

ENHANCING PREPAREDNESS OF M.B.A. STUDENTS TO MEET CORPORATE EXPECTATIONS BY CASE STUDY APPROACH

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Abstract—While graduates from any stream of study join management education programmes and wide spectrum of information is being imparted to them under several subjects covered in the curriculum, often the prospective employers do expect even more multi spectrum capabilities from them, so that they may be efficient and effective in their assigned functions in their organisations. But fresh management graduates are unable to meet this expectation, which of course, they could fulfill in course of time, and in the course of gaining experience. This glaring gap between theoretical knowledge and practical experience can be to a large extent filled up, by case study discussions, which is not presently a part of curriculum in many universities. Accordingly, few case studies representing real life actual situations encountered by a senior level practicing manager in the course of his everyday functions and which are of general nature and of common understanding are outlined for discussion in class rooms. Purpose is to orient the management students for case study approach of learning at basic level, so that they themselves would be able to deal with complex case study situations and then on to real work life situations.

Keywords: Management Education, Corporate Expectation, Theoretical Knowledge, Practical Experience, Glaring Gap, Basic Level Case Study Approach.

INTRODUCTION

Management education encompasses several streams of graduate education and covers fundamental knowledge of all functional area in any organisation for understanding, appreciating and taking appropriate decisions so as to communicate effectively, solve problems and lead the organisation to the desired goal, apart from other requirements.

Though management education comprises of wide spectrum of subjects, anything and everything cannot be taught in curriculum. Industry is fast changing. Requirements are also fast changing. As the education level is up, expectations levels are also up. Personal Ability of the student to cope up with the fast-changing expectations is more important. Study as per curriculum is a base only.

Though industrial visits are conducted by several management institutes for their MBA students during their tenure in college, it is not fulfilling the actual need of students, who would be facing the corporate employer in placement interviews and then on employment. As it is not mandatory to have practical experience before joining a post graduate management study programme or even after passing the theory papers as an internship programme, the prospective employee is much at disadvantage in aligning himself in real worklife. As such an exposure to case study preferably of actual experience could, to a large extent orient them to expect, what is store for them on employment. Of course, case study discussions also would tend to become an academic exercise imparting theoretical knowledge but the mental picture of students from various streams of graduate level study would get definitely more focused in administrative and management associated scenario. They would necessarily gain an aptitude to explore and find solutions which tendency, would be helpful in their development of analytical skill and problem solving. To a large extent they would enhance their preparedness to meet corporate expectations by continual exposure of case study discussion.

OBJECTIVES

To develop the mental makeup of the MBA students to meet corporate work situations

To develop their ability to understand the underlying concepts, link with their theoretical inputs, develop suitable logical alternatives, evaluate, propose and defend such chosen alternatives

To improve coordination, cooperation, mutual agreement on common grounds and to finalise a decision

To develop their interest in case study-based learning by beginning with simple non-complex case studies only, so that more advanced case studies could be taken up by themselves.

SECONDARY OBJECTIVE

CASE STUDY 1:

To expose the MBA student to a decision-making situation based on Human Resource, Finance, Organisational Climate, Organisational Culture, Leadership, Discipline, Industrial Relations, Personal Relations.

CASE STUDY 2:

To expose the MBA student to a decision-making situation based on Human Resource, Discipline, Industrial Relations, Standing Orders, Insurance Claims, Managerial Insubordination, Control Systems, Trade union activity at “nil” level, middle level, significant level, and authoritative level, Maslow’s Laws.

CASE STUDY 3

To expose the MBA student to a decision-making situation based on Human Resource, Discipline, Hierarchy, Reporting relationship, Role Play, leadership, bossism, Managing the Boss.

CASE STUDY 4

To expose the MBA student to a decision-making situation based on Human Resource, Discipline, Hierarchy, Reporting relationship, leadership, bossism, interpersonal relationship, positive and negative strokes, teamwork, recruitment strategy, job evaluation, work measurement, finance implications, climate and culture of organisation, organisational development, change management, ethos, leadership, EQ

CASE STUDY 5

To expose the MBA student to a decision-making situation based on Human Resource, Discipline, personal safety, organisational safety, visitor handling, System, Structure, Strategy, Staff, Style, Skill of work, negotiation management, conflict management, interpersonal relationship, communication, managing piquant situations, common sense

CASE 1

A driver in a large manufacturing organisation with over 25 years of experience in the same organisation and in charge of maintenance of enormous number of company-owned vehicles, while driving a company car, meets a peculiar situation of the central axle of the car he was driving getting dropped on the road, which he could recover and got repaired in due course. The bill was Rs 15000 and the head office managers wanted to deduct the amount from his salary and written orders were received by you, being the overall manager of the unit to which the driver is attached.

