Participant-Centered Learning and the Case Method

Case and Classroom: R. R. Donnelley & Sons

Professor David Garvin’s Teaching Tools

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20 minutes  1. Traditional versus digital business

   Characteristics? Disruptive technology?
   Selling? Operations? General manager skills to run?
   How are long-term employees likely to respond?
   Implications for Cowan? Separate versus integrate?

15 minutes  2. Stages of new business creation

   (Before April ’94, April 94-Jan ’95, Jan-June ’95)
   Major tasks? Activities? Deliverables?
   Role of numbers?
   How would you evaluate performance in each period?
   What questions would you ask?

15 minutes  3. Barbara Schetter

   Evaluation?
   Agenda and tasks going forward?
   Schetter and Clarke: good/bad idea? What are unresolved issues?
   How to make it work?
   How has Schetter’s job changed over time?

15 minutes  4. Organic and mechanistic processes

   Define
   In what circumstances?
   Require what skills?

10 minutes  5. Conclusion

   Update
   Lessons (organic/mechanistic processes, new business creation, the general manager’s job)
R. R. Donnelley & Sons Assignment Questions

1. How do the critical success factors for Donnelley’s traditional printing business compare with those for on-demand digital printing? How did these differences shape the agenda and tasks of Rory Cowan?

2. As the digital division evolved, what were the critical challenges:
   • Prior to April 1994?
   • Between April 1994 and January 1995?
   • Between January 1995 and June 1995?

3. What role did Barb Schetter play in each period? How has her job changed over time? What advice would you offer her going forward?
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(#3) Barb Schetter

(#2) Stages in New Business Creation
Before April ’94  April ’94-Jan’95  Jan-June ‘95

Organic versus mechanistic: in what circumstances?

(#1) Traditional versus Digital  Cowan’s Agenda

Organic versus mechanistic: what skills required?