

CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION

MASTER CASES



The Best Gillette Can Be?

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Tenth Edition
Master Student Case Papers

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Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's Cases

The "Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's cases" is a case series for applying the case method of teaching and learning in higher education. The cases are relevant to brand strategists in private and public sector organizations, as well as academics and students at universities, business schools, and executive education.

The cases are written by groups of master's students as a course project. The specially developed case format is defined as: *"A management decision case describes a real business situation leading up to a question(s) that requires assessment, analysis, and a decision reached by discussion in class. The alternative approaches and recommendations from the class discussion are followed by a description of the choices made by the case company. This description is then discussed by the class."*

The student groups select the topics of their case providing updated and relevant insights into the corporate brand management. The cases can be used as "written cases" (handed out and read in advance, later to be discussed in class) and/or as "live case" (presented by the teacher following a discussion in class). Each case includes teaching notes, visuals with speaker's notes, learning objectives, board plans, and references.

The mission of the series is *"to develop cases for discussion providing insights into the theory and practice of corporate brand management and reputation, with the intent of bridging the gap between academic teaching and managerial practice."*

The series is a result of co-creation between students and teachers at the elective course Corporate Brand Management (BUSN35 – five-credit course/eight-week half-time studies), part of the master's program International Marketing and Brand Management at Lund School of Economics and Management, Sweden. The cases represent the result of the intellectual work of students under the supervision of the head of course.

Although based on real events and despite references to actual companies, the cases are solely intended to be a basis for class discussion, not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. The cases are free to be used and are to be cited following international conventions.

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The Best Gillette Can Be?

WRITTEN CASE

MANAGEMENT DECISION CASE

2 - 2023

FEBRUARY 23rd, 2023

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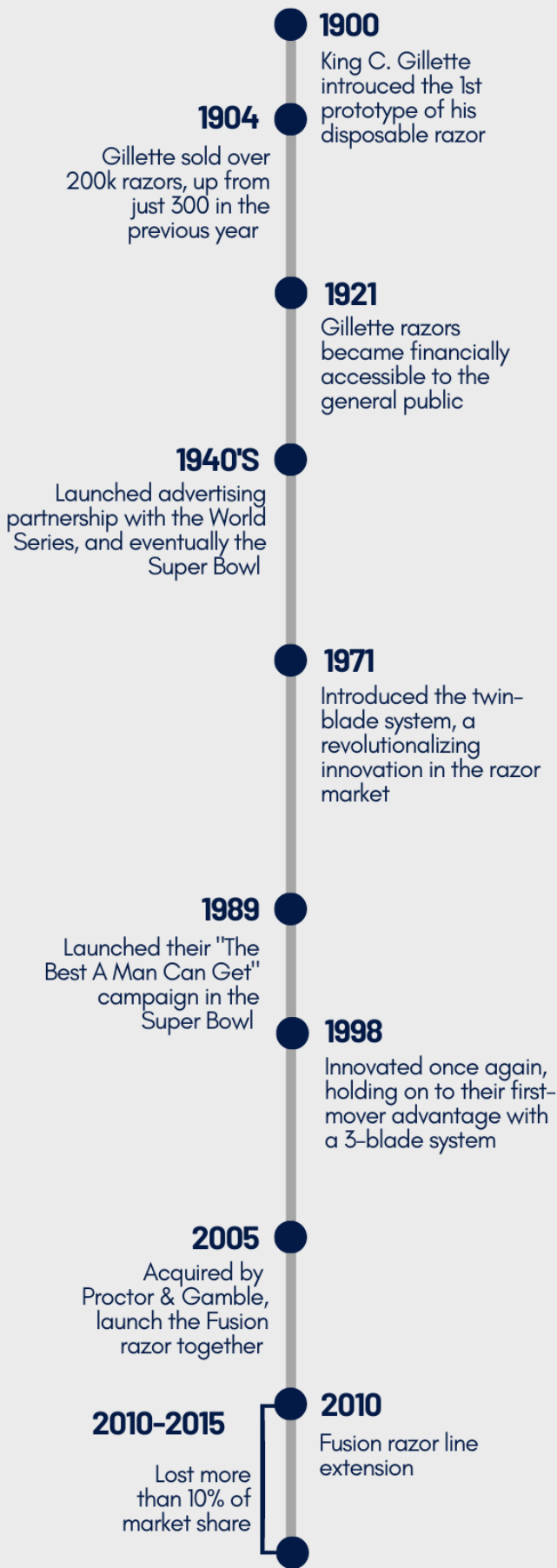
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case begins on next page.



A Brief History of Gillette



The American Safety Razor Company, which would soon be recognized as the Gillette Safety Razor Company, was formed in 1901 in the United States of America. It was founded by King C. Gillette and the innovative nature of King led to the idea of disposable razor blades, which could be placed into a holder and then replaced when dull. This stemmed from the desire to create a product where there would be even demand, generating a constant stream of revenue for the company as well as providing the consumers with a guaranteed sharp blade for every shave. The production of the first disposable razor began in 1903 and during the year of 1904 the company had sold over 200,000 products with razors and blades included.

Although shaving in and of itself was not viewed as a luxury during the early part of the 1900s, the Gillette razor and its concept had been considered a premium feature within the men's grooming landscape. However, that was about to be changed during the year of 1921, when Gillette introduced a razor to the market that would be widely financially accessible by the general public.

With the expanded accessibility, Gillette wished to evolve advertisement efforts to be able to reach a larger audience. This led to the launch of the advertisement partnership between the brand and the World Series and the Super Bowl, beginning during the 1940s, creating the foundation for the association between the brand and the world of sports. Despite the popularity and success, the process of innovation did not cease, and the brand introduced the twin-blade system in the 1970s, a revolutionizing concept within the marketplace for razors at the time.

Due to the mass-market appeal, Gillette wished to further establish a clear brand image and launched their iconic and well known "Gillette, the best a man can get" concept in 1989 during the Super Bowl.

As previously seen, the success of the brand did not slow down their innovative nature, which led to the introduction of the 3 blade system razor in 1998, allowing them to keep their first-mover advantage in the marketplace. The brand's continuous success caught the interest of the global conglomerate Proctor and Gamble, leading to an acquisition of Gillette and a collaborative launch of the fusion razor in the year of 2005, and the expansion in 2010.

