

Submission Template for the 2017 OBTC Teaching Conference for Management Educators

1) Title, Abstract & Keywords

Creating Relevant Cases using the Noun-Verb Framework

Perceived relevance is a motivational contributor to student's classroom engagement. Instructors using outdated examples or cases may diminish their student's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral participation. However, the prospect of using new cases and class material each semester can be daunting. In this session, educators will learn a technique to efficiently develop cases using short in-class popular press articles and/or other media sources. Attendees will be given an opportunity to develop their own assignment using a recent article and the framework. Examples from strategic management will be used but the technique can be applied to many management topics and courses.

Keywords: Case Method, Andragogy, Strategic Management

2) Teaching Implications:

“Knowles (1980, 1984) made the following assumptions about adult learning: (a) adults need to know why they need to learn something, (2) adults need to learn experientially, (3) adults approach learning as problem solving, (4) adults learn best when the topic is of immediate value, and (5) as an adult's concept of self becomes more

oriented toward being an independent person, she is more self-directed in her learning.”
(Conklin, 2013, p. 501)

Many management educators are aware of the concept of Andragogy. There are, however, few tools to help educators develop examples and cases to enhance the learning outcomes of adults. The specific aim of this session is to offer the Noun-Verb framework as a method of minimizing the effort necessary to develop relevant cases for students using popular press articles and/or pop media.

Borrowing from educational author, Mark Prensky (2010), learning outcomes in formal classroom settings can be divided into two categories: nouns and verbs. Verbs are the knowledge, skills, and abilities that instructors desire students to master from having been in their course (e.g., analyzing, debating, critiquing, synthesizing, writing, creating). Nouns are the subject matter, instructional methods, and materials through which students develop these skills and abilities. Situating Prensky’s insights within the example of our case, an instructor may want students to improve their ability to analyze an industry using Porter’s (1980) 5 Forces (verb). To do so, the instructor may design a case situated in the context of Uber and the modern taxi industry (noun). Prensky argues that while the verbs students master are slow to change over time, the nouns in which these verbs are contextualized in the classroom setting should be amended frequently to remain relevant to students.

Constructing verb-questions from the course content enables instructors to insert new nouns depending on the material used in the class. In addition to material specific questions (e.g., do you agree with the author?), the use of this framework allows an instructor to take an interesting article, video, etc. and present the class with as many

content-driven questions as necessary to achieve the objective of that particular class/topic. The structure provided by the framework leverages the Instructor's knowledge of the course content (verb) and the student's knowledge of the subject of the material (noun). The example used in my strategic management course will be attached at the end of the document.

3) Session Description and Plan:

1. The session will begin by introducing the importance of developing relevant course material (andragogy). (5 Minutes)
2. I will then distribute an article for participants to read and a handout of my Noun-Verb questions for several chapters of Strategic Management. (2-5 minutes)
3. After reading the article, each participant will create one or two interesting article-specific questions. They will also incorporate the noun to the verbs offered in the handouts by applying at least 3 questions. (2-5 minutes)
4. Then in small groups participants will discuss the 5 questions they developed and will then be given time to answer some of the questions. This portion of the session is to increase the confidence of the participants by demonstrating the ease of developing relevant questions and being able to discuss the material at length. Moreover, participants will be able to experience the

method as both a student and teacher to determine if they think this technique is right for them or their students. (10 minutes)

5. The session will conclude with a group discussion and questions (5-10 minutes)

4) Application to Conference theme:

“Developing effective classroom experiences for our students in the changing academic environment.”

Aligning with the Strategic Management notion of equifinality (Priem & Butler, 2001), employs open cases derived from recent and on-going management-related situations with no finite outcome; thereby allowing students to co-construct and debate possible, but not necessarily *correct*, solutions to complex issues. There are benefits to closed cases such as learning from the mistakes of others; however, management decisions are rarely made with certainty or with a definitive answer. Moreover, as Shugan (2006) points out, using closed cases gives students a “false confidence” in their abilities and applied knowledge. Indeed, questions such as, “Should McDonald’s divest from Chipotle?” were difficult decisions in 2006 but would now seem clear to students—hindsight truly seems to be 20/20 in such cases. From a closed case perspective, we can learn from the mistakes of McDonald’s: how they evaluated their options and whether Chipotle’s success was a consequence of gaining autonomy from McDonald’s. It is unreasonable to suggest, however, that students would be able to objectively examine the case with only the facts presented—given the biases present in their knowledge of Chipotle as it *is* rather than as it *were*.

