

Strategic Analysis Project

Students can work on this project individually or in a group. Students individually or in groups (3-4 students) will prepare a strategic analysis report on a hospitality and tourism organization. Students are required to select one organization in the hospitality and tourism industry on which contemporary published information is widely available. Where possible, students may approach this company to **interview** their managers and executives. If possible, you should choose a company for which you are currently working, have worked for in the past or you know the company and managers personally. The following companies and their brands under these corporations cannot be chosen for group projects: **Rosen Hotels, Universal, Walt Disney, Sea World, Southwest Airlines, Hilton Hotels, Marriott Hotels and Resorts (including Ritz Carlton and Starwood Hotels), InterContinental Hotels, Hyatt Hotels, Darden Restaurants and Starbucks. NO TWO GROUPS SHOULD WORK ON THE SAME COMPANY.** Therefore, as soon as you choose your company, inform the professor. The following issues should be covered in your project:

- Executive summary, introduction and methodology
- Company's history, vision, and mission.
- Analysis of the company's macro (general) environment (PEST analysis)
- Analysis of the micro (industry) environment (Porter's Five Forces Framework)
- Analysis of the internal environment (operations, marketing, HRM, finance, IT)
- Distinctive competencies, competitive advantage of the company and its sustainability
- Overall strategy and strategic direction of the company
- Conclusions emerging from your report
- Recommendations for this company
- Your learning from this project

Structure of the Project

1. **Front page:** This page should include the following: The University and the College names, course title, name of all team members, name of the professor, submission date.
2. **Executive summary:** One-page summary briefly explaining aim(s) of the project, methodology, key findings of the project, emerging conclusions and recommendations.
3. **Table of contents:** This should show main sections and their page numbers.
4. **Introduction and methodology:** This section should introduce the project aims and sub-sections. Concerning the methodology, you should explain how you collected the data about this company.
5. **The history of the company, its mission, vision, values and goals:** In this section, you should explain the company's history, mission, vision, values and goals. You should also critique the company's history, mission, vision, values and goals.
6. **Analysis of the general environment:** In this section, you should clearly present your **PESTE** analysis' findings. In other words, you should be able to explain and evaluate how developments in the general environment may now and in the future influence the company. In this section, you should be able to list and discuss main opportunities and threats to this company.
7. **Analysis of the task environment:** In this section, you should clearly present **Porter's Industry Structure** analysis findings. In other words, you should be able to explain and evaluate how developments in the task (industry) environment (competitors, suppliers, buyers-customers, substitutes and new comers) may impact the company. Overall, in this section, you should be able to list and discuss main opportunities and threats to this company from the task environment.
8. **Analysis of the internal environment:** In this section, you should explain and evaluate the internal environment of the company. In particular, you should discuss strengths and weaknesses of the company in terms of operations, marketing, HRM, finance and IT. In this section, you should discuss main strengths and weaknesses of this company.

9. **The company's resources, competencies, distinctive competencies, competitive advantage (if any!), and its sustainability:** In this section, you should explain the company's strategic resources, competencies, and distinctive competencies. Finally, you should be able to identify and discuss whether the company has any competitive advantage and whether it is sustainable.
10. **The company's overall strategy, its strategic direction, leadership, main problems, and challenges:** In this section, you should explain what the company's overall generic corporate, business, and functional strategies (where appropriate) are and explain the company's overall strategic direction and leadership. Here you should also discuss and evaluate strategic problems and challenges that the company currently faces or may face in the future.
11. **Conclusions and Recommendations:** In this section, you should draw several conclusions from your project, and based on your conclusions you should provide *specific* tactical and strategic recommendations for the company. If you suggest specific recommendations, you should provide suggestions about potential challenges and barriers when implementing such recommendations.
12. **Your learning from this project:** This section is more personal. You may explain what you have learned when preparing this project. Some examples may include your learning about leadership and strategic management theories and concepts, your learning about applying these theories and concepts into practice, providing recommendations for strategic change, working in a group, time management, preparing a business report, and impact of this project on your career plans (if any). Each member of your team can write about her/his learning separately or all members of your team can write your learning as a team from this project.
13. **References:** Please list here all those reports, articles, books, and other material you have used when preparing this report. You should show your references in the report either using footnotes, endnotes, or APA style. Let me know if you need help for this.
14. **Appendices:** In this section, you should include minutes of your (weekly) face to face or online meetings, interview notes and documents you collected from the company. You may also include here your detailed SWOT, PEST, Industry Structure and Internal Environment Analyses.