Although the brand had been a big presence, with years of popularity in the men's grooming marketplace, during the years between 2010 to 2015 the brand experienced a loss of market share during this time of 10% in total. Perhaps this fact is what led the brand to consider the rebranding effort that will be discussed further in this essay.

Target Market & “The Best A Man Can Get”

Gillette's target group is predominantly made up of men that are of age to shave. The brand holds an extensive share of the men's grooming market and can therefore be viewed as a leader in terms of visualization and advertisement in the industry, something that will be further explored in the following section.

The most well-known concept launched by Gillette can be recognized by the slogan “The best a man can get”. This slogan was the company's mantra and served as their brand identity for many years and manifested the brand as the premium choice amongst their consumers. The tagline was first launched in the 1989 Super Bowl, together with the visuals mentioned in the previous section. The campaign was a success and the slogan and concept have remained as a highly recognizable expression throughout the following decades.

For a better understanding of the visual components in previous ads that Gillette have launched, **Exhibits 1&2** provide links to an example from 1999 and 2013, respectively. The first commercial from 1999, advertising the Mach 3 razor, features a fighter pilot and a fighter jet soaring through the sky to simulate the speed and agility of the specific product. The same fighter pilot is then revealed to be a male model who can be seen shaving with precision, revealing a smooth shave and a confident attitude. The commercial ends by showing the product up close together with the slogan; The best a man can get.

The second commercial from 2013, advertising the Fusion Body Grooming Proglide Styler 3-in-1, features a pool party setting and a male model narrator posing the question “what do women want?” The commercial then cuts to famous model Kate Upton stating that hair on the chest is fine, but not one the back. The narrator then approaches yet another woman whom he claims likes a smooth shaved stomach that allows a guy to better show off his six pack abs. The narrator continues towards another woman whom he claims likes men who are completely hairless. The commercial then cuts to a male model demonstrating the product together with the narrator claiming that the proglide styler is the one tool you need to get the look she wants. The next frame reveals the narrator being surrounded by the women whilst he claims that the night is yours, followed by the brand's famous tagline; The best a man can get.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF #METOO

Following this event, thousands of women come forward alleging sexual assault against big names in Hollywood, on Wall Street, and in public office. Many being ousted from their positions.

OCT. 15TH, 2017

Alyssa Milano Tweeted, "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet," in response to backlash towards victims coming forward alleging they were sexual assaulted by Harey Weinstein.

DEC. 5TH, 2017

Ashley Judd and 4 other women who came forward regarding their sexual assault appear on the cover of *Time's* Person of the Year issue. *Time's* referring to them as "The Silence Breakers"

APRIL 3RD, 2018

Trojan condoms tweeted an encouragement to student activists to "create a culture of consent" on college campuses

MAY 25TH, 2018

Weinstein Arrested on rape charges

JUNE 30TH, 2018

Google searches for "sexual assault" and "sexual harrassment" reach upwards of 50 million since October 2017

DEC. 18TH, 2018

Amber Heard's op-ed detailing her domestic abuse is published in the *Washington Post*, prompting headlines worldwide

2006

Tarana Burke coined the phrase "Me Too"

NOV. 12TH, 2017

The first #MeToo Survivors march is held in Los Angeles, California

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the US

APRIL 2ND, 2018

Twitter launches its #HereWeAre campaign in support of women and the #MeToo Movement

MAY 12TH, 2018

"A Call To Men" social activism group is founded to promote more respectful ways of "being a man"

OCT. 29TH, 2018

The New York Times publishes an article taking inventory of 201 prominent men who lost their position as a result of sexual misconduct allegations inspired by the #MeToo movement and who their replacements were.

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A Brief History of #MeToo

The #MeToo movement is an ongoing social movement that aims to support survivors of sexual violence by demonstrating that they are not alone, hence the phrase "me too." Tarana Burke coined this phrase and started the movement in 2006 with a particular focus placed on helping black women and girls.

In October of 2017, American film producer Harvey Weinstein's sexual-assault victims began to come forward in multitudes. They were met with resistance from many members of the public and the media, insinuating that sexual assault was not as prominent as it was made to seem by these accusations, discrediting these women's testimonies. Alyssa Milano, an American actress, took to Twitter, outraged, posting the tweet seen in **Exhibit 3** which reads "If you've been sexually harassed or assaulted write 'me too' as a reply to this tweet."

The tweet went viral, with thousands of women replying and sharing their own stories. #MeToo was tweeted over 500,000 times in less than 24 hours, and became a prominent topic across not only Twitter, but Facebook, Instagram, and all other media outlets. The movement spread like wildfire, prompting other women, particularly in the entertainment industry, but also in politics and the workplace, to come forward about their experiences, demanding that their assailants be held accountable.

The attention that this movement received had many men taking personal inventory of their past actions and acknowledging the need for change. Alternatively, many were left outraged, concerned that it was now impossible to avoid falling victim to sexual assault allegations when working with women, and that anybody could be next, regardless of whether the accusations were true. Finally, another perspective was formed by women speaking negatively about men as a people group and men defensively stating that not all men were sexual predators. This morphed into a rekindled discussions about the patriarchy and toxic masculinity.

Toxic Masculinity

The idea of toxic masculinity originated in the 1980s from the mythopoetic men's movement. The movement mainly sought out to provide men with an alternative outlet for types of behaviors deemed as typically masculine and negatively viewed upon by the general society. The members of the movement believed that if men were unable to express these traits, within a space provided for them, that they would later manifest in chauvinistic or aggressive behavior towards women. This notion rapidly rendered critique due to its still highly limiting definition of what masculinity was and that it does not exist or take shape in one singular manner. This background provides us a solid foundation and understanding for how this term is used today.

The usage of this term in modern times can often be seen in relation to descriptions of masculine traits or characteristics that a wide variety of cultures have adopted, accepted, and praised. The central traits often associated with the term is strength, a lacking within the emotional sphere, dominance, and a virile nature. When these traits are exaggerated, they are believed to take the shape of aggression, sexist behavior through a disdain for women, suppressing one's emotions, being hyper-competitive, a need for general control, low levels of empathy, and glorifying violence. Across societies today, conversations about this limiting belief about what masculinity is have taken place, and masculinity has taken on a significantly more fluid form. The conversation about toxic masculinity and how these manifests in a negative way in society was in part fueled by the previously mentioned social movement of #MeToo.

