



Learning Spaces for Sustainable and Responsible Decision-Making

Case Studies on Sustainable and Responsible Decision-Making

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Introduction

Background

Case studies are powerful tools in education and professional development. They provide real-world scenarios that challenge learners to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations. Solving a case study effectively requires a structured approach that combines critical thinking, analytical skills, and creative problem-solving.

The process of tackling a case study involves several key steps: from carefully examining the situation and identifying core issues, to analyzing the context using relevant tools and theories, and finally developing and justifying practical solutions. This methodical approach helps address the specific case at hand and builds valuable skills that learners can apply in their daily practice.

You should use the approaches and tools taught in the Wise Up Training Programme to solve the following case studies: A useful starting point is to apply the six learning perspectives of the WiseUp Cube framework to the following case studies.

Instructions

1. Read the case carefully.
2. Adapt the company information according to your interest by filling in the boxes.
3. Analyze the company's background and situation: Identify key issues and stakeholders.
4. Analyze the dilemma (key decision points, possible outcomes, discussion points) using the six learning perspectives reflected by the WiseUp Cube framework; apply the approaches and tools delivered in the Wise Up Training Programme.
5. Brainstorm and generate several potential decisions/solutions and discuss them.
6. Weigh your alternatives by purposefully applying the WiseUp Cube perspectives.
7. List the potential benefits and drawbacks of each alternative; consider short-term and long-term implications.
8. Based on your considerations, build an argument for your decision for action.
9. Reflect on your solution against the background of the possible criteria for solving the case.



Case study 1 - Navigating the Aftermath of the Pandemic or the fragile Balancing of Stability and continuous Adaptation to new Realities

Company

The company, Alfons Dupont & daughters, has been a successful player in the [] industry for over [] years. Founded by the patriarch of the family, it has currently [] employees and has built a solid reputation for [] and [].

Background

The company has weathered the storm of the COVID-19 pandemic but continues to feel its lingering effects. Founded by the family patriarch, the company has a strong legacy of quality and reliability. As Emma, the eldest daughter of the family, prepares to take the helm, she faces a unique set of challenges stemming from the aftermath of the pandemic.

Situation

With the pandemic receding, Alfons Dupont & daughters is slowly recovering from the economic downturn. However, the company remains exposed to several lingering consequences, including shifts in consumer behavior, disruptions in supply chains, and heightened competition in the market. Additionally, the pandemic has accelerated trends towards sustainability and digitalization, further reshaping the business landscape.

Dilemma

Emma finds herself at a critical juncture, tasked with leading Alfons Dupont & daughters through a period of recovery and adaptation. She must navigate the company's post-pandemic reality, balancing the need for immediate measures to stabilize the business with the imperative to position Alfons Dupont & daughters for long-term success in a rapidly evolving environment.



Key Decision Points

- Recovery Strategies: Emma must devise strategies to accelerate Alfons Dupont & daughters' recovery from the pandemic's impact, including rebuilding supply chains, restoring customer confidence, and optimizing production processes to meet changing market demands.
- Adaptation to New Realities: The pandemic has reshaped consumer preferences and industry dynamics, necessitating adjustments in Alfons Dupont & daughters' product offerings, distribution channels, and marketing strategies.
- Sustainability and Digitalization: Emma must address the growing demand for sustainability and embrace digital transformation initiatives to enhance operational efficiency, improve customer engagement, and stay ahead of the competition.
- Talent Management: With remote work becoming more prevalent and the labor market evolving, Emma must rethink talent management practices, including recruitment, retention, and upskilling initiatives, to attract and retain top talent in a post-pandemic world.

Possible Outcomes

- Short-Term Focus: Emma opts to prioritize short-term recovery measures, such as cost-cutting and streamlining operations, to stabilize Alfons Dupont & Daughters in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic. While this approach may provide temporary relief, it risks overlooking long-term growth opportunities and innovation.
- Strategic Adaptation: Recognizing the need to adapt to the new post-pandemic realities, Emma takes proactive steps to reposition Alfons Dupont & Daughters for long-term success. By investing in sustainability, digitalization, and talent development, she aims to strengthen the company's resilience and competitiveness in the evolving market landscape.

Discussion Points

- How can Emma strike a balance between short-term recovery efforts and long-term strategic planning in the aftermath of the pandemic?
- What are the key challenges and opportunities presented by the post-pandemic business environment, and how should Alfons and Dupont & Daughters respond to them?
- How can Emma leverage sustainability and digitalization initiatives to drive innovation and growth within the company?
- What role does leadership agility play in guiding organizations through periods of transition and uncertainty, and how can Emma cultivate agility within Alfons Dupont & Daughters?
- How should Alfons Dupont & Daughters adapt its approach to talent management in light of the changing dynamics of the post-pandemic labor market?



