**Case Study Analysis: Learning to Analyze Research**

A case study is a story. It encapsulates a particular issue or dilemma, providing a snapshot of the organization or research phenomenon at a specific point in time. The process of identifying and analyzing the issues, conducting further research, and proposing solutions creates an experiential dimension to learning.

The cases in *Cases of Online Interview Research* are research cases. They include the story of how the researcher designed and conducted the study. As such they can be used to explore research design and conduct for studies using online interviews and also to explore the specific research problem or phenomena.

Learning potential for case analysis can be enhanced by using the categories from Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956). The upper levels of this model describe higher-order thinking skills that are important for case analysis.

- **Application:** Learners are asked to apply ideas or theories from case study into another situation.

- **Analysis:** Learners are asked to distinguish factors, influences, decisions, motives and assumptions that underlie the research design and/or the phenomena being studied. They are asked to analyze the circumstances and diagnose problems presented in the case study.

- **Synthesis:** Learners are asked to re-write some part of the case study, based on their own recommendations for solving the research or practical problems presented.

- **Evaluation**: Learners are asked to judge the effectiveness of the research design or solution they have chosen, in comparison to those recommended by classmates. They may be are asked to search for examples of other case study research, or examples of situations similar to the phenomena presented in the case, and present a comparative analysis.

**Key Steps for Analyzing and Building on a Case:**

1. **Overview of pertinent history and facts**
- Provide information that creates the context for your analysis;
- Incorporate additional background information about the case setting, phenomenon or issue derived from readings and other information located through your own research.

2. **State the research problem**
- Identify the research problem and questions;
- Clearly describe the research design used to plan the study.

3. **Broaden the inquiry; research the problem**
- Locate, evaluate and integrate other information or scholarly research relevant to understanding the research problem and the methodology and methods used in the study.
- Compare and contrast the situation described in the case with others. Is the problem widespread or limited to the circumstance described in the case? Does the problem represent larger economic, cultural or societal trends?
- How does the problem relate to concepts and theories presented in other texts and readings?

4. **Offer alternative solutions and approaches to the problem**
- Using information or data found in the case study, as well as from course materials and your own research, offer two or more alternate solutions or approaches to the problem studied in the case; or
- Using information or data found in the case study, as well as from course materials and your own research, offer an alternate methodology for studying the phenomenon.

5. **Evaluate each alternative**
- Critically assess the alternatives defined in step 4. Describe the implications and key steps for implementation of each alternative.

6. **Offer your best recommendation**
- Based on your analysis in step 5, recommend one alternative. Support and justify your recommendation.

7. **Summarize the likely result and/or obstacles that may play into the execution of your solution.**
- What outcomes might result from the implementation of the selected alternative? What internal or external trends may enhance or obstruct successful implementation?

8. **Finally, review your case analysis.**
    ♦ Does it demonstrate your comprehension and synthesis of the concepts presented in the case?
    ♦ Have you presented the paper using APA format, including abstract, correct citations and a list of references?

Bloom, B., Engelhart, M., Furst, E., Hill, W., & Krathwohl, D. (1956). *Taxonomy of educational objectives: Book 1, Cognitive domain*. New York: David McKay and Compan