

## Storyboarding with PowerPoint to bring cases, case problems, and course content to life

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### Framework

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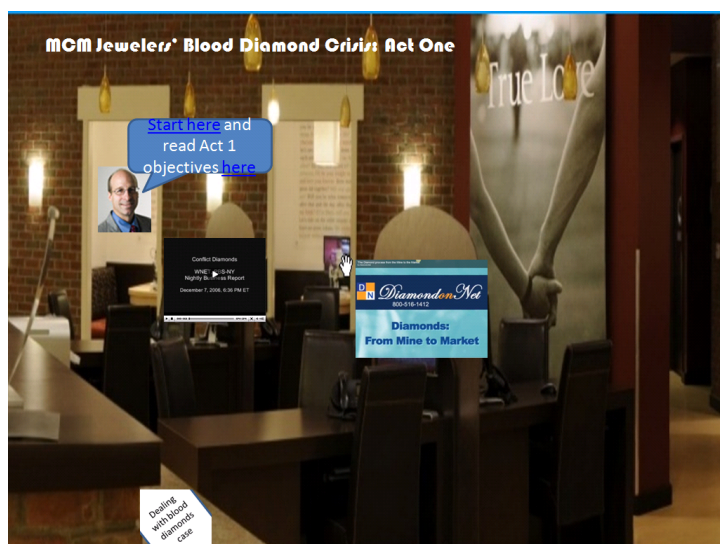
The case method is widely used in business, law and other disciplines as a way of contextualizing course content. Most commonly, cases are delivered as paper descriptions of problems that arise in the field being studied. The case method leads to student engagement as students use course content to understand and to propose solutions to real world problems. Technological developments, however, empower teachers to easily move away from paper presentation of cases and to bring cases to life with multi-media elements.

### Making it Work

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In order to integrate course readings and a business case for my Business Communication class, I use a storyboard approach in PowerPoint (sample screenshots left and below). The case discussed here includes five acts (modules) and centers on potential problems a jeweler faces because unscrupulous diamond vendors still find ways to sell conflict diamonds to jewelers.

The first slide of each act includes a link to a discussion of learning objectives presented in print and audio. As the students read the act, they discover other embedded links in the story. Pictures (all pictures are royalty free) of corporate offices, jewelry stores, etc. were used to create context and setting. Characters (again royalty free pictures were used) involved in the case converse with each other. Links to course content appear in conversation and thought bubbles, computer screens, and work files pictured in the act. For example, in the first act the executives



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at a regional jewelry chain begin to deal with fallout from a 60-Minutes episode featuring the arrest of one of the jeweler's diamond vendors. The students see the executives in a conference room discussing the company's public image crisis and a potential ethical lapse. The students click on the computer screen in the conference room and it shows a video that discusses crisis communication. As the story develops, the students become a part of the story as their assignments represent the company's attempts to deal with the crisis.

## Implications

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In class students take a readiness assurance quiz regarding course content. In follow up class days we apply and generalize the course content to other business contexts. Culminating assignments for each act and the class as a whole relate to the storyboarded case. This approach allowed me to create one storyline and easily use the case in class. Students showed enthusiasm for the case by learning character names and discussing, sometimes with surprise, the ways business messages have to change depending on purpose, audience, and channel. In general, the engagement with the lifelike story helped students remain engaged in the course and course content, while connecting course content to a variety of business situations.

This approach to case/course delivery can easily be replicated for other cases and classes in other disciplines.