **Recommendations**(for solutions to the problems).
	4. **Implications** (your recommendations are likely to have on the procedures, culture, and norms of the organization).

Follow the above format even if there are Assignment questions at the end of the case. **Important:**Weave the answers to the Assignment questions into your “Recommendations” section. Do not answer them specifically in your analysis, but weave them into your “Recommendations” section.

**Citations**

As you write your case analysis, you must include appropriate citations to the assigned reading. The citations in your analysis should be in the following formats, as recommended by the APA:

1. For citations to **books and articles** **in printed editions** on the Required Reading list, on the Recommended Reading list, or to assigned articles in the syllabus: (Warner, 2009. p. 126).
	1. Do not include chapter numbers, just the author’s last name, date of publication, and the page number where the concept you are referring to appears. Use the exact punctuation and capitalization in the above example.
	2. Do *not* include quotations in your case analysis; briefly summarize the concept of the quote in the material you are citing.
2. For citations to **books and articles** on the Required Reading list, on the Recommended Reading list, or to assigned articles in the syllabus if you are reading on a **Kindle or other e-readers** that do not show page numbers, **use the location number**: (Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1997.  Location #25540).
3. For citations to **books, articles, or blog posts** on the Required Reading list, on the Recommended Reading list, or to assigned articles in the syllabus that you **access on the web** and that are archived and not liable to be changed or updated: ([Author last name], [Date published]. [Chapter, article, blog post, or podcast title in quotes]. The citation would look like this: (Warner, 2019. “Chapter 1: The Media Ecology.” Retrieved from http://charleswarner.us/fifth/])
	1. If you are citing a book, article, blog post, or any other material you access on the web that is liable to change often, such as a Wikipedia entry, then include the date of the month you accessed a website. The citation would look like this: (*Wikipedia.* “FCC fairness doctrine.” Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FCC_fairness_doctrine> September 2019.)
4. For citations to a presentation or lecture in class by the instructor or guests use: (Warner, C. Class lecture, October 20, 2019).
5. Do *not* make any citations to the case you are analyzing.

The main reason I ask for citations is so that I know you have read the assigned material, understand it and can apply the lessons in the material to situations and problems in the case. Therefore, I want to see citations to a *variety* of assigned material.

**References**

If you cite material that is***not***on the on the Required Reading list, is *not* on the Recommended Reading list or is *not* assigned in the syllabus, include a separate REFERENCES section at the end of your case analysis, and use the following format as recommended by the APA:

1. For **print editions of books**: Brandenburger, A. & Nalebuff, B. (1997). *Co-opitition*. Currency Doubleday.
	1. A citation in your case analysis to this reference book would look like this: (Brandenburg & Nalebuff, 1997. p. 303.)
2. For **print editions of articles** in your REFERENCES section: McGinn, D. (2017). ”The Science of the Pep Talk.” *Harvard Business Review.* July-August.
	1. A citation for this article would look like this: (McGinn, 2017. p. 15.)
3. For **material you access on the web**: Zenger, J. & Folkmam, J. “What Great Listeners Actually Do.” *Harvard Business Review.* Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>.
	1. A citation for this reference would look like this: (Zenger & Folkman, 2017. “What Great Listeners Actually Do.” Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>.

Do***not***include a REFERENCES section at the end of the case if you just make citations to material in the Required Reading list, in the Recommended Reading list, or that is assigned in the syllabus.

I give extra grade consideration for citations to books, articles, or material that are *not* on the Required Reading list. In other words, I give you extra credit for reading books or articles that are on the Recommended Reading list or that you discover yourself that relate to the problems and issues in a case.

**Quotations**Do not use quotations from the material you cite, but write a concise summary of the concept you are citing instead. For example, rather than using the quotation from Chapter 3 of *Media Selling, Fifth Edition:* “People have a strong tendency to bow to the social pressure and conformity of their peer group, perhaps a left-over tendency from their teenage years, leading to the excuse of “everyone does it.” Summarize the concept by writing: people often bow to social pressure. I take points off of a case analysis with each quotation that is used and not summarized concisely.

**Summary Section**Begin your write-up with a *concise* synthesis of the facts in the case, under the heading “Summary.” Stick to *one or two sentences* and do not put any discussion of problems or recommendations for solutions in this Summary section.

**Analysis Section**
The most important section of your case analysis comes next, under the heading “Analysis.” This section should be the longest, most thorough section of your write-up. You cannot solve problems unless you can first identify them. Recognizing problems and then understanding the nature of the problems is the beginning of all solutions, which generally fall into place relatively easily once problems are recognized and understood. There are often several viable solutions to problems in a case, but you cannot implement any of them if you cannot identify the problems. It is important that there are citations to the assigned reading in the “Analysis” section. *Your grade will depend, to a large degree, on how many relevant, logical citations you include in your case analyses.* Also, remember, no quotations.

**Recommendations Section**
Next, write your recommendations on to how to solve the problems in a section titled “Recommendations.” Put the solutions in order of priority. It is vitally important that you *include citations to the assigned reading* in the “Recommendations” section, too. If there are questions asked in a case Assignment section, weave the answers to these questions into your “Recommendations” section. Do *not* answer the Assignment questions individually. Also, remember, no quotations.

**Implications Section**
Finally, in your “Implications” section you should elaborate what implications your recommendations might have on the operation and culture of the organization in the short and long term. Also, this section should include a brief discussion of what broader policy implications your recommendations might have, not only on your organization but also on the business community in general. In other words, if your recommendations are implemented, what changes will the organization and the business community in general have to make in the way they do things now and in the future? Include appropriate, relevant citations in this section, too. Also, remember, no quotations.