

# Fortaleza

## *Keeping an Electoral Promise*

### *Practitioner Guide*

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## Overview

A case study is a story about how a person or group of people faced and dealt with challenges or opportunities. It is based on desk research and interviews with key actors but does not provide analysis or conclusions. Written from the perspective of the protagonist(s), it is designed to raise questions and generate discussion about the issues they faced. Cases are meant to help participants develop analytic reasoning, listening, and judgment skills to strengthen their decision-making ability in other contexts.

A case-based conversation is a way to anchor a conceptual discussion to concrete examples. It can bring a case to life and allow participants to place themselves in the shoes of the case protagonist(s), while also allowing a variety of perspectives to surface. This guide is designed to help you lead a conversation about the case, “Fortaleza: Keeping an Electoral Promise.”

## Role of Facilitator

The facilitator leads the conversation with a clear beginning and end, ensures that everyone is heard, and keeps the group focused. The conversation can be broken into three distinct segments: exploring the case, applying the central questions of the case to your organization’s challenges, and formulating takeaway lessons. Some facilitation tips and tricks to keep in mind are below.

### **BEFORE the discussion**

Make sure everyone takes the time to read the case. Participants also have the option to fill out worksheets to prepare themselves for the case discussion. If you choose to use the attached worksheet, make sure you bring enough printouts for all. When setting up the room, think about situating participants where they can see you and each other. Designate a notetaker as well as a place where you can take notes on a flipchart or white board. Plan for at least sixty to seventy-five minutes to discuss the case and takeaways and have a clock in the room and/or an assigned timekeeper. Mention that you may interrupt participants in the interest of progressing the conversation.

### **DURING the discussion**

Encourage participants to debate and share opinions. State very clearly that there is no right or wrong “answer” to the case; cases are written so that reasonable people can disagree and debate different ideas and approaches. Be careful not to allow yourself or others to dominate the discussion. If the

conversation is getting heated or bogged down on a particular issue, consider allowing participants to talk in pairs for a few minutes before returning to a full group discussion. Do not worry about reaching consensus, just make the most of this opportunity to practice thinking and learning together!

## Case Synopsis

During his re-election campaign in 2016, Mayor Roberto Cláudio faced recurring complaints from voters concerning the availability of essential medicines at their health clinics. Limited access to medicine frustrated patients and health care providers, raised the cost of treating chronic conditions, and increased the risk of infectious diseases. It also placed the city in violation of Brazil's constitution that guaranteed access to essential medicines to patients of the public health system, most of whom were low income. Although Cláudio's administration had made strides in solving the problem during his first term by renovating a majority of the city's health clinics and improving access to medical personnel, Fortaleza residents still lacked reliable access to essential medicines. A comprehensive solution thus became one of Cláudio's main campaign promises, and a priority for his second term.

The case chronicles how Mayor Cláudio approached a persistent problem, changed tactics and teams, and fought for the necessary improvements and innovations to fulfill his promise. It raises questions around how to push through when your organization seems to have hit a ceiling in performance improvement: *When do you push harder for better execution and advancement of current systems? When do you invest in something new to achieve optimal performance? What is the role of mayoral leadership in ensuring that goals are achieved?*

## Conversation Plan

### Part 1: Exploring the Case (30 minutes)

Begin by asking if someone will volunteer to summarize facts of the case and the questions facing the reader, without stating their opinions. The goal of this part of the conversation is to review the case from the point of view of the people involved. Suggested questions:

- *Why was it important for Mayor Cláudio to deliver on his campaign promise?*
- *Why did the drug shortage problem persist in Cláudio's second term? What stood in the way of a solution?*
- *What leadership challenges did this pose for him?*
- *What options did he have to expand access to health care in his second term? What were the possibilities and potential challenges of each approach?*
- *What should he have done?*

Introduce the general questions raised by the case:

- *How do city leaders diagnose performance gaps? How do they decide whether to improve by managing performance or by introducing significant changes?*
- *What is the difference between improvement and innovation? What are the pros and cons of each approach? Under what circumstances should city leaders improve, innovate, or do both?*
- *What are the roles and responsibilities of mayors and their teams in driving performance and leading innovation?*

**Part 2: Application** (20 minutes)

Invite participants to break into pairs or work as a group applying the central questions of the case to the challenges and choices they face in their own professional lives.

- *Are you currently facing a performance gap in your career? What results are you looking for, what results are you getting, and what do you think explains the discrepancy? Consider three hypotheses and your means available. Which course of action should you take? Why?*
- *How would you define improvement versus innovation in your line of work? What determines which approach you take in driving change?*

**Part 3: Formulating Lessons** (15–20 minutes)

This part of the conversation focuses on the lessons of the case that participants will continue to reflect on and apply to challenges in their work. High-level takeaways to review after a productive discussion might include:

- A good understanding and diagnosis of a problem is the first step in solving it.
- The nature of performance gaps and the means available determine whether improvement or innovation, or both, are needed to move forward.
  - Improvement is needed when performance gaps lie in the lack of productivity; infrastructure is broken but repairable; business processes are designed sub-optimally; and other stakeholders, including clients, suppliers, and other intermediaries, still have work to do.
  - Innovation is needed when improvement is impossible (i.e., no authority or capacity) or not enough to solve the problem.
- Motivation and a can-do attitude are key, but so is an understanding of existing constraints and the ability to limit the scope of the problem.
- An effective leader: deepens understanding of why a problem persists; builds the capacity to act upon the diagnosis; develops a shared vision of what success looks like; communicates to citizens the exact scope of his administration's commitment; and convinces his or her team that the goal is achievable.

## Appendix

### Optional Worksheet Pre-Discussion Questions

1. *What obstacles did Mayor Cláudio face in delivering on his campaign promise to expand access to health care?*
2. *What lessons did Cláudio learn from his attempts to solve the medicine shortage problem in his first term? How did they inform his approach in his second term?*
3. *If you were in his shoes, would you have done things differently? Why?*
4. *How would you characterize Cláudio's leadership style?*
5. *What would success look like for Cláudio?*
6. *If you were in Cláudio's position, how would you move forward on expanding access to essential medicines?*