This resulted in open scrutiny of the traits that had previously been regarded as traditionally masculine, and in turn, scrutiny of the brands or public figures built upon them to a certain degree. Several brands whose foundation was somewhat built upon the notion of traditionally masculine traits began a process of introspection and a realigning of their values. Gillette was not an exception.

Social Movements as a Campaign Concept

The previously mentioned social movements and the impact these had on societal standards led several brands to get involved and show support outwardly. Examples of this concept include Nike showing support for Colin Kaepernick and Black Lives Matter, Schweppes with a commercial inspired by the #MeToo movement, and Absolut Vodka supporting the LGBTQ+ community during pride month. The success of these campaigns and the preestablished interest in a potential rebranding of Gillette created a potential opportunity for Gillette; a way to better align its image with the societal standards placed upon brands at the time. A new campaign concept was then introduced as a potential new direction for the brand. The campaign would incorporate and highlight how the brand was aligned with the previously mentioned social movement through a wide variety of visual and verbal context cues. These cues will be further introduced below.

"The Best Men Can Be" Video Concept

The proposed concept is for the video, shown in the frames below, is to begin by demonstrating behaviors that fit in to one of three categories; bullying, sexual harassment, and toxic masculinity, which typically go unchecked by men. These clips are then followed by questioning whether these behaviors are "the best men can be," challenging adult men to intervene in these behaviors, rather than continue to allow them to go unchecked under the excuse that "boys will be boys." This concept, and the use of kids in the video plays on Gillette's history of being a brand that is used by the best men and then passed down to their kids. The video ends by urging men to set an example for the next generation by discouraging these behaviors now, because kids are always watching.

BULLYING:



These frames shows two boys fighting, which is initially not stopped because "boys will be boys," followed by the second frame where the father intervenes, explaining that you can't treat people like that.

SEXUAL
HARASSMENT:



The frame on the left shows a man sexually harassing his maid on a television show, which then received audience laughter and applause, demonstrating the social normality and acceptance of these behaviors, while the frame on the right shows a man who has just seen a woman he is attracted to walk by and is about to go after her, while the other man stops him.

TOXIC
MASCULINITY:



This frame shows a man interrupting a woman in a business meeting, and then 'mansplaining' exactly what she just said, discrediting her legitimacy as a participant in the meeting.



This is the last frame, highlighting the importance of making the best future for the next generation by challenging these behaviors now, the same way Gillette innovates to make the best razors.

Case Questions

You, as the CEO of Gillette, have been called into a meeting in December, 2018. This is regarding the impact of the #MeToo movement on Gillette's target markets and the potential implications for the brand. It is up to you whether or not Gillette makes a public stance on the matter. Taking in to consideration Gillette's major stakeholders and the potential implications for the brand, both positive and negative, *would you advise that Gillette publicly declare alignment with the #MeToo Movement? If so, why? If not, why not?*

1. Should Gillette align its brand with the #MeToo movement?

2. What are the potential pros and cons of aligning the Gillette brand with the #MeToo movement

As the CEO, it is your duty to fully consider *all* of Gillette's stakeholders and how potential action regarding the #MeToo movement could be received. The information presented in this case regarding the Gillette brand, its history, and the prominence of the #MeToo movement serves to assist in contemplating *the potential pros and cons of aligning the Gillette brand with the #MeToo movement*. Prepare a chart listing the stakeholders that need to be considered and the anticipated repercussions to Gillette making a statement regarding #MeToo.

Finally, consider the proposal to launch the video adaptation of Gillette's long-running "The Best A Man Can Get" campaign, to "The Best Men Can Be." As Gillette's CEO, you have the final say on whether or not this campaign continues on into production and is eventually released to the public. The marketing team are on standby, wanting to waste no time, and launch the video campaign in January. You must consider the alignment of this campaign with Gillette's present image and the image that it wants to embody going forward. *Do you, as CEO, approve the production and launch of the proposed "The Best Men Can Be" campaign?*

3. Should Gillette Launch The Proposed "The Best Men Can Be" Campaign

Exhibit 1 Gillette Ad; 1999

 **Gillette Mach 3 commercial (1999)** 
youtube.com



 Commercial from 1999 for the Gillette Mach 3


https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v%3DyqgP7Ti0r4A&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1677109425683987&usg=AOvVaw2ZQdjKF7_Cez62Hip-7AhU

(Copy and Paste Link Into Browser)

Exhibit 2 Gillette Ad; 2013

 **Gillette Fusion Body Grooming Pr...** 
youtube.com



 Gillette Fusion ProGlide Styler - only \$15.99 (free s/h) Jolly Saver - <https://www.opensky.com/jolly...>

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.youtube.com/watch?v%3DtjbCZvldSGQ&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1677109425683574&usg=AOvVaw0kfi0g0fTMbfec5locAdYF>

(Copy and Paste Link Into Browser)

Exhibit 3 Tweet from Alyssa Milano that triggered the #MeToo movement in 2017



The Best Gillette Can Be?

MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

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The Best Gillette Can Be?

To Launch or Not to Launch

The first decision the company needed to make was whether or not to produce and launch the “The Best a Man Can Be” video as part of their “We Believe” campaign:

On January 13th, 2019, Gillette released the short film, highlighting issues such as bullying, sexual harassment, and toxic masculinity, and encouraged men to hold themselves accountable for their actions. The campaign also featured a call to action for men to take a pledge to "actively challenge the stereotypes and expectations of what it means to be a man everywhere you see them."

They posted the video across media platforms, anticipating praise and a positive response from the public. The video got 2 million views in 48 hours, but what they received was the exact opposite of what they expected. At first it was seemingly mixed public perceptions with some praising Gillette for taking a stand on important social issues and promoting positive behavior, but the positive was quickly overcome with massive amounts of backlash, as people criticized the campaigns for being too political and alienating their core customer base. Many even called for a boycott of the brand. The mixed reviews are demonstrated in the tweets below.



Now What?

