

## **DEFINING EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES WHILE USING THE METHOD OF CASE STUDIES**

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Prior to definition of educational objectives while using the method of case studies, we shall find out the meaning of the concept of “objective” and “educational objective”.

Objective is a philosophical category, it was borrowed by various areas of human activities from philosophy. There are several definitions of the notion. Here are some of them: an objective is

- a perfect predictions of results of activities;
- proactive reflection of events in human mind;
- starting and end control point of anything.

One of the ways of setting goals is the use of the so-called SMART criteria based on which objectives should be [82]:

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Achievable;
- Relevant;
- Limited to a specific period (Time-bound).

Educational objective is a prediction of results of interaction between teacher and students in the form of generalized concepts under which the rest of the educational process is developed.

Purpose of training (education) – description of expected or planned results that meet the requirements of society and personal development.

Methodological principles defining objectives are the social and public order, educational standards and results of market research of the needs for specialists with higher education and university degree.

Traditionally, learning objectives are defined through knowledge and skills.

Knowledge means the concept and systems of concepts that reflect the real world with its objects and processes, their properties and relationships. The notion of skills refers to the ability to perform particular actions to solve problems. Activity approach relates only skills (practical and research) to subject educational objectives. Knowledge constitutes scientific content of education. Objectives – skills – are set and defined at first. Then the knowledge needed for skills is chosen. This is the knowledge about the objects and processes of the world, which are required to be able to act. Such knowledge is supplemented with knowledge about actual activity - methods and techniques of problem solving. Both types of knowledge constitute the scientific content of the course.

The main task for a higher education institution is to prepare students for future careers [24] On the one hand – this includes provision of basic knowledge needed for activities, on the other – this includes development of professional skills. Among personal and professional qualities that make up professional competence of experts in finance and economics, employers pay special attention to the following [3, p. 3]:

- general level of development and basic knowledge of professionals;
- ability to use such knowledge in practice; ability to think systematically;
- ability to process large amounts of information and emphasize the important points;
- ability to learn constantly.

Based on modern requests the objective of any studies can be formulated as training of highly qualified professionals with knowledge, abilities and skills that will ensure their competitiveness in the labor market. But that is not enough for business education [57, p. 197], For managers and entrepreneurs it is important not only to find a place in the market, going through specific competitiveness, compared to employees in other professions, but also to win some market share for industrial, organizational, managerial, financial, economic and commercial activities.

Modern activity of entrepreneurs is in its form essentially situational, which means it is characterized by definition in situations, emerging and developing in capital, labor, goods and services markets. These situations are peculiar not only

because they are able to change quickly under the influence of market conditions, but also because they are characterized by poly-structural and multifunctional nature, are dependent on activities of their agents.

It is equally important that not only the knowledge, but also the values are fundamentally important for entrepreneurs. Hence, the ultimate purpose of business education is the transformation of knowledge into a system of values, development of proper attitude to the world, and natural behavior in a changing environment moving towards globalization [68, p. 26]. Another feature of entrepreneurs' and managers' activity is high energy and ambition in lifestyle. The most successful entrepreneurs are active people who are distinguished not only by the high speed of business life, but also by doing business on multiple levels in multiple systems in a number of areas, which increases the role of teaching methods that lead to mental changes, stimulate students' lives and increase their effectiveness.

Consequently, while assessing the quality of education the higher education institutions should focus on the overall competence of graduates, namely on an assessment of their competitiveness, willingness and ability to successfully fit into business structures, become effective and demanded in the labor market. Thus, competence requires professionals to possess certain knowledge, skills, and quite distinct ability to use such knowledge, abilities, skills in carrying out their duties in solving specific problems and issues, which is highly valued by employers.

In view of the above, it is possible formulate the main tasks of business education [57, p. 198]:

- gaining required systematic complex of professional knowledge by students.
- training energetic professionals focused on success.
- encouraging of constructive and critical thinking.
- familiarizing students with practical activities and operation of enterprises.
- gaining practical skills (decision-making, monitoring, analyzing situations) and development of skills (leadership, communication) which will be useful for students in future careers.

- extension and intensification of human, intellectual and social capital.
- development of a system of professional, human, moral, cultural, and other values.

The case study method is intended to contribute to solution of the aforementioned problems.

The main purpose of the case study method is to make students analyze problems and situations, collect and evaluate information, interpret facts, develop alternative solutions and come to final practical solutions, working alone or in groups. Depending on the type of case and learning tasks, cases may have a specific decision (after evaluation of proposed algorithms for solution of problems and selection of the best option in the context of the problem) or an open discussion may be the purpose [80, p. 77].

