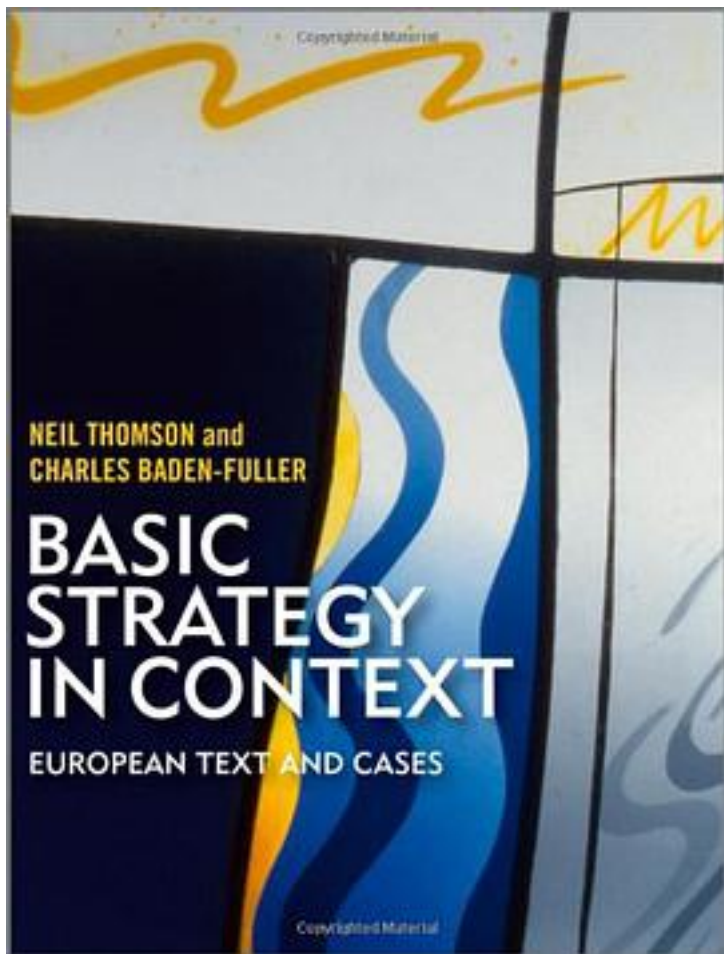


# Basic Strategy in Context



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Basic Strategy in Context centres on real-world firms and managers by giving each chapter's cases a higher weighting in importance and explanation than is normal. Given this emphasis on real-world as opposed to theoretical treatment the book

enables the solving of practical business problems like those below. This emphasis on reality is cemented by the book's treatment of diversity as being the norm highlighted through European business cases from different countries. Giving example answers and links from case to theory rams home further the expected usefulness of the book to students about to enter industry. Often theory and cases are treated as different and separated topics; we believe that our integrated didactic treatment is quite unique. Finally we use the basic theories of strategy and then show how these mainly simple concepts can be extended to solve tricky business problems anywhere in any industry. Here is a sample of specific practical problems to which this book can show solutions: Why are resources important and how are they leveraged? Using the case of a British failure (Railtrack) we show the fatal consequences of neglecting existing resources, and then in a completely different country and industry (Carlo Gavazzi Space in Italy) how resources can be utilised from outside the firm to achieve leverage. Given our emphasis on diversity we highlight successful change in a foreign and inflexible environment (Japan and Carlos Ghosn). But can change be planned? Sometimes events or luck sabotage the best intentions as shown in the Samsung case. The book differentiates itself from the competition in four ways: Cases form the highlight of the book. Taking European and some international cases as the starting point, the objective is to link themes or topics to a description of their effect on the firm. The linkage will occur at the relevant point in the case, not in a separate section or in another book. The author team has used several longitudinal cases spread over a 15-20 year period. The longitudinal cases are supported by some new, non-longitudinal cases selected from award winning cases associated with the LRP Journal and the Gate2Growth Academic Network. We feel such an emphasis on cases is a novel feature. The theory is explained using a range of modern didactic methods not usually found in competitive offerings. Examples include colour coded and highlighted links from the theory to the case, questions inside each theory section with model answers and unanswered questions to test the student's grasp of the concepts. The book features a mixture of cases from short specific to academically challenging ones. Too often, superficial cases are placed at the end of chapters in strategy theory books. They are picked to emphasize the topics of the preceding chapters. The result is spoon-feeding, with little need or motivation to provoke individual thought or learning. The cases in this book are comprehensive, approximately 20 pages in length, with ample quantitative and qualitative data, thus forcing a modicum of effort from the student. Shorter cases are also included for ease of understanding and instructor flexibility. Another differentiating feature is the emphasis on diversity hence the use of European as opposed to US based cases. "Thomson and Baden-Fuller have crafted a highly original and practical strategy textbook covering a wide range of strategic issues, debates, and frameworks. Their work contains a thorough overview of the strategy field, appealing cases of European firms such as Abrakebabra and Your cup of tea, as well as insightful treatises on the Brent Spar ignominy and the weapon industry. The clever combination of mini-cases, theory, questions and full-fledged cases, and a clear overall structure ensure that students obtain a representative image of strategy as it plays out in the 21st century."

— Paul W.L. Vlaar, Associate Professor, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Faculty of Economics and Business Management

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