



Organizing Your Course, Deciding What the Workload Should Be, and Settling on Specific Assignments

The Role and Objectives of Courses in Strategy

The cornerstones of courses in strategic management involve looking at the job of managing through strategic eyes and drilling students in the whys and hows of utilizing the tools and techniques of strategic analysis to craft, implement, and execute company strategies. The central theme of the strategic management course is that a company's chances for sustained success are greatly improved when managers (1) develop an astute, timely strategic "game plan" for running the company and then (2) implement and execute the strategic plan with great proficiency.

The content portion of the course should explain what it means to think strategically about a company's situation and it should instruct the student in the formal tools and techniques of strategic analysis, crafting a strategy, and then executing it successfully. The skills-building portion of the course, built around case analysis and strategy simulations like *GLO-BUS* and *The Business Strategy Game*, drills students in the applications of key concepts and analytical weaponry, helps develop their ability to do strategic thinking, forces them to exercise business judgment, and gives them a modest but valuable dose of experience in making strategy-related decisions.

The ground that has to be covered content-wise is expansive and moderately rigorous in terms of core concepts and analytical tools, yet the subject matter is full of energy and practical relevance. During the term, instructors are obliged to drive home what the roles and tasks of the strategist are, to introduce students to what strategy means, to lead them through the ins and outs of crafting and executing a strategic plan, and to get them into the habit of automatically reviewing a firm's situation and re-appraising the need for strategy revision.

The overriding pedagogical objectives are to sharpen students' abilities to "think strategically", to evaluate a company's situation from the perspective of its competitiveness and performance prospects, and to draw sound conclusions about what actions a company's management needs to take in light of all the relevant circumstances. Accomplishing these objectives entails introducing students to how an enterprise must in fact deal with all of the complexities and constraints of the business environment in which it operates, why none of these can be assumed away or ignored, and how situational factors impact strategic decisions. It means pushing students to grapple with many determining factors at once and forcing them to weigh how they shape what actions need to be taken from the perspective of the total enterprise. It means drilling students thoroughly in the tools of strategy analysis and exercising them in the managerial tasks of sizing up a company's competitive position in the marketplace. It means systematically exposing them to the rigors of industry and competitive analysis, to the process of evaluating a company's resources and competitive capabilities, to the ins and outs of crafting an attractive strategic plan, and to the varied managerial and leadership tasks associated with implementing and executing the chosen strategy as well as circumstances permit. It means deliberately putting them in managerial shoes and forcing them to make decisions (in an ethical and socially responsible manner!) and concoct concrete action plans capable of producing good results. The excitement and fun of it all comes from seeing the lights turn on in students' eyes and the "a-ha, now I get it" results that signal the lessons of the course are being driven home.

In the midst of all this, another major purpose of the course is being served: helping students synthesize and integrate much of the knowledge gained in the core business curriculum. Unlike most other required business courses, strategic management is a big picture course. Virtually all other business courses are narrower in scope and somewhat specialized—principles of accounting, corporate finance, principles of marketing, and so on. Some concern the "hard side" and others the "soft side" of managing. Some relate to important concepts and information, while others involve skills-building. But none can match courses in strategy in covering so much of the spectrum of managing. Weighing the ins and outs of crafting, implementing, and executing company strategies forces a total enterprise perspective, demands that many internal and external situational considerations be dealt with at once, and calls for judgments about how all the relevant factors add up. This trait is what makes strategic management an integrative, capstone course.

Suggested Course Objectives

We see courses in crafting and executing strategy as having eight very relevant objectives:

1. To develop students' capacity to think strategically about a company, its present business position, its long-term direction, its resources and competitive capabilities, the caliber of its present strategy, and its opportunities for gaining sustainable competitive advantage.
2. To build students' skills in conducting strategic analysis in a variety of industries and competitive situations and, especially, to provide them with a stronger understanding of the competitive challenges of a global market environment.
3. To give students hands-on experience in crafting business strategy, reasoning carefully about strategic options, using what-if analysis to evaluate action alternatives, and making sound strategic decisions.
4. To acquaint students with the managerial tasks associated with implementing and executing company strategies, drill them in the range of actions managers can take to promote competent strategy execution, and give them some confidence in being able to function effectively as part of a company's strategy-implementing team.
5. To integrate the knowledge gained in earlier core courses in the business school curriculum, show students how the various pieces of the business puzzle fit together, and demonstrate why the different parts of a business need to be managed in strategic harmony for a company to operate in winning fashion.
6. To develop students' powers of managerial judgment, build their skills in assessing business risk, and improve their ability to create results-oriented action plans.
7. To have students become more proficient in using personal computers to do managerial analysis and managerial work.
8. To make students more conscious about the importance of exemplary ethical principles, sound personal and company values, and socially responsible management practices.

Structuring Your Course

Just as there are “many ways to skin a cat,” there are many ways to structure a good course in strategic management. Aside from just the core text and cases which you plan to use, you will have to decide:

1. Whether to include *GLO-BUS* or *The Business Strategy Game* as an integral part of your course. Using one of the two companion simulations is a powerful and constructive way of emotionally connecting students to the subject matter of the course. There is no more effective and interesting way to stimulate the competitive energy of students and prepare them for the rigors of real-world business decision-making than to have them match strategic wits with classmates in running a company in head-to-head competition for global market leadership. The simplest (and usually the cheapest) way for students to obtain the simulation is via a secured credit card transaction at www.bsg-online.com (if you opt to use *The Business Strategy Game*) or at www.glo-bus.com (if you opt to use *GLO-BUS*).
2. Whether to use outside readings and, if so, what readings to assign.
3. What balance to strike between lectures on concepts/techniques, class discussion of cases, and a “learn by doing” strategy simulation. Our suggestions for weighting various possible assignments are offered several pages below.
4. What use you wish to make of written case assignments.

5. Whether to require class members to do an oral team presentation of an assigned case.
6. What use to make of the chapter-end Assurance of Learning Exercises and Exercises for Simulation Participants.
7. Whether to use the Connect platform for case assignments that the publisher now has made available for this edition—it contains automatically graded and recorded chapter-end quizzes, Assurance of Learning exercises, and exercises for selected cases.
8. What sort of examinations to use.

If you are a veteran in teaching the course, you undoubtedly have some experience in what works for you and which pieces of the overall text package are most intriguing. But if you are wrestling with teaching the course for the first time or are looking for new ways to design your course, you may find some of the following thoughts and suggestions helpful in selecting a comfortable, suitable approach.

Deciding on an Appropriate Workload

The “standard” senior-level and MBA course in strategic management these days seems to involve:

1. Covering all or most of the text chapters.
2. Discussing a subset of the cases in the text—somewhere between 5 and 15.
3. Assigning one or more written cases and/or an oral team presentation.
4. Use of a strategy simulation. (We believe over two-thirds of strategy courses in the U.S. entail having students play a simulation game—and the percentage seems to be growing, both domestically and internationally. The rapidity with which the standard pedagogy of strategy courses has changed from a two-pronged approach of relying on text chapters and cases to drive home the lessons of crafting and executing strategy to a three-pronged standard of relying on text chapters, cases, and a simulation exercise is powerful testimony to the effectiveness of simulations.)
5. Having one or more in-class examinations over the text chapters.

These combine to make a full course, with plenty of topics to cover and ample assignments to keep students busy.

So why add more? Specifically, should use of the Connect platform that incorporates chapter-end quizzes, selected Assurance of Learning exercises, and selected case exercises be voluntary or mandatory? Should you assign certain of the chapter-end Assurance of Learning Exercises in lieu of one or two cases? Also, we have designed chapter-end Assurance of Learning Exercises and Connect Interactive Exercises that are attractive vehicles for class discussion or student reports and that can be used for assessment purposes. And there are Connect-based case exercises that you can use to measure how well class members are able to use and apply core concepts and the tools of strategic analysis in assessing a company’s situation, identifying issues that company managers need to address, and proposing pragmatic action recommendations.

Why Incorporating a Strategy Simulation Makes Sense

Insofar as use of a simulation is concerned, we believe—based on our own experiences and the mushrooming use of simulations in strategy courses worldwide—that *incorporating a simulation as a course centerpiece definitely adds major value*. As was discussed at some length in Section 2 of this IM, a strategy simulation steps up the tempo of the course a notch, emotionally involves students in the subject matter, and gives them *much-needed hands-on practice* in (a) applying what they have read in the 10 chapters and (b) making sound business decisions and being held accountable for the results they produce.

Competition-based strategy simulation games give students every bit as much valuable practice as do cases in thinking strategically, diagnosing market and competitive circumstances, appraising a company's competitiveness and financial performance, and coming up with concrete actions to improve a company's market position and performance. What a simulation does that a case cannot is give students immediate and incontrovertible feedback of the caliber of their decisions to improve a company's performance—in light of competitive circumstances and the company's product offering, costs, and other situational circumstances. Since in the course of playing a simulation, students have to live with the financial results of their decisions, simulations are powerful devices for teaching students the importance of responsible, results-oriented decision-making. In contrast, in analyzing cases and making action recommendations for the company being studied, there little way to provide students with credible feedback on their caliber of their action recommendations / decisions beyond that of telling them what's happened at the company since the case was written. We think this is why professors of strategy at many business schools have concluded that supplementing coverage of the text chapters with use of both cases and a strategy simulation is more pedagogically powerful than just relying on traditional case assignments alone.

