

MBA 515 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

In this course, you begin the task of identifying a business idea that you will fully develop throughout your MBA journey. It can be a product, service, or other concept for an existing company environment, or a totally new entrepreneurial venture. You will first choose the market domain for your idea, such as transportation, healthcare, manufacturing, or the service industry, for example. This selected domain will be your area of focus throughout the MBA program.

Overview

Business environments are constantly changing for many reasons: competition in the marketplace, new technology, and political upheavals, for example. A prudent business manager will need to be able to first recognize and then react to these changes to ensure a company's survival and profitability. To do this, the manager will evaluate both the internal and external factors that can either inhibit or enable a company's assets and capabilities to align with market opportunities.

For this project, you will choose a market domain such as transportation, healthcare, manufacturing, or the service industry. This selected domain will be your area of focus throughout the MBA program. You will research the business environment of this domain, analyzing the trends and internal and external factors that affect businesses within this domain. Through this analysis, you will gain an appreciation of the business environment from a holistic perspective in order to foster innovation and maximize profit potential.

This assessment addresses the following course outcomes:

- Analyze inhibiting and enabling factors in current and historical business environments for their impact on opportunities for innovation and change
- Assess internal organizational assets and capabilities for determining competitive readiness and weaknesses in current business environments
- Analyze external factors of business environments for their impact on competitive readiness and internal organizational assets
- Assess intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities in the global marketplace for their viability based on organizational assets and the business environment
- Evaluate trends in the current global business environment for developing business opportunities and improving sustainable business operations

Prompt

Your business environmental analysis should answer the following prompt: Select a market domain such as transportation, healthcare, manufacturing, or the service industry. This selected domain will be your area of focus throughout the MBA program, although you will be able to change if you need to. Begin by evaluating the business environment of the market domain. Then, select a specific company within the market domain. The company you select should be a company where you can envision intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities, as you will identify and assess these opportunities in this project. Finally, evaluate the trends relevant to the business environment of your company and market domain.

Specifically, the following **critical elements** must be addressed:

- I. **Market Domain:** In this section, you will evaluate the current business environment of your selected market domain. Specifically, you should include the following:
 - A. **Historical Significance:** Analyze historically significant pivot points or factors that led to dramatic changes and innovation in the business environment of your selected market domain.
 - B. **Factors:** Analyze the factors that contributed to the obsolescence or dissolution of notable companies in your selected market domain in the recent past. Make sure to discuss both inhibiting and enabling factors in your analysis.
 - C. **Impact of Factors:** Assess the impact of the factors you analyzed on opportunities for change and innovation in the business environment of your selected market domain.

- II. **Competitive Readiness:** In this section, you will select a company within your market domain and then evaluate internal and external factors pertaining to the company's competitive readiness. Specifically, you should include the following:
 - A. **Internal Factors**
 1. **SWOT Analysis:** Complete a SWOT analysis on the internal factors that affect the company's readiness to compete. What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by the company relative to the competitive market?
 2. **Prioritized List:** Based on the SWOT analysis, create a prioritized list of strengths to exploit and weaknesses to mitigate. Each item in your list should have supporting rationale.
 3. **Readiness:** Based on internal factors, evaluate the company's readiness to compete in the business environment of the market domain. Support your evaluation with information from your market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis.
 - B. **External Factors**
 1. **PEST Analysis:** Complete a PEST analysis on the external factors that affect the company's readiness to compete. What are the political, economic, social, and technological factors that affect the company?
 2. **Prioritized List:** Based on the PEST analysis, create a prioritized list of strengths to exploit and weaknesses to mitigate. Each item in your list should have supporting rationale.
 3. **Readiness:** Based on external factors, evaluate the company's readiness to compete in the business environment of the market domain. Support your evaluation with information from your market domain evaluation and PEST analysis.

- III. **Opportunities and Trends:** In this section, you will assess intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities in the company you selected. You will then evaluate trends in the global business environment for their impact on the opportunities you identified. Specifically, you should include the following:
 - A. **Intrapreneurial Opportunities:** Develop a list of intrapreneurial opportunities within your selected company. Each opportunity in your list should have supporting rationale based on your market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis.
 - B. **Intrapreneurial Assessment:** Select one intrapreneurial opportunity from your list to assess. How viable is the opportunity? Your response should be supported with evidence from your market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis.
 - C. **Entrepreneurial Opportunities:** Develop a list of entrepreneurial opportunities outside the confines of the company you selected. Each opportunity in your list should have supporting rationale based on your market domain evaluation and PEST analysis.

- D. **Entrepreneurial Assessment:** Select one entrepreneurial opportunity from your list to assess. How viable is the opportunity? Your response should be supported with evidence from your market domain evaluation and PEST analysis.
- E. **Trends:** Evaluate key trends affecting the global business environment of your selected market domain. These could be geographic, political, or societal trends, or they could be trends specific to your market domain.
- F. **Impact on Opportunities:** Determine how these trends will impact the development of your selected intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities.
- G. **Impact on Sustainability:** Determine how these trends will affect the sustainability of your selected company. Which trends could be used to improve sustainable business operations?

