Writing and teaching with cases

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Pre-assignment, structure for today

1. How would you prepare for teaching this particular case (KONE)?

2. What would be your teaching objectives, teaching methods and expectations of class performance?

3. If you wanted to write a case on a company from your field, what do you expect the different tasks / stages in the entire process would be?

4. If you wrote a case, what do you think the main challenges would be?

Why use cases in teaching?

- The use of cases (from full cases to brief newspaper articles) allows for problem-based and experiential learning, but can also be used to illustrate theories/models

- Focus on students' ability to apply theories/models/concepts

- Students learn to argue their views & work in teams = skills development

- Activates students: preparation, in class reflection (small groups and plenary) & debate - builds on the emotional side of the learning process
  - From frustration and uncertainty to curiosity and perhaps also determination as they struggle with case questions?
  - From disappointment to satisfaction, confidence in the classroom?

- Provides visible examples that can be referred to subsequently

- Writing own cases ensures fit with learning objectives, that you really know the story, tend to give good ratings, and looks good on your CV
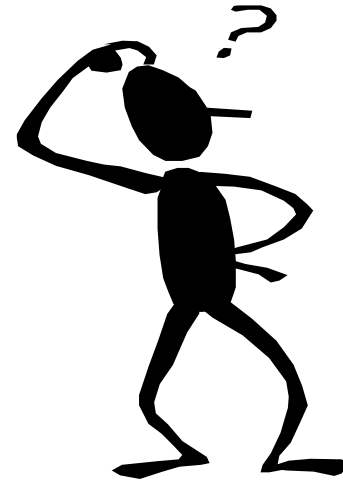
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Case KONE

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What is Talent?

'**Individuals likely to have a significant impact on the future performance of the organization**'
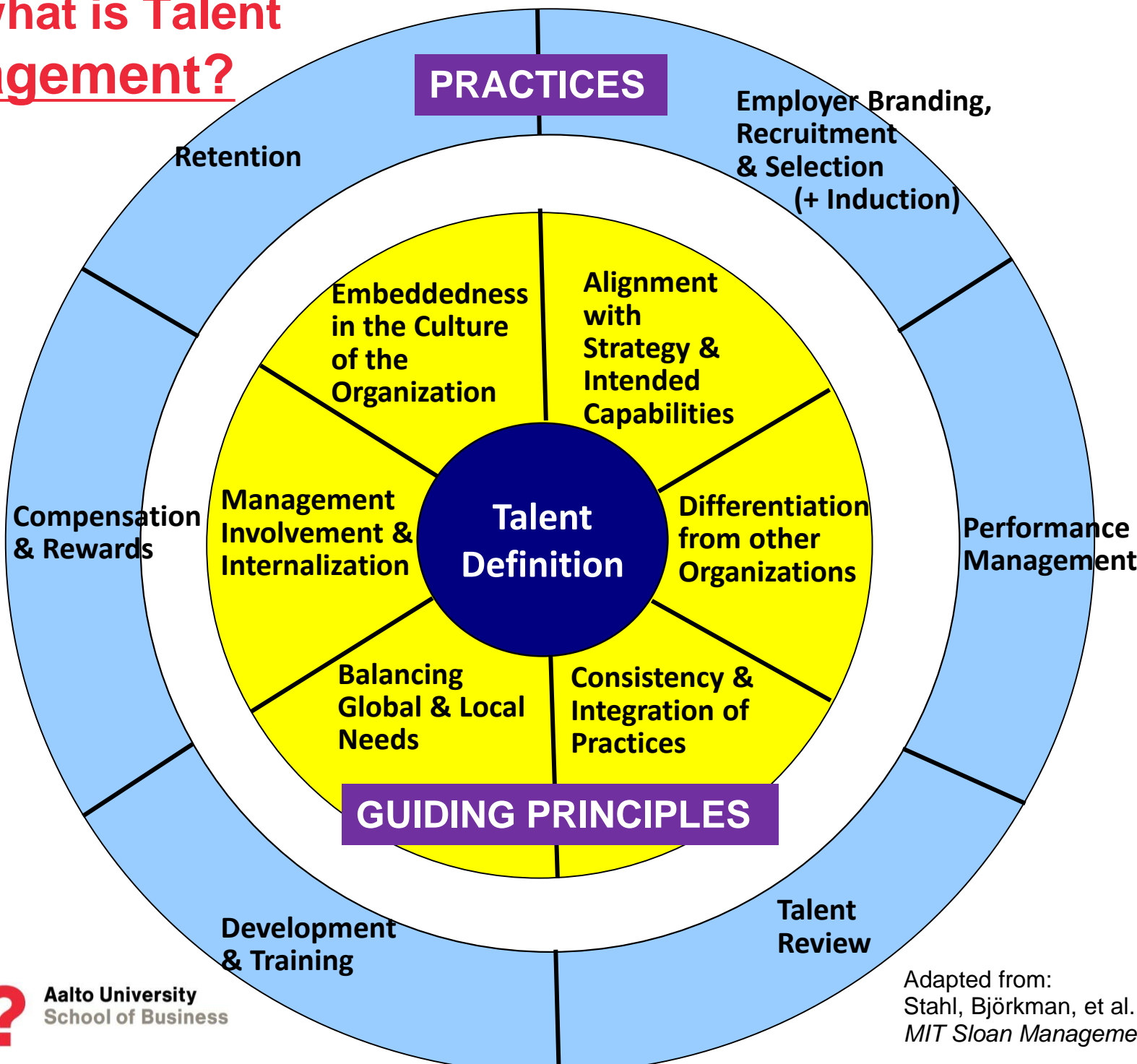
(high performers in positions that are key to the long-term performance of the organization)

