



## Guidelines

### 2007 Reaching Out MBA Case Study Competition

## Background

The 2007 Reaching Out MBA Case Study Competition, sponsored by Booz Allen Hamilton, is designed to provide MBA students the opportunity to hone and demonstrate their skills in strategic analysis, recommendation development, and persuasive presentation. The competition will take place at the 10th Annual Reaching Out MBA Conference in San Francisco in October 2007. Teams from the world's leading business schools will compete, before our prestigious panel of judges hailing from the consulting profession, industry, and academia, and address important issues that involve management challenges that LGBT business leaders may face in the professional environment.

## Composition of Teams

Teams must consist of a minimum of three (3) and maximum of five (5) students. Team members may either all attend the same school or be 'blended' from two or more business schools. Students can be first-year, second-year, part-time, or executive MBA students but all team members must be enrolled in their school at the time of the competition.

## Prizes

1st place team: \$2,500

2nd place team: \$1,500

## Timeline

- ❖ Friday, September 28, 2007 by 12 midnight (US Eastern Standard Time): All teams must be registered using the Case Study Competition Registration Form posted on the Reaching Out MBA conference website. Registration

will be confirmed via email with team captains on September 29, 2007, and blended teams will be assigned on October 1, 2007.

- ❖ Tuesday, October 2, 2007 by 12 midnight: All registered teams will receive an electronic copy of the case to be analyzed, along with any additional supporting material and instructions on required deliverables.
- ❖ Tuesday, October 9, 2007 by 12 midnight: All teams must have case analysis and deliverables completed and sent via e-mail to [case@reachingoutmba.org](mailto:case@reachingoutmba.org), including all relevant attachments. Teams may submit documents early, but no late submissions will be permitted.
- ❖ Saturday, October 13, 2007: The case competition will take place. All team members must be available to participate in final presentations on Saturday, October 13, 2007. Awards will be presented at the conference luncheon on Saturday, October 13, 2007.

## Format of Presentations

The competition is divided into two rounds. Two teams will emerge from the 1st round as winners and compete in the 2nd round.

The first round will take place simultaneously in two rooms. Each team will be assigned to present in one of the two rooms at a specified time. Each team will present for 10 minutes, followed by comments and a few questions from our

panel of judges. At the end of the 1st round, the highest scoring team from each room will be announced. The winner from each room will proceed to the 2nd round.

The 2nd round will be held immediately after the two finalist teams are announced. In the 2nd round, each of the two teams will provide a 5-minute overall summary and convince the audience why their recommendations should be adopted. Each summary will be followed by a few questions from the judges and general audience in attendance.

Judges will evaluate teams based on their presentation/summary as well as how they answer questions. To ensure fairness in the competition, each team will be identified by a number and color during the judging period. As the identity of the schools represented will not be revealed during the case competition, please only use your assigned team name as the identifier when you submit your PowerPoint slides and throughout your case presentation.

The case competition is open for viewing by all participants of the conference; however, case competition participants will not be allowed to view other teams' presentations until they have given their presentation.

To ensure the competition proceeds smoothly, the PowerPoint presentations will be pre-loaded and teams are expected to start their presentations quickly once the preceding team finishes answering questions.

Each presentation will be timed and flashcards will be used to indicate the length of the presentation. In the 1st round, flash cards will be shown in the following order:

2 minutes remaining  
1 minute remaining  
0 minutes remaining  
1 minute over

If the 4th flash card is shown (i.e. the presentation has exceeded 11 minutes) the team must stop presenting immediately and 10 points (out of a possible 30) will be deducted. In the 2nd round, two flash cards will be shown:

1 minute remaining  
0 minutes remaining

The team must stop their summary immediately after 5 minutes when the second flash card is shown.

#### *1st Round Evaluation Criteria*

Each presentation will be evaluated on the basis of the quality of the analysis, strength of recommendations, and presentation style, as follows:

- ❖ Quality and strength of analysis – 10 points
- ❖ Sound reasoning and strategic recommendations – 10 points
- ❖ Communication skills – 10 points

As with most cases, there is not necessarily a right or wrong answer. The judges will be looking for the quality of the analysis and reasoning in evaluating the presentation.

2nd and Final Round: Evaluation Criteria  
Each summary will be evaluated by the panel of judges on the basis of the quality of communication style as well as the reasoning and strength of recommendations, as follows:

- ❖ Communication skills – 15 points
- ❖ Sound reasoning and strategic recommendations – 15 points

Judges will deliberate who the eventual winners are and the winning teams will be announced at the awards luncheon on Saturday, October 13, 2007.

### **Judges**

Our panel of judges will consist of business leaders from consulting firms, industry, academia, and past case competition participants. Again, the judges will not know the identity of the schools appearing before them during the competition, nor shall competitors disclose this information to those doing the judging.

### **Deliverables**

Each team must email their analysis to [case@reachingoutmba.org](mailto:case@reachingoutmba.org) by Tuesday, October 9, 2007 at 12 midnight (Eastern Standard Time). Presentations that are submitted after this time will lead to disqualification of the team.

In anticipation of competing in the 2nd Round, you must submit two documents – one for each round. Do not include any team member names or school identifying information in either presentation; rather only use your assigned team number as an identifier. Your slides will be preloaded and ready for use. It is recommended that each

team have a copy saved on a flash USB drive or CD for the presentation in case of technical difficulties.

### **Research**

Some ancillary information about the company, industry and market data will be provided in the case vehicle. The case competition is intended to be a fact-finding exercise for the teams. Teams participating in the case competition are encouraged to do outside research regarding issues presented by the case for benchmarking and reference. Consulting with faculty advisors and industry partners for general help (e.g., strategic counsel, market analysis, and valuation principles) is allowed, as long as the help does not pertain directly to your case recommendations. You will be asked at the Competition to certify that the work product submitted is only that of your team and its members.

Once the competition begins, all faculty advisors, alumni, or other interested parties may act as spectators only. These individuals should not offer any suggestions, changes, or revisions to the content or structure of information presented during the preliminary or final round presentations, or question and answer session.

### **Confidentiality**

All public sessions of the competition, including but not limited to oral presentations and question/answer sessions, are open to the public at large. Any and all of these public sessions may be broadcast to interested persons through media which may include radio, television and the internet. Any data or information discussed or divulged in

public sessions by entrants should be considered information that will likely enter the public realm, and entrants should not assume any right of confidentiality in any data or information discussed, divulged or presented in these sessions.

**Contact**

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**Website:**

<http://www.reachingoutmba.org/sf07/comp.shtml>

