MARITIME CASE STUDY

GUIDELINES
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ABOUT THE GUIDELINES

These guidelines for using case studies as training material for the development of soft skills are aimed at addressing the needs of trainers who are engaged in the maritime sector. These guidelines are designed to:

- build an understanding of the concepts of soft skills in maritime education.
- offer a methodology for trainers to use case studies for developing soft skills in maritime education.
- serve as a handbook for sample training sessions, materials, exercises, and case studies to be used during such training. This handbook comprises steps and activities for facilitating training on soft skills.

The guidelines for the development of soft skills educational material are a practical set of recommendations to course designers for developing, conducting, and evaluating a course focusing on soft skills using case studies.
1. UNDERSTANDING SOFT SKILLS AND THEIR APPLICATION IN MARITIME EDUCATION

Soft skills, as defined by the dictionary, are the personal qualities that allow one to interact with others effectively and amicably. According to alternative definitions, soft skills are a collection of personal qualities, routines, attitudes, and social graces that make someone a good employee or organisation member who is compatible with others.

Individual and organizational performance is heavily influenced by abilities, strengths, and motivation. Soft skills and the capacity to realize an organization’s strategy and vision are the features that distinguish exceptional workers. High-performing organizations are increasingly recognizing that it is not simply what individuals do, but also how they execute their jobs, that makes the difference in attaining goals. It is critical to have processes and methods in place for defining, measuring, sustaining, and growing the abilities that contribute to a high-performance culture, which can be seen in people’s actions and behaviours.

Skills may be difficult to identify and measure, so it is necessary to have a common vocabulary and knowledge of the sorts of behaviours anticipated to enable effective performance in a variety of task types. Whether or if someone demonstrates a certain skill is determined by their ability (do they know how to react in that manner?) and motivation (do they want to perform in that manner?), as well as the chance to do so (when or in what settings they can exhibit that behaviour).

Technical skills (hard skills) are the professionals’ ability to perform a task safely, efficiently, and effectively using qualifications, knowledge and experience. Hard skills include vocational abilities and subject matter knowledge, such as accounting, typing, and operating machinery. They are quantifiable and have universal applications. Hard skills are distinct teachable capabilities required for performing a specific professional task.

Soft skills are the professional’s ability to successfully interact with other people, systems and equipment, procedures, and their environment. Some of the most important soft skills are:

- Leadership and managerial skills (ability to lead and understand leadership roles)
- Situation awareness (perception of the elements in a given environment, comprehension of what they mean and how they relate to one another)
Innovative SOft SkilLs to Maritime Education and Training - iSOL-MET

- Decision-making (making choices by determining an option, collecting data, and evaluating alternate solutions)
- Teamwork (the ability to work in a team and cooperate with individuals coming from various social, educational, and cultural backgrounds as well as being able to achieve the same goals)
- Communication and influencing (the ability to express thoughts and arguments clearly)
- Management of conflicts (the capacity to work through differences and conflicts collectively by utilising effective communication skills, such as active listening and confident speaking)
- Critical thinking and problem solving (ability to analyse, evaluate and implement knowledge according to the given context)

These abilities can be subdivided further. Communication skills, for example, will comprise verbal, written, and nonverbal communication, as well as presenting abilities. Facilitation, motivation, and bargaining are examples of influence abilities. To mention a few, personal talents include emotional intelligence, stress management, self-confidence, resilience, assertiveness, friendliness, and enthusiasm. The value of soft skills has expanded in recent years across the world. It is critical for businesses to understand not just the technical components of a task, but also how this understanding will translate into production. Behaviour, attitude, communication skills, and so on all play an essential part not only in job marketability but also in the relevance of such talents in professional advancement. No one works in solitude aboard a ship in the marine industry. In a specific employment scenario, all crew members are linked to one another. In this context, if a crew member has an outstanding understanding of her or his topic but does not have a solid relationship with the full team and is also incapable of guiding others to complete a project, the work will be compromised, resulting in discontent among all those involved.

The incorporation of soft skills needs to be acknowledged by professionals working in the maritime sector. This will ultimately facilitate a better onboard working environment, leading to improved productivity.
2. THE CASE STUDY METHOD IN TRAINING

The case study is a teaching strategy that involves presenting trainees with descriptive scenarios that encourage them to make decisions. This method is a collaborative teaching technique that research confirms is effective for the deep learning needed for students to be able to remember and apply concepts once they have finished the training process.