When working with a specific case the most important aspect is setting of the goals [78, p. 37], If the answer to the question - Why? - is known, you are half way to success. In determining the objectives teachers shall be guided by the general hierarchy of goals, according to the educational standard. Thus, teacher's goal setting while using case studies includes:

1. Formulation of overall objectives of a particular stage of learning to which the case belongs.
2. Definition of objectives for specific cases (educational, pedagogical and training objectives, which shall be implemented in the process of work on the case (including the appointment of the course and requirements of qualification profile), definition of skills, which students will receive when dealing with specific case studies, what type of knowledge they will use or receive).
3. Determine what kind of work students will perform to achieve the goals:
  - a) determine the overall learning<sup>33</sup>process;
  - b) identify important conditions in terms of which training shall be carried out in dealing with a particular case.

Learning objectives of the case method answer the following questions:

- Who? (Learn to identify the situation: company's position or point of view

of the current person in charge, accept positions of other participants, etc.)

- What? (Learn to identify solutions associated with a character's particular position and other participants, determine the extent of their liability, etc.)

- Why? (Learn how to determine causes and effects, chronological sequence of events in the examined situation)

- When? (Be able to develop an action plan, time completion of tasks and follow time limits for this situation)

- How? (Be able to assess the situation from a systematic perspective (taking into account internal connections between components together with the environment) and use it for effective address of challenges and problems).

One of the major problems in education is the problem of training of students, including the important role of students' age in shaping basic characteristics of individuals. On this basis, it is possible to formulate the following educational goals of case studies [57, p. 93-94J:

- formation of high mental, vital, professional and civic engagement of students, their personal dynamics.

- development of motivation and volition, ability to overcome difficulties, withstand competition in the labor market.

- mastering of methods and techniques of self-management, active self-development and self-education.

- building of morality and, above all, professional ethics, diligence, respect for personality and society.

- enhancement of communication skills, openness, ability to establish partnership relations, favorable psychological atmosphere in the workplace, interact with different social groups.

- desire to continuous mastering<sup>33</sup> of cultural values, development of the culture of feelings and emotions.

According to Barach [77], there are seven objectives for development of skills and three process objectives, which may be applicable for courses based on the case method:

Objective 1: Students should be able to make right decisions when working with cases, apply their knowledge to particular situations.

Objective 2: Student shall show ability to think logically, clearly and consistently using their knowledge, which present relevant data and assumptions.

Objective 3: Students should be able to present analysis in convincing and reasonable manner.

Objective 4: Student should be guided by common sense, which is the ability to see the obvious and appropriate. Student should be able to emphasize and evaluate key issues relating to the case.

Objective 5: Student must show willingness and ability to use analytical thinking and quantitative analysis when necessary.

Objective 6: Students should be able to go beyond the specific situation, considering perspectives and demonstrating their competence.

Objective 7. Student should be able to use data at their disposal develop detailed and reasoned action plans and conduct thorough analysis of the situation. To some extent, this objective repeats the previous ones. However, the difference is that simple making of decision and speaking in its favor without going into specific details and solution of many small issues arising in connection with the major problem does not mean to make a good analysis of the case.

It is possible to mention other objectives for development of skills based on the case method, but the aforementioned seven objectives are basic. For example, it is possible to consider objectives in terms of the development of written and / or oral skills in specific examples considered in the process of simulation of cases. However, they do not guarantee that students will be able to act the same way in actual practice.

Some teachers also consider the “process<sup>34</sup> objectives”. Often knowledge requires more time for perception and learning than the time given for the courses. The students understand significance of some courses only eventually. Such delayed effect, obviously, cannot be measured (and evaluated) during teaching of courses. Thus, the support for high-level representation and reasoning of points of view is

considered to be a significant value in verbal dialogue and in the process of analysis of cases. The “three process objectives” related to this statement: (1) students have to attend a number of classes; (2) student shall demonstrate preparation and express interest in classes; (3) students have to give oral reports at some point during studies.

Bloom J.S. [77] described the desired results of cognitive learning. His model classifies a wide range of learning results as six major groups of educational objectives:

- assessment (formation of criterion of investigation of situation, opinions, solutions, etc.);
- synthesis (production of new combinations of methods and means of solution, originality, creativity);
- analysis (identification of components, their connection and organization, separating facts from assumptions, etc.);
- application (how to apply existing understanding of the problem / task at a time when solutions are unclear).
- understanding (search for suitable interpretations for solution of problems and their extrapolation).
- knowledge (establishment of new facts, identification of new concepts, categories, ways of achieving results in the context of the situation).