Milestones

Milestone One: Market Domain Overview

In **Module Two**, using the MBA 515 Library Research Guide and other resources, you will create an overview of your selected market domain that identifies and examines factors and the impact that the factors have on your selected domain. You will analyze the factors that contributed to the obsolescence or dissolution of notable companies in your selected market domain in the recent past. Make sure to discuss both inhibiting and enabling factors in your analysis. Assess the impact of the factors you analyzed on opportunities for change and innovation in the business environment of your selected market domain. For example, if you chose the transportation industry and focused on ground transposition, you would discuss the development of the rail or interstate highway systems, the concept of intermodal transportation, deregulation, environment laws, and so forth. You will describe the impact on the marketplace of these new developments and leadership's response. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: SWOT Analysis

In **Module Four**, you will complete a SWOT analysis of the company you have decided to base your work on, whether it is a fictional or a real-world company. This analysis will be written viewing the company from the inside to the outside. You will submit an organizational assessment of your company within the chosen market domain. This assessment will determine the relative competitiveness of the company and demonstrate technical knowledge of assessment tools and techniques. This assessment will consider the total picture of the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to the current market environment. This assessment should consider key aspects of the company, including its product/service mix, pricing, location, technology, marketing, and human, financial, and information resources. Corporate ethics should be considered when completing the SWOT, whether a strength or a weakness. Discuss the direction of movement or trending of each of the four quadrants. Identify and elaborate on at least four each of the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: PEST Analysis

In **Module Six**, you will submit an environmental scan of the company within the chosen market domain using the PEST format. This analysis will be written viewing the company from the outside to the inside. This assessment will consider the knowledge gained from the SWOT analysis generated in Milestone Two and assess the company's competitive readiness from external dimensions, extending to the global marketplace. The scan will include the external political, economic/financial, sociopolitical, and technological trends for a given market environment and a potential market. The information gathered from this scan will

assist in the identification of the most lucrative market niche in which to formulate an actual business development strategy in Milestone Four. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Milestone Four: Intrapreneurial and Entrepreneurial Opportunities

In **Module Eight**, you will submit the last portion of your draft business development plan for your company, covering the specific opportunity assessment along with the trends and discussion on sustainability. This plan will be based on the results of Milestones One and Two in that it will consider that past forces of market change and the current capabilities and limitations of the company. This plan will align the company's efforts to exploiting intrapreneurial opportunities as well as entrepreneurial opportunities, depending on the company's capabilities. The plan should reflect consideration of potential future impacts on these plans such as changes in the economy, market position, technology innovation, or sociopolitical factors. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Four Rubric.**

Final Submission: Final Business Development Plan

In **Module Ten**, you will submit your final project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This submission will be graded with the Final Project Rubric.**

Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Market Domain Overview	Two	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	SWOT Analysis	Four	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	PEST Analysis	Six	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
Four	Intrapreneurial and Entrepreneurial Opportunities	Eight	Graded separately; Milestone Four Rubric
	Final Submission: Final Business Development Plan		Graded separately; Final Project Rubric

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your business environmental analysis should adhere to the following formatting requirements: 15-20 pages, double-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins. You should use current APA style guidelines for your citations and reference list.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
Historical Significance [MBA-515-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and analysis demonstrates keen insight into factors driving change or innovation in business environment	Accurately analyzes historically significant pivot points or factors that led to dramatic changes and innovation in business environment of selected market domain	Analyzes historically significant pivot points or factors that led to dramatic changes and innovation in business environment of selected market domain, but with gaps in accuracy or detail	Does not analyze historically significant pivot points or factors that led to dramatic changes and innovation in business environment of selected market domain	6.4
Factors [MBA-515-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and analysis demonstrates keen insight into factors driving change or innovation in business environment	Accurately analyzes factors that contributed to obsolescence or dissolution of notable companies in selected market domain in recent past, discussing both inhibiting and enabling factors	Analyzes factors that contributed to obsolescence or dissolution of notable companies in selected market domain in recent past, but discussion does not include both inhibiting and enabling factors, or response has gaps in accuracy or detail	Does not analyze factors that contributed to obsolescence or dissolution of notable companies in selected market domain in recent past	6.4
Impact of Factors [MBA-515-01]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and assessment demonstrates keen insight into factors driving change or innovation in business environment	Comprehensively assesses impact of factors on opportunities for change and innovation in business environment of market domain	Assesses impact of factors on opportunities for change and innovation in business environment of market domain, but assessment is cursory or inaccurate	Does not assess impact of identified factors on opportunities for change and innovation in business environment of market domain	6.4
Internal Factors: SWOT Analysis [MBA-515-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and analysis demonstrates nuanced understanding of internal organizational assets and capabilities	Completes comprehensive SWOT analysis on internal factors affecting company’s readiness to compete	Completes SWOT analysis on internal factors affecting company’s readiness to compete, but analysis is cursory or inaccurate	Does not complete SWOT analysis on internal factors affecting company’s readiness to compete	6.4
Internal Factors: Prioritized List [MBA-515-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and prioritization demonstrates nuanced understanding of internal organizational assets and capabilities	Creates prioritized list of strengths to exploit and weaknesses to mitigate based on SWOT analysis, supporting list with rationale	Creates list of strengths and weaknesses based on SWOT analysis, but list is not prioritized for exploiting strengths or mitigating weaknesses, or lacks rationale	Does not create list of strengths and weaknesses based on SWOT analysis	6.4