Thus, the objective of using the case approach in training is to encourage trainees to apply what they have learned and come up with new ways to manage a situation or find a solution to a problem. The accent lies more on the technique the student uses rather than on the solution. As a teaching tool, the case study approach can be used to promote decision-making abilities, improve collaboration, foster better communication and interpersonal skills, as well as boost the critical thinking abilities of students.

Teaching soft skills through case studies demands special teaching skills and methodologies.

The task of the case-study instructor is to structure the case with questions that compel students to absorb the case, in the sense that they must seek the best available answer under the same decision-making constraints as the actual event. Students take an important degree of responsibility for course material and their learning process. As they proceed through their collaborative deliberations, they not only discover facts and principles relative to the assigned specimen, but they also begin to reflect on and discover facts and principles relative to the investigative process itself. As they analyse the case, they seek a collective answer to the question, “What is the case’s fundamental importance and significance?” In the meantime, they are occupied with inquiries such as, “What are the characteristics of a sound analysis?” and “What represents an appropriate argumentation?” Case discussion complements topic sequencing, lecture allocation, and course principles to create a viable case course. The instructor must build into the course opportunities for conducting a post-assessment of case effectiveness so that real-time modifications to the case list and topic sequencing can maximise the benefits derived from the active discussion.

The following guidelines are going to provide the general framework of soft skills case study design including indicatively:
2.1 The scope

The objective of using the case study method is to increase student interest and engagement, have them practise implementation by making decisions as well as getting feedback on them, and refine their awareness of a particular topic's concepts and practises.

“How can I be more effective?”, “What do I want students to learn from the training course?” - these are questions that every trainer asks himself. The basic techniques that a trainer uses are the theory and skill sessions, the discussion, and the lecture. The trainer must, first of all, ensure that he gains adequate mastery over these basic training skills. Once the trainer can use these techniques with confidence and skill, he can move on to use some advanced techniques. One of these advanced techniques is the Case Study method.

These techniques can provide the following research-based benefits (Shaw, 2010):

- They provide concrete examples of abstract concepts and facilitate the development through the practice of analytical skills, procedural experience, and decision-making skills through the application of course concepts in real-life situations. This can result in deep learning and the appreciation of differing perspectives.

- They can result in changed perspectives, increased empathy for others, greater insights into challenges faced by others, and increased civic engagement.

- They tend to increase student motivation and interest, as evidenced by increased rates of attendance, completion of assigned readings, and time spent on coursework outside of class time.

- Studies show greater/longer retention of learned materials.

- The result is often better teacher/student relations and a more relaxed environment in which the natural exchange of ideas can take place. Students come to see the instructor in a more positive light.

- They often result in a better understanding of the complexity of situations. They provide a good forum for a large volume of orderly written analysis and discussion.

There are benefits for teachers as well, such as keeping things fresh and interesting in courses they teach repeatedly; providing good feedback on what students are getting and not getting; and helping in standing and promotion in institutions that value teaching and learning.
Specifically, in the maritime field and related to soft skills, the purpose of the Case study is to assist training institutions in the maritime field and their teaching staff in organizing and introducing a new type of training courses focused on soft skills, or in improving, updating, or supplementing the available training material so as to enrich the quality and efficiency of the training process.

2.2 The learning objectives and outcomes per soft skill axis

The learning activity should have a clear, specific skills and/or knowledge development purpose, and objectives that are evident to both teacher and students. Students benefit from knowing the purpose of the exercise, the learning outcomes it strives to achieve, and evaluation methods.

The focus is on the demonstration of what students will know and can do, and the alignment with appropriate learning activities to achieve some specific abilities; a synthesis of this idea is shown in the table below (Smith, A. R. & Evanstone, A.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal</th>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Learning experience</th>
<th>Evaluation/Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What will students</td>
<td>What will students</td>
<td>What activities will</td>
<td>What will students do to demonstrate they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learn?</td>
<td>know or be able to</td>
<td>students do to learn</td>
<td>know it or are able to do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>do?</td>
<td>it?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of soft skills, the learning objectives could:

- facilitate the trainees to develop decision-making and analytical skills.
- develop the communication and interpersonal skills of the trainees.
- enhance the leadership skills of the trainees.
- promote teamwork.
- develop critical thinking and problem-solving/decision-making skills.
- be used to convey complex theoretical concepts in a simple way.
- allow the group to reflect on its appropriateness in their milieu/life.
- allow discussions/sharing on potentially threatening situations on which the learners will not be willing to share if asked directly.
- sharpen learners’ analytical and diagnostic skills.
• confront learners with situations they might not ordinarily experience in their ordinary lives.
• confront learners with similar experiences elsewhere to enable them to feel a sense of solidarity and validation.
• help in expanding knowledge through collective reflection, analysis, and synthesis.

