

**University of  
Northampton**

**Case Study Representation:  
A Reflective Guide for  
Educators**



**UoN**

# Why Case Study Representation?

## *Disrupting the Hidden Curriculum*

Case studies enable students to apply theoretical knowledge and engage with imagined, historical, or current real-life situations.



Within management education, case studies primarily include white male protagonists and fail to incorporate equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) issues (Berkeley Haas Center for Equity, Gender and Leadership 2020).

Regarding the **hidden curriculum** socialisation process, tacit messages (messages that are implicit and / or not explicitly articulated), may be communicated through formal curriculum design and delivery. Tacit messages can:

- Create unintended learning about work skill abilities and perpetuate the status quo in which business leaders are often white males (Sharen and McGowan 2019).
- Communicate what really does (or doesn't) matter (Blasco 2012).
- **Fail** to provide students with an inclusive understanding of the diverse range of competent leaders.
- **Fail** to prepare students for employment within an increasingly diverse and global, interconnected industry.
- **Fail** to encourage critical self-reflection and appreciation of different viewpoints.
- **Fail** to develop change agents.

# Reflective Questions for Educators

## *Enhancing Case Study Representation*



**Are a diverse range of protagonists (including those with intersectional identities) included?**

**Are students encouraged to appreciate alternative perspectives?**



**Do the organisations represent different business sectors and include diverse CEOs?**

**Are stereotypes and gendered assumptions challenged?**



**Is there geographical breadth?**

**Are EDI topics explored and critically analysed?**



**Are social and societal issues explored and critically analysed?**

**Are the above points sustained and integrated across modules?**



'Case Study Representation: A Reflective Guide for Educators' was developed by Dr Stacie Gray as part of a research project that investigated case study representation in the sport management curricula. You can find the associated journal article here: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2023.2212605>

## References and Readings

Berkeley Haas Center for Equity, Gender and Leadership. 2020. *The State of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Business School Case Studies (University of California, Berkeley Haas School of Business)* <https://haas.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/EGAL-Case-Compendium-Analysis-Final.pdf>.

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Sharen, C. M. and R. A. McGowan. 2019. "Invisible or Clichéd: How are Women Represented in Business Cases?" *Journal of Management education* 43 (2): 129-173. doi:10.1177/1052562918812154.



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