Case study method has very broad educational opportunities. The variety of results possible while using the method can be divided into two groups - learning results - as results related to mastering of knowledge and skills, and educational results - as results described by participants of interaction, implemented personal learning goals (Table 1).

**Learning and educational objectives**

<b>Learning</b>	<b>Educational</b>
Mastering new information. Mastering methods of data collection. Mastering methods of analysis. Ability to work with information. Comparison of theoretical and practical knowledge.	Creation of proprietary product. Education and achievement of personal goals. Increasing the level of professional competence. Acquiring experience in making decisions, actions in new situations, problem solving.

Thus, we come to a conclusion that the main purposes of the case study method are as follows:

- activation of students, which, in turn, increases effectiveness of professional training;
- raising motivation in the teaching process and responsibility for the teaching process;
- learning to analyze situations and find optimum number of solutions to situations;
- training of skills in use of information, including the ability to request additional information necessary to clarify the situation;
- simulation of solutions to given situations and in accordance with the tasks, presenting different approaches to development of action plans focused on the end result;
- making right decisions based on group analysis of the situation;
- development of cooperation skills;
- acquiring skills for clear and precise statement of their own points of view orally and in writing, the ability to assert and defend their points of view in a convincing manner;
- development of critical thinking, development of skills for critical evaluation of different points of view, self-awareness, self-control and self-esteem; combination of affective and cognitive learning;

- development of analytical skills that allow to separate the elements of high-priority from elements of low-priority;
- development of interpersonal communication skills and ability to work in a team;
- establishing interdisciplinary links that would in other circumstances be considered separate disciplines;
- establish causal links between different aspects;
- explanation of objects (events, phenomena, etc.) in their complexity.

In addition, cases develop analytical skills, research and communication skills, develop ability to analyze situations, plan strategies and make management decisions [1].

Below is a short description of skills developed with the help of the case study method [11, p. 26]:

1. Analytical skills: ability to distinguish data from information, classify allocate significant and insignificant information, analyze, produce and present it, find gaps in information and be able to restore them, think clearly and logically.
2. Practical skills: ability to use the theory, methods and principles of relevant branches of science.
3. Creative skills: ability to generate alternative solutions that cannot find be found in a logical way.
4. Communication skills: ability to debate, convince others to use visual material and other media tools, make groups to defend points of view, convince opponents, make concise and cogent reports.
5. Social skills: assessment of human behavior, ability to listen, support debates or argue opposite views, ability to self-control, etc.
6. Self-awareness: understanding and analysis of the views of others and their own points of view, development of social skills for resolution of moral and ethical issues.

Use of the system of economic cases in teaching and learning activities provides an opportunity to develop the following professional skills among students [26, p.

1510-1512; 45, p. 1488-1491]:

- informational, that allows to develop the ability to search, collect, store, process, file data, differentiate information objects, group and classify data in order of importance, informative value, synthesize disparate data, use information and communication technologies and special software in professional activities, etc.;
- communicative, affecting the ability to argue, communicate, perceive and assess verbal and nonverbal information, persuade others, cooperate in groups, articulate, express and argue in support of their position, persuade opponents, make concise and cogent reports, etc.
- managerial, allowing to develop ability to assign tasks correctly among subordinates, correct their work, plan the work of the unit, exercise effective control over its execution, gain experience in activities related to setting of goals and objectives, support relations between organization and environment that enable it to achieve its goals, are consistent with its internal potential and allow to remain vulnerable to external requirements, etc.

Any case permits teachers to use it at different stages of education and for different purposes. Recently the use of cases has become increasingly popular not only at the stage of student learning, but for testing training results during exams. Students are given cases before the exams, they have to analyze them and bring examiners their reports with answers to the questions. Of course, it is possible to give students the cases directly during the exams, but then the cases shall be fairly short and simple, in order to meet the limited timeframe.

In general, cases are developed and used with due regard of the variety of instructional goals and objectives of the course. Accordingly, and taking into account competitive approach to teaching, it is possible to give the following examples of learning objectives with the use of case studies. The students shall:

- show their ability to acquire knowledge independently;
- show their ability to develop general ideas;
- show their ability to understand methods;
- develop skills for use of relevant methods, concepts and knowledge;