Gillette’s next decision was what to do about the overwhelmingly negative response to the ad:

Gillette ultimately chose to stand behind their message and continued to promote positive masculinity and social responsibility in their advertising and marketing efforts, showing some remorse for the way the ad was received, but not the intentions behind it. Top management have been quoted saying:

“We knew that joining the dialogue on 'Modern Manhood' would mean changing how we think about and portray men at every turn...effective immediately, Gillette will review all public-facing content against a set of defined standards meant to ensure we fully reflect the ideals of Respect, Accountability and Role Modelling in the ads we run, the images we publish to social media, the words we choose, and more. For us, the decision to publicly assert our beliefs while celebrating men who are doing things right was an easy choice that makes a difference.”

- Gary Coombe, President of P&G Global Grooming for BBC (Baggs, 2019).

“We're not saying all guys are bad. We're not trying to misrepresent any one individual. What we're saying is, as a collective group let's have a little less bad behavior and more good. That's the big message behind it...”

- Damon Jones, VP of Global Communications & Advocacy, P&G for Forbes (King, 2019).

“We weren't trying to court controversy...We were just trying to upgrade the selling line that we've held for 30 years—the Best a Man Can Get—and make it relevant. I don't think our intention was to have controversy just for the sake of controversy.”

- Pankaj Bhalla, Brand Director, Gillette for Fast Company (Berkowitz, 2019).

As of February 2023, the video remains posted on the company YouTube channel however the comment feature is disabled.

References

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The Best Gillette Can Be?

TEACHING NOTES

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Teaching plan

The teaching note is a guide for presenting a case to encourage engagement and interaction. It includes a brief case synopsis, learning objectives, discussion questions, and a time plan. The notes for the Gillette case are designed to support teachers in preparing for and presenting the case. They provide information on how to introduce and present the case, suggestions for making it interesting and unpredictable, learning objectives, and a board plan with key takeaways

Case synopsis

In 1989, Gillette launched its iconic and well-known "Gillette, the best a man can get" concept during the Super Bowl, focusing on the idea of successful men while invoking a feeling of nostalgia. The campaign showcased imagery such as athletes competing, professionally successful men, fathers being part of their sons' weddings, and fathers bonding with their sons over a moment of shaving, manifesting the notion of Gillette following its consumers through every important transition in life.

However in 2019, Gillette, changed its long-standing tagline from "The best a man can get" to "The best a man can be" as part of a new ad campaign aimed at promoting positive masculinity and challenging traditional masculine stereotypes. The change in slogan reflects a broader societal shift towards promoting positive behavior and addressing harmful behaviors associated with traditional masculine ideals. The new slogan has become a key part of the brand's identity and messaging, signaling a commitment to promoting positive masculinity and social responsibility. The new slogan received a lot of critique and this resulted in a reputational backlash for the razor company.

Learning objectives

The primary pedagogical objective for student engagement in this exercise revolves around the alignment of corporate communication with the core values of a brand, and the potential implications on the brand's reputation. Through the utilization of this case, the participating students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the following key aspects:

- The essential measures required to comprehend the brand's essence and its impact on decision-making processes that may influence the brand's image.
- The fundamental principles and structure of effective corporate communication, along with critical factors to be taken into account prior to making decisions that may have significant implications on the brand's reputation.

Corporate Brand Identity

The Identity Matrix is a useful tool for organizations to develop and communicate a clear and consistent brand identity. It helps organizations answer key questions about their offerings, stakeholder relationships, market position, communication style, promises, corporate character, values, and strengths. By clarifying these aspects of the brand, organizations can better communicate their value proposition to their audiences.

This acts as the core of the expanded matrix, and framework. The core consists of three elements, internal, external and internal/external.

Within the internal elements, acting as the foundation upon which the brand is built, consists. 'Mission & Vision', the inspiration source for all internal stakeholders; 'Culture', which Schein (1999) defines as "Underlying values, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and feelings", and acts as the engine of the employees work ethics; and "Competences" which are the unique abilities of the company (Urde, 2021).

The middle layer lays the internal/external elements. Here the students will find the brands' communication, its core, and its personality. This is very important to understand when wanting to work/manage a brand, since the core is the brand, and the brand its core. By having a clear set of values and promises, the brand builds trust.

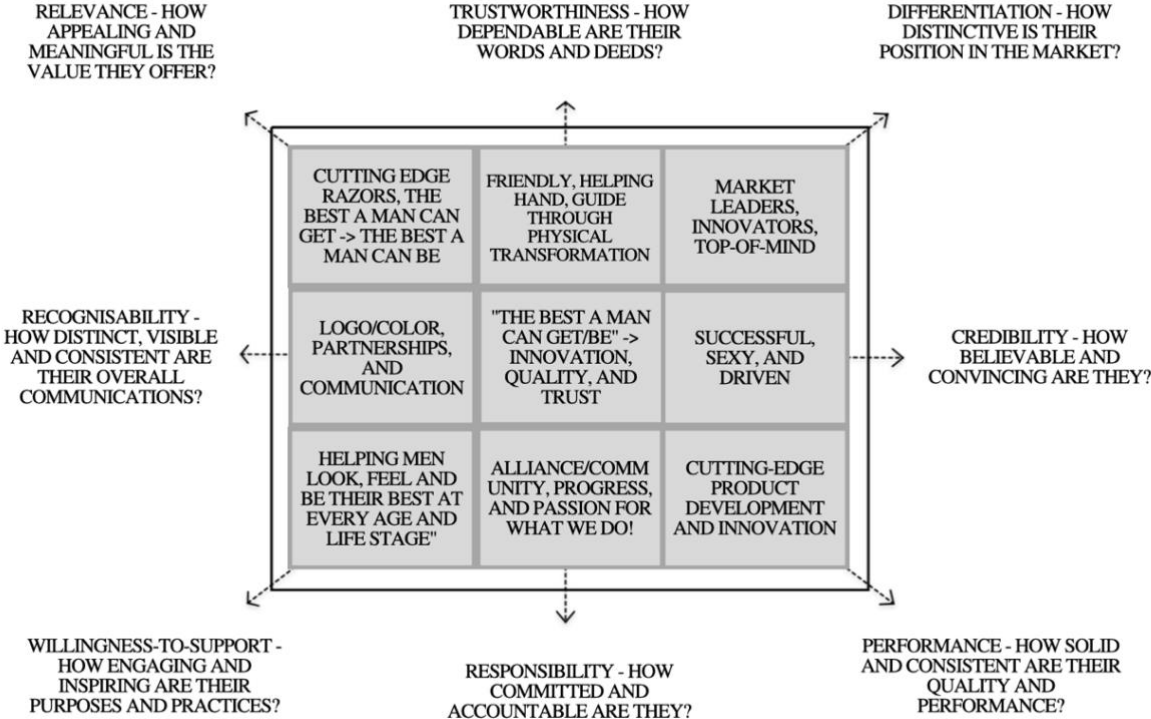
As Urde (2021) explained, "A promise kept builds trust and helps an organization reach its goals and stay true to its purpose."

