



Harvard Business School

“Participative Learning: Teaching by the Case Method”

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Three Levels of Learning

Level One (Knowledge)

- Transmission of information, concepts, frameworks, tools, techniques

Level Two (Skills)

- Development of capabilities with respect to analysis, critical thinking/ judgment, decision-making, execution

Level Three (Professional Identity, Leadership)

- Development of values, self-awareness, leadership capabilities, capacity for on-going learning

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The Case Method: In-Class Process

Students

- Role: individual learners and contributors to collective learning
- Active listeners and participants
- Willing to take risks



The Case Method: In-Class Process

Instructor

- Role: guide and facilitator
- Combines student development and assessment
- Respectful, yet sets high standards
- Encourages student-to-student exchanges vs. pure Socratic dialogue



The Case Method: Preparation

Instructor

- Careful preparation of class content and process, drawing on teaching note (and teaching group if available)
- Teaching plan includes learning objectives, discussion segments (“pastures”), question plan, board plan, opening, closing, student call list
- A case example: “Tiger-Tread” (see handouts)



Resources

Education for Judgment: The Artistry of Discussion Leadership,
Christensen, Garvin and Sweet, HBS Press, 1991.

*Researchers Hooked on Teaching: Noted Scholars Discuss the
Synergies of Teaching and Research*, Andre and Frost, Sage, 1997

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