

Steps for Preparing a Case Study

There are a number of phases in the case study process. Each requires reflection and consultation with your case study adviser. Because this is a process, expect to take numerous months, and even as long as a year, to complete it.

Phase I Identify a Problem

I. In order to start the process, you need to identify a problem of focus. Problems can concern

- a.) An individual student, a classroom experiencing difficulty, or be programmatic in nature.
 - (1) The problem can also concern either a behavioral or instructional issue or some combination.

II. Problems can come from potential referrals for evaluation through the co-op.

III. Systematically collect data.

- a.) data can come from the reason for referral or reason for this issue coming to your attention
- b.) data can come from grades/past performance—a record review
- c.) data can come from observations of the student/classroom over multiple settings and on different days and times of day
 - (1) count on collecting data each day for at least a week's worth
 - (2) make sure you have data for various settings and different times of day
- d.) remember that **baseline data will be used to set your goals for intervention**
- e.) remember that outcome data will be compared to baseline data at the end of the intervention to determine improvement

Phase II Define the Problem

I. Operationally define the problem

- a.) the definition must be in observable measurable terms
- b.) those terms must be based on the baseline data

Phase III Literature Review

I. The literature review should be focused on the identified problem and should **MINIMALLY include** a discussion of

- a.) background literature relevant to the problem identified
- b.) general information on the problem area and specifically in relation to the age group in the case study (e.g. anorexia in general and anorexia in adolescent males specifically)
- c.) a discussion of how different theories explain the issue – remember there needs to be evidence of theoretical grounding!

Phase IV Verify the Problem Behavior

- I. Classify the problem behavior through standardized, formal assessment
- II. Discuss the methods used and why they are appropriate
- III. Present and discuss the results of assessment

Phase V Discussion of Hypotheses of Possible Reasons for the Problem and its Occurrence

- I. Present reasons why the behavior is occurring
- II. Reasons should be grounded in theory but tied to the observable behaviors in the case

Phase VI Set Goals for Intervention

- I. Goals should be based on the data and hypotheses for why the behavior occurs
- II. State goals in explicit measurable terms

Phase VII Describe the Intervention

- I. Describe the intervention in relation to Phase VI
- II. Explain in theoretical terms why the intervention should work
- III. Intervention should be described in such detail that another person could carry it out
- IV. Describe how intervention is monitored
- V. Describe all parties involved and their roles in the intervention
- VI. Describe any training and/or support provided for participants in intervention

Phase VIII Outcome Data

- I. Collect post-treatment (outcome) data
- II. Outcome data must be based on identified problem
- III. Compare outcome data to baseline data
- IV. Prepare graphical representation of comparison
- V. Serendipitous results can be included in a separate section

Phase IX Discussion of Results

- I. Discuss progress toward goal
- II. Discuss the intervention
 - a.) Where was it successful?
 - b.) Where was it unsuccessful?
- III. Describe modification that could be made to the intervention to make it work better