Your project should be about 3000 to 5000 words excluding appendices. Please submit your project electronically by the due date.

Suggestions:

- Be careful when choosing your team members and forming your team
- Start working on your project as early as possible (start today)
- Choose a company on which published information is available
- Have regular face to face or online meetings (weekly)
- You must get along well with your teammates
- Be critical, creative, and precise
- Apply strategic management theories and models into practice
- Each report should be about 3000 to 5000 words
- Have several drafts before you submit
- Each report should be submitted on time

Your projects will be graded using the following criteria

	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
Content (180 points)												
Executive summary, introduction and methodology (15 points)												
Company's history, vision and mission 15 points)												
Analysis of the general environment (20 points)												
Analysis of the task environment (20 points)												
Analysis of internal environment (20 points)												
Identification of problems and challenges (15 points)												
Identification and evaluation of resources, distinctive competencies, and competitive advantage (15 points)												
Evaluation of strategic options and the company's strategic direction (15 points)												
Drawing conclusions from the case study (15 points)												
Proposing specific recommendations (15 points)												
Reflection of their learning (15 points)												
Style (20 points)												
Appropriate format – report style (5 points)												
The paper is not 'cut and paste' from various sources												
Explanation of methodology - how data is collected and analyzed (5 points)												
References and citations (5 points)												
Proper grammar, spelling, and syntax (5 points)												
Total 200 points												
Other Comments												

Strategic Analysis Project Grading Rubric

Opening	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
Executive Summary	Clearly focused, thoroughly introduces the project; immediately engages the reader. Provides the vital information about the project. Understandable as a stand-alone section. Findings are presented. Conclusions and recommendations are provided.	Often clear. Introduces the project. Somewhat engages the reader. Provides most of the vital information about the project. Somewhat complete as a stand-alone section. Most of the findings are presented. Most of the conclusions and recommendations are provided.	Sometimes unclear. Less than complete introduction of the project. Limited reader engagement. Less than complete as a stand-alone section. A few of the findings are presented. Some conclusions and recommendations are provided.	Vague; less than adequate introduction of the project. Does not engage the reader in the project. Not complete as a stand-only section. Findings are incomplete. Minimal conclusions and recommendations are provided.	Not provided or not relevant.
Introduction	Clear introduction. Introduces the purpose and scope of the project. Engages the reader.	Often clear introduction. Introduces the purpose and scope of the project to an acceptable level. Somewhat engages the reader.	Somewhat unclear introduction. Minimal introduction of the purpose and scope of the project. Limited engagement of the reader.	Unfocused and rambling, confuses the reader. Purpose and scope of the project unclear.	Not provided or not relevant.
Methodology	Complete description of how data and information was collected and analyzed. Clearly states the structure of the project.	Satisfactory description of how data and information was collected and analyzed. Often clear as the structure of the project.	Description of how data and information was collected and analyzed less than adequate. Good structure of the project.	Description of how data and information was collected and analyzed not included. Unclear as to structure of the project.	Not provided or not relevant.
Company	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
History	Clearly stated in chronological order. Defines the nature of the company. Includes growth of the company and market sector. Highlights most noteworthy achievements. Includes information on the founder, influential partners, and current leader.	Somewhat clearly stated in chronological order. Definition of the nature of the company adequate. Partial discussion of growth of the company and market sector. Includes somewhat complete information on the founder, influential partners, and current leader.	Less than complete or not stated in chronological order. Minimal discussion of the nature of the company, growth of the company, and market sector. Includes little information on the founder, influential partners, and current leader.	Inadequate discussion of company history. Incomplete discussion of the nature of the company, growth of the company, and market sector. Little or no information included on the founder, influential partners, and current leaders.	Not provided or not relevant.
Vision, mission, goals statements	Clearly stated. Evaluated, compared to competitors, and critiqued. Identified positive and negative aspects of the statement. Recommendations for improvements made.	Somewhat clearly stated. Evaluated and critiqued. No comparison to competitors. Identified positive and negative aspects of the statement.	Statement is included. Short critique. No evaluation or comparison to competitors.	Statement is included. No evaluation, critique or comparison to competitors.	Not provided or not relevant.
Analysis of Environment	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F

