Case Questions: Colby General Hospital (A/B/C)

1. What was the basic challenge facing the incident reporting system at Colby General Hospital?
   a. What business process was the reporting system supposed to capture and support?
   b. How was the reporting system supposed to work? What was its goal?
   c. What was actually happening with the reporting system? Why do you think this was the case?
   d. Why do you think these problems were not anticipated when the reporting system was first created?

2. How did MacDonald and DeGood approach modeling the problem?
   a. Why was quantifying soft variables in the system model such a “daunting” task? Explain your answer using some of those soft variables as examples.
   b. What insights does the stock flow diagram reveal about the way the reporting system affected work practices? What does this type of model fail to capture?
   c. How was “blame” operationalized in the model? Do you agree with this operationalization?

3. What changes might result from the findings of MacDonald’s analysis?
   a. What are some changes to the reporting system?
   b. What are some changes to Colby Hospital policy?
   c. What are some other outcomes besides mistakes per tasks executed that you could use to evaluate the effectiveness of the changes you suggest?
Case Questions: Wawa: Supply Change Management

1. What were the most important business process challenges faced by Wawa?
   a. How did their “historically entrepreneurial” structure play a role in these challenges?
   b. What, ultimately, was Wawa trying to accomplish in terms of their operations? The customer experience? How were these two goals related?
   c. Evaluate their ability, at the start of the case, to respond to Christensen’s “Signals of Change” in order to identify new products and services.

2. Evaluate Wawa’s strategic partnership with MacLane in terms of being able to address its supply chain issues (as described on page 8 of the case).
   a. What changes to their existing processes will this initiative bring?
   b. What elements of their business are they sacrificing with this strategy?
   c. Do you agree with Wawa’s decision not to “own the software, not the hardware?” Explain.

3. As Wawa’s new supply chain nears completion, Howard Stoeckel has several options going forward.
   a. Briefly explain the options, with the pros and cons.
   b. Which options would require further changes to their business processes?
   c. Do you think that their new supply chain constrains their strategic flexibility? Their ability to respond to develop new products and services? Explain.
Case Questions: Pharmacy Service Improvement at CVS (A)

1. Who are the key stakeholders in the process of fulfilling a prescription?
   a. What are the key requirements of each stakeholder for the prescription fulfillment process?
   b. Which requirements might in conflict with each other?
   c. Which stakeholder’s requirements should be given priority? Why?

2. What are the most significant problems with the current process?
   a. How do these problems specifically affect the tech fulfilling the prescription?
   b. How do these problems specifically affect the customer experience?
   c. Assess to what degree CVS’s process problems are due to things within their control or beyond their control.

3. What changes do you recommend to CVS’s existing pharmacy fulfillment process?
   a. What IT changes, if any, are required to implement your changes?
   b. How can you be sure that the new process you propose will be an improvement over the existing one and not make things worse?
   c. What groups are likely to have objections to your proposed solution? How would you deal with those objections?
Case Questions: Building Watson: It’s not so elementary my dear!

1. In what ways does the “problem” to be addressed by the Watson project differ from a traditional information systems initiative? In what ways is it similar?
   a. What new capabilities was IBM trying to develop through this project?
   b. What were the decisions that Watson had to successfully make to play the game? What were the performance metrics to measure success for Watson?
   c. What are some other applications for the tools and techniques developed from the Watson project?

2. The case describes the Jeopardy problem specification as “win at Jeopardy” and therefore concluded that there were no clear requirements.
   a. Do you agree with this statement?
   b. How did the project team develop a set of requirements and specifications for Watson?
   c. Do you think Watson could have been implemented using a more traditional approach, such as the Systems Development Life Cycle? What are the benefits and pitfalls of that approach for a project like this?

3. Although Watson won against its human opponents, it gave a “dumb” answer to the US airport question in the first game (e.g., the “Toronto” question).
   a. How was Watson’s answer consistent with the requirements and design specifications of the system? Do you think this was a failure in the design of Watson?
   b. Assess the decisions the design team made in balancing arriving at the “right answer” and developing a flexible, generalizable software architecture for answering questions.
   c. What lessons can you derive from this case to determine requirements for projects in other domains?