Possible criteria for solving the case

- **Alignment with Long-Term Strategic Goals:** Assess the proposed solutions based on their alignment with Alfons Dupont & Daughters' long-term strategic goals and values. Consider whether they position the company for sustainable growth, competitive advantage, and resilience in the post-pandemic landscape.
- **Integration of Sustainability and Ethical Practices:** Evaluate the extent to which the proposed solutions incorporate sustainability and ethical practices into Alfons Dupont & Daughters' operations. Consider initiatives related to environmental stewardship, social responsibility, ethical sourcing, and corporate governance.
- **Adaptation to Post-Pandemic Realities:** Assess the proposed solutions based on their ability to adapt to the new realities of the post-pandemic business environment. Consider how they address shifts in consumer behavior, industry trends, technological advancements, and regulatory changes.
- **Risk Management and Contingency Planning:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their effectiveness in mitigating risks and addressing potential challenges. Consider factors such as supply chain disruptions, market volatility, competitive threats, and unforeseen internal and external factors.
- **Employee Engagement and Well-being:** Assess the proposed solutions based on their impact on employee engagement, satisfaction, and well-being. Consider initiatives related to remote work arrangements, professional development opportunities, and support for mental health and work-life balance.



Case study 2 - Navigating Resistance to Leadership Transition

Company

The company, Alfons Dupont & daughters, has been a successful player in the [] industry for over [] years. Founded by the patriarch of the family, it has currently [] employees and has built a solid reputation for [] and [].

Background

Emma, the eldest daughter of the family that owns Alfons Dupont & Daughters, is preparing to take over the leadership of the company. However, as she begins to transition into her new role, she discovers that the older workforce is resistant to accepting her authority as the new boss.

Situation

Alfons Dupont & Daughters has a long-standing tradition of hierarchical leadership, with respect and authority typically reserved for seniority and experience. Emma, despite being well-prepared and possessing the necessary skills to lead the company, faces skepticism and pushback from older employees who are accustomed to the leadership of her father, the outgoing patriarch.

Dilemma

Emma finds herself caught between the need to assert her authority as the new leader of Alfons Dupont & Daughters and the desire to maintain harmony and respect within the workforce. She must navigate the delicate balance of earning the trust and acceptance of the older workforce while also establishing herself as a capable and respected leader capable of driving the company forward.



Key Decision Points

- Approach to Leadership: Emma must decide how to assert her authority and establish her leadership style while also respecting the experience and contributions of the older workforce. Should she adopt a more assertive approach to assert her authority, or should she focus on building consensus and collaboration?
- Communication Strategy: Emma must develop a communication strategy to address the concerns and skepticism of the older workforce. How can she effectively communicate her vision for the company while also listening to the perspectives and insights of older employees?
- Team Building and Collaboration: Emma must foster a sense of unity and collaboration among employees of all generations. How can she encourage intergenerational collaboration and create opportunities for older employees to mentor and support younger colleagues?
- Training and Development: Emma may consider implementing training and development programs to help older employees adapt to her leadership style and embrace change. How can she provide support and resources to help older employees enhance their skills and adjust to new ways of working?

Possible Outcomes

- Resistance and Conflict: Despite her efforts, Emma faces continued resistance and conflict from the older workforce, leading to tensions and disruptions within the company.
- Bridge Building and Collaboration: Emma successfully bridges the generational gap and earns the respect and acceptance of the older workforce through open communication, empathy, and a collaborative leadership approach.

Discussion Points

- How can Emma effectively address the concerns and skepticism of the older workforce while still asserting her authority as the new leader?
- What strategies can Emma employ to foster collaboration and unity among employees of all generations?
- How might generational differences in work habits, communication styles, and attitudes towards authority impact Emma's leadership approach?
- What role can mentorship, coaching, and cross-generational learning play in bridging the gap between Emma and the older workforce?
- How can Emma leverage the strengths and experience of the older workforce while also encouraging innovation and adaptation to change within the company?



Possible criteria for solving the case

- **Employee Engagement and Trust:** Evaluate the proposed solutions based on their effectiveness in fostering employee engagement and building trust among the older workforce. Consider initiatives aimed at open communication, transparency, and mutual respect.
- **Leadership Effectiveness:** Assess the proposed solutions for their ability to establish Emma as a respected and effective leader within Alfons Dupont & Daughters. Consider her ability to assert authority while also demonstrating empathy, adaptability, and strategic vision.
- **Communication Strategy:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their effectiveness in addressing the concerns and skepticism of the older workforce through clear, empathetic, and inclusive communication. Consider initiatives such as feedback mechanisms, and one-on-one discussions.
- **Conflict Resolution:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their ability to effectively manage conflicts and tensions that may arise between Emma and the older workforce. Consider strategies for constructive conflict resolution, mediation, and building consensus.
- **Training and Development:** Assess the proposed solutions for their possible effectiveness in providing training and development opportunities to help older employees adapt to Emma's leadership style and embrace change. Consider initiatives such as workshops, coaching programs, and skill-building seminars.
- **Retention and Talent Management:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their impact on employee retention and talent management within Alfons Dupont & Daughters. Consider initiatives aimed at recognizing and leveraging the experience and expertise of the older workforce while also creating opportunities for career growth and advancement for younger employees.