General Environment	Original, insightful, and detailed PESTE analysis. Logical presentation of ideas; all parts contribute to a strong central idea. Explains and evaluates how developments in the general environment have and will impact the company. Analyzes the general environment (PESTE) and does not primarily focus on the internal environment of the case study company. Identifies and includes strong discussion of opportunities and threats coming from the general environment. Statements and arguments are supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A detailed PESTE analysis table is given. Strong evidences of understanding the theory.	Identifies key issues. Provides some support for PESTE analysis. Most ideas are connected; some parts do not contribute to the central idea. Adequate discussion of how developments in the general environment have and will impact the company. Sometimes focuses on internal environment of the case study company. Identifies and includes satisfactory discussion of opportunities and threats coming from the general environment. Statements and arguments are mostly supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A PESTE analysis table is given. Strong evidences of understanding the theory.	Minimal PESTE analysis. Provides little support for analysis. Some ideas connected to each other; many parts do not contribute to the central idea. Minimal discussion of how developments in the general environment have and will impact the company. Primary focuses on internal environment of the case study company. Fails to clearly identify and discusses opportunities and threats coming from the general environment. Statements and arguments are seldom supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A PESTE analysis table is given but it is generally superficial and inaccurate.	Incomplete PESTE analysis. Unsatisfactory support for analysis. Ideas have little connection to each other; there is no strong central idea. Inadequate discussion of how developments in the general environment have and will impact the company. Fails to clearly identify and discusses opportunities and threats coming from the general environment. Statements and arguments are not supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A PESTE analysis table is not provided.	Not provided or not relevant.
Task Environment	Original, insightful, and detailed analysis of Porter's Industry Structure Five Forces. Logical presentation of ideas; all parts contribute to a strong central idea. Explains and evaluates how developments in the task environment have and will impact the company. Does not primarily focus on the internal environment of the case study company. Analyzes the task environment and identifies opportunities and threats coming from the task (industry) environment. Statements and arguments are supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A table or figure showing the industry structure analysis on the case study company is provided. Strong evidences of understanding of the five forces model.	Identifies key issues. Provides adequate support for Porter's Industry Structure Five Forces. Most ideas are connected; some parts do not contribute to the central idea. Adequate discussion of how developments in the task environment have and will impact the company. Primary focus is weighted towards the internal environment of the case study company. Analyzes the task environment and identifies opportunities and threats coming from the task (industry) environment. Statements and arguments are mostly supported with clear and reliable evidence and data. A table or figure showing the industry structure analysis on the case study company is provided. Strong evidences of understanding of the five forces model.	Minimal analysis of Porter's Industry Structure Five Forces. Provides little support for analysis. Some ideas connected to each other; many parts do not contribute to the central idea. Minimal discussion of how developments in the task environment have and will impact the company. Fails to identify opportunities and threats coming from the task (industry) environment. Primary focus is on the internal environment of the case study company. Statements and arguments are seldom supported with clear and reliable evidence and data.	Incomplete analysis of Porter's Industry Structure Five Forces. Recounts facts with little or no analysis. Ideas have little connection to each other; there is no strong central idea. Inadequate discussion of how developments in the task environment have and will impact the company. Fails to identify opportunities and threats coming from the task (industry) environment. Unclear presentation of ideas. Statements and arguments lack support of clear and reliable evidence and data.	Not provided or not relevant.

