

ADMN 404

Assignment Marking Rubric

Presentation			
A strategic plan should be well-written, balanced, and professional looking. The way in which the report's contents are presented should not lead to doubts about its authority.			
DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Technique/Mechanics	Numerous unequivocal typographical, grammatical, syntactical and/or punctuation errors on most pages. Little evidence that the document was proofread. Inconsistent/unrecognizable citation style.	A few writing errors on most pages. Most errors difficult to detect (e.g., they're <i>versus</i> there).	Flawlessly written or very close to it. Almost, if not entirely, free of typographical, grammatical, syntactical, and punctuation errors. Correct and consistent use of recognized citation style (e.g., APA).
Clarity	Numerous sentences on each page whose meaning is unclear or, even worse, undecipherable. The point or conclusion of many sections and paragraphs is difficult to discern.	The occasional sentence whose meaning is difficult to understand. Some confusion regarding the argument or logic being put forward.	- Consistently communicates its content in a clear manner and at an appropriate level. Excellent sentence, paragraph, and sectional structure. Appropriate tone and vocabulary. - Report is written for the CEO of the company.
Support	Very little if any support provided. Support is limited to the occasional quote or reference, and one or two tables/figures at most.	- Makes some use of external sources and visual aids, but did not take full advantage of this strategy. Or - Relies so heavily on external sources that the author's voice is more or less absent in many places. Incorporates too many tables and figures, making the narrative thread of the document difficult to discern.	- Makes extremely effective use of external sources (e.g., quotes, references, interviews) and visual aids (e.g., tables, figures). Avoids overuse of external sources and visual aids. - Sources are used to support the student's analysis.
Appearance	Little to no effort put into the document's appearance. Headings not differentiated by font size/style. Alignment and spacing inconsistent.	The document is generally neat and tidy. A consistent style—regardless of how attractive—is used throughout. Clear evidence that some effort was put into the visual appearance of the document.	Aesthetically impressive. Polished and professional looking. Significant attention given to page layout, fonts, alignment, spacing, colour, and so forth.

Executive Summary			
This section should succinctly summarize that which follows.			
DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Content	- Provides a poor indication of the contents of the report. - Introduces the report instead of summarizing it.	Provides a reasonably good summary of the report. Some important points left out such that the overall logic of the report is less than clear.	Conveys or summarizes the most important conclusions of each of the sections that follow such that the overall structure of the argument is conveyed.
Succinctness	Summary is far too long. Provides far too much detail. Wastes space that would have been better used within the body of the report.	Generally sticks to the most important points. Occasionally provides more detail than is required.	Only the most important and necessary aspects are presented. Supporting data and examples are used sparingly if at all.
Independence	- Provides the reader with little more than a table of contents. - Leaves the reader unsure of the report's contents or conclusions.	- Leaves the reader with a reasonable understanding of the report's contents, but lacks clarity regarding the relationships among them. - Provides a generally good summary, but is confusing or misleading in one or two areas.	Summary could be distributed separately to those needing a less detailed version of the entire report.
Impact/Authority	Gives the impression that reading the report would be a waste of time.	- Creates some interest, but raises doubts as to the author's authority. - Gives the impression that the report will be well written but of little value/interest.	- The tone, clarity, and organization leave the reader with a strong desire to read the rest of the document. - The reader is confident that time spent reading the details of the report would be well spent.

Introduction

This section provides the reader with the context required to make sense of what follows. It is a particularly important section when your reader is not familiar with the organization being discussed (e.g., Assignment 3).

TOPIC	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description/History	- Inadequate. Provides very little information about the organization, its products, and its industry. - Confusing. Provides contradictory or indecipherable information.	- Informative but overly detailed. Goes beyond introducing the organization/industry and provides some analyses. Provides a lot of information that is repeated elsewhere in the report. Or - Too brief. Creates ambiguity/uncertainty about the	- Provides a succinct but informative introduction to the organization, its products, and its industry. - Focuses on pertinent details. Skips information that is irrelevant in this context or presented elsewhere in the document.
Rationale/Context	Provides little to no rationale for the report.	- Provides a less-than-compelling rationale for the report. - Expands on the reasons for writing the report.	Succinctly describes the events or circumstances that justify the preparation of this report.
Limitations/Foreshadowing	- Provides little evidence that any thought was given to the limitations of the analysis provided. - Provides only a general indication of what is to follow.	- Identifies the more obvious limitations and supplemental sources. - Provides some indication of the report's organization.	- Clearly identifies the limitations of this report. Specifies research or resources that could improve the quality of the analysis and recommendations contained therein. - Briefly describes the structure of the remainder of the document.
Organization	Wanders from subject to subject. Confusing.	The information presented is organized into clearly discernible sections. Awkward organization of some sections and transitions.	The contents are organized in an extremely effective manner. Information is grouped and sequenced in a reader-friendly manner.