Moreover, today's students have access to more information than any other generation. As such, the overreliance on closed cases can be problematic as students are able to search for answers rather than using their own critical thinking and problem solving. This session highlights the importance of not only the changing academic environment which sees a new group of students (i.e., millennials) with new technology (i.e., mobile devices); but also the changing currents of organizations.

5) Unique Contribution to OBTC:

A version of this paper was presented at another conference. The presentation at that particular conference was well attended but focused on the theoretical development of the proposed case method. In a sense, the presentation made a case for using our case method. The noun-verb framework was just one component of the overall model.

Attendees at the previous presentation were unable to actively create their own assignment and I ran out of time before we could begin a robust demonstration of the method. As a result, this particular proposal is narrowly focused on demonstrating how to develop the cases using the noun-verb framework. Therefore, the aim of the OBTC proposal and session will be to focus on how to comfortably create and discuss real-time events without a heavy time investment.

This paper is not currently under review but we will be submitting versions to JME and AMLE in the future.

Supplemental Materials:

Evidence of Effectiveness

- does a great job and engaging the students and making it more conversational and example based than standing in front of the class reading the PowerPoints and hoping we understand. He provides the class with daily worksheets to work on during class which requires you to understand the chapter as we are discussing it rather than the students cramming before that test.
- Professor not only explained the material thoroughly but brought in real-time situations to break down the course material in different scenarios.
- Professor is very receptive of his students and their learning needs. I really enjoyed this class, because of the topics discussed, the companies analyzed and the push for us to think outside the box.
- Professor is probably one of the best teachers I've ever had. I think it largely has to do with the fact that he took a course that was required for all graduates (and therefore a serious drag for most of us) and made it interesting and actually fun. I loved going to his lectures because it was almost entirely a discussion, and at the end of the day I still got something out of it.
- I really enjoyed Professor , he has a unique style of teaching that made learning the material easy and relatable.
- Challenging course, very stimulating and real world applicable. Professor was a great professor, he truly goes above and beyond for his students!
- Best professor I've had at (redacted university)! He knows how to relate to students and situations in order to understand the material. Love his class!!

- Professor 's course was very refreshing. His modern views on education make learning such a great experience and the tone he sets for the classroom is nothing shy of inviting and friendly.

Noun and Verb Framework for Strategic Management

Book: Hitt, M., Ireland, R. D., & Hoskisson, R. (2012). *Strategic management cases: competitiveness and globalization*. Cengage Learning.

Subject	Verb	Noun
Strategic Management	How should _____ respond to strategic actions from _____?	Time Warner Cable, Comcast, Amazon Prime, Netflix
	What are the business-level strategies of _____?	Chipotle, Burger King, McDonalds, Wendy's
	Conduct a SWOT analysis on _____.	Uber, Lyft, Yellow Cab, Curb, Sidecar

Chapter 1: Strategic Management and Strategic Competitiveness

What is _____'s strategy?

How will this strategy lead to a competitive advantage?

Describe the competitive landscape facing _____. Is it similar to the two factors explained in the book or is something else emerging?

Would you consider this a “disruptive technology?” Why?

Did _____ appear to use the I/O Model of Above-Average Return, the Resource-Based Model of Above Average returns, or both? Which do you recommend? Are they Mutually Exclusive? How would the strategy change if the firm used the other determinant of strategy (i.e., I/O or RBV)?

What are _____'s resources, capabilities, and core competences? What is the relationship between them?

What are _____'s vision and missions statements? How might that influence their strategy?

Who are the major capital market, product market, and organizational stakeholders for _____?

Chapter 2: The External Environment: Opportunities, Threats, Industry Competition, and Competitor Analysis

Describe the general (demographic, economic, political/legal, sociocultural, technological, global, and physical environment) environment facing _____.

Conduct a Porter's Five Forces for _____'s industry. Is this an attractive industry?

Identify the opportunities and threats facing _____. Use the environmental analyses to help identify the opportunities and threats presented by the general, industry, and competitive environments.

What organizations are in the same strategic group as _____?

You will be gathering some competitor intelligence. Who are the complementors to _____? What are (rival of _____ firm)'s future objectives, current strategy, assumptions, and capabilities? What should be our response to these?

Chapter 3: The Internal Organization: Resources, Capabilities, Core Competencies, and Competitive Advantage

How does _____'s products/service create value for consumers?