Internal Environment	Original and insightful analysis. Provides data and support for analysis. Logical presentation of ideas; all parts contribute to a strong central idea. Discusses strengths and weakness of company in terms of operations, marketing, HRM, finance and IT. Statements and arguments are supported with clear and reliable evidence and data.	Identifies key issues. Provides some support for analysis. Most ideas are connected; some parts do not contribute to the central idea. Includes satisfactory discussion of strengths and weaknesses of company in terms of operations, marketing, HRM, finance, and IT. Statements and arguments are sometimes supported with clear and reliable evidence and data.	Minimal analysis. Provides little support for analysis. Some ideas connected to each other; many parts do not contribute to the central idea. Includes minimal discussion of strengths and weaknesses of company in terms of operations, marketing, HRM, finance, and IT. Statements and arguments are seldom supported with clear and reliable evidence and data.	Recounts facts with little or no analysis. Ideas have little connection to each other; there is no strong central idea. Includes incomplete discussion of strengths and weaknesses of company in terms of operations, marketing, HRM, finance, and IT. Statements and arguments lack support of clear and reliable evidence and data.	Not provided or not relevant.
Identification & Evaluation	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
Problems and Challenges	Identifies, analyzes and evaluates complex problems and issues. Demonstrates strong understanding of the concepts discussed.	Partly identifies, analyzes and evaluates complex problems and issues. Demonstrates good understanding of the concepts discussed.	Recognizes two or more key problems in the case; discussion of issues is not complete.	Recognizes one of more key problems in the case; incomplete explanation of the importance of the issues.	Not provided or not relevant.
Resources	Identifies significant tangible and intangible resources. Includes significant discussion of property, plant, and equipment. Includes significant discussion of intangible resources such as company reputation and brand, leadership and culture. Identifies specific resources that create a competitive advantage. Includes analysis of how resources contribute to company's performance.	Identifies several tangible and intangible resources. Includes satisfactory discussion of property, plant, and equipment. Includes satisfactory discussion of intangible resources such as company reputation and brand, leadership, and culture. Identifies adequate number of resources that create a competitive advantage. Includes satisfactory analysis of how resources contribute to company's performance.	Identifies few tangible and intangible resources. Includes minimal discussion of property, plant, and equipment. Includes minimal discussion of intangible resources such as company reputation and brand, leadership, and culture. Identifies general resources that create a competitive advantage. Includes vague analysis of how resources contribute to company's performance.	No identification of tangible and intangible resources. Includes incomplete discussion of property, plant, and equipment. Incomplete discussion of intangible resources such as company reputation and brand, leadership, and culture. Lacks identification of resources that create a competitive advantage. Analysis of how resources contribute to company's performance not included.	Not provided or not relevant.
Distinctive Competencies	Identifies, analyzes and evaluates distinctive competencies. Compares company to competitor's competencies. Justifies why competencies are distinctive.	Somewhat clearly stated. Competencies discussed with adequate evaluation and analysis. Satisfactory comparison to competitor's competencies.	Less than complete/clear. Competencies mentioned with limited evaluation and analysis. Minimal comparison to competitor's competencies.	Unclear. Lacks evaluation and analysis of distinctive competencies. Lacks comparison to competitor's competencies.	Not provided or not relevant.
Competitive Advantage	Identifies and evaluates competitive advantages. Examines the	Somewhat clearly identified. Satisfactory discussion of	Vague identification of competitive advantage. Limited discussion of	Unclear. Competitive advantages are not	Not provided