You can be fairly confident that if you incorporate use of *GLO-BUS* or *The Business Strategy Game* the challenges and excitement of a competition-based strategy simulation will get most students' competitive juices flowing and make their task of learning about crafting and executing winning strategies more enjoyable. Most students find the “learn by doing” nature of a simulation more engaging. They become more emotionally and personally involved in the subject matter because they are active participants, along with their co-managers, in crafting and executing strategy for a company in which they have a stake—the decisions they make and the results these decisions produce affect their grade! Their company becomes “real” to students and takes on a life of its own as the simulation unfolds—and it doesn't take long for students to establish a healthy rivalry with other companies run by their class members that they must compete with head-on in the marketplace. Because the competition in the simulation typically gets very personal, most students become immersed in what's going on in their industry—as compared to the more impersonal engagement that occurs when they are assigned a case to analyze.

While incorporating the simulation will consume part of a class period to get things under way, the actual playing of the game is an *out-of-class group exercise* done mostly sitting around a personal computer (company team members will need to spend 1½ to 2½ hours preparing each decision, usually more for the first couple of decisions until students gain command of the software and the procedures).

Use of either *GLO-BUS* or *The Business Strategy Game* is likely to add net time to the course requirements from a student perspective. To adjust for these time requirements, you may want to have the simulation substitute for a written case assignment or a couple of class discussions of cases or an hour exam or some combination of these.

Again, should you decide to incorporate one of the two simulations in your course, the simplest (and usually the cheapest) way for students to obtain the simulation is via a secured credit card transaction at www.bsg-online.com (if you opt to use *The Business Strategy Game*) or at www.glo-bus.com (if you opt to use *GLO-BUS*). Purchasing the simulation direct at the simulation web site allows students to bypass paying sometimes hefty bookstore markups (a savings that can amount to \$10-\$15). The second way for students to register for the simulation is by using a pre-paid access code that comes bundled with the 6th Edition when you order the combination text-simulation package through your bookstore—this requires use of a separate ISBN (the 6th Edition bundled with either simulation has a different ISBN number than just the 6th Edition ordered alone). Your McGraw-Hill rep can provide you with the correct ISBN for ordering the text-simulation package.

Suggestions for Using the Connect™ Web-based Assignment and Assessment Platform Accompanying the 6th Edition

The popularity of McGraw-Hill's innovative Connect™ Web-based Assignment and Assessment Platform among text adopters is a solid reason to consider incorporating use of Connect in your own course offering.

The Connect-Based Chapter-end Quizzes. One element of Connect for the 6th edition involves automatically-graded and recorded chapter-end quizzes consisting of 20 to 25 multiple choice questions. Having students complete these quizzes following your coverage of each chapter is strongly recommended, not only as a prod to push students to gain better command of the chapter material but also to assess class member learning and the achievement of course objectives.

For students to realize the maximum benefit from the online chapter self-tests and for you to see the difference in their command of the core concepts and ability to use the analytical tools to analyze assigned cases, we recommend that you *strongly encourage students to work through the Connect chapter quizzes immediately after reading each chapter* (rather than waiting until just before the hour exam over the chapters). It is easy to check the automatically graded and recorded scores for the chapter-end quizzes on Connect.

The sample course syllabi and the 9 sample schedules of assignments and activities in Section 4 of this IM illustrate ways to make the chapter-end quizzes a part of your course syllabus.

The Connect-Based Chapter Interactive Exercises. The authors of the text have developed Connect-based Interactive Exercises for all 10 chapters of the 6th edition that can be used for assurance of learning purposes. Each of the exercises is based on an end-of-chapter Assurance of Learning Exercise that requires students to demonstrate understanding and proper application of chapter concepts. The exercises include 3 to 6 assignment questions that assess students' abilities to accurately apply chapter concepts and analytic tools. Students should be able to complete the Connect-Based exercises for a chapter in about 20 minutes.

Topics included in the Connect Interactive Exercises for the various chapters include:

- Identifying and critiquing a company's business strategy
- Assessing the effectiveness of managerial oversight on the part of a company's board of directors
- Drawing a strategic group map and assessing the positions of the companies/strategic groups
- Calculating financial ratios and doing other number-crunching to determine a company's financial performance and the strength of its balance sheet
- Determining the strengths of a low-cost provider strategy and gain command of the major avenues for securing a cost-based advantage
- Evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of extending the company's scope of operations via vertical integration
- Assessing the merits of utilizing strategic alliances to enter and compete in international markets
- Evaluating the strategic fit potential among the value chain activities of a diversified company's lineup of businesses

- Assessing how companies balance duties to engage in socially responsible and sustainable business practices with economic responsibilities to shareholders
- Identifying and critiquing the policies, practices, principles, and approaches management is using to implement and execute the company's strategy
- Determining if and why a company's system of incentives and rewards promotes adept strategy execution and operating excellence
- Identifying the key features of a company's corporate culture and assessing if and why a company's culture aids in the drive for proficient strategy execution and operating excellence

Each chapter includes one exercise that is automatically graded and open-ended assignment questions that require students to discuss their analysis of the exercise material.

Chapter Interactive Exercises are intended to improve student understanding of chapter concepts and their mastery of the application of tools of strategic analysis. The Connect Interactive Exercises may be scored and used as a graded component for the course or the exercises may be used for individual-level assessment purposes only. Whether used as part of course pedagogy or for accrediting body assessment purposes, the Connect Interactive Exercises are an easy-to-administer approach to collect individual-level measures of student performance.

Table 1 below lists the chapter and source content, learning objective linkage, topic, and auto-grading features of each Connect Interactive Exercise.

TABLE 1

Connect Chapter Interactive Exercises Included in the 6th Edition of Essentials of Strategic Management

Chapter and Source Content for Exercise	Learning Objectives Covered	Exercise Title/Topic	Automatic Grading
Ch 1: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 1, LO 3	What is Strategy and Why Is It Important?	Yes
Ch. 1: Assurance of Learning Exercise 2	LO 2	Strategy and a Company's Business Model	No
Ch. 2: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 1	Developing a Strategic Vision	Yes
Ch. 2: Assurance of Learning Exercise 5	LO 5	Corporate Governance	No
Ch. 3: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 2	Competitive Forces Model	Yes
Ch. 3: Assurance of Learning Exercise 2	LO 3	Strategic Group Mapping	No
Ch. 4: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 1	Ratio Analysis	Yes
Ch. 4: Assurance of Learning Exercise 3	LO 3	Company Value Chain	No
Ch. 5: Assurance of Learning Exercise 2	LO 2	Low-Cost Provider Strategy	Yes

Chapter and Source Content for Exercise	Learning Objectives Covered	Exercise Title/Topic	Automatic Grading
Ch. 5: Assurance of Learning Exercise 4	LO 3	Differentiation Strategy	No
Ch. 6: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 1, LO 2, LO 3	Mergers and Acquisitions	No
Ch. 6: Assurance of Learning Exercise 2	LO 4	Vertical Integration	Yes
Ch. 7: Assurance of Learning Exercise 2	LO 1, LO 3	Cross Border Strategic Alliances	No
Ch. 7: Assurance of Learning Exercise 3	LO 2, LO 3	Strategic Choices in International Markets	Yes
Ch. 8: Assurance of Learning Exercise 1	LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4	Related Diversification Strategy	No
Ch. 8: Assurance of Learning Exercise 3	LO 1, LO 2, LO 3, LO 4, LO 5	Diversification and the Multibusiness Company	Yes
Ch. 9: Assurance of Learning Exercise 3	LO 4	Corporate Social Responsibility	Yes
Ch. 9: Assurance of Learning Exercise 4	LO 4	Environmental Sustainability	No
Ch. 10: Assurance of Learning Exercise 6	LO 6	Rewards and Incentives	Yes
Ch. 10: Assurance of Learning Exercise 7	LO 7	Corporate Culture	No

The Connect-Based Case Exercises. The Connect package for the 6th edition includes auto-graded case exercises for all 12 cases. All of the exercises are based on the complete set of assignment questions for the respective case and call upon a student to develop thoughtful, analysis-based answers (as opposed to stating seat-of-the-pants opinions). Each exercise is different, depending both on the circumstances of the case and the content of the chapters to which it is closely linked. The exercises relate to such things as

- Identifying and critiquing a company's strategic vision or objectives or strategy
- Doing a five-forces analysis
- Identifying driving forces (industry dynamics) and evaluating their impact
- Drawing a strategic group map and assessing the positions of the companies/strategic groups
- Identifying key success factors
- Doing a SWOT analysis
- Doing a competitive strength analysis
- Calculating financial ratios and doing other number-crunching to determine a company's financial performance and the strength of its balance sheet
- Evaluating the performance potential of a diversified company's lineup of businesses
- Identifying and critiquing the policies, practices, principles, and approaches management is using to implement and execute the company's strategy

The driving concept underlying the creation and use of these exercises has been to facilitate student learning, put students on the path to sound strategic thinking and proper use of the concepts and tools of strategic analysis, and make it quick and easy for you to assess student performance on assigned cases.

The exercises can typically be completed in 45 to 60 minutes, assuming a student has done a conscientious job of reading the case and absorbing the information. The exercises were deliberately crafted in a manner that allowed many (sometimes all) of the answers to be judged as “right” or “wrong”; this has the distinct appeal of enabling each student’s work to be automatically graded and recorded in your electronic grade book. You may find that the case exercises are suitable for use as substitutes for a written case analysis, with a portion of the exercise being automatically graded and a portion requiring instructor grading.

Special Note: Because, the Connect-based case exercises call upon students to develop answers to questions that are largely identical to some of same assignment questions presented in the Teaching Note we provide for the case, the content of the Teaching Outline and Analysis section of each TN serves as your “answer guide” to the questions posed to students in each of the Connect case exercises.

