

[* Adapted from M. B. Handspicker notes on the basis of Harv. Bus. School's M. Thomas Kennedy lectures, copyright 1975 Case-Study Institute.]

The central dynamic of case study is "interchange among students....a participatory method of learning," everyone sharing "responsibility...to share their insights and points of view....prepare to learn and to help others learn."

1. Immerse yourself in the case; get to know all the details.
2. Analyze the case after reading it.
 - A. Write out the cast of characters.
 - B. Develop a chronology of events in the case.
 - C. Identify the basic issues (especially those things--acts, values, attitudes--about which decisions need to be made).
 - D. Try to see all the positions reasonable persons might take.
 - E. Then try to see how to raise issues with these various positions.
3. Mull it over--i.e., just ruminate about it casually, let things flow through your mind, free-associate.
4. Think of any theoretical material which would be helpful in clarifying or resolving the issues in the case.
5. Remember that there is usually no one right answer.

Participation

1. Push your ideas, and be willing to give reasons for them.
2. Listen to others, and evaluate their positions.
3. Keep an open mind, be willing to change it upon new insights or evidence.
4. Enjoy yourself.

Aftermath

1. Jot down any new ideas which occur to you in the course of discussion.
2. Make note of any information or theoretical knowledge for which you feel a need as a result of the discussion; find out where to get it.
3. Evaluate your own participation; what could you do to improve it next time?