Case Preparation:

Remember, the cases are graded per the rubric. The BoD would want your recommendations with the proper support. Any analysis details should be covered in an appendix. Do not go to the Internet to find, for example, a SWOT analysis and use it for your case. Do your own research and develop your own strategic analysis.

In doing your cases you will need a minimum of three references outside the case I give you. One of the references must be the company’s latest 10K report or Annual Report - Wikipedia and QuickMBA type sources do not count. Use current business websites to find out about recent developments. Certainly do not use websites that develop term papers or do strategy analysis on these cases and publish them. This could lead to charges of plagiarism and the associated consequences.

The case study analysis allows you to apply your knowledge to the real world. Your goal is to identify the major problem confronting the subject company and provide a strategic solution for the problem. You will need to collect data and interpret it. You must also isolate the critical issues that the company faces. Remember that in the words of Lord Kelvin, "anything that cannot be expressed in numbers represents knowledge that is of a poor and uncertain kind."

After identifying the critical issues you can generate alternatives to address the company's competitive situation. Evaluating these alternatives allows an organization to select one course of action. With a course of action defined the strategic manager can then provide a plan for implementation this is what you are to do on the case studies. Always refer to the rubric for the critical points to cover.

The format for the case studies should be as follows.

1. APA cover page,
2. One page, single spaced Executive Summary for the case as noted below. This is a summary of your report and, therefore, must be done after you finish the report. This one-page report must use headings and subheadingss indicated in the following format to identify the critical issues. Begin with your understanding of the situation in a problem statement. Follow this with a concise presentation of your analysis and the alternatives you see. Recommend one course of action and support that recommendation with facts and other information, such as competitor’s moves. The last item is presents a plan for implementation –a sentence or two is sufficient. A sample of the Executive Summary is available with all this material.
3. Body of your report (5 Pages). The summary page should encapsulate your understanding to the problems facing the company, a brief summary of the strategic analysis, financial analysis, the alternatives considered and a single recommendation with an implementation plan.

After the executive summary page, you are to use standard APA formatting for a 5 page report. Tables, charts, graphs, etc. are to be put in the appendix and referenced from the body of your paper. Deductions may be taken for papers where the body is longer than five pages. Remember, in management you must get your thoughts across quickly if you expect your work to be read. Long reports generally wind up in a stack awaiting reading at some future date (which never comes).

Case Study Report Format:

Your report must include:

I. NSU **Cover page** (1 page in length). It will present the name of the case and the author(s) of the report.

II. Executive Summary (1 page in length).

The Executive Summary is a concise overview of the report. The Case Study Report should be written from the *perspective of an outside consultant, writing to the Board of Directors of the firm*. It notes the essential points of the report and must have the following sections:

1. Problem Statement: State the main problem facing the firm (or industry) in one, succinct sentence.
2. Analysis: Summarize the main findings of your analysis. You may use bullet points, bold, italics – any means to convey and highlight the key factors you have determined based on your analysis. Don’t repeat items from the body of your report like the SWOT. Summarize the major issues.
3. Alternatives: State briefly (one sentence or a bullet point each) 2 or 3 alternative courses of action that could be implemented
4. Recommendation: Choose one course of action and support your choice.
5. Implementation: Briefly (1or 2 sentences are sufficient) present how the plan would be implemented. This tests the viability of the choice. For example, your plan would demonstrate that the company has the people, financial resources and time to implement your recommendation.

III. Body of Report (5 Pages)

These bullets should appear in your paper. The following is a precise format for the Case Studies.

FORMATTING for Executive Summary:

* Single-space
* One inch all margins
* Use bullet points, lists, or other means to convey information briefly. Further explanation can be found in the main body of the report.
* Use headings and subheadings to organize the material in an easy to read and understandable manner that highlights the essential points of your analysis.
* Do not include a summary or overview of the firm in your report. The Board of Directors are knowledgeable and need no background presented.

The body of your paper should be in standard APA format, double-spaced, with appropriate references, but not exceeding five pages. You may attach Appendices for tables, charts, anything useful that is referred to in body of the case report.

Remember that cases are graded per the rubric. The Case Study rubric can be found here or in the in the Course Instruction Tab and should be added at the end of your submission.