- Having class members complete some or many of the Connect-based case exercises serves several teaching/learning purposes and has multiple benefits:
- The nature and content of a case exercise signals students that they need to do more than come to class having read an assigned case (this is particularly beneficial if the case assignments for your course are a student’s first encounter with the case method of teaching/learning). There is no way that students can score well on the case exercises without doing some serious thinking and putting forth effort; guessing at the answers or relying on seat-of-the-pants opinions won’t get them very far.
- The exercises are yet another means of drilling students in how to apply the chapter content in managerial situations and helping them bridge the gap between theory and practice. We think a good argument can be made that the learning potential of an assigned case is more likely to be fully achieved by having students use an interactive tool that “tutors” them in the process of (a) thinking strategically, (b) using the concepts and methods of strategic analysis to evaluate a company, and (c) arriving at analysis-based action recommendations.
- Students that do a conscientious job of completing the Connect exercise for a case will be better prepared to make meaningful contributions to the class discussion of that case, as opposed to merely giving off-the-cuff opinions. Letting students know that you fully expect them to come to class truly well-prepared in terms of developing solid answers to the assignment questions will put more students in position to give meaningful, content-filled answers to the questions you pose in class.

Suggestions for Examinations over the 10 Text Chapters

We suggest having two exams covering the text material and perhaps having a comprehensive final (although our preference is to use a comprehensive case as a final exam as opposed to a comprehensive final covering the content of just the 10 chapters). If you opt for two chapter-related exams, we recommend that the first one cover Chapters 1-5 and that the second one cover Chapters 6-10. If the number of class periods is too short for two exams, a single exam covering all 10 chapters is the next best option—it can be given at the end of the course or shortly after your lectures on all the assigned chapters.

We prefer giving a test on the assigned chapters immediately following the conclusion of the lectures and before covering most of the related cases so that you can be assured that students have sufficient acquaintance with the concepts and analytical tools covered in the chapters and concepts to apply them in the course of preparing and discussing the cases. The sample course outlines in Section 4 indicate possible locations in the class schedule where exams on the chapters fit in.

There's a test bank of 600+ multiple choice and short-answer/essay questions you can choose from in making out exams. The full test bank is in both this volume of the IM. The EZ Test companion software enables you to quickly setup an online exam or print out a test master.

Suggested Weights in Determining Final Grades in the Course

If you are a veteran in teaching strategy, then you have no doubt arrived at a scheme for weighting all the various assignments in determining each student's final grade in the course. And the scheme necessarily varies with the number of written case assignments, the number of exams, whether you are using a simulation, the weight you put on class participation, and whether you have students do oral team presentations.

In the table below, we offer some suggestions for weighting various possible assignments:

Assignment/Activity	Weighting of Assignment/Activity				
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Exam over Chapters 1-5	10%	10.0%	15%	12.5%	—
Exam over Chapters 6-10	10%	10.0%	15%	12.5%	—
Written Case Report #1	15%	12.5%	15%	12.5%	20%
Written Case Report #2	—	12.5%	15%	—	—
Oral Team Presentation	15%	15.0%	15%	—	20%
Company Performance on Simulation Exercise	35%	25.0%	—	30.0%	25%
Participation in Class Discussion of Assigned Cases	15%	15.0%	10%	15.0%	15%
In-class Written Case for Final Exam (2½ – 4 hours)	—	—	15%	17.5%	—
Final Exam over All 10 Chapters	—	—	—	—	20%
Total	100%	100.0%	100%	100.0%	100%

Tips and Suggestions for Effectively Incorporating Either *The Business Strategy Game* or *GLO-BUS* in Your Course

Both *The Business Strategy Game* and *GLO-BUS* are suitable for either senior-level or MBA-level courses. Which to use is really a matter of preference and the degree to which the faculty believe that there should be a clear distinction between the content and rigor of a senior-level course in strategy and the MBA-level course in strategy:

- If you want students to spend an average of 1-2 hours per decision, then we believe *GLO-BUS* is the best choice. If you want the simulation to be a truly major part of the course and serve as the main assignment for the class beyond the text chapters, then *The Business Strategy Game* is perhaps the better choice—especially for a MBA class—because it has more robust production and distribution operations and allows students to formulate somewhat more complex strategies. Both simulations have a 3-year strategic plan module (which can be made a requirement or left optional or ignored altogether).
- If school policy is to maintain a clear-cut distinction between the content and rigor of the senior-level course and the MBA-level course then it probably makes sense to use *GLO-BUS* in one course (probably the senior-level course) and *BSG* in the other course (the MBA course)
- If many of your school's undergraduate students also go on to be part of your school's MBA program (thus making it desirable to provide them with a differentiated simulation experience in the two courses), then it probably makes sense to use *GLO-BUS* in one course (again probably the senior-level course) and *BSG* in the other course (again the MBA course)

However, adopters have used both *GLO-BUS* and *The Business Strategy Game* for senior and MBA courses—with apparent success at both levels. We firmly believe you can have a successful experience with either simulation in either senior or MBA courses.

What Decision Schedule to Use. We suggest that you consider one of the three following types of decision schedules:

- One decision weekly throughout the term (with a total of 1 or 2 practice decision rounds and 7-10 regular or scored decision rounds). This decision round schedule makes the simulation a standard part of the course load and spreads the work load of the simulation evenly across the whole term. We have used a 1-per-week decision round schedule at The University of Alabama for over 30 years, and it is the most popular schedule used by adopters of the two simulations.
- Two decisions weekly the last 5-6 weeks of the term (with a total of 1 or 2 practice decisions and 8-10 regular decisions). The advantage of this schedule is that students will have covered a number of the chapters (ideally through Chapter 7), be familiar with many of the concepts, analytical tools, and competitive strategy options, and have had some experience in analyzing some cases. Somewhere near mid-term of the course, it can thus be assumed that students have a fairly solid foundation for beginning an exercise which will give them opportunity to use and apply all that they have learned and will later encounter in the course.
- Daily decisions the last two weeks of the term (which is an ideal schedule for concluding the course and perhaps using the simulation as a final exam for the course). A variation of this schedule is to have decisions twice daily for the last week of the term. However, you should always have at least a 3-hour interval between decisions to give students ample time to review the industry and company reports and develop their strategy and decisions for the next decision round.

In setting up a complete assignment schedule for the simulation, you will also need to decide whether to require completion of Quiz 1 and Quiz 2 (requiring both quizzes is very highly recommended), what times/dates to establish as deadlines for completion of the quizzes, whether to require completion of one or two strategic plans (at least one is highly recommended), what deadlines to establish for completion of any strategic plans you require, and whether to require completion of the peer evaluation (very highly recommended) at the end of the simulation.

However, you have complete freedom to set up any decision/assignment schedule that you wish—and further to change the decision/assignment schedule at any time for any reason.

How Much Should the Simulation Count in the Course Grade? Whether students take the simulation exercise seriously hinges in large part on whether you make performance on the simulation count enough in the overall course grade to get their attention. As a general rule, we recommend having performance on the simulation count *at least* 20% of the overall course grade and probably no more than 40% of the total grade. If it counts less than 20%, then student effort is weakened to an undesirable extent and some of the learning potential slips through the cracks. If it counts more than 40%, then the game may take something away from the emphasis you want to give to other aspects of the course.

However, we have growing numbers of users who are making the simulation the *dominant centerpiece* of the course (particularly in online and distance learning courses where case analysis is difficult to use effectively). When *BSG* functions as the primary part of the course (aside from the text chapters), then counting the simulation as 50-60% (or more) of the final grade is reasonable, given that you can use the quizzes, one or two 3-year strategic plan assignments, and perhaps an end-of-simulation presentation to an invited panel of 3 or 4 persons (who act as a company board of directors) as a substitute for assigning students a larger number of cases to analyze.

A related grading issue is how much each of the various assignments within *The Business Strategy Game* or *GLO-BUS* should be weighted. You have full control over these weights and can change them at your pleasure by entering different weights at the top of the columns of your online “Individual Grade Book.” A table of suggested weights is presented below:

Performance Measures	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5
Overall company performance on the 5 scoring measures	85.0%	80.0%	75.0%	75.0%	70.0%
Quiz 1 (which is relatively easy and only tests whether they have read the Participant’s Guide)	2.5%	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Quiz 2 (harder questions covering important elements of the simulation and testing understanding of the numbers)	7.5%	7.0%	4.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Performance on strategic plan #1	N.R.	5.0%	3.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Performance on strategic plan #2	N.R.	N.R.	N.R.	5.0%	5.0%
Company presentation	N.R.	N.R.	10.0%	5.0%	7.5%
Peer evaluations done by co-managers	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	7.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

N.R. = not a required assignment

We suggest caution in placing less than a 70% weight on overall company performance, since lower weights weaken student incentive to be diligent in making decisions, doing the requisite analysis and strategic thinking, and going all out to try to boost their company’s performance.

We believe it makes sense to place a significantly higher weight on Quiz 2 as opposed to Quiz 1, because Quiz 2 is harder and tests individual understanding of important topics.

We also think it is best to weight a second strategic plan higher than the first plan because (1) students are more knowledgeable about how to do a good plan the second time around, (2) they have more experience in appraising the impact of changing market conditions, and (3) they should now be seasoned veterans in setting performance targets and trying to meet or beat them.