What is important for the students to understand in this case, is the purpose. In this case, the purpose of the campaign, which re-aligned the brand core through changing the iconic "Gillette, the best a man can get" slogan to "The best a man can be", is to reposition the brand as a champion of the people in the battle against toxic masculinity.

In the uppermost level, the external elements are found. These elements are related to how external stakeholders view and perceive the brand. The dimensions found are; "Value proposition", "Relationships" and "Position".

We have conducted a discovery of Gillette's brand identity by applying the matrix:

Exhibit 1 - Gillette's Brand Identity Matrix



However, since this case is focused on the communication campaign executed by Gillette, and the aftermath of it, the students should also take the two subsequent layers into consideration as well.

The communication and positioning layer of the Identity Matrix focuses on how organizations can effectively tell their brand's story and stand out in the marketplace. To do this, brands need to appeal to reason (logos), establish trust (ethos), and evoke emotions (pathos) in their audiences. By leveraging these three rhetorical modes of persuasion, organizations can activate their brand identity and engage with their target audiences in meaningful ways. For Gillette, it is important to acknowledge and understand which of the rhetoric modes of persuasion was attempted in this campaign. There are elements of logos, ethos and pathos in the communication of the new slogan. However, they are all subjective and interpreted differently for all recipients of the campaign, and as described, Gillette received critique and praise for the campaign. To be able to reach a conclusion (Should the campaign be initiated or not), it is important to analyze the campaign through the rhetoric lens. How will the recipients reason favorably around the campaign, will it build trust or is there a risk that it seems unauthentic, and finally, does it evoke any positive emotions?

Finally, the reputation layer of the Identity Matrix acknowledges that a brand's reputation is not something that it can control directly. Instead, it is earned through the actions and words of the organization and how it is perceived by its audiences. This means that it is crucial for organizations to not only develop a strong brand

identity but also to consistently act in a way that aligns with their values and promises. By doing so, organizations can build a positive reputation and earn the trust and loyalty of their stakeholders. Thus, by understanding the values and promises of Gillette, the students will be able to reach a conclusion and a decision based upon their analysis of the brand. Reputation is difficult to foresee without the underlying information and analysis of Gillette's core.

Since the change of their slogan, there was backlash from the public which disrupted the positive reputation Gillette enjoyed previously. Although they tried to appeal to reason, emotions with the intent to build trust and a positive reputation as a champion for the future man, it seems that stakeholder critique trumped the praise.

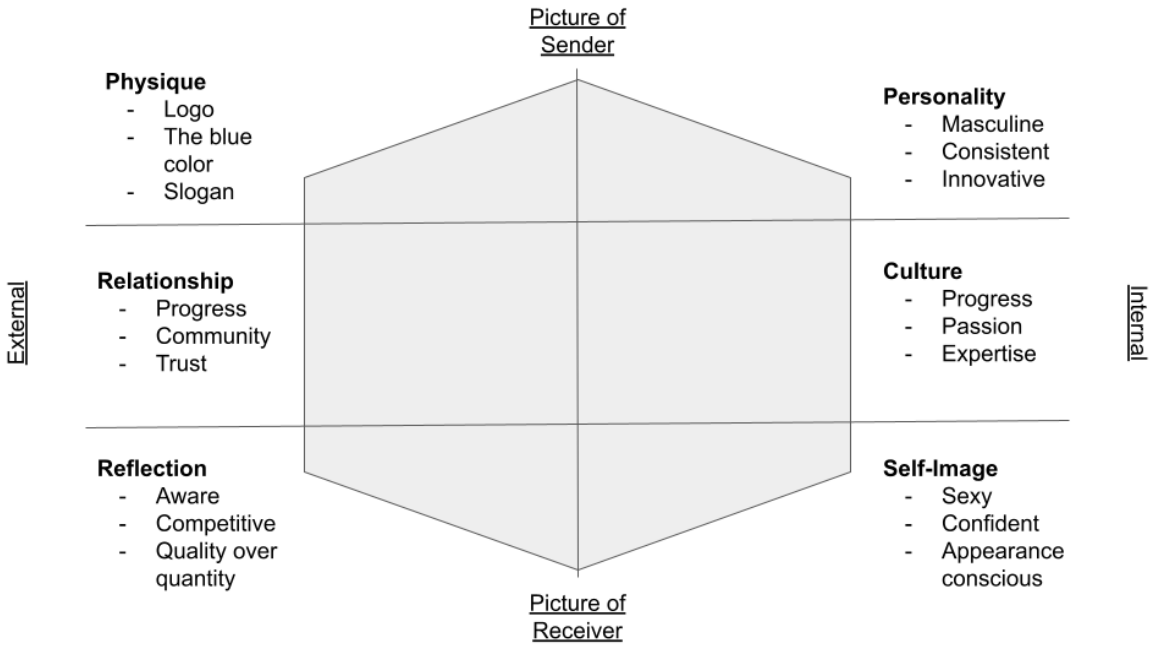
Brand Identity Prism

When making the decision to execute the new campaign, students should realize and take into consideration whether this is the right direction for Gillette and does it align with the core identity that the brand is communicating. Consistent development of the brand identity is essential; however, staying true to the core is what the stakeholders have fallen in love with - which raises the question if the change is a benefit or disadvantage for the brand? J. Kapferer states, "Brands can only exist if they communicate. As a matter of fact, they grow obsolete if they remain silent or unused for too long." (Kapferer, 2012). The Brand Identity Prism, initially introduced by J. Kapferer in 1986, describes a brand's identity through its characteristics - which is a vital element for the brand to generate loyalty. The prism is built from six different facets of brand identity that could construct a basis for students to understand Gillette's position and determine if the campaign is a go or no-go.

Students can identify the tenets of Gillette's brand identity and assess the coherence and consistency of their advertising by using this lens. If it isn't, they must determine whether it's time to adapt one of their fundamental beliefs or just one advertising component to conform to their already recognized identity. They might also take into account a different perspective that is more consistent with their brand.

