

# **WESTERN CASEWRITER'S ASSOCIATION (WCA)**

## **HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE CASE DISCUSSION SESSIONS<sup>1</sup>**

WCA's annual meeting is a developmental workshop. Each person contributes to each case discussion and in turn receives comments from each person at the roundtable. Please come prepared to discuss all cases that are included for your roundtable. It is your responsibility to review the cases before attending the conference. Plan to be at the conference for the entire. It is unfair to expect others to be prepared and comment on your case without your providing the same for them.

### **PURPOSE OF WCA CASE PRESENTATION SESSIONS**

Our purpose is to assist all presenters to improve their cases for use in classes, for adoption by others, and for publishing. Rarely is a case presented that is nearly ready for journal publishing; yet even such a case can be improved. Case authors may feel overwhelmed by all the suggestions. The process is not negative; rather, we work with you for improvement, just as we expect that you will help others improve their cases. Therefore, all participants must thoroughly prepare all Cases and Instructor's Manuals. Several important questions to ask yourself include:

- Is the case interesting? To students?
- Does it address an important issue in the specified course(s)?
- Can teaching objectives be achieved with the case? Does the IM address these?
- Can the IM analysis be derived from the case (and other course material)?
- Is there enough data? Should more be added? Should some be deleted?
- Is the analysis tied to theory? (always difficult)
- Is the case presentation unbiased? Or is the author's opinion evident?
- What types of response are expected from "A" students? from "C" students?

The discussion process is rigorous, but it is done in a very supporting manner. We hope that you will agree. You should expect that the first case discussed, long or short, will take more time than those that follow. Some issues will occur in several cases; discussion thereof need not be repeated after the first time they arise.

### **HOW TO PREPARE YOUR CASE CRITIQUES**

We focus upon major as well as more subtle ways to improve cases, not on proofreading details of grammar, spelling, rhetoric, etc. Yet authors need to know about these problems, in addition. To facilitate this information transfer, all cases for your table are provided to each author. It is each author's responsibility, review them, and give case authors constructive comments of each case and Instructor's Manual (also called Teaching Note). To give this kind of feedback, please do one of the following:

- 1) If you do not want or need to keep the other cases from your table, mark up the cases and IM, and give them to each author after his/her case is discussed.
- 2) If you wish to retain the cases, or a particular case, simply print two copies of the case, keep one for yourself, and use the other for making notes and suggestions for the author

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<sup>1</sup> We would like to thank NACRA for allowing WCA to use this document. This document was written by Timothy W. Edlund and modified later by Linda E. Swayne. Jeff Shay (2005) and Duane Helleloid (2011) modified it for WCA's purposes.

**DUTIES OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE CASE ROUND TABLES SESSION CHAIRS:**

Brief session participants about what will happen. Determine case sequence. Be sure there is a recorder for each case, preferably with prior workshop experience. Guide discussion. Keep focus on important issues, not on proofreading. Discourage repetitious comments.

**RECORDERS:**

Record substance of comments, in an appropriate way. One extra copy of each case and IM will be available if you wish. Give comments to the author(s).

**CASE AUTHORS:**

Review your Case and IM before the meeting. You might want to prepare some opening remarks that explain why you wrote the case, how you have used it in class, and any issues you are particularly looking for suggestions as to how to handle or improve. Listen to comments and ask questions whenever you do not understand. Bring an audio recorder if you wish.

**DISCUSSANTS:** [All other authors and other participants]

Prepare cases and participate actively in the discussions.

**OTHER POINTS**

There may be participants in your session who are not presenting a case. They are there to observe, to learn, and to participate. It is possible for them to learn nearly as much as when their own case is discussed. Welcome them!

Most participants find that these sessions are more enjoyable and collegial than any other type of academic conference they attend. We hope that you will agree, and we have planned the conference to provide several interesting, enjoyable, and instructive activities. We look forward to your participation.

**AFTER THE WORKSHOP**

Revise your Case and IM to improve them. Carefully consider all session comments; some changes may not be appropriate or feasible, in your opinion. Some suggested data may not be available. However, you are likely to see the more cogent changes you don't make in reviews of your case when you submit it to a journal. Can you defend your choices when you respond to reviewer? Test-teach the revised case and update your IM based on that teaching experience. Get a colleague to observe your teaching or to teach the case, if possible; he or she will find things you missed or that you know but didn't include. (The author always knows more details not included in the case.)

Submit your revised Case and IM to the Case Research Journal or to another journal. Most journal submissions will require at least one revision before acceptance. Failure to revise and resubmit represents the largest category in the number of initial submissions not published by the Case Research Journal! If one journal rejects your case, another journal may accept it. Once your case is accepted by a journal, or finally rejected, it is then appropriate to submit it to book authors for adoption. Earlier acceptance by book authors disqualifies your case for most journals. Why? Because it is highly undesirable to have two versions of the same case in the marketplace. Book acceptances often carry merit, depending on your school, but rarely have as much academic credit as acceptance by a peer-reviewed journal.