

Case Analysis Brief

Use these guidelines for individual and group analyses of cases.

1. Facts
 - a. List the pertinent facts
 - b. Focus on the what, where, when, and why of the case
2. Issues
 - a. List the primary problem and issue
 - b. List any secondary or related problems and issues
 - c. Identify the sources or causes of the problems/issues
3. Actors
 - a. Names, titles, position, etc. of pertinent players
 - b. Identify any important traits of the actors that could shed light on the decision-making process
4. Analysis
 - a. Identify the resources and formal/legal constraints and issues (staff & budgetary resources, rules & regulations, job responsibilities, etc.
 - b. Identify the ethical constraints and issues
 - c. Identify the political constraints and issues
 - d. Attempt to identify any "unknowns"
5. Group Analysis
 - a. In small groups, discuss Step 4 (consider having group members play the roles of different actors in the case and/or different community or interest groups impacted by the issue and possible courses of action)
 - b. If conflict arises in the group, consider suitable approaches to conflict resolution, cooperation, and coordination
6. Courses of Action
 - a. Consider precedents or models/paradigms to guide the decision
 - b. List three possible courses of action and develop criteria to rank them
7. Decision
 - a. Select and recommend a course of action
 - b. Provide a short overview of the decision and the rationale or justification for it

[Adapted from Robert P. Watson, ed., *Public Administration: Cases in Managerial Role-Playing* (NY: Longman, 2002).