

**Management and Organizational Behavior Teaching Society (MOBTS)
48th Annual Conference (Virtual)
Tradition Meets Technology: Finding Ways Forward**

Title: Metropolitan Mining Company: A Situation Analysis Case Study

Abstract: (100-word maximum)

Fairy tales can be a great low stakes way to teach business students strategic analysis skills. In this session, the story of The Metropolitan Mining Company (based on *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*) is used to teach strategic analysis skills. This fairy tale is a classic! Using either Grimms' (1971) or Disney (2001) as a foundation the story seems to work with a variety of teaching modalities, with diverse students, and does not require library research, yet forces students to think outside the box. Learners analyze Snow White's management style, competitive advantage, and current conditions in business terms. The premise, executive leadership is well-liked, yet plagued by problems.

Three Keywords: situational analysis, SWOT, fairy tale

Session Type: Case Study

Resource Needs: Zoom (or similar) with screen sharing and chat functions

Method: What you did in developing this case study (1 paragraph minimum)

I was interested in using a case based learning in-class assignment that could be scaffolded each week of the semester in an Introduction Human Resource Management course. Leveraging a fictional story that many students already knew, I created weekly discussion materials that applied the course content.

Findings: What you learned in developing this case study (1 paragraph minimum)

The first thing that I learned was that not all students were familiar with the story of Snow White. I was also surprised at the enthusiasm and engagement among students in applying the class content to the case study.

Classroom Execution: How you utilized this in the classroom, what expectations you have in terms of discussion and learning outcomes (1 paragraph minimum)

This is the first assignment in a 15-week series. It is used as the weekly in-class assignment and done in small groups then discussed with the entire class.

Session Discussion and Objectives: What objectives do you have in presenting, discussing, and/or performing this case study in an MOBTS session? (1 paragraph minimum)

- Attendees will be able to evaluate a fictional organizational context, then discuss, and identify the organization's mission and vision.
- Attendees will be able to synthesize thinking and correctly categorize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats when given a fictional case study.
- Working in small groups, attendees will be able to orally communicate and discuss findings concisely to other participants.

In which learning environment do you utilize this study (physical and/or virtual)? (1-2 sentences)

I have only used this case in face to face classes, but it could easily be adapted to on-line assignments or discussions.

Will you be conducting this case study with your attendees in this session? (1-2 sentences)

Yes, I will conduct the case study with attendees in this session.

References (as required)

Disney, W., Hand, D., Caselotti, A., Stockwell, H., La, V. L., Olsen, M., Sears, T., & Buena Vista Home Entertainment. (2001). *Snow White and the seven dwarfs*. Burbank, Calif: Walt Disney Enterprises.

Grimm, J., Grimm, W., Jarrell, R., Burkert, N. E., & Tehon, A. (1972). *Snow-White and the seven dwarfs: a tale*. Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

STUDENT CASE STUDY DETAILS

The Metropolitan Management Mining Company (MMMC) has recently appointed a new chief executive. She has quickly built a positive reputation and is well-liked and respected by staff, the board, and shareholders. She has already reengineered the premises and increased efficiencies to become the most productive branch in the company. The strong corporate culture is noticed regionally and competitors actively recruit her, yet she likes the pace, people, and culture of the rural mining company and prefers to stay. A local competitor (The Queen) is adamant about destroying her reputation and the business situation is going from bad to worse.

The existing conflict seriously impacts the CEOs productivity and ability to manage mining operations. She loves her job! She has spent a lot of time reorganizing and increasing sales, developing self-managed teams, improving morale, and doubling profits. Her management practices have had a positive impact on reducing employee turnover, improving employee engagement, and the applicant pool for vacancies is unbelievable for this part of the forest (this is the “Bentonville” of the mining industry) and she routinely attracts top performers and high potential candidates. The cost and challenge of staffing and succession planning is quickly meeting its critical mass.

The increasing tension is a serious business issue, but Snow White has been presented with an opportunity to create a merger/acquisition with the Prince. What should she do?

Assignment Questions:

1. What is the mission of the MMMC?
2. What is the vision of the MMMC?
3. Complete a SWOT.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

TEACHING NOTES

This fairy tale is a classic! The story itself usually transcends generational and cultural gaps, it does not require library research, and it forces students to think outside the box, challenging them to analyze Snow White's management style, competitive advantage, and current conditions in business terms. The premise, Snow White is well-liked, yet plagued by problems.

As the case unfolds, Snow White becomes the fairest in the land (market leader) but then begins to have problems. She is forced to change markets (and occupation) and becomes the manager for a mining company. She again builds her reputation and becomes well-liked and respected by staff, the board, and shareholder. She quickly reengineers the premises and increases efficiency becoming the most productive branch in the company. The strong corporate culture is noticed regionally and competitors actively recruit her, yet she likes the pace and culture of the mining company and prefers to stay with the seven dwarfs. The Queen is adamant about destroying her reputation and the situation begins to deteriorate. She eventually finds an opportunity for a merger/acquisition. What should Snow White do?

POSSIBLE ASSIGNMENT ANSWERS

MISSION:

To marry a prince

VISION:

To live happily ever after

SITUATION ANALYSIS:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Beauty Delegates well Nice Many friends Excellent reputation Strong management skills Appreciates diversity Environmentalist Well-dressed but limited wardrobe Talented (singing) Happy Lucky Adaptable	Sleeps on the job Gullible Shallow (chooses the prince when she could have had any of the dwarfs) Second hand smoke Absentee management style Beauty Threat of dwarfs unionizing Poor intuition Poor advisors—bad forecasting Workplace diversity Lack of technology

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Cosmetic surgery Prince/power/access to new markets Recruiting Monopoly on mining Befriend the queen Distribution (the Prince's horse) The sword</p>	<p>The mirror The queen Jealousy Time—aging Technology—apple and mirror Crime in the forest (security/espionage) Changes in strip mining laws Cultural view of beauty Forest (animals unpredictable weather) Diamond pricing Competitors (Fiona, Jasmine, Belle, Cinderella, Aurora, Rapunzel, etc.)</p>