It's important to remember that repositioning doesn't always include altering the brand's identity. According to Kapferer (2012), a brand can develop over time while staying faithful to its core values thanks to the freedom between identity and positioning. Hence, maintaining brand integrity is essential to (re)positioning.

Exhibit 2 - Gillette's Brand Identity Prism



Corporate communication

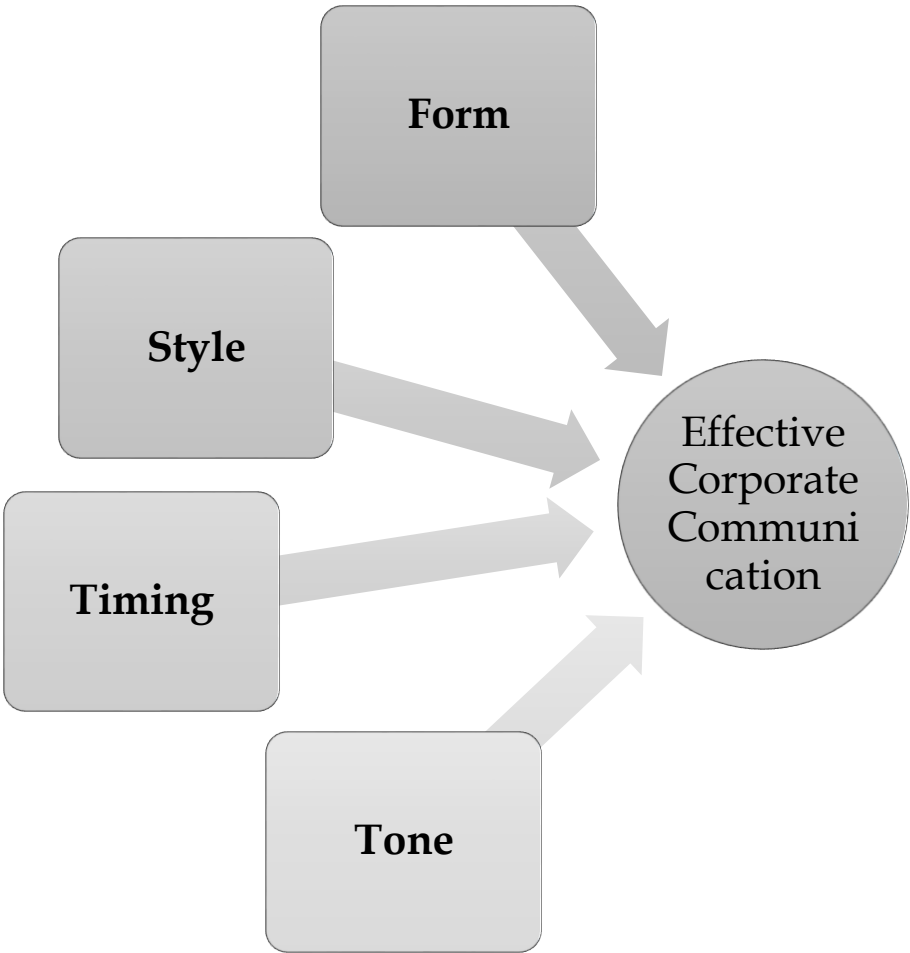
In order to determine the successful or effective use of corporate communication, several criteria need to be considered. One of these is the form of the communication, which refers to the style, timing, and tone of the message.

The style of the communication is important as it determines the direction and inherent truth of the message. Grunig & Hunt's 2x2 model of communication distinguishes four types of communication, which can be useful in understanding the complexity of public relations activities. These models reflect the different ways in which communication works, and can help in choosing an appropriate style for the message. In order to determine which style is suitable, the brand needs to consider the four types: the press agency/publicity model, the public information model, the two-way asymmetric model, and the two-way symmetric model. The press agency/publicity model is characterized by one-way communication that aims to persuade the receiver, even if the content is not strictly truthful. The public information model also involves one-way communication, but the focus is on providing truthful information rather than persuasion. The two-way asymmetric model incorporates feedback from receivers, but the relationship between the organization and its stakeholders is regarded as asymmetric, with the organization having more power to influence attitudes and behaviors. The two-way symmetric model is the most mutually rewarding form of communication, with power seen as equally dispersed between the organization and its stakeholders, and the intent of the communication flow being reciprocal.

Timing is also critical, as communicating too early or too late can affect the impact of the message. If the communication is too early, the audience may not be prepared to receive it, while communicating too late can result in misinformation being spread through informal channels.

The tone of the message is another important factor, as it determines the level of formality of the communication. An appropriate blend of formal and informal language is usually required, as an entirely formal or informal style may not be suitable for all audiences. Managers should also ensure that their internal communication style is consistent with their external communication style, to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

Exhibit 3 - Corporate communication



Criteria for effective corporate communication (Roper & Fill, 2012)

A successful and effective use of corporate communication requires careful consideration of the form of the communication, including the style, timing, and tone of the message. By choosing an appropriate form, organizations can ensure that their message is received and understood by their target audience.

When applying this framework to the campaign, students will be able to plot out the form, style, timing and tone of Gillette’s communication. During 2018, the attention surrounding the MeToo-movement was ramping up as the hashtag was used more and more frequently by the brave victims, and the campaign was launched in 2019. By focusing on men and their behavior, Gillette framed the “Boys will be boys” sentiment as negative through their short film, with the intent of changing the mindset at an early age, thus the students will be able to determine if the style and tone was appropriate or not. After discussion, a conclusion whether this is deemed as “effective corporate communication” or not, can be reached.

Key learning objectives

Table 1 presents and summarizes the key insights the audience should learn connected to Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge (Webb, 2002). The table combines the primary learning objectives into four layers representing a structured understanding of the case. These levels are crucial elements that should be achieved - to reach the utmost level of extended thinking.