Internal Factors: Readiness [MBA-515-02]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and evaluation demonstrates nuanced understanding of relationship between competitive readiness and internal organizational assets and capabilities	Comprehensively evaluates company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on internal factors, supporting response with market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis	Evaluates company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on internal factors, but response is cursory or inaccurate or lacks support	Does not evaluate company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on internal factors	6.4
External Factors: PEST Analysis [MBA-515-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and analysis demonstrates nuanced understanding of external factors affecting company’s business environment	Completes comprehensive PEST analysis on external factors affecting company’s readiness to compete	Completes PEST analysis on external factors affecting company’s readiness to compete, but analysis is cursory or inaccurate	Does not complete PEST analysis on external factors affecting company’s readiness to compete	6.4
External Factors: Prioritized List [MBA-515-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and prioritization demonstrates nuanced understanding of key issues from each quadrant	Examines and addresses the key issue from each quadrant, including supporting rationale and research	Examines and addresses the key issue from each quadrant but lacks rationale	Does not examine or address the key issue from each quadrant	6.4
External Factors: Readiness [MBA-515-03]	Meets “Proficient” criteria and demonstrates nuanced understanding of relationship between competitive readiness and external factors affecting company’s business environment	Comprehensively evaluates company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on external factors, supporting response with market domain evaluation and PEST analysis	Evaluates company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on external factors, but response is cursory or inaccurate or lacks support	Does not evaluate company’s readiness to compete in business environment based on external factors	6.4
Intrapreneurial Opportunities [MBA-515-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between intrapreneurial opportunities, market domain evaluation, and SWOT analysis	Develops list of intrapreneurial opportunities with supporting rationale based on market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis	Develops list of intrapreneurial opportunities, but rationale is missing or is not based on market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis	Does not develop list of intrapreneurial opportunities	4.8
Intrapreneurial Assessment [MBA-515-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between intrapreneurial opportunities, market domain evaluation, and SWOT analysis	Accurately assesses viability of selected intrapreneurial opportunity, supporting response with evidence from market domain evaluation and SWOT analysis	Assesses viability of selected intrapreneurial opportunity, but with gaps in accuracy, detail, or support	Does not assess viability of selected intrapreneurial opportunity	4.8

Entrepreneurial Opportunities [MBA-515-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between entrepreneurial opportunities, market domain evaluation, and PEST analysis	Develops list of entrepreneurial opportunities with supporting rationale based on market domain evaluation and PEST analysis	Develops list of entrepreneurial opportunities, but rationale is missing or is not based on market domain evaluation and PEST analysis	Does not develop list of entrepreneurial opportunities	4.8
Entrepreneurial Assessment [MBA-515-04]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between entrepreneurial opportunities, market domain evaluation, and PEST analysis	Accurately assesses viability of selected entrepreneurial opportunity, supporting response with evidence from market domain evaluation and PEST analysis	Assesses viability of selected entrepreneurial opportunity, but with gaps in accuracy, detail, or support	Does not assess viability of selected entrepreneurial opportunity	4.8
Trends [MBA-515-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and evaluation demonstrates nuanced understanding of trends in current global business environment	Comprehensively evaluates key trends affecting global business environment of selected market domain	Evaluates key trends affecting global business environment of selected market domain, but evaluation is cursory or inaccurate	Does not evaluate key trends affecting global business environment of selected market domain	6.4
Impact on Opportunities [MBA-515-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between opportunities and trends in current global business environment	Accurately determines how trends will impact development of selected intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities	Determines how trends will impact development of selected intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities, but with gaps in accuracy or detail	Does not determine how trends will impact development of selected intrapreneurial and entrepreneurial opportunities	6.4
Impact on Sustainability [MBA-515-05]	Meets “Proficient” criteria, and response demonstrates keen insight into relationship between sustainability and trends in current global business environment	Accurately determines how trends will affect sustainability of selected company and which trends could be used to improve sustainable business operations	Determines how trends will affect sustainability of selected company and which trends could be used to improve sustainable business operations, but with gaps in accuracy or detail	Does not determine how trends will affect sustainability of selected company and which trends could be used to improve sustainable business operations	6.4
Articulation of Response	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	4
Total					100%