Using the “Exercises for Simulation Participants” at the End of Each Chapter. *One of the biggest teaching/learning benefits of using a strategy simulation like BSG or GLO-BUS in your course is the array of opportunities it presents for class members to immediately utilize the concepts and analytical tools covered in the text chapters in running their simulation company. There are extensive and tight ties between the issues/challenges that company co-managers face in running their company and the content of the 10 chapters in the 5th Edition.*

To provide a powerful means for you to tie the chapter content to the simulation exercise, we created a set of “Exercises for Simulation Participants” that appear at the end of each chapter. You can use these exercises to accomplish three things:

1. Prod class members in their role as company co-managers to do some quality strategic thinking about their company’s situation and the industry circumstances in which their company is operating.
2. Point each company’s management team directly to ways of using specific concepts and tools of strategic analysis to improve their decision-making and to improve their company’s performance.
3. Speed the process whereby your students bridge the gap between theory and practice—the faster and more completely that class members come to recognize the practical managerial value of strategic concepts and analytical tools covered in the text chapters the better.

It is, of course, entirely optional whether to make extensive or selective use of these exercises (or ignore them altogether). In our strategic management classes, we have found the exercises to be particularly productive in steering class members to do a more insightful job of assessing industry and competitive conditions, evaluating their company's competitiveness, and otherwise being wiser and more analytical in managing their simulation company. *We recommend that you give serious consideration to using at least some of these exercises because they will stimulate the thinking and analysis of company-co-managers in a very positive way and because they will "force" company co-managers to wrestle with things that should contribute to better decision-making and company performance.*

Some of the questions/exercises can be posed to the class as a whole for open discussion and debate (perhaps as vehicles for concluding your lectures on the chapter material). But a substantial number of the exercises are best used for written assignments because the answers involve competitively sensitive analysis and thinking that company co-managers will not want to share with other class members who are managing rival companies. As a general rule, class members should be asked to prepare their answers to the italicized questions on a team basis rather than individually; having company co-managers collaborate in preparing their answers is an effective means of building consensus among company co-managers

Other "Getting Started" Considerations If You Use One of the Strategy Simulations. Enumerated below are our recommendations concerning the team size, number of companies, number of decision rounds, use of quizzes, use of the 3-year strategic plan feature, scoring, and peer evaluation requirements—all of which are part of the "Course Set-up" procedure that you will be asked to complete in order to get the simulation ready to go in your course:

1. Try to assign teams of 2, 3, or 4 co-managers per company. Two- or 3-person teams are optimum in an MBA class; *3-person teams are probably the optimum size in an undergraduate class*, with 4-person teams being a very acceptable second option. The pros and cons of various team sizes are discussed at length in Section 2 of this manual.

The software for both simulations is programmed to allow a maximum of 12 companies to compete head-to-head in a single "industry." If your class size is above 36 and thus too big to have 12 companies with 3 co-managers each, we suggest that you consider dividing the class into 2 industries (or groups of competing companies) so as to keep from having a large number of 4-5 person teams. With automated processing, it is really no bigger administrative burden to set up your class with 2 or more competing groups of companies than it is to have the whole class in a single group or industry.

If you have other group activities in your class, then you should consider having students play the simulation in the same group, as long as the size of the group is 5 or fewer persons. If your other group activity involves group sizes of 6 or larger then you can divide each into two teams for the purpose of playing the simulation. If some teams end up with only two co-managers because one of more of their co-managers drop the course, then we suggest giving the two-person team to option to continue on their own—particularly if the simulation is well underway and the co-managers are working well together. However, there are options in both simulations to switch company managers to different teams and eliminate a company from the industry, whenever you determine that is a good option.

2. Avoid having fewer than four companies per industry if at all possible. If you have a small class, we recommend having no fewer than 4 company teams—two-person teams for a 4-company industry will work better than fewer companies and more players per team.
3. Select a decision schedule that is a good fit with other class assignments. As indicated earlier, any of three decision schedules can be employed successfully. The simulations are programmed for a maximum of 2 practice decisions and 10 regular decisions.

4. Schedule at least one, preferably two, practice decision rounds. We urge scheduling 2 practice rounds (if at all possible) and 1 practice round for sure. Practice decisions give students a chance to get comfortable with the software and to conduct “risk-free experiments” in trying out certain strategies and options. Two practice rounds are plenty to prepare your class for “the real thing,” and students can definitely do well with just 1 practice round if the time you have to allocate to the simulation is constrained. During the practice rounds, urge class members to make use of the Video Tutorials for each of the decision screens—these will give them a good overview of how to proceed in tackling the decision entries. Also, urge them to use the Video Tutorials in digesting the information provided on the various pages of the Competitive Intelligence Reports, the Industry Report, and the Company Operating Reports.
5. Try to build a minimum of 6 regular or scored decision rounds into your decision schedule. This will give players some time to put a strategy in place, tweak it (or make wholesale changes), and operate the company for the “long-run.” However, 8 to 10 regular decision rounds is significantly better in terms of giving players enough time to really see what they can do with their company and to experience the full effects of having to adjust their strategies to changing market and competitive conditions.
6. Consider using the default 20% weighting on each of the performance measures. There are 5 scoring variables: earnings per share (EPS), return on stockholders’ equity (ROE), stock price appreciation, credit rating, and corporate/brand image. While we believe a 20% weight for each of the five variables works exceptionally well, you have complete freedom to set whatever weights you prefer, including assigning a 0% weight to one or more measures and eliminating them from the scoring algorithm. If you strongly believe that some of the 5 variables should carry a higher weight, then our advice is to up them to 25%-30% and cut others back to 10%-15%.
7. Utilize both scoring standards in determining the company performance scores. *GLO-BUS* and *The Business Strategy Game* employ two standards in scoring company performance: the “Investor Expectations” Standard and the “Best-in-Industry” Standard (these are explained briefly in Section 2 of this manual). We suggest using the default 50%-50% weighting on these two standards in designating how the company performance scores should be weighted, but you can change the weights if you wish. (Other alternatives include 67%-33% or 33%-67% or 75%-25% or 25%-75%). Of course, if you want to use just one of the standards, you can place a weight of 100% on that standard and a 0% weight on the other one. Both the websites and the IMs for the two simulations contain in-depth explanations of the scoring standards and provide instructions for changing the default weights.
8. Make full use of the two built-in quizzes. We strongly urge requiring students to complete the quizzes and then counting their scores on these quizzes as part of the final simulation grade. We developed these quizzes to provide you with feedback on each individual participant’s grasp of the simulation. ***Both quizzes are open-book, and really are aimed at pushing students to learn what is going on rather than “testing” them.***

We suggest putting a 5% weight on Quiz 1 and a 7.5% weight on Quiz 2 in having the software calculate overall performance scores for each participant. Keep in mind that both quizzes are, in effect, “open book.” *Quiz 1, which covers the Player’s Guide, is relatively easy* since students the open-book nature of the quiz allows students to look up the answers they don’t know right off. Students can easily score 80 or higher on Quiz 1 if they have read the *Guide* and refer to it during the course of taking the quiz. Grades of 90 and higher on Quiz 1 should be common. Students who score poorly on Quiz 1 (below 75) simply have not put enough effort into reading the *Guide* and understanding what the simulation is all about. We urge setting the deadline for this quiz to correspond to the deadline for the first practice decision so as to spur students to read and understand the *Participant’s Guide* at an early stage in the simulation exercise.

Quiz 2 is more difficult than Quiz 1 and merits a higher percentage in the grade calculation. Quiz 2 consists mostly of questions that require students to make calculations or otherwise indicate their command of where the numbers in the company reports come from—it has a time limit of 90 minutes (versus 45

minutes for Quiz 1). All of the quiz questions tell the students on which Help/More Info screens the answers can be found; all of the formulas for calculating the various financial ratios are contained on the Financial Ratios summary link on each student's Corporate Lobby screen (6-8 of the questions on Quiz 2 involve financial calculations). So students can make a pretty decent score (80 or higher) on Quiz 2 by using printouts of the Help/More Info screens to help them determine the correct answers for the 20 multiple choice question comprising Quiz 2.

We strongly suggest setting the deadline for completing Quiz 2 to correspond to the deadline for the decision for Years 9 or 10 for *GLO-BUS* and Years 13 or 14 for *BSG*. By this point in either simulation, we think students ought to have a good grasp of what is going on, what the numbers in the company reports mean, and how they are calculated.

9. *Give strong consideration to having students do at least one 3-year strategic plan* during the course of the exercise. Both simulations have an optional 3-year strategic plan module. The 3-year strategic plan feature calls for students to (1) articulate a strategic vision for their company (in a couple of sentences), (2) set performance targets for EPS, ROE, stock price appreciation, credit rating, and image rating for each of the next three years, (3) state the competitive strategy the company will pursue, (4) cite data showing that the chosen strategy is either currently on track or will require substantial internal changes, and (5) develop a projected income statement covering the next three years.

Each company's strategic plan is automatically graded based on the extent to which the company meets or beats its performance targets (this is explained at greater length in Section 2 of this manual). The grade on the strategic plan is automatically recorded in your online grade book and can be used in calculating a final simulation score for each company.

For more details, see Section 2 above or the Instructor's Guides for the simulations.

10. *At the end of the simulation, we strongly urge that your decision schedule include a requirement that students do peer evaluations of their co-managers and also do a self-evaluation (using the same form).* Peer evaluations provide very valuable information about how well a company's management team functioned from the perspective of the co-managers—attendance at meeting, teamwork, contribution of ideas and suggestion, leadership, and so on. The responses to the peer evaluation are automatically scored and recorded in your online grade book. You have the ability to click on any of the peer evaluation scores for any co-manager and review the entire peer evaluation. When students know that you will review the peer evaluations (only the low scores really need to be inspected individually), then you have a powerful tool for exposing “free riders” and students who have not carried their fair share of the workload. We suggest having the deadline for completing the peer evaluations correspond to the deadline for the last decision but you can set a later deadline if you wish—while students can review the content of the peer evaluation at any time, students are not allowed to complete the peer evaluation until the deadline approaches.

