<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEAM SELECTION GUIDELINES</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PREPARATION GUIDELINES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE ANALYSIS GUIDELINES</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIVIDING THE WORK</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VISUAL SUPPORT</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESENTATION SKILLS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTICIPATING QUESTIONS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTACT US</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BUILDING AN ENGCOMM LEVEL TEAM

Getting ready for a case competition, no matter the type, location, or duration, begins with a very simple, yet important step: choosing who to compete with. As ENGCOMM aims at bridging the gap between the fields of engineering and business, our Academics department strongly suggests that you consider building a team of two (2) engineering students and two (2) business students, in order to maximize your chances of successfully solving the complex cases that await you.

How can you increase the quality and durability of a company’s product while reducing its cost and production lead time? How about reinventing a local business’ delivery system in hopes of doubling its current market share? In these situations, knowledge diversity is key to success!

HOW TO BUILD A DIVERSE TEAM

1. Search your network!
Do you have friends who study engineering? Do you know someone who can present you to a fellow business student? Go out there and search!

2. Use social networks to your advantage.
Subscribe to your university’s business/engineering social network group. You might connect with people who share your interests and could be the missing member to a perfectly balanced case competition team.
Preparing for a case competition requires students to engage in specific activities prior to competing that will help them to build confidence in their case-solving abilities and to better understand what to expect. As the cases vary in lengths, areas of expertise and industry sectors, students need to begin preparing well before the date of the competition, in order to maximize their chances of success.
WHAT SHOULD I DO PRIOR TO THE CASE COMPETITION?

Meet your teammates. Meeting and working with your teammates prior to the competition week will allow you to assess one another’s skills and to better understand each other’s strengths and weaknesses. Work to uncover and leverage your strengths, while also recognizing areas of weakness and how to mitigate potential problems.

Meet your coach. Your coach is not simply someone who will accompany and support you throughout the week of the competition; they are meant to guide and help enforce your learning prior to the competition. Listen to your coach as they will generally have advice, best practices and a desire to see you succeed.

Watch Past Case Presentations. Through watching the presentations of previous year teams, you can further understand the importance of key presentation techniques. Watch the presentations and notice points of improvement, as well as how you can ensure to not repeat the same mistakes.

Practice. Mock cases are accessible, whether it be online or through your coach. Through practicing past cases you can familiarise yourself with the types of problems that can arise, how they will be worded and what to look for while reading through a case.

Create a Practice Schedule. Accountability is Key – You and and your teammates should work towards a practice schedule that is realistic and can be strictly followed. Try to simulate a case-solving environment and then reflect with your team on how you can improve.
Regardless of your team’s intellectual capacities, case competition performance is strongly driven by your team’s understanding of the issue that is presented. Taking the necessary time to interpret and develop a well-rounded approach to the problem at hand will be among the most important steps of your preparation period. To ensure you make the most out of the time that is allocated to you, here are a few pieces of advice you should consider prior to entering the preparation room.

1. **Read. Carefully.**
Reading the case is the first and arguably the most important task of your preparation period, which will usually take around 30 minutes to accomplish. During that time, make sure to take notes and/or highlight key elements within the text which will help you piece together your interpretation of the problem, later on. A common practice is to start your reading by going over the first and last paragraphs of the case. As the information they contain is usually important to your general understanding of the problem, reading them first will make it easier for you to identify important information by bringing an initial perspective of what is asked of you.

2. **Discuss the case.**
Once you and your team members are done carefully reading the case, assign the role of note taker to one member of the team members and begin comparing your respective understanding of the presented industry problem. Laying down everybody’s ideas and opinions will be key to correctly interpreting the problem and identifying a comprehensive solution with both engineering and business considerations.
3. Frame the problem and identify your solution.
Once all ideas are laid out, proceed to filter down the information gathered until you reach a point where the problem is clearly defined. Once you have assessed all of the important information gathered by your team and painted a clear picture of the problem to be tackled, you will be able to formulate a truly comprehensive and well-rounded solution to build your presentation around.

4. Clarify the roadmap that leads to your solution.
Once your solution is established, separate the information that is needed into the two following categories: the information you have and the information you are missing. From clearly depicting what you need to research and address, you will then be able to form a logical plan for you and your teammates to follow into efficiently finding the missing pieces to the puzzle.
HOW TO EFFECTIVELY DIVIDE THE WORK

Many different strategies can be used when it comes to dividing a certain workload between teammates in an efficient way. In a case competition environment, where every second counts, it is of the utmost importance for delegations to aim at benefitting from each delegate’s particular skills and knowledge.

As ENGCOREM 2021’s scoring grids will assign equal points distribution between the engineering and the business components of a solution, it will be critical for students to evenly distribute the intellectual resources of the team between the two disciplines. As such, engineering students may be assigned tasks such as product design, materials choices/sourcing, and sustainability/environmental considerations while business students could tackle items such as market conditions analysis, marketing strategy, and financial planning.

