Decision Making – 1

**Template Instructions**

This template outlines the**2 steps** required for this exercise. Once you have completed it, save it or save it as a PDF.

**Step 1 – Identifying situations**  
  
Step 1 is to decide what kind of situation you would like to analyse in this course. To practice, write down a few situations and try to explain for each situation why it is a complex situation or why not. In the end pick one (or more) complex situations that you find interesting enough to work on during this course.

You could look for situations that are problematic (or will become problematic) or that might contain an opportunity for business. The first one you might want to solve, either to solve the problem now, or to prevent a problem from occurring in the future. While in the second, you might want to take the opportunity and turn it into successful business. What the situations have in common is that they will require making a decision about a course of action. This makes them very suitable for this course, as the methods and concepts in this course show their practical value in situations such as these.

In addition to 'business opportunity', the term 'business strategy' usually refers to a few analytical steps that are, in essence, comparable to the analytical steps in this course. Creating a good strategy requires understanding what the situation looks like that the company is in. Basically, you find out how well the organisation fits with its surroundings. From there you elaborate on as many different possibilities you can think of to improve that fit. Some of these possibilities are more promising than others and you will design these in more detail, compare them elaborately and come to decision making and implementation. Of course, 'business strategy' is an academic and practical field on its own, with many schools, theories and models, but it is interesting to see that it shares an analytical nature with this course.

Describe 6 situations in your life that you are interested in. Explain for each of those situations whether you think they are complex or not. Choose any of the complex ones to further analyse in this course.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Describe the situation | Is this situation complex?  Yes No | Why? |
| Situation 1 |  |  |  |
| Situation 2 |  |  |  |
| Situation 3 |  |  |  |
| Situation 4 |  |  |  |
| Situation 5 |  |  |  |
| Situation 6 |  |  |  |

Which of these situations will you analyse further during the course?

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Step 2 – Identifying a few stakeholders**  
  
A first way to increase our understanding of the situation, is to know how other people involved in that situation look at it. So, we are going to identify a few, preferably very different, people involved in our situation and try to make their perspectives on the situation more explicit. First by describing how they look at the situation, and then by formulating a dilemma that they might face.  
  
Dilemmas are always combinations of one thing that you want (for instance more airport capacity) and one thing you automatically get but that you do not want (more noise, more gas emissions, more maintenance cost, etc.). So try to think of what you want the situation to be. More efficient production. Safer working place. Less sick leave. Etc. And think then about what you might get if you implement a solution that gives you less sick leave. Probably increasing cost at the HR department. And when creating safer working conditions, you might become less effective and your labour cost might increase. And so on.  
  
If you have no idea how these other people in your complex situation look at it, simply drop by, drink a cup of tea and ask them. If these people are not accessible for you (because they are a minister or something) just look at interviews in the media, podcasts, blogs, etc., and try to compose their perspective.

Look for three people in your complex situation. You can include yourself if you want. Write down in a few lines how you think they look at your complex situation. If possible, ask them. Then try and formulate a dilemma they might face in your complex situation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Stakeholder | Perspective | Dilemma (…versus…) |
| 1 |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |
| 4 (You) |  |  |  |

Well done! Great that you have tried all the steps and thought about the implications for your particular case (or even cases if you analyze more than one!).