	sustainability of the competitive advantages.	competitive advantages. Adequate discussion of sustainability of the competitive advantage.	competitive advantage. Minimal discussion of sustainability of the competitive advantage.	evaluated. Sustainability not discussed.	or not relevant.
Strategic Options and Direction	Explains overall business strategy. Clearly discusses and evaluates strategic challenges/options/direction the company faces currently or may face in the future. Refers to options and direction.	Somewhat explains overall business strategy. Satisfactory discussion of strategic challenges, options and direction the company faces currently or may face in the future with adequate evaluation. Adequate number of references to options and direction.	Less than complete/clear explanation of overall business strategy. Includes few challenges, options and direction the company faces currently or may face in the future with limited evaluation. Minimal amount of references to options and direction.	Unclear. Lacks explanation of overall business strategy. Lacking challenges/options/direction the company faces currently or may face in the future. Lacks references to options and direction.	Not provided or not relevant.
Conclusions	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
Conclusions	Coherence from project to conclusions. Integrates and extends key ideas of project; furthering understanding of the project. Provides several clear conclusions emerging from the project.	Summarizes main ideas. Satisfactory coherence from project to conclusions. Adequate understanding of the project. Conclusions are somewhat clear and emerge from project.	Restates main ideas. Minimal coherence from project to conclusions. Less than complete understanding of the project. Conclusions are less than complete.	Unclear understanding of the project. Conclusions emerging from the project are vague.	Not provided or not relevant.
Proposed Recommendations	Provides well-reasoned recommendations that clearly follow from the analysis and address the key issues. Creates and evaluates proposed recommendations. All alternatives are assessed. Recommendations are well linked to the project content and conclusions. Proposed recommendations deal with all of challenges identified. Data clearly shows the best alternatives.	Proposed recommendations seem to deal with most of the challenges identified. Provides recommendations that follow from the analysis. Most of the alternatives are assessed. Recommendations are feasible. Recommendations are linked to the project content and conclusions. Clear rationale and support for the recommendations.	Proposed recommendations deal with a few of the challenges identified. Offers weak support of recommendations. Few alternatives are assessed. Recommendations are not well linked to the project content and conclusions. Somewhat unclear rationale and support for the recommendations.	Proposed recommendations do not relate to challenges identified. Unclear and unrealistic recommendations. Recommendations not supported by clear rationale. Strategies are contradictory.	Not provided or not relevant.

Reflection of Learning	Learning may be group or individual. Student is able to apply, analyze, synthesis, and evaluate information from the course. Has an interesting, important, and different perspective than at beginning of course. It is evident that the student has developed and improved critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as some other skills such as time management, writing, working in teams etc.	Learning may be group or individual. There is evidence that the student is able to apply, analyze, compare, evaluate and synthesize the information from the course. Has a satisfactory increase in perception from the beginning of the course to the end of the course. It is evident that the student has developed and improved critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as some other skills such as time management, writing, working in teams etc.	Learning may be group or individual. Student is able to understand and remember information from the course. Has a limited increase in perspective from the beginning of the course to the end of the course. There is not much evidence that the student has developed and improved critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as some other skills such as time management, working in teams etc.	Learning may be group or individual. Student doesn't show understanding of information from the course. Perspective from the beginning of the course to end of the course is unchanged. There is not much evidence that the student has developed and improved critical thinking and problem solving skills as well as some other skills such as time management, working in teams etc.	Not provided or not relevant.
Style	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
Format	Selects and consistently uses correct format for the project.	Selects and generally uses correct format for the project.	Selects correct format for the project but uses it inconsistently with many errors.	Selects incorrect format.	Not provided or not relevant.
References and citations	Numerous supporting references are provided in the correct format.	Several supporting references are presented in the correct format.	Some supporting references many not presented in the correct format.	Few supporting references not presented in the correct format.	Not provided or not relevant.
Grammar, spelling, and syntax	Consistent and appropriate use that enables the reader to understand the meaning. Free of all spelling and grammatical errors.	Uses appropriate grammar, spelling, and syntax that does not interfere with meaning. Few errors in spelling and grammar.	Uses grammar, spelling, and syntax choices that sometimes confuses the reader. Several errors in spelling and grammar.	Uses grammar, spelling, and syntax choices that limits reader understanding of the information.	Not provided or not relevant.
Total	A and A-	B+, B and B-	C+, C and C-	D+, D and D-	F
Other Comments					