Generally, a big percentage of company co-managers will earn scores of 85 or better on the peer evaluations, signifying that their “effort index” and participation has been quite satisfactory to even superb (in the case of scores in the high-90s. Scores below 80 should usually raise a red flag and merit inspection to see discover the causes of the low ratings.

We urge that you make it clear to the class that the peer evaluations are “confidential” reports to be seen only by you and that you will exercise your judgment as to just how much they will count in assigning grades on the simulation. Making the “threat” of a bad peer evaluation a part of the simulation grade helps reduce the likelihood that weak students will slack off on their effort and let their co-managers assume full responsibility for company operations and thus make the bulk of their grade for them. In our classes, we tend to reduce the grades of participants who receive very low peer evaluations (sometimes by a full letter grade or more), since we believe it is inherently unfair and unethical for low contributors or absentee co-managers to receive a grade that their co-managers agree they really did not earn or deserve.

But, obviously, you have to use discretion and judgment in how to treat peer evaluations—one can't always be entirely sure that students are “telling the truth” on the evaluations or that their judgments are completely honest and fair. Many times, of course, students “overrate” the performance and contributions of their colleagues, so don't be surprised if some of the peer evaluation scores are higher than they probably should be. The potential for the peer evaluations scores to be less than trustworthy *in the case of some students* is one reason why you may not want to include them in the grade calculations; certainly, if you tell students that the peer evaluations have some percentage weight, then the chances that co-managers will strike an agreement to give each other highly positive evaluations are substantially enhanced. That is why in our classes, we are deliberately vague about what we do with the evaluations, except to say we will definitely look them over and that everyone is expected to complete them in a professional and honest manner.

Forming the Company Management Teams for the Simulation. We have two approaches to offer for your consideration in assigning students to co-manage the companies. One is to let those students who want to form their own management teams do so and then assign the remaining students to companies on the basis of major (we always form teams with students of *different* majors, to the extent possible). This procedure seems to satisfy all concerned. Some students always prefer to choose their own teammates — so they are pleased with the two-option procedure. And those students who, for whatever reason, prefer “the luck of the draw” are nearly always pleased with the impartiality of teaming up people with different majors.

The second approach is to assign all students to teams, trying to diversify teams on the basis of both major and cultural diversity. *Assigning people to teams has the highly desirable advantage of establishing a business relationship between the team members rather than allowing teams to be formed on the basis of prior friendship or common major or prearranged liaisons with a known-to-be-bright student.* Business relationships among students with differing majors and cultural backgrounds has, in our experience over the years, often proven to be the superior basis for team formation compared to the practice of giving students the freedom to form teams based on whatever criteria they choose to use. But, on the other hand, we've found the first approach tends to be most popular with students.

Tips on Conducting the Simulation. Once the team sizes and decision/assignment schedule have been decided and the simulation has been launched, you may want to consider the following:

- **Schedule 2 practice rounds** (barring time constraints) to deepen class member familiarity with the how the software works, the decision entry screens, and the information and outcomes provided after each decision round. Two practice rounds also give company co-managers a chance to try out different strategy/decision combinations and see what happens.
- **Stress to class members the importance and value of using the Video Tutorials and the detailed Help sections to find answers to any questions they have:**
 - **The short 2-3 minute** Video Tutorials are particularly helpful during the practice rounds when students first encounter the software menus and the information on the screens and are wondering what to do next.
 - Whenever class members want more in-depth explanations and details than contained in a Video Tutorial, all they have to do is click on the Help button at the top of a decision screen or report page.
 - The Help sections for decision screens provide information about each decision entry, full explanations of cause-effect relationships, and tips/suggestions about what to do and not do.
 - The Help sections for any page of the Company Reports, the Footwear Industry Report, and the Competitive Intelligence Reports explain what the numbers mean, how they are calculated, and how to use the information to good advantage.

Insisting that students make full use of the Video Tutorials and the Help sections will virtually eliminate the need for students to ask you any questions about “how things work.” Plus, the tutorials and the Help sections will educate them about how to run their company in a “wise” and successful manner.

- Encourage team members to explore and take advantage of using the built-in Collaboration Mode and Audio Mode capabilities when working online at the same time from different locations.
- ***During the Course Setup Procedure, create an extra company for you to operate throughout the practice rounds (and maybe for several additional decision rounds)—do this especially if you are a first-time user or if you want to learn more about what operating a company is all about. The company you manage can easily be deleted at the conclusion of the practice rounds (but no sooner than that) or in later scored rounds if you opt to run your company for additional decision rounds.***
 - Running a company yourself is the quickest and most productive way to familiarize yourself with “how things work”, explore all the various decision entries, view the reports showing the results of each decision round, and experience what the simulation experience for students is all about.
 - Operating a company will equip you to (1) see the value of the information that you and your students are furnished after each decision round, (2) provide the class with your perspectives about the competitive battle that is taking place and call attention to particularly interesting outcomes, and (3) be wise in assigning grades and otherwise conducting the simulation.
 - The knowledge and understanding gained will also enable you to answer student questions about this or that aspect of the simulation (which sometimes occurs) and, if you wish, to provide advice and counsel to companies that may be floundering and need some guidance.

If you opt to run your own company, inform the class which company you are running, tell them it will be a temporary thing (and that your company will be deleted later), indicate that you will exercise care in making “competition friendly decisions” that are not aimed at stealing sales and market share from other companies, and make it clear that you have no intention of trying to outcompete the companies they are running or otherwise demonstrate your prowess. ***What class members need to understand is that your purpose in running a company during the practice rounds is to become as familiar as possible with what is involved in making decisions, managing company operations, and comprehending the information in the various reports available to all companies.***

Once the practice rounds are completed, there is an item on the Administration Menu for the industry that enables you to quickly and easily delete the company you are running from the competition. (***Note: No company can be deleted until the practice rounds are completed.***)

Also, bear in mind that the built-in Collaboration and Voice–Chat capabilities allow you to join an online meeting of the co-managers of any company—either as an observer or as an advisor/consultant. If you have run a company yourself for several decision rounds, you will be better prepared to take on this role, answer student questions about this or that aspect of the simulation (which sometimes occurs) and, if you wish, to provide advice and counsel to companies that may be in need some guidance.

- Use the PowerPoint slides that we have created (see the link on the left side of your Instructor Center screen) to introduce the simulation to your class and explain some of the mechanics.
- Urge students to read the list of recommended decision procedures that is provided on the link on their company’s “Corporate Lobby” page. This list provides students with a useful guide in using all the available industry and company reports and a suggested routine for preparing each year’s decisions.

- Emphasize to the class that it is wise to be very wary of trying something that is imprudent or highly risky or un-businesslike (things that would get a manager fired in a real company). In our experience, overzealous students who resort to trying to “game the system” almost always shoot themselves in the foot. They’ll get more out of participating in a simulation when they take on the role of a business professional who is trying to achieve the best possible company performance using managerially prudent and responsible business approaches. Little of value will come from students approaching the simulation exercise like a daring adventurer out to win some variant of a videogame by testing the limits of the simulation and using whatever un-businesslike and unprofessional means they can get by with. When class members know you will hold them accountable for bad or foolish decisions, they are less likely to be a “loose cannon” in running their companies and will take things more seriously.
- As previously discussed, use the “Exercises for Simulation Participants” that appear at the end of each chapter in the 4th Edition to help connect issues/challenges that company co-managers face in running their company to the content of the 10 chapters. Some of these exercises are suitable for open class discussion (immediately during or following your lectures on the chapters) but many are best used for team assignments, with the answers provided confidentially to the instructor in a brief report (because the answers involve competitively sensitive analysis and thinking on the part of each company team that they will definitely not want to share with class members managing rival companies). ***Insisting that each team of company co-managers complete the “Exercises for Simulation Participants” for each assigned chapter in a conscientious manner has two benefits:***
 - **Increasing the likelihood that the members of your class will come to appreciate the managerial relevance and value of the topics covered in the chapters and how they can be used to make wiser strategic decisions.**
 - **Prodding each team of company co-managers to think about many of the right things in arriving at their choice of a company strategy (and fine-tuning or overhauling it as circumstances may require) and achieving better performance results (because of more astute decision-making on their part).**

It is not really necessary for you to grade what companies turn in for their answers to the chapter-end exercises; merely spot checking to see that they have done them will suffice.

- Stress that, at the end of the simulation (and also mid-way through the simulation if you wish), all company managers will be asked to complete comprehensive peer evaluations of their co-managers, as well as an evaluation of their own performance. (Students can see the content of the 12-question peer evaluation form by clicking on the Peer Evaluations link in their “Corporate Lobby” but they are not given access to completing the form until the deadline for the next-to-last decision has passed. Hence, it is no secret what they will be rated on.) Peer evaluations will have the effect of greatly reducing “free-riding” or “coasting on the coattails” of more industrious co-managers if you emphasize to the class early on that the results of the peer evaluations will be taken seriously and that poor evaluations and absences from team meetings will negatively impact an individual’s grade on the simulation.

In the event that you want to do an “interim” or “mid-course” peer evaluation after the first 3-5 decisions as a check on how well things are going, you can ask students to print out a copy of the peer evaluation form, fill it in, and submit it to you. Alternatively, you can print out a blank peer evaluation form, make copies, and pass them out in class. You’ll find it pretty simple to skim through the evaluations to spot any problems with low performers. It is generally wise to call them in for a consultation and counsel them on the importance of being a fully-participating contributor. Usually, this will suffice to alter their behavior and jack up their participation and contribution.

