

COMM 306 Team Case Challenge (25%)

Apple and Its Suppliers: Corporate Social Responsibility

Due Date: Sunday, June 14, 2020 via Blackboard

Deliverable: 8-Page Case Analysis

(not including Title Page, Table of Contents, Appendix, or Team Reflection)

Note: *This is a case analysis not a research paper. The objective is to use the concepts and tools you have learned in this course to facilitate your critical and creative thinking skills, complete a strategic analysis, and develop an original recommendation. You are only to use information from the case and concepts from this course to complete this assignment (citations not required when using course and case resources in this assignment). Use of information from external resources is not permitted. Submissions will be monitored carefully. Any violations will be addressed in accordance with the university policy on academic honesty.*

FORMATTING: Use Calibri, Arial, or Times New Roman 12-point font with 1.15 line spacing, one line between paragraphs, and one-inch margins on all sides of the paper. Do not indent paragraphs. Use a proper heading structure so the document is easy to read and comprehend. Use bold font, italics, underlining, and numbered or bulleted lists as appropriate to improve “skim value.” Incorporate tables and graphics as appropriate to organize your information and analysis effectively.

Assignment

Complete an analysis of the situation and provide a recommendation to Jeff Williams to help him address the key ethical and strategic issues facing Apple. Use the following to guide your analysis process:

- **Issue Identification:** Outline the problem and clearly specify the key issues facing the company. Consider, what has been core to the success of Apple in the past? How might this current situation jeopardize the future success of the company if it is not handled effectively?
- **Situational Analysis:** Briefly highlight any *historical* factors that have led up to this situation. In addition, identify *current* factors or trends that should be taken into account as future decisions are made (you may find the PESTEL framework useful for examining these factors). Given this situational analysis, what life cycle stage does the issue appear to be in? What is the significance of this stage from a strategic perspective?
- **Stakeholder Analysis:** Complete a detailed analysis of stakeholders using tables, power/interest matrix mapping, and narrative summaries as appropriate to structure your analysis and communicate your findings. You may find some of the following questions helpful as you conduct your analysis:
 - **Identification:** Who has a vested interest in this situation and in future decisions made by the company? Note: when identifying stakeholders, consider who is going to be impacted by decisions the company makes, as well as who might have the ability to influence the strategic/operational decisions and positively/negatively impact the future performance of the company.

- **Perspective:** What are the views of these stakeholders on the issue? What is important to them? What is their level of interest in this situation?
- **Power:** How much power do these stakeholders have to influence the situation and/or the operations of Apple? What are some of the tactics these stakeholders may use to exert and/or gain power and influence?
- **Strategic Implications:** Summarize and synthesize the key insights arising from your situational and stakeholder analysis. What are the most important factors for Williams to take into account moving forward? What are the critical challenges or threats to future operations? What are some potential opportunities? Based on your analysis, clearly articulate what Apple’s “go-forward” strategy needs to do.
- **Alternatives:** Outline three valid courses of action Apple could pursue going forward. Complete a pros/cons analysis of the potential alternatives.
- **Recommendation:** Use decision criteria to evaluate the alternatives. Based on your analysis, make a recommendation as to the optimal “go-forward” response for Williams. Clearly indicate how this recommendation best addresses the critical issues, takes into account the interests of key stakeholders, and promotes the common good ethically and strategically. Your solution should be desirable (make sense to/for people), viable (able to be accomplished), sustainable (able to become part of a long-term strategy), and ethical (minimize harm/maximize benefits).
- **Implementation Considerations:** Conduct a risk analysis and highlight any foreseeable risks, conflicts, or challenges Jeff Williams and his team may face if they choose to implement this recommendation. Suggest ways to mitigate these risks.

Team Reflection (not included in the 8-page limit)

Reflect on your experience completing this case as a team. Consider a few of the following questions in your response: Which cognitive biases became apparent as you worked through this analysis? How was the potential negative impact of these biases minimized? Were there different opinions and ideas? How were those opinions/ideas encouraged and explored? What were some of the challenges that emerged throughout the process? How did you reach an agreement on the proposed course of action? Do you believe you assessed and addressed stakeholder perspectives fairly? Do you feel your discussion challenged individual assumptions and allowed you to explore various perspectives and potential alternatives more objectively? Do you feel that you effectively utilized both critical and creative thinking skills throughout the strategic process? How might you continue to strengthen your skills in these areas?

Performance Evaluation: Your submission will be evaluated according to **content** and **competency level**. Basic content requirements for each component of the case analysis are outlined in the assignment instructions above. The level of competency (quality or skill level) with which those requirements are fulfilled will be evaluated using relevant Competency Framework descriptors. As more than one competency is typically utilized during the completion of each component, the performance rating will take into account multiple factors.

Case Analysis Component and Relevant Competencies	Performance Rating
Issue Identification (moral awareness; social perceptiveness)	
Situational Analysis (moral awareness; social perceptiveness; use of tools)	
Stakeholder Analysis (moral awareness; social perceptiveness; use of tools)	
Strategic Implications (moral awareness; social perceptiveness; use of tools)	
Alternatives (synthesis; use of tools)	
Recommendation (use of tools; promoting the common good)	
Implementation Considerations (use of tools; moral commitment)	
Team Reflection (self-awareness; identifying and overcoming personal biases)	
Overall Demonstration of Strategic and Ethical Thinking, Problem Solving, & Decision Making (integration of all competencies)	
Overall Professionalism of Written Report (quality of written communication; organization, analysis, synthesis, integration, innovation; objectivity i.e. self-awareness; overcoming bias)	
OVERALL RATING (MAX 80 – to be converted to a grade out of 25)	

Performance Scale

<4: Inadequate – critical content requirements absent; minimum competency level not demonstrated

4: Minimal Pass – content requirements partially fulfilled; emerging competency level demonstrated

4.5 - 5: Adequate – content requirements fulfilled; approaching competency expectations for this assignment

5.5 - 6: Very Good – content requirements fulfilled; competency expectations achieved

6.5: Excellent - content requirements fulfilled in-depth; advanced competency level demonstrated

7 - 8: Exceptional - content requirements exceeded; distinctive competency level demonstrated