- develop skills for analyzing complex and unstructured problems;
- develop skills for formulation of action plans and their implementation;
- develop listening skills;
- develop the ability to identify, formulate and express their position;
- develop the ability to identify and evaluate points of view of others;
- develop the ability to perceive and evaluate information received verbally and nonverbally (body language);
- develop the ability to build trusted relationships;
- develop specific (professional, interpersonal, etc.) relations; engraft responsibility for their decisions, for the results;
- develop critical perspective, status quo and skepticism;
- develop confidence - “I can do it”;
- develop ability to communicate - briefly, effectively, convincingly;
- develop ability to make presentations;
- develop certain qualities of mind (language skills, ability to listen, remember, etc.);
- distinguish predictions, opinions, assumptions, facts and be able to tell facts from speculations;
- develop ability to formulate quality goals and objectives;
- develop personal rules of behavior and response to complex situations;
- develop ability to analyze and detect problems;
- develop initiative, ability to make decisions;
- develop a set of rules – moral, business, civil and social;
- have common sense, which is defined as the “ability to see the obvious and appropriate”;
- develop ability to foresee value and results;
- develop ability to consider situations in long-term prospect;
- develop ability to generalize - from specific details to understanding of prospect and development of successful concepts;

- be able to apply knowledge to particular situations and make appropriate decisions;
- improve ability to use theory for practical purposes;
- show ability to think logically, clearly and consistently;
- show their analytical skills, possession of quantitative analysis methods, reasonable argumentation;
- gain experience in problem solving and decision making in groups;
- gain experience of careful reasoning of their judgments and resistance to temptation to make conclusions about facts at once, the ability to listen to different opinions of their classmates;
- be able to present results of analysis of case study in convincing and reasonable manner;
- practice in expressing goals and outlining of strategies for administrative actions involving personal, organizational and inter-organizational relationships;
- improve detection skills and design skills for effective intervention in administrative proceedings;
- be able to go beyond specific situations, demonstrating their competence.

### **Functionality of the case study method**

Case functionality means its possible effective use with a view to address any people's needs. A case is a functional system, a complex dominated by certain functions. Their extensive functional field can be represented as follows (Table 2).

*Table 2*

**Features and properties of cases**

<b>Name of dominant feature in case</b>	<b>Type of case</b>	<b>Specification of case features</b>
Training	Training	Training students' reaction skills in changing situations.
Education	Educational	Mastering knowledge regarding dynamic stochastic (probable) objects.

Analysis	Analytic	Development of skills and abilities for analytical work.
Research	Exploratory	Getting fundamentally new knowledge about developing stochastic objects.
Systematization	Systematizing	Systematization of situational knowledge.
Prognostication	Prognostic	Getting information about the future of stochastic systems.

Source : [57, c. 82]

The following table describes the “general” case. A particular case is a functional system, where certain functions are dominating.

The need for the introduction of case methods into teaching practice is of current interest. First of all, modern education makes emphasis on competence approach. That is, development of skills and mental activity, development of capabilities with the emphasis on learning ability, change in the paradigm of thinking, ability to process huge amounts of information. The second follows from the development of requirements to personal qualities of professionals, who, in addition to meeting the requirements of the first trend, should also have the ability to optimal behavior in different situations, stand out for systematic and efficient actions in terms of crisis. The intersection and interaction of these trends will inevitably enhance the role of the case study method in education of professionals, especially in management and a wide range of “market” specialties. Based on international experience, it can be argued that this method contributes to development of features and qualities of future professionals required by the market society. Table 3 shows how the use of the case study method promotes development of professional qualities [57, p. 84-85].

*Table 3*

**Development of qualities with the help of case methods**

<b>Professional’s personal qualities</b>	<b>Their description</b>	<b>Impact of case method on their development</b>
Ability to make decisions	Ability to produce and accept a model of certain actions	Comparison and evaluation of advantages and disadvantages of

		different situations, differentiation of logic of the situation
Educability	Ability to search for new knowledge and skills, arrange the studies	Constant search for new information in the process of analysis of the situation, especially during its development
Systems thinking	Ability to holistic perception of objects in their structural and functional expression	Thorough understanding of situation, its systems analysis
Planning and organization	Ability to plan and organize activities (independent / team)	Planning (individual / group) of activities to address the case
Independence and initiative	Ability to produce individually and actively implement the solutions	High individual activity in situations of uncertainty
Willingness to change and flexibility	Willingness and ability to navigate quickly in changing situations, adapt to new conditions	Development of behavior in constantly changing situations of analysis
Commercial and business orientation	Determination to productive activities for achievement of practical results	Constant search for answers on practical results in situations
Ability to work with information	Ability to find information, analyze it, transfer it from one form of presentation to another	Constant search, differentiation, classification, clustering, analysis and presentation of information
Persistence and determination	Ability to defend points of view, overcome opposition from partners	Ability to argue and defend points of view
Communication skills	Command of language and non-verbal means of communication, ability to make contacts	Persistent expression of personal positions, ability to listen and understand interlocutors
Ability to interpersonal contacts	Ability to make favorable impression on partners in interactions	Constant desire to make good impression on teacher and other students
Problematicity of thinking	Ability to see problems	Search for the problem and determination of its basic characteristics