What are the tangible resources (financial, organizational, physical, and technological) of _____? What are the intangible (human resources, innovation resources, and reputational resources)?

What are some of the capabilities that _____ possesses? What are their core competencies? Are they valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and nonsubstitutable? Explain the relationship between capabilities, core competencies, and competitive advantage.

Describe how _____ creates value for the customer through the value chain (distribution, supply-chain management, follow-up service, operations, and marketing). How do the support functions (finance, human resources, and management information systems) support the work being done to produce, sell, distribute, and service _____'s product? Which value chain activities and support functions creates the most value for _____'s customers?

Are any of the value chain activities and support functions being outsourced? Do you think there are some that aren't but could be outsourced? Which ones and why?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of ____?

Chapter 4: Business-Level Strategy

How does ____ effectively manage their relationship with customers (reach, richness, affiliation)?

Who are the customers? What do they need? How can ____ provide products/services to satisfy customer needs?

What type of business level strategy does ____ use? How does the Porter's Five Forces model influence the ways in which ____ implement their strategy?

Describe how ____ creates value through the value-chain and support functions. How might this be different if they were implementing another type of business level strategy?

How could ____ be successful using an integrated cost leadership/differentiation strategy? How do you overcome the dangers of being "stuck in the middle" or do you think this is inevitable when you attempt to pursue both strategies simultaneously?

Chapter 5: Competitive Rivalry and Competitive Dynamics

Who are ____'s competitors? How would you describe their rivalry? What are some recent competitive behaviors taken by ____ and their rival?

Is ____ and in multimarket competition with their competitors? Why is it important to accurately identify the relevant competitors and the relevant competitive space?

Conduct a competitor analysis on at least 3 of the competitors you have listed (figure 5.3 Market commonality and resource similarity). What does the degree of market commonality and resource similarity suggest about the competition between the two firms? Which firms should we be most concerned about (i.e., which quadrant)?

How does market commonality and resource similarity influence the drivers of competitive behavior (specifically, awareness and motivation)? What role does ability play? Which companies would ____ be aware of and highly motivated to react to?

Is this a strategic action/response or a tactical action/response? Explain.

Is ____ a first mover, second mover, or late mover? How might this influence the likelihood and type of attack by rival firms?

How does ____'s size and quality influence the likelihood of attack from competitors?

Is _____ more or less likely to respond (or see a response) to this action? (Hint, is this a tactical or strategic action)

How might _____'s reputation within the competitive space influence how their rivals approach taking actions and responses to them?

What role does _____'s dependence on the _____ market influence their likelihood to respond to competitive actions taken by their rivals?

Describe the market cycle (slow, fast, standard) for _____.

Chapter 6: Corporate-Level Strategy

How does corporate level strategy differ from business level strategy?

What level of diversification is _____ (single, dominant, related constrained, related link, unrelated)? What are some of the benefits and dangers of this diversification strategy?

Is this a value-creating, value-neutral, or value-reducing diversification strategy? Why?

To what degree is _____ attempting to achieve economies of scope? Are they sharing activities or transferring core competencies into businesses?

How might _____'s diversification strategy increase market share? Which companies are they in multipoint competition with? Do you think this is why they made their decision to diversify?

How might _____ vertically integrate?

What are the benefits of unrelated diversification? Why is it difficult to successfully implement an unrelated diversification strategy?

Describe how _____'s business units create synergy.

Why is _____ engaging in value-reducing diversification?

Chapter 7 Mergers and Acquisition Strategies

Is this a merger, acquisition, or takeover? Why might that matter?

Is this a horizontal or vertical acquisition? Is it a related acquisition?

What organization should _____ acquire if given the opportunity? Why?

What are the reasons for this acquisition (see figure 7.1)?

What might be some problems with this acquisition (see figure 7.1)?

What are some of the attributes of a successful acquisition? Do you think this acquisition has the potential to be successful?

Why might a company restructure? Do you think this is a good strategy for _____? Do you think they chose the right type (downsize, downscope, leverage buyout) and the right business unit?

Do you think _____ paid a premium for the target firm?

Chapter 8: International Strategy What were the incentives for _____ to use an international strategy (figure 8.2)? What are the basic benefits (figure 8.2)?

Use Porter's model of Determinants of National Advantage (figure 8.3) to analyze _____ (country). What are some opportunities in this country? Do you think this is the reason _____ entered the country or do you think it was a value-neutral strategy?