2.3 The step-by-step analysis of a case study

The case study method typically consists of three stages, which are individual preparation, small group discussion, and big group or class discussion. These stages are utilized regardless of the subject matter that is being studied. Although the instructor and the student begin with identical information at each of these stages, their roles could not be more different from one another.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Trainer</th>
<th>Trainees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before class</td>
<td>Elects and assigns the case.</td>
<td>Receive the case and assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepares for class.</td>
<td>Prepare individually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During class</td>
<td>Manages the class in the reading activity and familiarization with the case.</td>
<td>Raise questions regarding readings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leads case discussion.</td>
<td>Participate in the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After class</td>
<td>Records, evaluates, and grades student participation.</td>
<td>Compare their personal analysis with their colleagues’ analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluates materials and updates teaching notes.</td>
<td>Review class discussion for major concepts learned.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Teacher’s and students’ roles in case study-based learning (after Mauffette-Leenders, 2005)
In this approach, the group is presented with the experiences of others in the shape of a case study. Learners reflect on and analyse these experiences in order to derive or establish new principles. The learners' personal experiences, principles, and emotions serve as a foundation for analysing the experiences of others. Depending on the cultural context, case studies (and anecdotes) may be conveyed in either written or oral form, or even through film or song.

The trainer should:

- analyse the trainees’ profiles and classroom conditions.
- choose an appropriate case study.
- establish the course timetable, meaning the number of hours required per case study activity.
- prepare the case study with the suggested teaching methods and tools.
- present the case study.
- divide the class into smaller groups (if necessary) and assign the task/question to the trainees.
- allow time for reflection and discussions.
- pay attention to debriefing and consolidation.
- evaluate/assess the students.
2.4 Before class

2.4.1 Analyse the trainees’ profiles and classroom conditions

A very important pre-step before starting the teaching and learning process using a case study is to evaluate if the technique is in line with the conditions of the classroom. Thus, even before the trainer decides to use this advanced training technique, he/she must ask herself/himself the following questions:

- Are trainees sufficiently encouraged to engage in such advanced techniques and exert additional effort to participate?
- Case Studies require much more mature participation because it is less structured compared to other techniques. Do the trainees possess such maturity?
- Does the technique seem to satisfy the objective of the programme? Is the method compatible with the objectives?
- Is the method appropriate for the size of the trainee/student group?
- Does the method require that the trainees/students already possess certain background knowledge or skills?
- Is there ample time? How much time does it take for the trainer to prepare and then use it in the training session? Do the trainees and the trainer have that kind of time in the training session?
- Does the training method demand certain special skills from the trainer? Does the trainer possess these skills?

For the case study method to be successful, one must be familiar with their students and link the material with the people who are there, e.g. *Who has already been at sea (as a cadet)?* *Who has worked in the maritime field?* or questions like:

- *If you could talk about a time when you had to lead your team through a challenging scenario, what was it like?*
- *When you have a number of different due dates to meet, what method do you use to prioritize your work?*
- *Describe an instance in which you were required to make a judgement without the oversight of managerial personnel. What strategy did you use to approach this matter, and with whom else did you discuss it?*
• When was the last time, if ever, that you attempted to do something without any prior experience?

• Describe the biggest professional setback you’ve ever had. What kind of lessons did you take away from this experience?

It is recommended to have students fill out cards listing their educational backgrounds, employment histories, and hobbies, depending on the teaching setting (whether it be during the academic year with regular classes of students or on an irregular basis during a spring or summer school course).

These cards should include information on the students' interests. Before the beginning of class, teachers should go over these flashcards and compile a list of the four or five individuals in each group who are most likely to offer anything insightful to the conversation.