Table 1 - Key Learning Objectives

<i>Recall</i>	...Comprehension of facts and the case environment ...Ability to identify potential issues/problems	- Identify, Recall, Use
<i>Skills and concepts</i>	...Complete path of reasoning in order to find a solution ...Making informed decisions	- Organize, Classify, Evaluate
<i>Strategic thinking</i>	...Reasoning and application of brand management models ...Requires students to draw conclusions from information provided in class	- The Brand Identity Matrix, The Brand Identity Prism, Effective Corporate Communication model
<i>Extended thinking</i>	...Complex reasoning, i.e., going past the case ...Discussing and developing alternatives	- Connect, Relate

Discussion questions

The discussion will be divided into two parts:

The discussion will be held in the moment before the ad was aired. This to determine if it is wise to run it or not. After showing the proposed ad for the executive board, the main discussion will consist of three questions. The first one (As the CEO of Gillette) “Should Gillette align its brand with the #MeToo movement?”. If the discussion stagnated, the case presenters will provide the “board” with two assisting / guiding questions of: “What are the potential pros of running the ad? What are the potential cons of running the ad?” with the intent of reaching a decision on the matter.

After this has been determined, the executive board has to reach as decision of “Should Gillette launch the proposed “The Best a Man Can Be” campaign?”

After the decision has been made by the executive board, the case presenters will then provide the board with Gillette's actual decision. Due to the negative feedback of the campaign, the board will be asked the main question of: What should Gillette's next steps be following the negative feedback on their ad? In this point of the discussion, the board will be provided with follow-up questions to guide/assist in the attempt to reach a solution and decision. These questions will be: “Should we keep going with the new socially aware concept regardless of the negative feedback, or should we change it again?” and “Should we address the issue and the negative feedback publicly?”.

Teaching suggestions

The following section offers the responsible presenters advice on how to prepare and deliver the case in a manner that aligns with the paper and the presented core issue. The purpose of employing this case is to expose the audience, i.e., students, to real-world business scenarios that will force them to move outside their comfort zones and tackle the issues raised in class in order to come up with practical answers or recommendations to the case. In order to attain these solutions, it is necessary to actively engage the class and promote conversations while making the argument. The teaching suggestions are divided into four categories, which will be discussed below.

Pre-presentation phase

This phase introduces the first steps the responsible presenter should take and consider before stepping on the stage. Firstly, the presenter should read all three essential parts of the case, i.e., the written case, management decisions, and teaching notes - to ensure complete comprehension. Secondly, plan how the presentation and discussion will be organized, including what details to include and in what sequence, how much time to provide, and how to guide the conversation. Furthermore, if the presenter is more than one, prepare, divide, and be organized; so that each person's responsibilities are clear. Thirdly, take control of the room, meaning the environment

where the presentation will take place - including steps such as testing the electronics, familiarizing yourself with the stage, etc., but most importantly, deciding on how to organize the in-class responses, for example, by writing them on a whiteboard. Lastly, the presenter should prepare the class for the upcoming task by providing preparation materials at least one day before the "d-day".

Introduction phase

Depending on the class's atmosphere and welcomeness, this phase can be considered a "thrive-or-die" moment. The presenter should be prepared to activate the audience from the start, i.e., capturing their interest and focus. Doing this can be tricky but necessary - a suggestion is to relieve tension and anxiety through relaxed questions, such as, "How many stayed up for the last Super Bowl? / What was the best commercial?". Then seamlessly move to the actual case; after a while, ask the audience if they have ever heard of Gillette - which starts the planned presentation. When introducing the case, the presenter should remember the presentation strategy that was created during the pre-presentation process - however, remember that a good performance is a two-way street, and interaction is key.

Discussion phase

Firstly, The audience should be reminded of their part, functioning as board members, and clearly make the transaction to the discussion phase. Additionally, remind and make sure that the class understands the example and question and if any clarification is necessary.

This phase can be considered the hardest one, as it requires the presenter, i.e., the teacher, to have complete control of the room and function as the discussion leader, i.e., the moderator. The teacher should strive for open discussion, be objective, and accept all viewpoints. If necessary, use guiding questions to keep the conversation moving and ensure everyone is heard to encourage lively debate, a range of viewpoints, and an attentive audience. Moreover, utilize the classroom tools, such as the whiteboard, to keep the structure and have everyone on the same page.

Conclusion phase

This phase represents the final and closing stage for the presented case. The presenter should relate what is written on the whiteboard, conclude any unfinished business, and finally close the conversation.

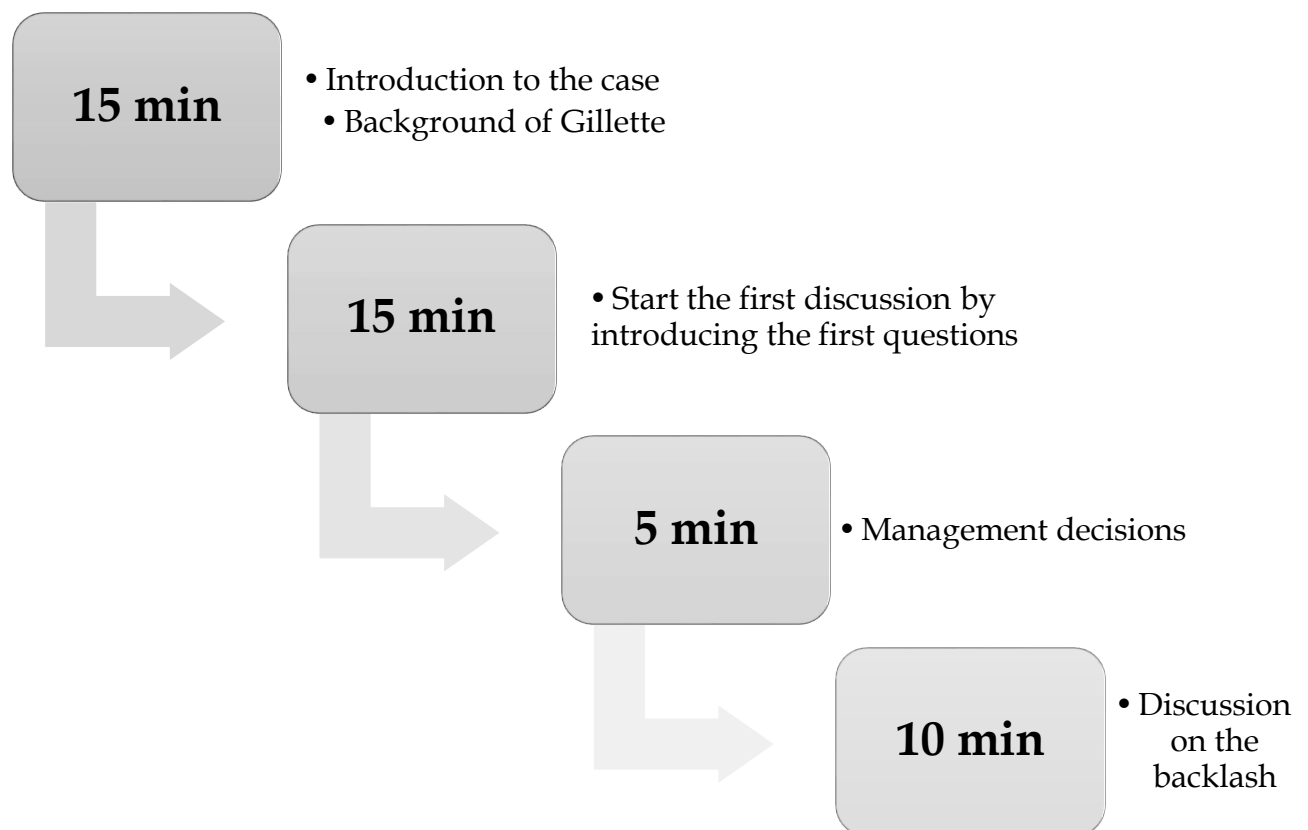
The presenter should then provide the audience with different managerial choices from the conversation. Moreover, describe the specific business choice and make a comparison between the options discussed in class and the decision made by the company. The presenter should also give the audience a different perspective and look for similarities and differences.

