

# Chapter 7

## Combining Case Teaching and Case Writing Creatively

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### ABSTRACT

*In this chapter, the authors propose that not only do case teaching and case writing belong together, they can also support and inform each other in many ways. The authors highlight the fact that case teaching and case writing are not two separate and independent tasks, and therefore they should be combined continually in new and creative ways. Although it is obvious that it does not make a lot of sense to write cases without there being a teaching need, the authors argue that educators can start teaching the case even before writing it, and by doing so improve their writing. Many examples are given on how case teaching can be used for case writing, and vice versa.*

### INTRODUCTION

Case teaching and case writing are usually treated as two seemingly independent domains. This is equally true for case teaching and writing as a subject of academic research as well as for the practice of teaching and writing case studies. This separation seems logical, as teaching and writing are fairly different activities, not least due to the fact that some academics focus solely on teaching case studies (without ever writing them), whereas others become active in case writing only for scholarly purposes, without the intention of using the cases in class.

Contrary to this, the present book chapter proposes that not only do case teaching and case writing belong together, they can also support and inform each other in many ways. Although it might be more intuitive that writing one's own cases would support their teaching efforts, the authors argue that case teaching can support case writing in many ways. In this chapter, the authors highlight the fact that case teaching and case writing are not two separate and independent tasks, and therefore should be combined

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continually in new and creative ways. Although it is obvious that it does not make a lot of sense to write cases without there being a teaching need, the authors argue that educators can start teaching the case even before writing it, and by doing so improve their writing.

The rest of this book chapter unfolds in the following sequence:

- The tradition of treating case teaching and case writing separately
- Why case teaching and case writing should be grouped together
- Using case teaching for case writing
- Using case writing for case teaching
- Conclusion

## **THE TRADITION OF TREATING CASE TEACHING AND WRITING SEPARATELY**

Teaching with case studies and writing case studies have traditionally been treated as distinct and separate activities. Accordingly, the dominant way of thinking about the production and use of case studies is characterized by a rather disjunctive approach to these two domains, both in theory and practice. This can be observed and documented on the basis of at least two dimensions.

### **Workshops/Training**

Traditionally, the art, craft, and science of case teaching and case writing have been developed and advanced through two separate forms of training. All of the leading institutions that offer courses on case studies as an educational tool in management education treat the two topics separately.

#### **Harvard Business School**

Harvard Business School has frequently been referred to as the pioneer of the case method being used as an educational instrument for management education (The Case Centre, n.d.). The output of case studies from Harvard Business Publishing has been consistently very high. Despite this productivity in case writing, Harvard Business Publishing only offers case teaching seminars (divided into two parts); recently, they have also begun offering an online course focused on teaching with case studies in online courses (“Teaching with Cases Online,” Harvard Business Publishing, n.d.). Harvard Business Publishing did not advertise any case writing workshops in 2016.

#### **The Case Centre**

The Case Centre was founded in 1973 – initially under the name “The Case Clearing House of Great Britain and Ireland.” From 1991 until 2013 it was known as “ecch European Case Clearing House” – a (European) counterbalance to the dominance of US institutions concerning business-related case studies. Following some early workshop experiments in the 1970s, The Case Centre has been offering case method training sessions continuously since 1992. These are offered both as open programs to faculty members

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