
CONDUCTING A COMPANY CASE STUDY

*The aim of this project is to gain insight into company internal workings
a framework which can be mapped onto any company situation.*

Instructions For Study

Think of a company in which you have been placed as part of an internship, or one you intend to work for in the future.

- 1° Gather as much documentation as you can about the company.
- 2° Visit the company's website, if it has one.
- 3° Study the firm's past, present and future situation on the basis of the information available on the website and from any other sources.
- 4° Use the checklist of items below to help you.

Case Study

The following is a *checklist* of items you might like to consider when studying the past, present and future situation of a company

I. Historical Background

1. What is the home country of the company?
2. Who set it up? When? Under what circumstances? Give important dates if possible.
3. What product(s) did it make or what services did it provide at the outset?
4. Have there been any partnerships, mergers, takeovers and the like in the development of the company?

II. The Marketing Mix *The Four P's: Product, Price, Promotion, Place*

1. What product(s) does it make now or what service(s) does it provide?
2. What is the image of each product or service?
3. What is the image of the company itself?
4. How does the price of the product or service compare in the market? Is it the same everywhere or does it vary from one area to another? Give details if possible.
5. Does the company offer discounts in some transactions?
6. How and where is each product or service advertised?
7. What are the channels of distribution of the products?
8. Where are the points of sale? Are they easily accessible to customers?

III. SWOT Analysis *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats*

1. What are the firm's *Strengths and Weaknesses*? Look at the areas below:
 - *Management and organisation*: management quality; staff quality; experience; structure; planning; information and control systems
 - *Finance*: profit margin; capital ratios; stock ratios; credit management; return on capital; risk; costs

- *Marketing*: market share; advertising; effectiveness; channels of distribution; customer satisfaction; service reputation; sales force turnover
 - *Operations*: location; capacity; age of facilities; purchasing; quality management; efficiency
 - *Human resources*: skills and qualifications; labour relations; turnover; absenteeism; job satisfaction; grievances
 - *Research and development*: basic research, development capabilities; research programmes; new product introductions; process innovations
2. What *Opportunities and Threats* does the firm currently face in the market or might it meet in the near future? Consider the following:
- trends in demand
 - labour supply and demand
 - competition from business rivals, or from other areas
 - competition from transnational companies
 - technological innovation
 - growing customer awareness of price and quality
 - lower price or higher quality imported goods

IV. Corporate Philosophy and Culture

1. What message(s) do the company's slogan, logo, or motto convey to customers?
2. Does the company stand by any ethical credo or principles regarding environmental protection?
3. Is there anything you can say about their working habits that would be different from other companies'?
4. Are there any rites or practices that help the company maintain good working relationships amongst employees?

V. Contribution of Information Technology to Management

1. Does the company have its own website? What type of information does it display?
2. What software(s) does the company use to improve the management of its activities? (refer to the activity areas outlined in the SWOT analysis section of this checklist)
3. How efficient is this software?