Mandate

This section describes the organization's mandate. It should draw extensively on the material presented in Lessons 1 and 2 (textbook Chapters 1 and 11).

DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description	Mandate is specified in a cursory manner if at all.	- Omits one of the elements of the mandate. - Aspects of the mandate are incomplete or inappropriate.	Clearly and competently presents the organization's 1) mission/purpose, 2) vision/goals, 3) values/ethics, and 4) stakeholder analysis.
Analysis	Mandate is not congruent with the facts of the case.	Mandate is internally sound, but in some small ways incongruent with the facts of the case.	Mandate is internally sound and reflects a deep understanding of the organization's history and circumstances. Analyses each element.
Use of Concepts	Uses concepts to organize or categorize the material presented. Fails to use the concepts as anything more than labels.	Uses concepts to organize and categorize the facts of the case. Frequently uses the characteristics of the concepts and their relationships with other concepts to arrive at implications and conclusions.	Whenever possible, and without being pedantic, uses course concepts to describe, analyze, and illuminate the facts of the case. Arrives at novel insights through systematic application of the concepts and the models of which they are a part.
Conclusions	The mandate as described provides little guidance to the organization. Most if not all of its elements are generic and do little to establish the identity of the organization.	Some elements of the mandate are too generic. Vision is not inspirational. Confusion regarding mission/vision.	The mandate provides a clear, appropriate, and inspiring statement of the organization's strategic context. Sets clear boundaries with respect to the actions/directions that are (and are not) acceptable for this organization.

External Analysis

This section identifies the organization's most significant opportunities and threats. It should draw extensively on the material presented in Lesson 3 (textbook Chapter 2). Make use of a SWOT analysis and Five Forces.

DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description	Provides a cursory overview of the environment. Limited to a couple of the more obvious aspects (e.g., macroenvironment, Five Forces). No attempt to focus on the more significant details.	Provides a general and balanced overview of the external environment. With few exceptions, focuses on the more important aspects.	Clearly presents the most significant/material aspects of the external environment in a logical and effective manner. Leaves no doubt that all aspects of the external environment were scrutinized in arriving at the aspects selected for inclusion. Goes into greater depth where appropriate.
Analysis	Fails to make connections among or draw conclusions from the facts of the case. Describes the environment, but makes no or only a limited attempt to ascertain how one aspect might affect another.	Connects the various aspects of the environment with one another to arrive at implications and conclusions. Identifies some trends and patterns in the available data.	Makes numerous logical and insightful connections between different aspects of the external environment. Identifies implications and anticipates future developments in arriving at the proposed opportunities and threats. Reveals key patterns and trends in the available information.
Use of Concepts	Uses concepts to organize or categorize the material presented. Fails to use the concepts as anything more than labels.	Uses concepts to organize and categorize the facts of the case. Frequently uses the characteristics of the concepts and their relationships with other concepts to arrive at implications and conclusions.	Whenever possible, and without being pedantic, uses course concepts to describe, analyze, and illuminate the facts of the case. Arrives at novel insights through systematic application of the concepts and the models of which they are a part.
Conclusions	- Clearly misunderstands opportunities and threats. - Omits obvious opportunities and threats. Poorly develops/supports those that are presented.	Clearly identifies some obvious opportunities and threats, but omits some that are important. Provides a good rationale for those that are included.	Clearly identifies the most significant/material opportunities and threats confronting the organization. Provides a compelling argument for the significance/materiality of each opportunity/threat.

Internal Analysis

This section identifies the organization's most significant strengths and weaknesses. It should draw extensively on the material presented in Lesson 4 (textbook Chapter 3). Make use of a SWOT analysis.

DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description	Provides a cursory overview of the organization. Limited to a couple of the more obvious aspects (e.g., value chain, organization). No attempt to focus on the more significant details.	Provides a general and balanced overview of the organization. With few exceptions, focuses on the more important aspects.	Clearly presents the most significant/material attributes of the organization in a logical and effective manner. Leaves no doubt that all attributes of the organization were scrutinized in arriving at the attributes selected for inclusion.
Analysis	Fails to make connections among or draw conclusions from the facts of the case. Describes the organization, but makes no or only a limited attempt to ascertain how one aspect might affect another.	Connects the various aspects of the organization with one another to arrive at implications and conclusions. Identifies some trends and patterns in the available data.	- Makes numerous logical and insightful connections between different aspects of organization. Identifies implications and anticipates future developments in arriving at the proposed strengths and weaknesses. - Calculates and analyzes ratios. Reveals key patterns and trends in the available information.
Use of Concepts	Uses concepts to organize or categorize the material presented. Fails to use the concepts as anything more than labels.	Uses concepts to organize and categorize the facts of the case. Frequently uses the characteristics of the concepts and their relationships with other concepts to arrive at implications and conclusions.	Whenever possible, and without being pedantic, uses course concepts to describe, analyze, and illuminate the facts of the case. Arrives at novel insights through systematic application of the concepts and the models of which they are a part.
Conclusions	- Clearly misunderstands strengths and weaknesses. - Omits obvious strengths and weaknesses. Poorly develops/supports those that are presented.	Clearly identifies some obvious strengths and weaknesses, but omits some that are important. Provides a good rationale for those that are included.	Clearly identifies the organization's most important strengths and weaknesses. Provides a compelling argument as to why <i>these</i> are the most important strengths/weaknesses, drawing attention to their implications for competitive advantage.