After this initial evaluation, considering that the answers are favourable in using a case study in the training process, the trainer can start the process of preparing, organizing, and carrying out the teaching course based on the case study technique.

2.4.2 Choose an appropriate case

Choose an appropriate case or cases from one specific category of soft skills in order to have a comprehensive idea of it.

In order to engage students in this type of teaching and learning method, teachers need to not lose sight of the main objectives of the case study method, i.e., to engage students in the authentic application of knowledge, to help them assimilate further knowledge about procedures and strategies, to promote collaboration and to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving/decision-making skills.

A trainer should select just the right number of cases, ensuring that said cases are integrated into the general flow of the course and that these are the best available cases for pre-identified course objectives and classroom conditions.
Example: Matrix on the correlation between Case study (Activities) and core competencies (Soft Skills)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Competencies (Soft Skills)</th>
<th>Case studies (Activities)</th>
<th>Case study 1 (Activity 1) e.g.: Presentation</th>
<th>Case study 2 (Activity 2) e.g.: Teamwork</th>
<th>Case study 3 (Activity 3) e.g.: Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skill 1</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skill 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skill 3</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skill 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Skill ......</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The instructors have more possibilities in their choice of case studies:

- Finished cases based on facts are useful for purposes of analysis (a case study).
- Unresolved, open-ended cases in which the student must make predictions, offer suggestions, and draw conclusions (a case method).
- Fictional stories written by the instructor; the challenge lies in composing these cases so that they reflect a real-world scenario.
- Providing two sides of a situation would be an intriguing instance.

Usually, case studies should concentrate on actual problems pertinent to the discipline and level of the course. Thus, they can be “well-structured” or “ill-structured”, depending on the training objectives.

- The former - case studies, problems, and scenarios - can be simple, complex, or anything in between; however, they all have an optimal solution and provide only pertinent information that is typically labelled or otherwise readily identifiable.
- In addition to being simple or complex, the latter, i.e., ill-structured case studies, problems, and scenarios can also be simple or complex, although they tend to be complex. They contain relevant and irrelevant information, and it is part of the student's
responsibility to determine what is relevant, how it is relevant, and to develop an evidence-based solution to the problem that is appropriate to the context and can be defended by argumentation that draws on the student’s understanding of concepts in the discipline.

- Utilising well-structured problems to demonstrate comprehension and application. Analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are best demonstrated by poorly structured problems at higher levels of learning.

2.4.3 Prepare the case study.

Having chosen the appropriate method as the case study, the trainer must keep the material prepared and ready to use. For a case study, it might mean identifying the proper case and getting copies made.

Board tables

Blackboard or pin board tables for the writing comments on the blackboard as to engage students and to ensure them that they’ve been heard (feedback); drawing circles, arrows, and lines to connect these comments in order to link fragments of discussion into a summary of what has been said, smart TV – linked to a laptop – to play the interview, to pause and discuss, to rewind if necessary.

Board tables. Pictures from Chios Summer School, University of Aegean, Summer 2022.
Timetable

Establish the course timetable, i.e., how many hours are required in order to deliver a case study properly. This step is necessary in order to achieve the teaching and learning objectives on time.

Develop effective questions.

A case study discussion is usually guided by the instructor/teacher. Depending on the case study or based on the student group, the instructor can start the discussion such as using a hypothetical example or employing the background knowledge of the students. The instructor should know very well the case study in order to guide the students to analyse it under many possible alternatives. Students are expected to participate in the discussion and present their views. In certain instances, the instructor may choose a specific point of view and solicit a reaction from the students.

During the discussion, while a student presents his point of view, others may question or challenge him.

Students must interact constructively and positively with one another and with the instructor. Such interactions enhance the students’ analytical, communication, and interpersonal skills.

While the small groups are engaged in discussion the trainers should keep a constant watch over the group for such mundane matters as whether order is maintained and for more important things like whether the talk is clear, whether the discussions are on track etc. The trainer must emphasize that the analysis will be a group project and that no one will be criticized for raising naïve questions or uncertainties… and that everyone is required to actively work together on the analysis. (Without a distinct sense of freedom to test hypotheses, students tend to remain silent until they believe the correct answer has been determined.)
2.5 During Class - Process

2.5.1 Present the case study.

The trainer briefly presents the case, provides some instructions for how to approach it, and clarifies how students are expected to think about the case. Also, he provides an outline of the process that students are to follow when evaluating the case. If the teacher would like students to ignore or concentrate on specific facts, he or she should express that as well; alternatively, he/she might assign certain soft skills to be considered by individual students or by different groups of students, and then, at a later time, exchange points of view. The teacher advises the students to watch and listen closely and to concentrate on the reactions of the characters engaged in the case that is being depicted, gives the students instructions to take notes and offers them enough time to think about the case. If the case is long, it may be assigned as homework with a set of questions for students to consider.