- Instructors that want to take a more hands-on approach to administering the simulation may find it worthwhile to spend about 10 minutes of class time “debriefing” industry members on particularly interesting outcomes and results, to comment on what you see happening in the industry, to urge them to make note of the wide differences in company costs that you see in the benchmarking data, and to

connect events in the simulation to your lectures on the chapters or to similar situations in some of the assigned cases you've discussed. You can hold these debriefings on a regular basis (following each round of decisions and results) or just hold them occasionally when there's something of significance you want to talk about. You'll find information for these debriefings in the Industry reports and in the special Administrative Reports that you can view or print out after each decision. Most of the information in the Administrative Report is not provided to players and you'll find it to be a quick and convenience source of which companies are doing what and which companies have operating costs that are out-of-line and in need of attention.

- ***Don't be overly concerned if one or more company teams do poorly on the first one or even two decisions***—and you should definitely convey to teams that might be distressed with their initial results that it is absolutely possible to turn things around and come out as a market leader by the end of the simulation. Sometimes it just takes a while for a company's strategy to begin to bear fruit or the chemistry on the team to jell; sometimes, the initial strategy is ill-conceived or is thwarted by the strategies of rival firms and thus has to be adjusted. In our experience, the companies that are the leaders after the first one or two decisions seldom end up on top. Just as who is ahead after one or two innings of a 9-inning baseball game may not end up winning the ball game, so also is it in a competition-based simulation.

Naturally, of course, the co-managers of companies who fare poorly will be concerned and should be counseled to review their strategy and decisions for ways to improve. ***You should tell concerned co-managers of low-performing companies that much of the information provided in the various reports is "diagnostic" (particularly the Competitive Intelligence Reports) and points directly to things that are in need of attention.*** In our experience, there are two primary reasons why companies perform poorly:

- Company co-managers have a poor grasp of the contents of the Player's Guide and/or have not spent time reading the Help screens (which provide substantial guidance in how to approach strategizing and decision-making).
- Company co-managers are not paying nearly enough attention to *studying and digesting the information in all the reports and diagnosing their company's situation*. When they are directed to really probe this information and use it, then their company usually begins to perform better. You'll find there is plenty of information provided in the reports for students to identify "what went wrong", where their costs are out-of-line with rivals, and what they should do to boost sales and market share. Company managers who conscientiously look at the numbers will have little trouble spotting avenues for improving their company's performance—***each page of the Competitive Intelligence Reports provides a list of competitive strengths and competitive weaknesses in each of the four geographic regions***. Determine if company co-managers have grasped the significance of the information in the Competitive Intelligence Reports and really dug into the numbers—if not, this is the root of their problem. ***Urge that they pay very special attention to the numbers in these reports, read the Help screens for these reports, and take actions to remedy their company's competitive weaknesses.***

Sometimes, bad results turn out to be a positive catalyst for co-managers, causing them to really buckle down, dig into the numbers, and get serious about the effort they are putting into the simulation. Students can learn every bit as much from their mistakes and from efforts to turn their company around as from enjoying success decision round after decision round.

- As a general rule, we think that companies with an overall performance score of 90 or above should get an A. Companies with an overall performance score of 80-89 should get a B (or better if there are no companies with scores of 90 or more). Companies with an overall performance score of 70-79 above should get a C (or better depending on how many teams have higher scores). You may find it desirable to scale the scores if competition turns out to be so fierce or cutthroat that companies in the industry can't earn good profits and meet investors' performance expectations. In most of our classes, we end up scaling the performance scores of companies with scores below 70-75, but it is rare for no company to end up with a score above 90 and thus clearly earn an A without the need for putting much of a scale on the grades on the upper end.

Bear in mind that the scoring method we use does not in any way require that some companies receive low scores. Scores are based entirely on (1) whether companies achieve the benchmark performances that investors expect for EPS, ROE, credit rating, stock price appreciation, and image and (2) whether the race to be the market leader is very close from the first place company to the last place company or whether there is quite a wide disparity in the caliber of performances (with the bottom-performing companies turning in truly bad results). If one or more companies have truly low performance scores relative to the other companies, we leave it up to you to decide what sort of scale to apply and thus how much to raise their grade. You'll find that there's plenty of information provided to you in your online electronic grade book to decide what grades to assign. You can either use the ones calculated for you (based on the weights you have specified, which can be changed whenever you wish by merely inputting different weights) or else scale the overall performance scores to your liking.

Dealing with Disagreements among Co-Managers and “Non-Contributors.” As with any team assignment, situations will arise where a team member does not carry his or her share of the workload, causing other team members to complain or otherwise voice displeasure. We recommend handling this situation in several ways. Our first recommendation is always to urge the hard-working team members to have a heart-to-heart talk with the person who is slacking off; we also offer to talk with the low-contributing student if the other team members think that would be helpful. A second approach to dealing with complaints about weak contributors is to remind the low-contributing student (or the class as a whole) that there will be peer evaluations at the end of the course and that poor peer evaluations are likely to have an adverse and perhaps severe effect on the grade assigned. If an alleged low-performer's contribution still does not improve, you may have to read them the riot act, threaten to drop them from the simulation with a failing grade, or (if it seems appropriate or practical) you may consider assigning the low-performer to another team (with their consent).

On occasions, company co-managers get into such serious disagreements or have disruptive personality conflicts that it makes sense to move one or more team members to a different team. While moving a person from one company team to another should be done sparingly, it does give you a sometimes workable out for dealing with unusually severe problems among company co-managers.

Moving students to a different team is quickly accomplished if you are using either *GLO-BUS* or *The Business Strategy Game*; all you have to do is select the “Move/Delete Company Co-Managers” option on the Administrative Menu. But you should probably first consult the co-managers of the company to which you want to move the person and secure their approval to take on a new member.

The Business Strategy Game also has an “Add a Company” menu feature. This option (which is available if you have less than the maximum 12 teams in an industry) allows you to assign disgruntled or low performers as co-managers to run a newly created company as they see fit. This may, indeed, be the best solution for all concerned.

Suggestions for Sequencing Chapter Coverage and Case Assignments

In using *Essentials of Strategic Management: The Quest for Competitive Advantage*, two basic sequencing approaches are possible:

- (1) Spend the first several weeks covering the 10 chapters of text material, then spend the remainder of the course on cases and/or a strategy simulation, and/or perhaps some outside readings.
- or
- (2) Synthesize coverage of the text material, the cases, simulation decision rounds, and/or outside readings.

In our course we've used both approaches successfully but our strong preference is for the latter, so as to introduce some variety into the assignments and to vary the course tempo from class period to class period. We have organized the text chapters and the cases to make it easy to integrate the sequencing. For example, the primary issues in the first 8 cases call upon students to make heavy use of the tools and concepts in Chapters 1 through 7. Case 9 requires application of the material in Chapter 8. Cases 10 and 11 deal mainly with the topics covered in Chapters 10 and Case 12 is a fitting companion to your coverage of Chapter 9.

In Section 4 that follows, you find 11 sample schedules of class activities for courses of varying length and content; the schedules show recommended ways to sequence your coverage of the chapters and cases, with and without use of an accompanying simulation.

Making Use of the Guide to Case Analysis

Generally speaking, before initiating discussion of the cases, you should encourage students to read the “Guide to Case Analysis” posted in the Connect Library, under Instructor Resources. Having students read the Guide is especially important when many of the class members are not familiar with the case method and with how to prepare a case for class discussion or for written analysis. Most students need explicit direction in the mechanics of coming to class adequately prepared for class discussion of an assigned case—otherwise, they are likely to do no more than read the case and respond to your questions with off-the-cuff opinions. The hints and pointers in the Guide to Case Analysis should help students get off to a better start and orient them to the traditional analytical sequence of (1) identify, (2) evaluate, and (3) recommend.

In explaining how you plan to handle class discussion of the cases, you can easily highlight those points discussed in the Guide to Case Analysis which best reflect your own thinking and preferences. And you can do the same with regard to the suggestions for preparing a written case analysis and doing an oral team presentation.

The Table of Financial Ratios. *There is a summary table in the Appendix of the text that presents and explains the array of standard financial ratios that come into play in sizing up a company's financial situation.* We suggest calling this table to the attention of students so they can utilize it in analyzing the financial statements in the cases.

A big majority of students will likely make extensive use of the Financial Ratio table in calculating and properly interpreting financial and operating ratios appropriate for assigned cases.

How Many Cases to Assign

How many cases to use varies with whether you use a simulation game, how much class time you wish to spend on the text chapters, whether you like to assign additional readings from either a readings supplement or from library resources, how many times your class meets per week, and whether the course runs for a quarter, a semester, or two quarters.

Generally speaking, we recommend covering 6 to 8 cases in a semester-long course meeting twice weekly (25 or so class meetings). In a one-quarter course you may find it more comfortable to cover only 4-6 cases in a class meeting twice weekly for 75 minutes. If you are using a strategy simulation, then assigning a lesser number of cases than you otherwise would makes sense.

Aside from the number and length of the class meetings each term, the “right” number of cases to try to cover is very much a function of your choices about using a simulation game and how much (if any) time you opt to spend on the simulation in class, whether you decide to assign outside readings, the amount of class time you want to spend covering the basic concepts and analytical tools (the material in Chapters 1-10), and whether you decide to spend more than one class period covering one or two of the longer/issue-rich cases.

Deciding How to Sequence the Case Assignments

In selecting what sequence in which to assign the cases, we suggest at least a *rough* adherence to the order in which the cases appear in the book—particularly the first time you use the book. In sequencing the cases under each topic heading, we have tried to follow some logical order based on central teaching points, key issues, analytical complexity, and overall pedagogical purpose.