Talent Management at Kone

1. What do you think works well in terms of KONE's global talent management activities?

2. Critically evaluate KONE's global talent management activities. What kinds of improvements should KONE still make? Why?

And what is Talent Management?

PRACTICES

Employer Branding, Recruitment & Selection (+ Induction)

Retention

Compensation & Rewards

Performance Management

Development & Training

Talent Review

Talent Definition

Embeddedness in the Culture of the Organization

Alignment with Strategy & Intended Capabilities

Management Involvement & Internalization

Differentiation from other Organizations

Balancing Global & Local Needs

Consistency & Integration of Practices

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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Adapted from:
Stahl, Björkman, et al. (2012)
MIT Sloan Management Review

Dilemmas in Talent Management

- **What** to use as input? Job performance, values/norms, future potential?

- **Leadership potential vs. other** crucial competency areas**?**

- **How** to judge potential? «The best player doesn't always make the best coach»

- **When** to identify potential?

- How **strictly** to enforce criteria/dimensions across individuals, countries?

- **Transparency**? Do the 'chosen ones' know? How to **manage expectations**?

  'Talent' status ➜ work-related attitudes (Björkman et al., 2013), but also inflated expectations

- **How to avoid parent country & other selection biases ➜ glass ceilings** (gender, functional background, education, nationality, etc.)**?**

  √ Make sure that executives meet local talent during visits overseas

  √ Increase foreign staff at HQ (inpatriation) and in cross-unit projects

  √ Targets #/% persons with different background (diversity mgt.)

- **Who is accountable for identification?** HQ or local units? HR or line?

- Over-emphasis on identification **at the expense of development?**

Teaching (with Cases)

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Using cases with BSc and MSc students

Pedagogical assumptions

- The students must confront 'the complex reality': feel lost, be frustrated, try again to make sense, make mistakes, etc. to realize their need for conceptual/theoretical 'help'

- The less experience they have, the more we need to move between theories/models and descriptions of 'the reality'
  - May e.g. begin with broad questions posed during lectures, followed by useful theories/models and case material to demonstrate these
  - Then have cases where the students are to frame questions/problem & develop solutions with the help of these theories/models
  - Finally the students are to develop their own cases/write papers based on data that they collect

- With more advanced students, they may even be asked to produce own cases

Preparation of case teaching session

- Develop **clear learning objectives** (1-2 key ideas/session!)
  - Theory/model/concepts that help structure the problem?
- **Outline** the session (on paper for you to consult if needed):
  - How long time on what?
  - If group work: note that it usually takes more time than expected
  - Plan questions for each issue that you are covering
  - Plan how to use the board/overhead
- Teaching notes are helpful, but **make it your own**!
- Continuously **learn more** about the case:
  - up-dated search on internet: always the previous/same day!,
  - collect material to use: videos, media clips, LInkedIn data & comments, etc.
  - make notes on what works and what doesn't, and do it immediately
- Your level of preparation **sets performance standards** for students!
  … and makes it more fun to teach the case

The session

- Begin by referring back to the overall 'map' of the course (if the case comes in the middle)
- You may begin with a short background to the case – why important issue(s)? Why relevant?
- Make sure that there is a good distribution of roles:

Teacher	Students
✓Be provokative, devil's advocate, …but also give face! ✓ Help synthesize ideas ✓ Move between the specific (case) and the general (generalization?) ✓ Provide theories/models (link to the literature!) for sensemaking	➤Provide enough time for them to present (important signal!) ➤ Encourage them to debate – less intervention means more learning! ➤ Build on their comments to stimulate further discussion, refer to their comments in the wrap-up