Finally, express gratitude to the audience for attending.

Time plan

The time estimate for this case presentation is illustrated below (**Exhibit 4**), along with a structured breakdown of each stage. A suggested time for covering all the key areas and giving a complete presentation, including discussion, will take about 45 min. The timetable starts off by describing the company's background and introducing the case. When the first phase is completed, the presenters will pose the initial question to start the class discussion. After the discussion is over, the presenters will provide the class with the management's decision. To round off the case presentation, the presenters will spark a closing discussion by providing a question that will further allow contrasts and comparisons. Finally, the presenters will thank the audience for its time and focus.

Exhibit 4 - Suggested Timetable



Board plan

In order to keep the discussion structured, it can be useful to have a board plan. This is a guiding tool for the presenters and discussants to keep track of the ideas, recommendations and suggestions made during the discussion phase of the case

presentation. By structuring it in three sections, namely; challenges/opportunities, alternatives/solutions, and actions/decisions, the discussants and the presenters will grasp what has been said, and it can easily be referred back to at a later stage in the discussion.

This will help visualize what has been said, and it makes it easier to track the path of reason. Below, in Table X, we have made an example board plan, which the presenters can use if the discussion runs stagnant.

Table 2 - Board Plan

Challenges/Opportunities:	Alternatives/Solutions:	Actions/decisions:
Interpreted the correct way	Reshape the narrative of the ad	Run the campaign
Seen as inauthentic	Keep the old slogan, but run the ad with the same sentiment	Do not run the campaign
Reach a larger community and audience	Create a completely new campaign, with the old slogan	Edit the campaign

Please do note that this board is only a visualization and example of what the discussion can look like. It is important to be reflexive and flexible as a presenter in a case discussion, as there are many opinions and ideas, which are important to respect and inquire more about if relevant. We keep the room respectful and positive, as all ideas are of worth.

Reflection

During the in-class case presentations and while reading the written cases in preparation for class sessions, we kept in mind that we were going to be writing and presenting a case of our own. Because of this, we tried to take note of what was effective and ineffective in other people’s presentations, as well as the 13 takeaways. As we are reflecting before our presentation, we can not comment on whether the implementation of our observations was effective, but we can reflect on the steps we took to ensure that we would put our best foot forward.

Step 1: Picking a Topic

We had a rough time trying to pick a topic for this project. Many of our initial thoughts ended up being too obvious/one sided, meaning that we would not be able to incite a proper class discussion, as the solution was obvious. Great cases, as we

learned, do not have a right or wrong answer, but instead several potential solutions, one just as good as the other but with different pros and cons. Another problem we

faced was that we would find cases that could prompt good discussion, but were very specific and not really applicable to the future, which is also no good, as the goal was to have a case that was relevant to problems companies will likely face in the future. The final problem problem that we ran into was that many of the cases that we had heard about, our classmates likely would have also heard about, which is also bad for class discussion, as participants would more than likely go for the same solution as the company if they knew it worked out, or the opposite if they knew it didn't, and this problem came back in to play with the topic we ultimately chose.

Step 2: Deciding Our Approach

The Gillette case is unique because it presents two different discussion topics. The first being whether or not Gillette should have gotten involved in the #MeToo movement at all, since they were in no way related to the movement except of their own accord. This brings up an excellent discussion question of how involved companies should get in social movements and hot topics, and whether taking a stance, even if its for the objectively correct side, is always necessary and/or good for the brand. Second, it presents a crisis management discussion regarding what Gillette should have done when they ultimately launched the campaign and it went horribly. It demonstrates how even the best of intentions can backfire and raises the question of what do you do when you are on the right side but did it the wrong way? This dynamic has the potential to raise some heated class discussion, which is why we chose it, but it made designing the case difficult. A big issue was that we needed to ask the audience whether or not the campaign should launch without showing them the actual campaign in the written case. This would not only reveal that it launched, but also allow them to see the overwhelming negative feedback the video received, likely swaying their opinion. That is where the idea for the sketches came from, that way readers could have a concept of the video without watching it. This also made it as realistic as possible, because no CEO would approve a project like this without, at minimum, what was presented in this case. We are confident that we have prepared this case in the best way possible for class discussion and are looking forward to presenting it!

General Feedback

We really enjoyed being given the structure to follow but also the freedom to interpret it how we wanted and how we felt best suited our case. We feel that our choice to use timelines that are imbedded in the text make the experience of reading the text significantly more effective and enjoyable, as well as the other fun visuals throughout. Writing a teaching note was also a unique experience and something that we felt like all our years in education had prepared us for, although it was still kind of eye-opening to realize how much teachers need to prepare to teach these concepts.

Overall, we thought that this was a great experience that forced us to look at a case from all angles, and that it was applicable to our future careers as well as interesting, which can sometimes be difficult to find in a school assignment.

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