In Section 4 of this IM are 5 sample course schedules that provide specific suggestions for sequencing your case assignments over a 15-week term. Section 4 also provides 3 sample daily schedules for a 10-week term and three sample daily class schedules for a 5-week summer. In addition, each case teaching note contains a section on “Suggestions for Using the Case” that provides further details and guidance on where a particular case fits and the central teaching points it contains. But to simplify things a bit in choosing the cases and sequencing that might work for you and to further supplement the Table 1 grid showing the strategic issues that are prominent in each case, we have provided some groupings below that you may find helpful.

Cases that make especially good lead-off cases and/or that are easier to analyze:

Lead-Off Cases	
Airbnb in 2017	Competition in the Craft Beer Industry in 2017
Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	Robin Hood

Cases which are good follow-ons to “lead-off” cases and only moderately difficult for students to analyze:

Follow-On Cases	
Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Can the Company Get Back on Track?
Competition in the Craft Beer Industry in 2017	Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy Connect with Consumers in 2017?
Fitbit, Inc. in 2017: Can It Revive its Strategy and Reverse Mounting Losses	GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?
Robin Hood	Ricoh Canada

Cases that are most comprehensive nature and somewhat greater analytical requirements:

Comprehensive Cases	
Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	Rosen Hotels & Resorts
Mondelez International’s Diversification Strategy in 2017: Has Corporate Restructuring Benefitted Shareholders?	TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility
Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Can the Company Get Back on Track	GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?

Table 2 profiles the topics and issues that are contained in the 12 cases in this edition. The grid in Table 2 and sample daily class schedules in Section 4 are intended to help you make wise choices about how to position coverage of the chapters and sequence the case assignments in your course. Each case teaching note also contains a section on “Suggestions for Using the Case” that provides ideas on case sequencing and case use.

TABLE 2

A Quick Profile of the Cases in the 6th Edition of Essentials of Strategic Management

		Accompanying video (Y = yes; N = no)	Connect Case Exercise (Y = yes; N = No)	Size: Small (S), Medium (M), Large (L)	The manager's role in crafting strategy	The manager's role in executing strategy	Vision, mission, and objectives	Crafting strategy in single-business companies	Industry and competitive analysis	Company resources and capabilities	Global or multinational strategy	E-business strategy issues	Diversification strategies and the analysis of multi-business corporations	Financial conditions and financial analysis	Staffing, people management, incentives and rewards	Organizational structure, core competencies, competitive capabilities, staffing	Policies, procedures, operating systems, best practices, continuous improvement	Corporate culture issues	Ethics, values, social responsibility	Exercising strategic leadership	Making action recommendations
Case 1	Airbnb, Inc. in 2017	Y	N	S		X	X	X	X	X	X			X							X
Case 2	Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	Y	Y	L	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X
Case 3	Competition in the Craft Beer Industry in 2017	Y	N	S				X	X												X
Case 4	Fitbit, Inc. in 2017: Can It Revive its Strategy and Reverse Mounting Losses?	Y	N	S	X			X	X	X				X							X
Case 5	Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Is the Company on the Path to Becoming a High Performer Again?	Y	Y	M	X		X	X	X	X	X			X							X
Case 6	Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy Connect with Consumers in 2017?	Y	N	M	X		X	X	X	X		X		X							X
Case 7	GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?	Y	N	M	X		X	X	X	X		X		X							X
Case 8	Ricoh Canada	Y	N	L	X			X	X	X	X			X							X
Case 9	Mondelez International's Diversification Strategy in 2017: Has Corporate Restructuring Benefitted Shareholders?	Y	Y	L	X				X	X	X		X	X							X
Case 10	Robin Hood	Y	Y	S	X	X	X		X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Case 11	Rosen Hotels & Resorts	Y	N	M	X	X	X	X		X					X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Case 12	TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility	Y	Y	M	X		X	X	X	X	X			X							X

Cases with Accompanying Videos

All cases in this 6th edition have accompanying videos which may want to consider showing during the course of the case discussions. We have recommended multiple videos available on the Internet for students to view on their own outside of class or for in-class use by the instructor. Table 3 below provides some information on each of the case videos, including the title, source, video run time, and the URL for videos.

TABLE 3

List of Videos Accompanying the Cases in the 6th Edition

Case #	Case Title	Source	Length	Title	URL
1	Airbnb in 2016: A Business Model for the Sharing Economy	YouTube 2015	5:04	Airbnb's International Growth Strategy	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsF4VHriFFY
1	Airbnb in 2016: A Business Model for the Sharing Economy	YouTube 2015	6:40	Airbnb's VP of Product on Growth and Planning for the Future	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o1RMH8WQtAQ
2	Costco Wholesale in 2016: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	YouTube 2015	2:26	Jim Cramer Discusses Why Costco Is King	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCU1hLF7jE0
2	Costco Wholesale in 2016: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy	YouTube 2015	2:46	Nightly Business Report: Costco Strikes a New Deal	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05Ojj32ZYks
3	Competition in the Craft Beer Industry in 2016	YouTube 2015	2:39	US Craft Beer Producers Looking to Conquer Overseas Markets	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRU6V20RQbA
3	Competition in the Craft Beer Industry in 2016	YouTube 2015	3:27	Is the Craft Beer Market Getting Too Crowded?	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BbSnoTBZVv8
4	Fitbit, Inc.: Has the Company Outgrown Its Strategy?	YouTube 2015	3:10	Fitbit CEO: We Don't Target Same Consumer as Apple	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Elpglbn7bs
4	Fitbit, Inc.: Has the Company Outgrown Its Strategy?	YouTube 2015	6:02	Fitbit CEO: Upping the Wellness Game/ Mad Money/ CNBC	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yobOs-mgHmE
5	lululemon athletica, inc. in 2016: Can the Company Get Back on Track?	YouTube 2016	1:14	lululemon athletica: Don't Customize, Configure	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKuyxgpX6po
5	lululemon athletica, inc. in 2016: Can the Company Get Back on Track?	YouTube 2015	3:27	lululemon Resale Is Big Business	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eVtqvXMd2fo
6	Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy to Connect with Consumers in 2016?	YouTube 2015	1:38	Why Is Gap Closing 175 Stores in North America	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TdARiQlrFgE
6	Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy to Connect with Consumers in 2016?	YouTube 2015	2:01	GAP Inc. to Open Store in India	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvTFvw6E53Y
7	GoPro's Struggle for Survival in 2016	YouTube 2016	8:34	GoPro CEO on New Camera Drone, Company Performance	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOZB-UV71NI
7	GoPro's Struggle for Survival in 2016	YouTube 2014	2:05	CEO: Leading GoPro Is like Racing a Car	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=co510JA34nl

Case #	Case Title	Source	Length	Title	URL
8	Ricoh Canada Inc.	YouTube 2015	3:37	Ricoh Americas Corporation Interview (EN)	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jITCCHzGgQ8
8	Ricoh Canada Inc.	YouTube 2012	4:05	Ricoh - Business Transformation - Cross Media 2012	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMQAdk6AHu8
9	Mondelēz International: Has Corporate Restructuring Produced Shareholder Value?	YouTube 2016	2:51	Why Hershey Rejected Mondelez's \$23B Takeover Offer	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZ21Y4RGqc
9	Mondelēz International: Has Corporate Restructuring Produced Shareholder Value?	YouTube 2015	4:56	Mondelez CEO on Turnaround: "Be Straight with people"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lo--USeFhCE
10	Robin Hood	YouTube 2012	2:26	Sheryl Sandberg: What I Learned from Google	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TWI8L2oWYo
10	Robin Hood	YouTube 2014	2:15	Insights on Leadership: Sara Blakely, Sir Richard Branson, and Richard Anderson on Advice	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKhEuKVk0Jc
11	Rosen Hotels & Resorts: Delivering Superior Customer Service	YouTube 2016	7:17	The Hospitality Business: Adapting to Survive - Counting the Cost	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5yRTUpXxRM
11	Rosen Hotels & Resorts: Delivering Superior Customer Service	YouTube 2015	6:01	Harris Rosen '61, President & COO of Rosen Hotels and Resorts	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8rJhWiU_dU
12	TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility	YouTube 2015	2:16	TOMS: The Business of Footwear and Philanthropy	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvVle_W9epI
12	TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility	YouTube 2014	2:16	TOMS Launches One-for-One Coffee Company / Fortune	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtKsC8BIYhw

N/A – not applicable

Suggested Cases for Oral Team Presentations

There is great merit in selecting several cases for use as oral presentations by teams or groups of students. Group sizes can range from two to as many as four or five, with the time allocated for presentation ranging from about 30 minutes per group to the whole class period. We like to assign oral team presentations of cases because such assignments drill students in organizing the work and tasks of several people into a team effort, presenting their ideas, preparing professional caliber PowerPoint slides, and defending their ideas in a Q&A session—all skills that most students will be called on to display in future job assignments.

In our course, we like to have teams of 3-4 persons (usually composed of the same students who are playing the simulation exercise together) and presentations that last 15 to 20 minutes, followed by a 10-minute question and answer session (where class members have responsibility for asking all the questions and can be graded on the caliber of their question for class participation purposes). With this format, two or three teams can be assigned the same case and give their presentations of the case on the same day. This adds a useful bit of competition to the process and also serves to illustrate the different perspectives, analysis, and recommendations that can flow from wrestling with the same case situation (amazingly enough, 3 presentations of the same case tend to be strikingly different).