In this stage of the deployment of the case study method, it is essential for the students to develop a sense of familiarity and confidence with one another. If students do not feel that the classroom is a secure environment, then they will not participate in the conversation. Teachers should assist them in becoming familiar with one another by providing name tags or cards for their workstations, have a conversation with the students about the process of case studies and the appropriateness of using them for the development of soft skills and also make clear the connection between the learning objective served by case studies and the expected level of participation on the part of students.

In achieving said objectives, a good strategy is, first of all, to create a positive atmosphere by setting out ground rules for participation. It is also essential to underline that the study will be a collaborative endeavour, that no one will be criticized for bringing naive questions or uncertainties, and that everyone should actively collaborate with the other members of the team on the study. In the absence of a distinct sense that they are free to explore assumptions, students have a tendency to keep quiet until they have the impression that the correct response has been established.

Instead of being the central figure and feeding students the most appropriate answer, the teacher should ask questions to guide students through the activities and elicit answers.

Though this might sound authoritarian, the trainer needs to maintain some degree of control over processes like simulations, role plays and games, in order for effective learning to take
place. The trainer must maintain a positive atmosphere by setting out ground rules for participation.

2.5.2 *Divide the class into smaller groups.*

It may be necessary to divide the larger group into smaller groups for more effective sharing and analysis. Even if the trainer is not directly responsible for dividing the learners into groups, it is his/her responsibility to see that such groupings are made.

The trainer should separate the students in the class into groups according to several characteristics, such as whether they are outgoing persons or more reserved, how well they speak English if the case study method is used in Maritime English classes, or how much sailing experience they have.

Additionally, it is essential for students to be familiar with and trustworthy of one another. Students will be reluctant to participate in the conversation if they don’t think the classroom is a secure environment for them.

2.5.3 *Allow time for reflection and discussions.*

After the case study is presented and the instructions are very well understood, the students (individuals or groups) have time to reflect and prepare themselves for the activity, within a time limit exposed from the beginning. They can use all the materials (flipchart, blackboard, laptop, paper, pencils, etc.), in order to prepare the activity proposed by the teacher.

Thus, the first step in this preparation is to read the case thoroughly. In order to comprehend the situation described in a case study, the student must read it multiple times. The initial perusal of the case can be brief in order to gain a general understanding of the story. The subsequent readings must be more focused, to help the student become familiar with the facts of the case, and the issues that are important in the situation being described in the case study – the who, what, where, why and how of the case.

However, knowledge of the case’s described circumstances is insufficient. Through a complete analysis of the case, the student must also acquire a comprehensive understanding of the situation.

During the case analysis process, the students must attempt to identify the main protagonists in the case study (organizations, groups, or individuals described in the case) and their relationships. It is needed to have an analysis properly structured.
The trainer must give students ample time to think about the case. If the case is long, it should be assigned it as homework with a set of questions for students to consider.

Thus, to prepare for the next class, the students are asked to think about the following questions:

- What is the problem or decision?
- Who is the key decision-maker?
- Who are the other people involved?
- What are the environmental problems and opportunities, the demographic and social–cultural factors? What are the technological conditions, legal and regulatory areas?
- What caused the problem?
- What are some underlying assumptions or objectives?
- What decisions, issues/problems/challenges need to be made/faced?
- Are there alternative responses?

Depending on the case study and the activity deriving from it, sometimes, instructors may require individuals or groups of students to provide a written analysis of a case study. This case analysis may be a component of the internal evaluation procedure. When a written case analysis is needed, the student has to make sure that it is correctly organised. The instructor may provide specific guidelines about how the analysis is to be structured.
2.5.4 Promote student participation.

**Case Discussions in the Classroom**

After the team or the individuals read and analyse the case, they are given the opportunity to present their activity, views and analysis to the class/group. This makes the case study ensure interaction and active participation of the trainees/students in the session which helps to know how others respond to the views.

