DOING GOOD IS WORTH DOING WELL
Case Competition Prep Session

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Today’s objective
Agenda

1. Patagonia Case Competition and Background
2. Patagonia Case Format and Submission Guidelines
3. Aspen Case Competition and Background
4. Aspen Case Format and Submission Guidelines
5. What the Judges are Looking For
6. Q & A
Patagonia Case Competition

• Competition focuses specifically on the intersection of business and sustainability in line with Patagonia’s overall mission

• This year’s challenge: “Patagonia Provisions is continually searching for environmentally benign packaging options for its food products. What solutions – technical or otherwise – can Patagonia and the broader food & beverage market adopt?”

• This topic is a real life challenge that Patagonia is actively working to solve

• [Patagonia Case Competition webpage]
Patagonia: Case Format

- Teams will receive a case prompt in the form of a multi page report containing extensive background and data about the case.

- The case will include specific prompts/questions to address in your proposal and specific proposal requirements.

- The case contains more information than you can digest on your own, so work in small teams to sift through data, news reports, and interviews, and then build your analysis.

- Some past cases are available here from the Harvard Business Review.
Patagonia: Submission Requirements

• Specific requirements for written proposals will be posted on January 18\textsuperscript{th}

• The initial submission will be a written report submitted as a PDF. Last year’s proposal could not exceed 12 pages in total
  • Page 1: Title page
  • Page 2: Bibliography of team members
  • Page 3: Executive Summary
  • Page 4-9: Body of Text
  • Page 10-12: 3 additional pages can include references and/or annexes and appendices supporting data/analyses.

• Finalists will be required to submit a PowerPoint deck after selection to attend the final round.
Patagonia: Key Dates

• January 18, 2019 - Case Study and Submission Guidelines released

• January 24, 2019 - Final Submission of Case Questions

• Office hours with Rustandy Center Sustainability Executive in Residence, Karen Wiegert. 1/22 and 1/24 3:30 – 6:30 PM

• February 10, 2019 - Proposal Submission Deadline

• March 4, 2019 - Finalist Announcement (Up to 10 teams across all participating schools)

• April 18 (evening) to April 19, 2019 - Final event at Berkeley
Aspen Institute Business & Society International Case Competition

• The Aspen Institute's Case Competition offers a meaningful opportunity for reflection on the significant and positive influence that a well-managed business can have on society.

• The case will require innovative thinking at the intersection of corporate profitability and positive social and environmental impacts. As a student participant, the idea is to step into a real-life, time-sensitive scenario demanding integrative decision-making.

• Aspen Case Competition Website
Aspen: Case Format

• Aspen offers is a ’raw’ case format developed by Yale SOM

• Raw cases present you with extensive data about a real situation, often including video interviews with some of the key actors.

• By design, case contains more information than you can digest on your own, so work in small teams to sift through data, news reports, and interviews, and then build your analysis.

• Sample case: http://vol10.cases.som.yale.edu/design-mayo
Aspen: Submission Requirements

• Specific requirements for the Aspen competition are posted on their website [here](#).

• The initial submission will be a written report of no more than 6 pages of text with two additional pages allowed for charts, graphs, or exhibits.

• Round one submission will be submitted to the Rustandy Center via email for the on-campus competition.

• Finalists present a PowerPoint deck if selected to attend the final round in New York City.
Aspen: Key Dates

Round 1:
• February 13, 2019: Team registrations opens
• March 13, 2019: Team registration closes
• Thursday, April 4 (5:00 PM): Case distributed to registered teams
• Sunday, April 7 (5:00 PM): Case submission are due
• April 12: Booth competition winner notified

Round 2:
• April 12 – 17: Aspen reviews the winning submission from each of the 25 participating schools and selects 5 winners
• April 18: Round two winners announced

Round 3:
• April 25 -26: Top five national teams compete in New York City

Disclaimer: Students should never miss class to attend optional programming. The Deans’ Office will not support requests for absences due to participation on a trek, event, conference, or trip as excused.
Social Impact Case Competitions: Judging Feedback & Suggestions

- Start with the case assignment.
- Keep the assignment questions in mind as you go through the material and use them to orient your initial thoughts.
- The case writers include a wide range of material to help students.
- The judges want you to succeed.
- Judges are looking for interesting and innovative ideas that are grounded in solid analysis.
- Judges would want nothing they want more than to have multiple terrific ideas battling to solve the problem.
- Don’t forget that these are real issues on the table, with real people and real problems to address.
Social Impact Case Competitions: Analysis

• Read the case in full.

• Judges want to know if you've thoroughly considered the issues, but try not to spend too much time rehashing the case. Focus on laying a foundation for your solution and how the data support it (and not some alternative approach).

• You'd be surprised how many people just submit a SWAT analysis. This isn’t about proving that you know a given technique, it’s about building a convincing case for your proposed course of action. Analysis needs to be on point, but it should serve as the foundation from which to start. The analysis portion should be no more than the first 1/3 of your allowed pages. This is very different than a case write-up for class where the primary objective is analysis.
Recommendations: What do Judges Look for?

- Try to take a step back and consider the issue. The sponsoring company is looking for real solutions, not checklists proving you’ve read the material.
- New ideas are great, so long as they aren’t pie in the sky (i.e. if your proposal involves a space elevator, keep thinking!). Judges are looking for innovation that’s feasible now.
- Proposals should be internally consistent.
- Are your recommendations innovative and thoughtful?
- When relevant, integrate both qualitative and quantitative arguments. Don’t forget that this is a complex real-world case with multiple dimensions, and there are human beings behind the numbers.
- Why is your proposed approach good? Interesting? Innovative? Something the sponsor hasn’t already thought of? How is it going to achieve the assignment's stated goals?
Recommendations: What do Judges Look for?

- A “safe” proposal might advocate doing more of the same, only bigger. The hope is that students will present innovative ideas that may not have already occurred to people in the industry. Diverse perspectives bring added value.
- Some exhibits, if allowed, especially for Aspen
- Check the write-up for typos and fluidity
Q & A
Good Luck!