It is also recommended for each student to conduct the necessary research, develop the slides, and present their respective part of the case to improve efficiency and to ensure that the presenter’s ideas are laid out in a sequence that is natural and familiar to him/her.

Finally, remaining subtopics such as introduction, problem statement, implementation and conclusion can be distributed to even out everyone’s preparation workload and presentation time.
**DIVIDING THE WORK**

**BONUS TIPS:**

- Make sure that each part is well supported by either tangible and reliable data or by assumptions that are fully disclosed and explained.

- While students should have clear and distinctive parts of the case to tackle, make sure that the overall solution is known and understood by everyone. This will not only show in your presentation but will also ensure that the entire brain power of the team can be leveraged during the Q&A period.

- Remain in constant communication with your teammates. Inform them of your progress on a timely basis. You can even use a clock to set your team alarms as reminders to catch-up on each member’s advancement.

- Ask your coach about additional tips on how to divide work effectively. Keep in mind that it is your coach’s responsibility to provide guidance to the team on such topics. Use his/her knowledge and experience to your advantage!
CREATING THE PERFECT VISUAL SUPPORT

Animated or static, stock images or drawings, illustrations customized for you, images can change an average presentation into an eye-catching, memorable, and effective means of communication. Engage your audience and use your valuable presentation time most efficiently by incorporating relevant and appropriate visual elements.

Here are some tips on preparing a high quality presentation using visual aids:

- Start your presentation with at least a rough and brief outline of the goal, Make content simple, punchy and easy to read, Choose a relevant colour theme and images.

- The audience should not be trying to read and listen at the same time - use visual aids to highlight your points.

- Try to point out one message per visual aid and one key point per slide.

- Avoid distracting special effects and try to limit the number of slides.

- Pause enough on each slide and allow your audience time to look at slides, and talk to the audience, not the screen.

- And finally, keep in mind that your appearance, body language and facial expressions are the most important visual support. Practice presenting the full program to have an excellent presentation!
YOU CAN INCORPORATE PRESENTATION DESIGN ELEMENTS SUCH AS:

- Animation – use simple and subtle movements to catch your audience’s attention because eyes follow motion

- Photos and illustrations – stock photos and illustrations can personalize your presentation and connect with your audience

- Diagrams & charts – bar graph, pie chart, flow chart, organizational map, or other diagrams can visualize statistics much better and have a greater impact

- Demonstrations – use GIFs or illustrations wherever possible to visualize processes
REFINING YOUR PRESENTATION SKILLS

While public speaking can be daunting, there are some key attributes that define a good public speaker and luckily, there are some exercises that help you train to become that person.

To be a good public speaker you first need to be confident and excited about the subject you are about to present. Try to be yourself and speak with passion about the subject in order to really communicate to people through speech. The main purpose of delivering a speech is to attempt to get your point across, so it is better to keep your presentation short and sweet. And lastly, connect with your audience and paint a picture through storytelling.

There are some exercises that can help you become the person described above:

- Try to only memorize the key points of each slide; not all the lines. The better strategy is to memorize your key concepts instead of the specific lines. You can do this by creating bullet points of your key messages, stories, data and takeaways that you want to get across in each part of your presentation.

- Use audio and visuals. Do not read directly from the slides and make your speech into a multi-sensory content.

- Interact with your audience. Try to think about ways you can involve the audience in your presentation and make it interactive so that you are talking with them, not just to them.

- Prioritize your audience. Even professional speakers get nervous prior to presenting. The most effective way to take the pressure off of you is to make serving your audience your top priority, rather than your own performance.

As mentioned before, storytelling is an amazing tool to connect with your audience. In order to tell an engaging story, you can share personal stories that your audience can relate with or share stories about people that share your audiences’ values and beliefs. You can also include facts within your stories to better challenge the rational parts of the brain.
HOW TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE QUESTIONS

One of the most challenging parts of a business presentation is managing questions. It is a challenge because questions are hard to control. But don’t worry! The key is that you have to spend as much time preparing for the questions as you do for creating the visual aids. Here are some tips that can help you manage them better:

- Anticipate the questions and try to put yourself in the shoes of the judge. Create a list of questions you anticipate from attendees. You can conduct Google research using a variety of keywords that relate to your topic and key points.

- Have confidence in yourself. When you get a question, it is crucial to address it confidently.

- Include facts in your answers. One way to make your responses impactful is to drop in some specific facts even if they do not completely align with the question.

- Ask strategic questions. Engage people, inviting questions will help you handle the Q&A much better. You can leave obvious question points in your presentation.

- Have a Back-Up Plan. Keep in mind that you should not just guess, or take a chance, especially on a factual answer.

All in all, instead of hating the questions try to look at them as opportunities to shine and build credibility!
FOR PARTICIPATION INQUIRIES CONTACT:

Nicolas Arguin-Malo
Vice President of Academics
n.arguin_malo@engcomm.ca

Rana Barakat
Vice President of External Affairs
r.barakate@engcomm.ca

Léopold Lévesque
Director of External Affairs
l.levesque@engcomm.ca

STAY UP TO DATE WITH ENGCOMM