**Presentation and discussion**

Following the instructions received from the teacher, the students, based on the case study, must prepare a presentation on the topic comprised in the case study, considering some important questions, and instructions that the student should pay attention. In a specific time, they must prepare their presentation, using all the materials they have at their disposal (flipchart, laptop, paper, etc). They can receive questions during the presentation or at the end of it. The questions can be asked by the teacher or also by the other students that are not engaged in the study case analysis. The teacher can observe and note the presenter’s behaviour and also the students’ behaviour (students engaged in addressing questions and not in the case study analysis). The behaviour is defined by a number of specific soft skills.

**Teamwork (working together)**

During this activity, the students, based on the case study topic, should prove they work as an efficient team, developing ideas and solutions in a specific problem. The teacher can observe and note if the students define properly some critical success factors and each participation of the students involved in the analysis.

**Role-playing in the case study technique**

The idea is to enable students to experience what it may be like to see a problem or issue from many different perspectives as they assume a role they may not typically take, and see others do the same. The role-playing in the case study technique could generally have two types of participants: players (students) and observers (teachers) and sometimes, a facilitator could also be added. There are three phases: the briefing phase, the play phase and the debriefing phase.
2.6 During Class - Close

2.6.1 Debriefing and consolidating

Debriefing

Debriefing questions are a final important part of the case study strategy.

After participating in an experiential learning activity, participants need to engage in debriefing and consolidation activities. If the students have just been through an emotional experience that was anywhere from mild to extreme, it is imperative that the instructor give them some time to move out of that emotional framework; otherwise, they risk being overly absorbed and carried away with the activity.

When doing a debriefing, it is important to elicit from the individual learner or the learner group their ideas, emotions, and observations, as well as anything else the trainer may deem necessary. The knowledge that was debriefed needs to be written down and made public so that it can be related to learning in actual life circumstances.

The teacher may alternate between different points of view by asking questions such as, now that we’ve seen it from character A’s standpoint, what’s happening here from character’s B’s standpoint? What kind of evidence could B present to back up their claim? To what extent do the two positions interact with one another? Also, the debriefing can go on by changing the level of abstraction: if the response to the issue that was asked is “It’s just a bad situation for her,” using quotations can be helpful. When character A says “_______,” what does B assume he/she means? The teacher can look for more specific explanations to the question, Why does that character in the case study have such a viewpoint? or change the time frame to include more than just what’s next? but also to the question of how a different outcome may have been achieved given the circumstances by inquiring about students’ input by questions such as What steps could have been taken earlier to head off this disagreement and ensure that it led to a positive result?

Conceptual framework in the debriefing stage

The conceptual framework is the broad theoretical framework that the trainer follows when choosing the content area. The conceptual framework relates to the learning objectives and the content area. It forms the basis for the debriefing and the analysis. Without suggesting manipulation, the objective of the trainer is to put the debriefed information into this
theoretical framework after analysis and additional information. It is essential that it be situated in/related to real life.

A scheme for questioning could be:

1. **What did you see? How did you feel?** What did you say during the discussions? These questions help in bringing out the participant’s perceptions and experiences. The information gathered is noted down on a board or chart paper.

2. **Why did you feel the way you did? Why did you say what you did during the discussions?** These questions enable participants to analyse the reasons and causes behind their behaviour, perceptions, and experiences.

3. **Do such situations occur in real life? When? Has it happened to you?** Questions like these try to situate the experience in reality and to draw parallels with life.

4. **Why do you think this happens?** This is an attempt to analyse and draw principles and conclusions that form the core of the new learning. It may be necessary at this point to provide additional information.

The Framework on Study cases for teachers shows:

- Incident description
- Causes
- Lessons learned / action required
- Dos and Don’ts

### 2.6.2 Consolidating and summarizing

The instructor (or a student) may conclude a case discussion by summarising the main learning elements (or “takeaways”) of the session. The various reports and debriefings should be summarised in front of the group and various patterns and threads should be identified in order to organise the information into a coherent framework. Often it may be necessary for the trainer to contribute something on his/her own.
2.7 After Class

2.7.1 Evaluation of Students’ Performance through the Case Study Method

- The evaluation must imperatively and primarily take into account the objectives of the training.
- The evaluation should not be a scope in itself, an ending limit but a starting point for future learning processes.

