GEB 3213
Team Project Assignment

Report: 200 points; Oral Presentation: 100 points

For this assignment, you and your team will write a report on topics 14.6 (select one only) or 14.9 (choose one of the options: 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6) detailed on pp. 437-440. In addition, you and your team will produce documents relating to the final report (listed under "Additional Materials," below) and prepare a 10-20 minute oral presentation that you will deliver to the class.

You and your team will work on this project through the rest of the semester, even as you complete your writing assignments individually, so you should carefully note the deadlines for the various components of this extended project.

Final Report Guidelines
A 10-15 page report, single-spaced, containing the following elements:
  • Title page (not included in total page count)
  • Executive summary (1 page)
  • Table of Contents
  • List of Illustrations/Tables/Figures
  • Text of report
  • Works cited
  • Appendices (if applicable, not included in total page count).

You may use MLA, Chicago, or APA style for your report, but you must use a single style guide consistently throughout your report. **Final report due: 28 November – 2 December.**

Additional Materials

1. **Project proposal**: a memo to your instructor in which you explain your purpose, audience, necessary research, challenges, and solution. **Due:** *[should be at least 5 weeks before final deadline] (50   pts)*
2. **Gantt chart or timeline visual**, providing timelines for completing tasks, such as research, drafts, editing, collation, presentation preparation, practices, etc. **Due:** *[should be 1 week after proposal deadline] (25 pts)*
3. **Progress report**, explaining the progress your team has made, research completed, and state of the report, using memo form. **Due date:** *[approximately 2/3 weeks before final deadline] (25 pts.)*

Grading
Your grade will reflect your performance in using all the information you have learned throughout the course about professional communication in business, including
- purposeful writing for action
- focused attention to audience
- appropriate tone and style
- attention to the 4Cs of writing (clarity, continuity, coherence, concision)
- effective and correct use of visuals
- proper professional format
- appropriate use and documentation of research
- logical development and organization of ideas and arguments
- professional overall presentation
- coherence of team approach.

Business Reports: Sections, Formats, Approach

Business reports exist under many different names: feasibility reports, recommendation reports, evaluation reports, assessment reports, business plans, proposals, and many others. They generally perform the same functions: providing background information, compiling research, delivering carefully studied opinions and recommendations.

Report Sections
Reports are presented in sections, with each section having a specific purpose. Often, specific company guidelines dictate how you should format each section. If your company or division lacks a style guide, consult a previously submitted report to fully understand expectations for reports in terms of content, style, and format.

Business reports, regardless of their specific type, have similar sections:
- Title Page
- Executive Summary (or, less commonly, Abstract)
- Table of Contents
- Introduction
- Body
- Recommendations
- References
- Appendix (or Appendices)

Front Matter
Title Page: The title page of reports normally contains four pieces of information: the report title, the name of the person, company, or organization for whom the report has been prepared; the name of the author and the company or university which originated the report; and the date the report was completed.

The title should reflect the major topic of your report. Try to develop a title that will be interesting and will make readers want to read the rest of your report. Avoid, however, being too creative or cute. You should also omit obvious words and phrases such as "A

study on ____ " or "An Investigation of _____," as both will make titles unnecessarily wordy without telling your readers what the report is about. Keep titles descriptive, yet simple and professional:

Recommendation Report: Outsourcing Customer Service to New Zealand

Executive Summary: The executive summary follows the title page, since the summary provides the executive in charge of making decisions with all the necessary information —including your recommendations—quickly and easily. As a result, you should number the executive summary page using lower case Roman numerals and also list it that way it in the Table of Contents (i, ii, iii, iv).

Table of Contents: The Table of Contents (TOC) follows the executive summary and should list the sections of the report and the page number they start on. You should also list Works Cited and Appendices.

List of Figures, Illustrations, Tables: After the TOC, you should insert a list of figures, which includes tables or any other visual material.

Body
Introduction: The introduction prepares readers for the discussion that follows by introducing the purpose, scope, and background of the research. The audience for your report largely determines the length of the introduction and the amount of detail included in it. You should include enough detail so that someone knowledgeable in your field—or, in some cases, a general reader—can understand the subject of your research.

Most introductions contain three parts to provide context for the research: *purpose, scope, and background.* These parts often overlap with one another, and you can sometimes omit one of them when you have no reason to include it. Introductions serve to catch your readers' attention, and they also help place your subject in its context. As a result, you should carefully consider the approach you and your team will take before beginning your introduction.

To begin your introduction, think of your audience and consider how to orient them to your topic. State the problem specifically, then contextualize the problem. Consider placing the purpose of your project or the background information first, then moving on to the scope after you introduce your topic.

Purpose refers to why the report exists. Be certain to consider the purpose of your report and research before you begin the introduction. If you fail to completely understand the purpose, you have no chance of making your reader comprehend your purpose. To help you think about the purpose of your research and your reason for writing a report, consider the following questions:
- What did your research discover or prove?
- What kind of problem or possibilities did you assess?
- Why did you work on this problem?
- Why are you writing this report?

• What should your reader know or understand when they have finished reading the report?

Scope refers to the ground covered by the report and outlines the method of investigation used in the project. When you consider the scope of your project in the introduction, you help readers understand the parameters of your research and your report. The scope also helps you identify limited factors to your research and acknowledge these early in the report. For example, if a car dealership is interested in selling both used and new cars to college students, but your report only focuses on the market for new cars, the scope indicates this limitation and concisely explains why your report is limited to only a single option.

To help you think about the scope of your research, consider some of the following questions:
• How did you work on the research problem?
• Why did you choose the specific approach you used?
• Could you have taken other approaches to this problem? What were the limitations included in these other approaches that prevented you from using them?

Background Information includes facts that the reader must know to understand the discussion that follows. These facts may include descriptions of conditions or events that gave rise to the project and details of previous work or reports on the problem or problems closely related to your problem. You might also want to review theories that have a bearing on the project and references to other documents. Ask yourself:
• What facts does the reader need to know to understand the discussion that follows?
• Why was the project authorized?
• Who has done previous work on this problem?
• What theory or model informed your analysis of the project?
• What will readers know about the subject already and what will you need to tell them so they can understand the significance of your work?

Recommendations: You should make clear at the end of your introduction what action you recommend your readers take, since readers need to know how to interpret the highly detailed information they'll encounter in the body.

Body: You should situate the bulk of your research, findings, and discussions in the body of the report. This section should be divided into subsections, and you may need to divide those subsections further, with each subsection having its own introduction, body, and conclusion.

Recommendations/Conclusions: Since most busy readers skim, you also need to present your final recommendations and suggested actions to your reader at the conclusion of the report. Your recommendations section should
• summarize your findings

- build on the evidence included in the report body
- present solutions and advice
- persuade readers that your recommendations are worth following.

Back Matter
Works Cited: In this section, you should list works you cite in the report. Generally, writers use their company's established style guide to format this section, but, for this assignment, you should choose to use MLA, APA, or Chicago style guides.

Appendix/Appendices: An appendix presents information relevant to your subject but not strictly central to your primary line of argument (e.g. research data and statistics). To avoid interrupting the development of your primary argumentative line, you should relegate these items or details to an appendix. You can place any item in an appendix if it is relevant and you've referred to it in your report. Do not, however, include an appendix purely for the sake of having one—or for padding out the length of your report.

You should label each appendix with a letter: Appendix A, Appendix B, etc. Organize your appendices in the order in which you refer to them in your report and paginate them separately so that the first page of each appendix begins with 1.