

Introduction to Case Analysis



0:00	This short tutorial introduces you to the concept of writing a case analysis essay, which is a common essay format in the health sciences and nursing fields.
0:10	A case analysis essay, which is sometimes also referred to as a case study, allows you to make connections between concepts you have learned in a class to the facts associated with a specific case.
0:21	The purpose of a case analysis essay is to give you real-world experience, but in a safe way.
0:27	The case analysis gives you the opportunity to explore, make mistakes, and learn.
0:32	In most cases, your professor will provide a case study that describes the facts of a patient's health situation.
0:38	Sometimes, the case study will focus on a particular community or organization instead of just a single person.
0:44	It's also possible that in some cases you may be asked to write a similar kind of essay in which you connect class concepts with your actual experiences in a clinical setting.
0:55	Examples of case analyses include exploration of patient perceptions regarding a specific type of care, evaluation of a process intended to reduce lengths of stay for a specific diagnosis code, and effects of the mismanagement of a specific treatment protocol.
1:12	You should keep your professor in mind for this kind of document, for he or she is the one who will evaluate you on the assignment.
1:19	However, your professor will also be interested in your demonstrated ability to communicate with an outside decision maker in the community, so you should imagine that's who you are writing to with this document.
1:30	Other healthcare professionals may also use what you write in their own practices, so consider their needs as readers, as well.
1:37	On the final page of this tutorial, you will see links to various Excelsior Online Writing Lab resources, including one on audience analysis.
1:47	Read the case study you have been given carefully.
1:50	If you're working from your own clinical experience, review your notes and memories from that observation, as well.
1:56	Your job is to form opinions on the health-related strengths and weaknesses of the community, organization, or individual featured in the case study.
2:05	Ask yourself several questions, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are they doing well?• What resources do they have at their disposal?• In what areas do they need to improve?• What limitations do they face?



2:17	The process of examining the facts of the case carefully to discern strengths and weaknesses is called analysis, which involves taking something whole and seeing it for its parts.
2:28	If you don't take the time to examine the parts individually, the whole may not make complete sense.
2:35	Once you reach some conclusions in response to these questions, you need to use what you have learned in class or what you have discovered via outside research to make evidence-based recommendations for how the object of the case study can capitalize on their strengths to improve upon their weaknesses.
2:51	This is the main purpose of your case analysis essay.
2:55	The process of linking learned knowledge to case facts is called synthesis, for you are bringing together, or synthesizing, information to arrive at a new understanding.
3:07	Since this is an essay assignment, your document should include an introduction, body, and conclusion sections.
3:14	Your introduction should provide a complete, objective, and accurate summary of the facts of the case study.
3:21	Who does it focus on?
3:22	What key facts does it present?
3:24	What conclusions does it draw?
3:26	What recommendations does it make, if any?
3:29	Following the summary, you should provide a thesis statement in which you state the main purpose of your essay.
3:35	Your body paragraphs should present logically organized responses to the questions that naturally stem from your thesis.
3:41	For example, if your thesis says, "XYZ organization should take steps A, B, and C in order to leverage their strengths to allow them to improve upon their weaknesses," then your readers would likely ask themselves the following questions: "Why should XYZ organization take these steps?" or "How would these steps help XYZ make improvements?"
4:04	Each section of your body should provide an evidence-based response to such questions.
4:09	Keep in mind, too, that body paragraphs should begin with topic sentences and transitions should be used between paragraphs to help readers see the relationship between each of your main points.
4:19	Your conclusion should remind your readers of what your recommendation has been, and it should also summarize the main points of support that you have offered in the body of your essay to defend your recommendation.

4:31	Because this is an academic essay, as opposed to a clinical document of some kind, you should format your document according to APA guidelines, and you should use semi-formal academic writing style.
4:43	Links to the Online Writing Lab and Online Reading Center resources on analysis and synthesis, research techniques, and writing an introduction, body, and conclusion, plus language choices and APA style are included on the final page of this tutorial.
4:58	The links you see on this page take you to a variety of examples of case analysis.
5:03	One is from the Institute for Health Care Improvement, and one is from Catalysis, which is a consulting firm.
5:10	Each takes a slightly different approach, but these examples clearly show the purpose of the case analysis in healthcare.
Displayed on screen	Links: Excelsior Online Writing Lab, Download a Transcript, Download a Tip Sheet with Examples, Analyzing Your Audience, Analyzing What You Read, APA Style, Finding Your Voice, Introductions & Conclusions, Research Strategies, Synthesizing

