

## Tips for Case Write-ups

1. Your answers will be graded on both the substance and the level of professionalism. Poor English will be penalized, as it would in any workplace.
2. Answer the entire question. When you skip bits, you are throwing points away.
3. Provide a separate answer to each question, not one giant essay.
4. Think about why I ask each question. Is there a broader point that I am trying to get at?
5. Figure out the main point of the case and relate your arguments to this.
6. Before writing the each answer, plot it out in bullet point format or a spider diagram.
7. When writing, ask yourself: what is the point of each sentence, and each paragraph? Eliminate loose, imprecise language. I recommend Zinsser's Book "On Writing Well".
8. Try to think about your arguments within the frame of the class and, more generally, as economists. This will help you be precise in your argumentation. For example, are you talking about fixed, sunk or variable costs? When discussing who a product will appeal, think about segmentation, self-selection and price discrimination.
9. Talk to other people. It's best to form a group and spend an hour to two talking through things with a whiteboard. They will raise points that are new to you, which will stimulate you to think further. These interactions work best if you have *all* read the case beforehand. You should write up your answers on your own – I do not want to see identical sentences on different reports.
10. Don't make unsubstantiated claims e.g. "It is a well known fact that econ students at UCLA make unsubstantiated claims". If you need this information, either look it up and put in a reference, "50% of UCLA econ students make unsubstantiated claims (Board, 2010)", or say something less binding, such as "Based on my personal experience, it is likely that...", or "it seems to be that..."
11. Don't use words you don't understand. A large vocabulary is great, but it is very apparent when a word is out of context. Formal writing does not have to mean fancy writing.
12. Don't throw in business buzz words without purpose, particularly if they distract from your main point.