Constructibility	Ability to produce models of problem solving	Search for ways to solve the problem in a case
Ethics	Command of ethical and moral behavior skills in terms of group interaction	Constant collective interaction, competition
Focusing on quality and result	Focus on production of high- quality final product (product / service)	Search for an effective solution to the problem with presentation of quality result
Ability to compete in professional field	Struggle for dominance in a particular professional field	Competition with each other in the argument and defense of individual points of view
Ability to predict	Imaginary vision of developments, ability to predict long-term consequences of actions	Analysis and evaluation of the effects of different solutions to management situations
Tolerance to stress	Combination of personal qualities of an employee, due to which they can withstand overwork (intellectual, emotional and volitional) in fulfilling their duties without negative consequences for the activities of others and their health	Achievement of successful outcome in group work within a limited time
Diligence	Love for work, diligence at work	Group work requires constant work on the assignment
Skills of business correspondence, preparing reports (presentations)	Ability to prepare and edit professional and socially meaningful texts, monitor literacy in description of their own activities, ability to describe work	Drawing a plan of works, business correspondence, presentation

### **Tasks to be solved in the process of implementation of the case study method**

As a reminder, the objective is a perfect prediction of the performance result. The term “objective” is inextricably linked to the concept of “task”. The task arises when the goal is divided, it is a part of the goal. In any activity the goal is achieved by solving the system of problems.

One of the main tasks of high school is development of professional skills for independent work with knowledge among students. It means being able to define problems accurately; collect and assess information quickly and efficiently; identify traditional approaches and contradictions in the problem; develop alternative views on the problem independently; reliably come up with new ideas and suggest unique options for solution of problems.

Now we can state the tasks, which have to be addressed in the process of implementation of case methods [11, p. 36-37]:

1. Problem structuring, involving distinguishing of a complex of problem situations, their typology, characteristics, consequences, ways of solving (problem analysis).
2. Determination of properties, situation structure, its functions and interaction with the internal and external environment (system analysis).
3. Determination of reasons that led to such situation, and consequences of its occurrence (cause-effect analysis).
4. Detection of actions in a situation, its simulation and optimization (praxeological analysis).
5. Development of a system of assessments of the situation, its components, conditions, consequences, characters (axiological analysis).
6. Preparation of predictions regarding the probable, possible and desired future (forecasting analysis).
7. Preparation of recommendations regarding behavior of characters in particular situations (recommendation analysis).
8. Development of action plans in this situation (target-oriented analysis).

Case analysis shall begin with identification of the type of its demand. Once the demand is identified, the possible options<sup>44</sup> for its satisfaction shall be determined. Role analysis of the case study involves specification of its type and revealing of its role system.

Case analysis provides for solution of the five questions:

1. What is the type of conflict laid in the case?

2. What is the current stage of the conflict?
3. What is the role and function of the conflict?
4. What is the structure of the conflict?
5. What are the possible methods and ways to resolve conflict?

The case has a certain nature of internal interaction. The underlying problem is usually hidden and disguised by other structures. The task for the students is to define and qualify the problem. And then on its basis develop a certain type of activity, which will help to solve it. The problem and activity act in the case as elements of nature, in the language of classical philosophy. With regard to the conflict, events and roles, they are presented as a phenomenon. Their purpose is to hide root of the matter, that is the problem, to the maximum, create obstacles on the way of case analysis. Time parameter permits to present case dynamic. It is representative of both the nature and the phenomenon.

Case study method provides an opportunity to solve the following didactic objectives:

- solidify knowledge acquired in previous classes (after theoretical course);
- use theoretical knowledge, including for learning other disciplines and solving practical problems;
- work on the skills of practical use of conceptual schemes to familiarization of students with layouts of analysis of practical situations;
- work on the skills of group problem analysis and develop decision-making algorithms;
- use proper decisions under uncertainty; master situation research skills;
- develop action plans focused on intended results;
- provide examples of administrative decisions;
- provide examples of consequences<sup>45</sup> of management decisions;
- take into account the views of other experts on the matter under consideration when making final decisions.

Thus, the case study method as a form of active teaching provides means for solution of the following educational problems [9, p. 1489]:

- development of a holistic understanding of professional activity and its dynamics;
- acquisition of problem-professional and social experience, in particular, making individual and collective decisions;
- development of theoretical and practical thinking in the professional field;
- development of cognitive motivation, provision of conditions for professional motivation;
- development of readiness to solution of professional tasks.