



Building a Case Writing Project

The Experience at Wits Business School

History of the WBS Case Centre

- Established in the late 1990s
- Tasked with writing South African and African teaching cases with WBS faculty members
- Currently two-and-a half permanent staff members, with three freelance writers and a freelance proof reader
- More than 300 cases in our collection, covering all management disciplines
- Cases set in listed and small organisations, private and public sector, profit and non-profit
- Cases distributed via our website, The Case Centre, Evalorix, Sage Business Cases and Emerald Publishing's Emerging Markets Case Studies journal

- WBS full-time and freelance writers research and write the cases with supervision of faculty members
- WBS case centre works with faculty members to produce teaching notes
- We follow a rigorous methodology
 - Scoping – identify learning objectives and potential content
 - Interviews and/or desk research
 - Writing according to a style guide
 - One or two rounds of editing and revision with WBS case centre editors
 - Review by faculty member and revision if necessary
 - Review by focal organisation and revision if necessary
 - Proof reading

Teaching Note Writing

- Our model still in development
- Faculty involvement is critical
- Different ways of assisting faculty members
- Journal review processes are useful

- Different kinds of cases: Harvard style, or more informal
- Students can write and faculty/editors refine the case
- Train young academics to write cases
- Require faculty to write and/or collaborate on cases
- Carrot or stick? (Incentives for faculty who write cases and note, penalties for those who don't)

What We Have Learned

- Writing great cases is complex and time consuming
- Faculty find it difficult to make the time
- Conflict between case writing and writing for journal publication
- DHET publication rewards have been a game changer
- Understanding of the case method and how to teach cases in the class is crucial for effective teaching notes
- Formal training in using the case method is crucial
- The enthusiasm of the head of school for the case method is a critical
- There has to be a case champion
- Be prepared to spend money



Thank you