How will the teacher know if the learning objectives were met?

After the study case, teachers analyse exactly what the students have acquired and determine whether or not there are methods to make it more effective. Throughout the duration of the class, it is important to evaluate whether or not the students are independently achieving meaningful progress in the subject matter. Are they putting into practice what they discovered in the initial discussion? Students improve their ability to communicate both orally and in writing, as well as their capacity to work effectively in groups and collaborate while using the case study method. This is why teachers need to pay attention to how the students behave during the discussion in order to determine how they apply their hard and soft skills and which of their skills are most likely to be demonstrated during the exercise. There are a variety of different tasks that can be given out in class when the case study method is utilized. These assignments are determined by the academic subject that is being studied.

The assessment of a learner's achievement in a case-based course may incorporate some or all of the following criteria:

- Written reviews of cases (logical flow and structure of the content, language and presentation, analysis, and recommendation quality, etc.)
- Presentations of cases (communication skills, logical flow and structure of the content, analysis quality and recommendations, etc.)
- Taking part in classroom discussion of cases (participation level and quality)
- Case writing assignments or similar projects
- Case-based examinations.
Soft Skills Performance Scale by Case Study Method (example)

Scale from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence/Parameter</th>
<th>Student 1</th>
<th>Student 2</th>
<th>Student ....</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Soft skill 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft skill 2</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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The trainer has a wide variety of training methods which can be utilized, however, it is necessary that they keep in mind the time available, the training environment, the training objective as well as the type of trainees. Trainers usually combine two or three methods and often come up with innovative variations to suit their needs. Ultimately, what matters is not just the means, it is important that the training objective is achieved. The issue that comes up is: “What was the student's most significant takeaway from this particular case study?”

Thus, keeping in mind the extensive benefits of the case study as a learning tool, trainers have further innovated with the case study method. Innovations may be in terms of how and when it is used, the supplements it is used with and the activities preceding or following the case analysis. These are variations in teaching methods in order to enhance the impact of learning as Case studies followed by role-play, simulations, structured exercises and instruments, field visits, practice sessions, games, self-study, video review, discussion, debate, jigsaw, etc.
3. OVERALL SUGGESTIONS ON CASE STUDY METHOD IN THE LEARNING PROCESS

Case-based teaching texts and materials are depictions of real-life events. A good case study is “…the vehicle by which a chunk of reality is brought into the classroom to be worked over by the class and the instructor. A good case keeps the class discussion grounded upon some of the stubborn facts that must be faced in real-life situations” (Christensen, 1981).

Maritime case studies present and analyse events that took place either on board or during the ship-to-shore communication process. Depending on the academic subject and its objectives and at the same time considering the IMO model courses, case studies are used as a valuable teaching accessory to develop hard skills and/or soft skills for problem-solving, and for this reason, they often focus on the external factors, the situational context, and circumstances.

Teachers and academicians have developed important learning tools with the case study method, doing so while thereby maintaining an eye on the broad benefits that the case study may provide as a learning tool. The manner in which it is applied, the level at which it is used, the additional materials that are used with it, and the activities that come before or after the case analysis can all be considered new developments.

Teachers are generally fully aware that there is no one definite way to ensure that their classes are beneficial to their students. Because the trainer has an awareness of the many approaches he employs in a variety of settings, he is able to influence trainees to participate and learn in a manner that is both more fascinating and unique. In order to have good results deriving from the case study method, some suggestions can be considered:

Suggestions for trainers

- They should try to refrain from being a monopoliser! If they are, students are solely assimilating the material and not interacting with it as the case method allows.
- Trainers should make sure the students have finished presenting their perspectives before interjecting. It is best to wait and check their body language before replying or interfering or changing the topic!
- Taking notes of the progress and the content of the discussion is also a good approach.
- If they decide to grade participation, their grading system should reflect the contributions accurately and defensibly!
The initial training objective should always be kept in mind!

**Suggestions for students for effective class discussion**

- Carefully listen to the discussion, but do not wait too long to participate!
- Collaboration and respect should always be present!
- Provide value-added comments, suggestions, or questions. Maintain a focus on the class objective by directing the conversation towards constructive inquiry and viable solutions!
Bibliography


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