Case study 3 - Balancing Responsibility and Viability: Navigating Sustainability Amidst Economic Challenges

Company

The company, Alfons Dupont & daughters, has been a successful player in the [] industry for over [] years. Founded by the patriarch of the family, it has currently [] employees and has built a solid reputation for [] and [].

Background

As Emma prepares to assume leadership of Alfons Dupont & Daughters, she is determined to transform the company into a more responsibly acting organization, prioritizing sustainability, ethical practices, and social responsibility. However, she faces significant challenges, including decreasing sales, increasing costs, and a shortage of skilled staff.

Situation

Alfons Dupont & Daughters is facing mounting pressure to address environmental and social concerns while maintaining financial viability in a competitive market. Emma recognizes the importance of embracing sustainability initiatives but must navigate the complexities of implementing them amidst economic challenges and resource constraints.

Dilemma

Emma finds herself torn between her desire to lead Alfons Dupont & Daughters towards a more responsible and sustainable future and the immediate need to address pressing economic concerns. She must balance the company's commitment to sustainability with its financial stability and competitiveness in the market.



Key Decision Points

- Sustainability Initiatives: Emma must decide which sustainability initiatives to prioritize and how aggressively to pursue them. Should she focus on reducing carbon emissions, implementing eco-friendly manufacturing processes, sourcing ethical suppliers, or investing in renewable energy?
- Cost Management: Emma must develop strategies to manage increasing costs and declining sales while still allocating resources to sustainability initiatives. How can she identify cost-saving opportunities, streamline operations, and optimize resource allocation without compromising sustainability goals?
- Talent Acquisition and Retention: Emma must address the shortage of skilled staff needed to drive both sustainability initiatives and core business operations. How can she attract and retain skilled employees with expertise in sustainability, environmental management, and responsible business practices?
- Stakeholder Engagement: Emma must engage with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the broader community, to gain buy-in and support for Alfons Dupont & Daughters' sustainability efforts. How can she effectively communicate the company's commitment to sustainability and address concerns about its financial performance?

Possible Outcomes

- Sustainability Sacrifice: Emma prioritizes short-term financial stability over sustainability initiatives, scaling back or postponing environmental and social responsibility efforts to focus on immediate economic concerns.
- Strategic Sustainability: Emma adopts a strategic approach to sustainability, identifying cost-effective initiatives that align with Alfons Dupont & Daughters' core values and long-term objectives. By integrating sustainability into the company's business strategy, she aims to drive innovation, improve efficiency, and enhance competitiveness in the market.

Discussion Points

- How can Emma effectively balance the competing priorities of sustainability and financial viability within Alfons Dupont & Daughters?
- What strategies can Emma employ to manage costs and allocate resources to sustainability initiatives in a way that maximizes their impact?
- How can Alfons Dupont & Daughters address the shortage of skilled staff needed to drive sustainability efforts while also ensuring the company's core business functions are adequately staffed?
- What role can stakeholder engagement play in supporting Alfons Dupont & Daughters' sustainability agenda and overcoming resistance to change?
- How might sustainability initiatives contribute to Alfons Dupont & Daughters' long-term success and resilience in the face of economic challenges and market uncertainty?



Possible criteria for solving the case

- **Sustainability Impact:** Evaluate the proposed solutions based on their potential impact on Alfons Dupont & Daughters' sustainability goals and objectives. Consider initiatives aimed at reducing environmental footprint, promoting ethical practices, and fostering social responsibility.
- **Financial Viability:** Assess the proposed solutions for their ability to address the company's economic challenges and maintain financial stability. Consider strategies for managing costs, improving efficiency, and generating revenue while still investing in sustainability initiatives.
- **Resource Allocation:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their effectiveness in allocating resources, including financial, human, and technological resources, to both sustainability efforts and core business operations. Consider how resources are prioritized and optimized to achieve maximum impact.
- **Talent Management:** Assess the proposed solutions for their ability to address the shortage of skilled staff needed to drive sustainability initiatives and support overall business objectives. Consider strategies for attracting, retaining, and developing talent with expertise in sustainability and responsible business practices.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their effectiveness in engaging with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and the broader community, to gain support for sustainability efforts and address concerns about financial performance.
- **Innovation and Adaptation:** Assess the proposed solutions for their potential to drive innovation and adaptation within Alfons Dupont & Daughters, both in terms of sustainability initiatives and core business processes. Consider how sustainability can be integrated into the company's business strategy to drive long-term growth and competitiveness.
- **Risk Management:** Evaluate the proposed solutions for their ability to identify and mitigate risks associated with sustainability initiatives, including regulatory compliance, reputation management, and supply chain disruptions. Consider strategies for proactively managing risks while still pursuing responsible business practices.
- **Measurable Outcomes:** Assess the proposed solutions for their ability to deliver measurable outcomes and demonstrate progress towards sustainability goals. Consider key performance indicators (KPIs) related to environmental impact, social responsibility, and financial performance.
- **Long-Term Sustainability:** Assess the proposed solutions for their potential to drive long-term sustainability and resilience within Alfons Dupont & Daughters. Consider how sustainability efforts can contribute to the company's ability to adapt to changing market conditions, mitigate risks, and create value for all relevant stakeholders over time.



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