Strategic Options

This section briefly describes and analyzes three strategies the organization could pursue. It should draw extensively on the material presented in Lessons 5 to 11 (textbook Chapters 4 to 10).

DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description	The strategies are not distinct and/or are incomplete and/or are not described in sufficient detail to reveal their underlying logic.	- The strategies are complete and described in sufficient detail to reveal their underlying logic. However, they are variations as opposed to distinct from one another. Or - The strategies are distinct. However, they are either not complete or not described in sufficient detail to reveal their underlying logic.	- The proposed strategies are distinct, complete, and described in sufficient detail to clearly reveal their underlying logic. - Includes and makes use of the Hambrick tables. - All strategic options are either corporate- or business-level strategies.
Analysis	Strategies have been analyzed in a superficial manner. Little consideration is given to the results of the SWOT analysis.	- Assessment of each strategy is unbalanced, placing too much emphasis on either the advantages or disadvantages. - Implications of the SWOT analysis have not been fully considered.	Provides a balanced assessment of the (dis)advantages of each strategy with emphasis given to its fit with the SWOT analysis of the previous sections.
Use of Concepts	Uses concepts to organize or categorize the material presented. Fails to use the concepts as anything more than labels.	- Uses concepts to organize and categorize the facts of the case. - Frequently uses the characteristics of the concepts and their relationships with other concepts to arrive at implications and conclusions.	- Whenever possible, and without being pedantic, uses course concepts to describe, analyze, and illuminate the facts of the case. - Arrives at novel insights through systematic application of the concepts and the models of which they are a part.
Conclusions	The strategies are inadequate and/or inappropriate given the organization's circumstances.	The proposed strategies are both plausible and feasible but have definite weaknesses that would compromise their efficacy.	The proposed strategies are plausible, feasible, novel, and clever responses to the organization's current situation that, to the degree possible, would provide it with a <i>sustainable</i> competitive advantage.

Recommendation and Implementation

This section recommends a strategy and describes how it should be implemented. It should draw extensively on the material presented in Lessons 12 (textbook Chapter 12).

DIMENSION	Poor (1)	Average (3)	Excellent (5)
Description	A very superficial description of the actions required to implement the proposed strategy.	- Provides a description of the most important actions required, but does not provide objectives, milestones, and so forth. - A generally good implementation plan, but fails to go into sufficient detail regarding structure, control systems, culture, and so forth.	Identifies the most important changes/steps with respect to implementing the recommended strategy. Addresses the implications for structure, control systems, and culture. Identifies key objectives, milestones, and deliverables. Provides adequate discussion and commentary which develop issues important to implementing this strategy.
Analysis	The plan is not congruent with the recommended strategy. Little consideration has been given to the interaction effects that may result from the individual aspects of the implementation plan.	- The implementation plan is well matched to the recommended strategy, but does not anticipate the challenges and obstacles that are likely to be encountered. - Some aspects of the plan are not congruent with the recommended strategy.	Anticipates implementation problems and incorporates preventive measures. Incorporates interaction effects among the plan's components. Considers long-terms effects and risks and, where appropriate, explains how these can be addressed.
Use of Concepts	Uses concepts to organize or categorize the material presented. Fails to use the concepts as anything more than labels.	Uses concepts to organize and categorize the facts of the case. Frequently uses the characteristics of the concepts and their relationships with other concepts to arrive at implications and conclusions.	Whenever possible, and without being pedantic, uses course concepts to describe, analyze, and illuminate the facts of the case. Arrives at novel insights through systematic application of the concepts and the models of which they are a part.
Conclusions	The proposed course of action is poorly developed and would most likely be unsuccessful for the purpose of implementing the recommended strategy.	The proposed course of action is either implausible, unfeasible, or suffers from some other fundamental weakness that would compromise its efficacy.	The proposed course of action is a plausible, feasible, and insightful approach to implementing the recommended strategy.