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The *Psychological Contract* (obligations – expectations) between you & the students is crucial for their investments and how they perceive your contribution

- Clarify the **obligations** and **expectations** from the beginning
- Show how **you invest** in **their** learning by
  - Updating material
  - Arriving early to class
  - Grading quickly
  - Providing feedback to students, requesting & reacting on their feedback
  - Being resonsive to student requests and wishes
- Give **positive feedback** to students who live up to or even surpass their obligations, **'punish'** those that don't
  - Don't accept late papers, absentism, students who arrive late or leave early
  - Build in mechanisms to deal with students who surpass as well as don't live up to the contract – this is also a question of 'Equity' (fairness)

Ideas about classroom interaction(1)

- Aim for **broad participation** – some ideas
  - Focus on participation from the **first minute**: Quizz?
  - Use buzz groups ➔ 'mandatory' presentation of **group comments**
  - Use team **role play** ➔ joint reporting afterwards to the whole class
  - Invite **counter arguments**: 'Do you all agree?' 'How many are for and against' -- Why?
  - **Exaggerate** so much as to provoke reactions
  - **Give face** & **build on** comments made by the students to encourage others to be active in the future
  - Use of **testimonials**: 'Who knows this firm? Tell us about it'

- Learn **whom you can provoke, 'role play' with** without risking loss of face, withdrawal

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Ideas about classroom interaction(2)

- Build in **surprises**
  - Use a film, some kind of internet clip, newspaper article
  - Bring in surprise guest, e.g. individual from the case company
  - Break for sudden buzz group discussion ➔ Debate where different views are being defended
  - Use lottery to determine who will present

- Use **buzz groups/debates** within structure of large class
  - 'Relate what has been discussed to your own experience'
  - 'What is "Strategy"?' 'Develop arguments for and against X'
  - 'List the three most important learning points from the case'

- Use **different media** for texts: PP slides, white board, flip charts but also "silly drawings", "crazy formulas", etc.

Ideas about classroom interaction(3)

- Be **Sensitive** concerning the **Atmosphere** in the class
    - Change pace (surprises!) if the ambiance drops

- How to **respond to 'wrong' answers**? Make sure to avoid loss of face, risk of ridicule, effects on subsequent activity level by e.g.
    - Interpreting the answer to turn it into an interesting twist or transition to another issue
    - Asking others to elaborate

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Ideas about classroom interaction(4)

- Show **Enthusiasm**, have **Fun**, keep up the **Energy** level

- Always **Speak To** the students: eye contact important

- **Move Around** the classroom (but not <u>all</u> too much)
  - Keeps the students awake and give them the feeling that you speak to and interact with everyone - <u>especially</u> even those in the back row
  - Moving closer for emphasis and to create 'mini role play', distance yourself to turn back to the whole class, perhaps also repeating question

But perhaps most important piece of advice is:
Develop your own style!
Dare to <u>experiment</u> and <u>learn</u> from it!!

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Potential problems/challenges in using cases

- Typically relatively shallow analyses which give the illusion of students learning how to act as leaders/managers
- Stories of what leads to success without profound understanding of why (theories, also contingencies) are potentially dangerous
- Students learn a habit of making up arguments
- Limited control over how the discussion evolves in class
- How to make sure that the students prepare properly? Extremely time consuming to read case analyses if large class
- Can quickly become dated
- Do you know what happened?

- **Real-life cases (with live input) instead?**
  - **Student motivation**
  - **Impact on business, society**

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Writing Cases

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Some thoughts on case writing: Managing relationships

- Start with an idea of the learning objective(s) of the case
- Make sure that you have sufficiently good contacts (at all levels) to make it work from data collection to case clearance by the organization
- Clarify expections to the case organzation from the beginning
  – Send a copy of a case that you would like to emulate
- Be prepared to revise the case extensively based on feedback from the interviewees, top management, and external communication people
- Balance the advantages of describing a real company and people with that of "revealing everything" (even telling an even better story!) if disguising it

Writing the case: Some general principles

- Tell an engaging story, if possible with emotional elements
- Make us care about the characters, the problems/questions
- Make the case as realistic to the learners as possible
- Raise learning issues important to the curriculum

Typical structure

- Start by setting the scene: key actor(s), perhaps the problem/situation at a general level

- Background

- More information about the organization(s), key actors

- Outline the overall issue/problem/situation

- End by returning to the beginning, typically clarifying the decision making situation that the protagonist finds him/herself in

Making an impact with your case

- Write good teaching notes
  - Slides and other teaching material
  - Overview of learning objectives, student questions, ideas for the structure and content of the actual session
- Publish your teaching case
- Market it by sending it to colleagues who might be interested in the case
- Update the case after some years with new information

Good luck!