What are the options before you, like implementing the order or otherwise?

What would be the reactions of persons concerned like the Driver, Head office managers, other drivers, other employees and yourself in such cases and how would you resolve them?

CASE 2

A driver in a large manufacturing organisation with over 15 years of experience in the same organisation, while returning from the head office in a city to the base factory in a district headquarters, took few roadside passengers in the empty car he was driving and dropped them enroute back, either he did it for collecting money or for helping people reach their places in the festive season and resultant heavy crowd is not known but his accommodating of members of general public in company car and transporting them to some other place enroute was witnessed by another employee, who gave a written complaint to you, being the overall in charge for everything in the factory. The driver accepted his mistake and requests pardon. In the meantime, head office got wind of it and asks you in unambiguous terms to dismiss the employee

immediately, failing which you would be dismissed for insubordination. You have joined that organisation in the middle of your career about four months before the incident.

What will you do? What are the options before you? What would be the implications of those options?

CASE 3

A driver in a large manufacturing organisation with over 10 years of experience in the same organisation, returned from the head office in a city to the base factory in a district headquarters about 200 kilometers away. Immediately on his arrival at the factory gate, the Vice President of the unit asked him to drive him to the same city, leaving him not a single minute for anything. The driver normally a well-behaved person somehow curtly answered that he would not do so. Vice president got offended and asked you to take action on the driver immediately. You were in charge of the total unit reporting to the Vice President and had joined the organisation about a year back. You said that the Vice President would be driven to the city immediately but by a different driver to which Vice President opposed and insisted that the same driver who refused alone should drive. You stoutly opposed and told his job is to provide a driver and no one can choose a driver of their choice, for whatever reason. A very strong altercation emanated between both of you, in public view, though his departure was delayed. Ultimately Vice President drove his own car and went to the city.

Evaluate the argument of all the persons concerned, in management parlance.

Discuss what could be the working relationship between the parties after the episode.

Could you relate the case study situation to any theoretical knowledge gained in curriculum?

CASE 4

You have recruited three additional drivers apart from existing three drivers only working round the clock in the factory. You have done it immediately on getting written clearance from the Managing Director on your proposal and the drivers had joined duty. It was done on recommendation of existing drivers each one given one chance to bring any driver of their choice and be fully responsible for their actions. Next day three drivers came, checked for credentials by personnel department and joined duty.

Head office influential persons and top managers asked to cancel their appointment to which you refused to comply as it was done on clearance from Managing Director. Strong arguments followed. Influential Manager stated the new manager was spoiling the culture of organisation.

Evaluate the argument of the person concerned in management parlance.

Discuss what could be the working relationship between the parties after the episode

Could you relate the case study situation to any theoretical knowledge gained in curriculum?

CASE 5

You asked the senior most driver to pick up foreigners from guest house about five kilometers away from the factory, to the factory for auditing the factory for award of prestigious international safety certification. Foreigners, immediately on arrival at the factory and sitting in conference hall, in the presence of many others, ask you if driving under intoxication was safe or not and you reply promptly. Next, they say “Your driver picked us up on intoxication. How can we recommend you for safety certification?”

How will you handle the situation? What would be your first reaction?

How will you answer on the spot?

How do you handle the situation, in case the charge is false or true on verification?

How do you report to your Managing Director in this episode?

What will happen to certification, in case the charge is true?

In case certification is denied on this ground only, who is answerable and ultimately responsible?

Who will lose the job in such scenario?

Can you give a convincing argument or explanations to the foreigners, even if the charge is true?

What all could be other possible scenario behind such charge?

Could you relate the case study situation to any theoretical knowledge gained in curriculum?

CONCLUSION

MBA students should be technically capable of being at helm of affairs of any department or organisation in corporate employment, notwithstanding their desired role or specialisation. If they stick on to one field of their choice, their career prospects would get limited, after few stages. When they reach higher echelons of management, anything and everything is important and ability to handle them nicely, in limited time and resources is necessitated.

All ordinal and inordinate objects, so to say all living beings, human or otherwise and all nonliving things can throw up challenges to the person at helm of affairs, anytime, anywhere. As such, few case studies involving drivers is elaborated above. It may be noted that the complexity of the cases, from one to five, gradually increases and reaches a crescendo of spoiling the future of the organisation.

Every MBA Student and graduate should attain desired level of preparedness to meet corporate expectations by equipping himself with thorough theoretical knowledge and also reasonable practical knowledge as far as possible and case study approach could be polishing him up to an extent.

In fact, every manager worth the name should handle such incidents to the best satisfaction of all stakeholders. That is the challenge to be met by the professional manager, which determines his growth path.