Cases which are particularly well suited for oral team presentations include:

- Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy
- Fitbit, Inc. in 2017: Can It Revive its Strategy and Reverse Mounting Losses?
- Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Can the Company Get Back on Track?
- Fitbit, Inc.: Has the Company Outgrown Its Strategy?
- Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy to Connect with Consumers in 2017?
- GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?
- Ricoh Canada
- Mondelez International's Diversification Strategy in 2017: Has Corporate Restructuring Benefitted Shareholders?
- Rosen Hotels & Resorts: Delivering Superior Customer Service
- TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility

Cases Suitable for Follow-On Research on the Internet

If you are inclined to have students do further research on companies and update what's happened since the case was researched, the following cases are especially good choices:

- Airbnb in 2017
- Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy
- Fitbit, Inc. in 2017: Can It Revive its Strategy and Reverse Mounting Losses?
- Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Can the Company Get Back on Track?
- Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy to Connect with Consumers in 2017?
- GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?
- Ricoh Canada
- Mondelez International's Diversification Strategy in 2017: Has Corporate Restructuring Benefitted Shareholders?
- TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility

The Merits of Providing Students with Study Questions for Assigned Cases

In assigning cases for either oral discussion or written analysis, we've found it advisable to provide students with a set of assignment questions.

Assignment questions direct students toward what to be alert for in the case, push them to do the kind of strategic thinking and analysis that is required, and let them know what things you intend to bring up in leading class discussion of the case. Making it crystal clear that students are absolutely expected to prepare substantive answers to each of the assignment questions is pretty much essential if you want students to speak with authority and make meaningful comments on the questions you pose. Otherwise, your class discussions are likely to involve a lot of shooting-from-the-hip, instant analysis, and uninformed opinion on the part of students, none of which does much in the way of building their analytical skills or teaching them to probe deeply into the decision-making issues posed in the case. Without assignment questions to guide their thinking and analysis, too many students tend merely to read the case and come to class without having done any thoughtful analysis and evaluation—a condition which lowers the overall caliber and value of the case discussion.

But when the instructor insists on conscientious preparation of answers to study questions, then one or two of the assigned questions can be used as the basis for launching discussion of the case and getting the class started on a positive note. Sometimes, particularly for more complex cases, it is good to assign specific study questions to specific groups of students prior to the day of class and ask them to come prepared to present their analysis to the rest of the class.

To facilitate your providing class members with study questions for the assigned cases, we have created a PDF file of Assignment Questions for each case and posted the files for all 12 cases in the Instructor Resources section of the Connect Library. The assignment questions for each case are identical to the suggested assignment questions that are part of our teaching note for each of the 12 cases in this edition (the teaching notes are in Section 6 of the IM). Having students use the assignment questions posted at the Student Edition of the text Web site eliminates the need for you to go to the trouble of providing your class with assignment questions for the cases in your syllabus (if you are so inclined, you can single out specific questions for students to concentrate on, should you wish to focus the class discussion on particular areas). Naturally, of course, you can provide class members with your own set of preferred study questions for each case and have them ignore the ones that are posted altogether.

Written Case Assignments

It is our practice during the term to assign two, sometimes three, written reports on assigned cases. Written reports are a valuable requirement from several perspectives. They give students a formal workout in

- diagnosing a company's situation,
- sizing up what problems/issues need to be addressed,
- deciding what analysis to conduct to probe the identified problems and issues,
- making use of the appropriate core concepts and analytical tools in the text chapters to thoroughly describe the ins and outs of the company's situation,
- evaluating the pros and cons of various action alternatives,
- setting forth a practical, workable set of action recommendations (that are within the financial means and resource capabilities), and

- putting their thoughts in writing—and doing so in a persuasive, professional manner.

Moreover, a written report gives students valuable practice in (a) preparing charts, graphs, and other visuals, (b) organizing their thoughts, and (c) communicating their analysis and conclusions in a manner suitable for top management. And, finally, written reports provide feedback to students on how well they are doing and to the instructor on how well the class is progressing.

To accomplish these objectives, you can choose among three different types of written case analyses:

1. *Short reports of about 500 words.* These reports are prepared in response to a specific question and do not require a broad-ranging analysis and set of recommendations. Generally, we ask such questions as: What is the firm's strategy? What actions would you recommend management take to deal with its problem of . . . ? Does the company need to change its organization structure to accommodate its change in strategy? Is this an attractive industry to be in? What is your appraisal of competitive conditions? What issues do you think management needs to be worried about most? Short reports can be assigned for almost any case. The primary value of short assignments is in preparing students to do a better job on longer, more comprehensive written analyses.
2. *Comprehensive reports of about 1,000 - 2,000 words (3-6 pages) plus exhibits.* These reports require that students go through the entire process of identifying (or diagnosing), evaluating, and recommending. We stress to students that their reports should deal with all of the major problems and issues raised in the case. Normally, we insist that these analyses be prepared as "reports to management" rather than as the commentary of a student analyst to the instructor. We think it is important for students to assume the posture of a professional manager writing to an audience of other practicing managers. On occasions we like to focus the entire assignment on "what to do and why." Making students center their report on a set of well-supported recommendations to management has the advantage of involving them more directly in the case situation and keeping the student's analysis action-oriented.
3. *In-class written analyses.* It is often useful to require students to do an in-class written analysis of either a case which has been discussed earlier (in part or in whole) or a case that is completely new. Because of the time constraints, it is obviously imperative here to select a case that can be read and analyzed in the allotted time. It is a matter of preference whether students are given a narrowly-focused question to answer or a broad-ranging analysis to conduct. The amount of time available for the exam (as well as the length and complexity of the chosen case) should determine which approach is taken. We use an in-class written case as a final examination and schedule it over a four-hour period. We have opted for closed-book instead of open-book exams; the only aid students can use is a calculator to expedite calculations and financial analysis. As an alternative to giving students a sight-unseen case for in-class analysis, you can assign the case to be read and studied beforehand and use the whole class-time for answering questions posed by the instructor. This technique works quite well when the class time available for examination is only 50 to 75 minutes, but it has the disadvantage of not testing the student's abilities independent of opportunities to consult with others.

In our course, we insist that written case analyses be prepared in a professional manner. By this we mean that papers should be concise, incisive, and literate and include appropriate supporting tables, charts, and exhibits. ***Summarizing and rehashing facts stated in the case is highly discouraged (and usually penalized)***—except where factual restatement is an integral part of the analysis and evaluation and is done to support conclusions about the company's situation. We find that if we insist upon a quality effort from students (with severe grade consequence for poorly-done papers—poor from an analytical perspective or from the standpoint of grammar, spelling, and writing style), then students are more likely to prepare their written cases in a manner that reflects serious analytical effort and professionalism. It is our policy to automatically reduce the grade by one letter if a paper is sloppily and incompetently written; students have to understand that a badly written report reflects badly on their skills and credentials and simply cannot be tolerated at this point in their academic careers.

To avoid chronic problems with late cases, it is our policy to reduce the grade on each late paper by two letters; thus the maximum grade on a late paper is a C (and that only if the paper would otherwise be an A paper). We feel such a policy is entirely justified because it is not a great achievement for students to attend the class discussion of the assigned case, take copious notes, and then hand in a paper which does little more than summarize the class discussion. The latter tactics subvert the pedagogical value of written cases and cannot be tolerated. Our automatic two-letter grade penalty on late papers has worked well in discouraging overdue reports, and you may wish to experiment with it if you are plagued with late papers.

Cases in this edition which we feel are especially appropriate for written case assignments include the following:

- Costco Wholesale in 2017: Mission, Business Model, and Strategy
- Fitbit, Inc. in 2017: Can It Revive its Strategy and Reverse Mounting Losses?
- Lululemon Athletica, Inc. in 2017: Can the Company Get Back on Track?
- Gap Inc.: Can It Develop a Strategy to Connect with Consumers in 2017?
- GoPro in 2017: Will Its Turnaround Strategy Restore Profitability?
- Ricoh Canada
- Mondelez International's Diversification Strategy in 2017: Has Corporate Restructuring Benefitted Shareholders?
- Rosen Hotels & Resorts: Delivering Superior Customer Service
- TOMS Shoes in 2016: An Ongoing Dedication to Social Responsibility

Suggested written case assignments for these and other cases are provided in the teaching notes for the cases.

Suggestions For Leading A Case Discussion

In the event you want some suggestions on how to lead a case discussion, we highly recommend the following sources:

1. V. Kasturi Rangan, "Choreographing a Case Class," available from Harvard Business School Publishing (can be downloaded free at www.hbsp.harvard.edu).
2. Ram Charan, "Classroom Techniques in Teaching by the Case Method," *The Academy of Management Review* (July 1976), pp. 116-123.
3. Charles I. Gragg, "Because Wisdom Can't Be Told," available from Harvard Business School Publishing (the product number is 9-451-005; it can be ordered by calling 800-545-7685, or faxing 617-495-6985, or going to www.hbsp.harvard.edu). Gragg's presentation is a classic and is very worthwhile reading.
4. Louis B. Barnes, C. Roland Christensen, and Abby J. Hansen, *Teaching and the Case Method*, Third Edition, Harvard Business School Press, 1994, ISBN 0-87584-565-7 (can be ordered by calling 800-545-7685, or faxing 617-495-6985, or going to www.hbsp.harvard.edu).
5. B. P. Shapiro, "Hints for Case Teaching," available from Harvard Business School Publishing (www.hbsp.harvard.edu).

6. Kenneth R. Andrews, "The Role of the Instructor in the Case Method," in *The Case Method at the Harvard Business School*, edited by Malcolm P. McNair (McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1954), pp. 98-109. You may also wish to consult the articles by Dewitt C. Dearborn (pp. 121-133) and Robert W. Merry (pp. 132-138) in this same volume.