Is _____ implementing a global, transnational, or multidomestic international corporate-level strategy? Do you agree with their strategy? What are the pros and cons and what would you suggest be an alternative for them?

Is _____ in danger of the liability of foreignness?

What type of international entry mode is _____ using? Do you think this is the best mode of entry for them? How might local laws and culture influence _____'s decision to use this mode of entry?

What are some of the risks (political and economic) facing _____ in _____ (country)?

What are some of the outcomes _____ hopes to gain by expanding internationally?

Chapter 9: Cooperative Strategy

Why does _____ want to form a cooperative strategy with _____?

Describe the market type (slow-cycle, fast-cycle, standard-cycle) facing _____. Based on the market type, what are the reasons _____ is using a strategic alliance (figure 9.1)?

Is this a complementary strategic alliance? If so, is this a vertical or horizontal complementary strategic alliance? How do they hope to achieve competitive advantage through this strategic alliance (figure 9.3)?

Is this a competition response strategy, uncertainty-reducing strategy, or competition-reducing strategy? Do you think it will work?

What type of corporate-level cooperative strategy is this (diversifying alliances, synergistic alliance, franchising)? What are the benefits?

How did this network cooperative strategy lead to ____'s ability to access their partner's network?

2/3's of cooperative strategies have serious problems in their first two years and 50 percent fail. Do you think this cooperative strategy will work? Why? How might they manage competitive risks in cooperative strategies (see figure 9.5)?

Chapter 10: Corporate Governance

Why is corporate governance important?

Describe the agency relationship. Did ____ use managerial opportunism when making that decision?

What type of agency costs does ____ have?

How did ____ use their power as a large block shareholders to modify the strategy and behavior of ____?

How did _____, as institutional owners, discipline _____ for his/her actions as CEO?

How is _____'s addition to the board of directors going to shape the effectiveness of the board? Is ____ an insider, related outsider, or an outsider? Why might this matter?

Was ____ successful in implementing an executive compensation? Will interest of the managers and owners ever align when it comes to salaries, bonuses, and stock options?

Describe the hostile takeover defense strategy used by _____ (table 10.2).

Chapter 11: Organizational Structure and Controls

Draw ____'s organizational chart. What can you learn about ____ through their organizational chart?

What type of organizational controls (strategic and financial) are _____ using? Are they meeting expectations? What are some of the major goals (look at annual report)?

Would you consider ____'s structure simple, functional, or multidivisional? Has this changed over time as they've grown?

Describe how specialization, centralization, and formalization are used by _____ to match their functional structure to their business-level strategy.

What type of Multidivisional Structure (cooperative, strategic business unit, competitive) is ____ using to implement their (related constrained, related linked, or unrelated diversification strategies)? What are some of the structural characteristics of their diversification strategy (table 11.1)?

What type of international structure (worldwide geographic, worldwide product divisional, hybrid) is ____ implementing? Do you think this is working and is going to continue to work? Why?

Chapter 12: Strategic Leadership

Is ____ an effective strategic leader? How did they bring about strategic change?

Would you consider ____ a transformational leader?

What is the role of the top management team at _____?

Does ____ have a heterogeneous top management team? What are some of the benefits of a heterogeneous top management team?

What is managerial discretion? Do you think ____ has a lot of managerial discretion as the CEO of _____?

Do you consider ____ a powerful CEO?

Did ____ use the internal or external managerial labor market to find the successor of their CEO? What are the pros and cons of looking internally or externally for executives (figure 12.3)?

What is the strategic direction of _____ as described by ____ (CEO)? Do you think the CEO is committed to the status quo?

How is ____ exploiting and maintaining their core competencies?

How is ____ developing human capital and social capital? What type of training programs do they have?

What type of culture does ____ have? How does the CEO influence the culture of the organization? Does this organization have an entrepreneurial mind-set?

What is one tool to determine if a firm is achieving their performance using strategic and financial controls?

Chapter 13: Strategic Entrepreneurship

Why is corporate entrepreneurship important for _____?

What are the 3 types of innovative activities? Which are _____ engaged in?

Does _____ (CEO) have an entrepreneurial mindset? What evidence is there?

Has _____ been successful with international entrepreneurship?

Does _____ use incremental or radical innovation? How would the value chain facilitate or hinder this innovation?

Does _____ use autonomous strategic behavior or induced strategic behavior for internal corporate venturing? Which do you think is most effective? Are they using the correct type given their industry?

What are some of the ways _____ is implementing their internal innovations (figure 13.2)?