

# Twelve angry men case study

Business



## **Free Case Study on 12 Angry Men:**

When people execute justice they are placed in the situation when the human beings have to take a decision defining the destiny of the human being like them. The laws which are to protect society sometimes contradict the nature of the human being, i. e.

they may cause the violent death in the form of death penalty. But society has to apply such laws to protect its members from the violence. People who decide the destiny of the accused take a great responsibility for their verdict. They are guided by the law, logic and their life experience. The brilliant movie *Twelve Angry Men* reveals the process of taking the decision in case study. The plot is very simple.

Actually the film reveals a complicated process of taking the decision by the jury regarding an 18 year old boy who is on trial for the murder. He accused in murder of his father and the jury has to take difficult decision which may lead to the death penalty. Twelve men, members of the jury are anonymous just to underline their disaffection regarding the case. The movie puts the questions whether the jurors should apply their life experience and personal attitude or not. Should they be guided by the logic and law only? It is naturally the jurors may commit certain mistakes because they are human beings. The mankind has not yet invented a legal mechanism according to which the defendant could be sentenced by machine and, thanks God it will never be invented.

Film shows the deliberations of the jury on the case. It is the hot day, the air conditioner is not working and people are hurrying to sentence a boy.

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Everyone has something to do after the trial, one is in a hurry to a baseball match, another one is ill. The conditions according to which the wrong verdict can be taken are created. Any doubt regarding the guilt of the accused cause anger of the Jury.

The Jurors are trying to act logically but there are some logical fallacies in their reasoning. There is some evidence against the accused. The old man claims he heard the voice of accused threatening his father to kill him. Then he heard the sound that he identified as the sound of a body falling down the floor. So he heard the voice resembled that of accused and he heard the sound which he himself identified as a sound of a body hitting the floor. The knife was identified as that belonging to defendant.

Several witnesses confirmed it. The accused did not have the firm alibi. He did not remember the details of the film he saw when the murder happened and his attempt to explain that he had lost his knife before looked like attempt to avoid the punishment. The Jurors were ready to take just such kind of evidence. The accused had a reason to commit a murder. He had bad relations with his father and his father beat him.

The accused had problems with police before. If we study the facts which testify against the accused we see that most of them do not confirm his guilt directly. The old man identified the sound of the falling body under the circumstances and the information acquired before. The knife was not a unique one, but typical and nobody wanted to accept this fact. The boy did not remember the details of the film, but instead of investigating if he visited

the cinema he was accused of telling lie. Bad relations of accused with the victim did not confirm the fact of murder.

The jurors in their discussions committed some logical fallacies. The juror # 2 said that the main factor for him was that nobody proved that accused was not guilty. Thus he was guided by the Preponderance of the Evidence, which is " The level of proof required to prevail in most civil cases. The judge or jury must be persuaded that the facts are more probably one way (the plaintiff's way) than another (the defendant's)." The principle of the Preponderance of the Evidence is appropriate in civil cases, but not in the criminal ones. According to the US law a principle of reasonable doubt is applied in the criminal cases.

So the juror #2 did not take into consideration any doubt while defining the guilt of accused. The reasonable doubt is defined as " An accused person is entitled to acquittal if, in the minds of the jury, his or her guilt has not been proved beyond a " reasonable doubt;" that state of minds of jurors in which they cannot say they feel an abiding conviction as to the truth of the charge". Juror #7 admitted that the Jury could be wrong, but still he insisted on the verdict. He used the generalization, saying that all accused are alike. Juror # 8 appealed to pity which is also a fallacy. Juror # 10 generalized all the accused.

Taking into consideration all evidences of the case it is difficult to say that all of them unbreakably proved the guilt of the accused. Some doubts regarding his guilt still remained. If it is so, the accused should have found not guilty.