

C714 v1 Task 1 Tips & Best Practices for Success

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Competency 3063.1.1: Strategic Planning - The graduate analyzes the key components of strategic planning within an industry as well as internal and external environments.

Competency 3063.1.3: Organizational Environment - The graduate analyzes the organizational environment that supports the implementation of a strategic plan.

Introduction:

Based on the information in the corn and potatoes case study (see Case Study Attachment 1) by accessing Evaluation Management Application (EMA) from the assessment tab in the course of Study (COS) and scrolling down past the Task directions. You will write an essay that discusses the necessary components for beginning the strategic planning process. You will discuss EZ-Pleeze's organizational culture, explain the appropriateness of the current mission and vision statements, the structure of the strategic team, discuss internal and external influences specific to EZ-Pleeze, as well as explain advantages and disadvantages of the company's current strategic plan.

A best practice is to go into the Course Tips, locate and watch the C714 recorded cohort. This recording provides you with the best overview of the course. Students have noted how helpful this video is to their success in the course. After watching the video, please read the EZ-Pleeze case study. It would be best to read it 2-3 times to get the full essence. As you answer the various questions for each task, you may refer to and read the e-textbook. It is not a good idea to read the e-textbook until you have started to write your papers. **Read concepts as you need to read them. In other words, do not read ahead. 'Read it as you need it.'**

Scenario:

The management at EZ-Pleeze, a food distribution company, has tasked you with collecting and analyzing the information needed to formulate the strategic planning process for the company and provide strategic recommendations to senior executives. This is achieved by competing 3 separate tasks. In the first task, you will write an essay (suggested length of 5-8 pages) that references "EZ-Pleeze Case Study" and answers all aspects of the Rubric. Recently a few students used an earlier version of the EZ-Pleeze Case Study, which discussed meat products. Please note the Evaluators will no longer accept a response to this version.

The rubric provides detailed criteria for evaluating your submission. It is expected that you use the rubric to direct the creation of your submission. A prompt may be evaluated by more than one rubric aspect. The rubric aspect titles may contain hyperlinks to relevant portions of the course.

Your work must be double-spaced. Use 12 pt Times New Roman or Calibri font. Have a Title page and a References page. You do not need a Table of Contents or Abstract.

Requirements:

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT TASKS ONE AND TWO MUST BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED SUCCESSFULLY PRIOR TO SUBMITTING TASK THREE. YOU MAY PREPARE TASK THREE IN ADVANCE OF SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING TASK ONE & TWO, BUT PLEASE DO NOT SUBMIT.

Originality of Work:

Your submission must be your original work. We suggest no more than a combined total of 30% of the submission and no more than a 10% match to any one individual source can be directly quoted or closely paraphrased from sources, even if cited correctly. Your percentage may be a bit higher. Use the Turnitin Originality Report available in EMA as a guide for this measure of originality.

Directly from the Rubric

- A. **Organizational Culture:** The description maps cultural elements from the case study to the Competing Values Framework, identifies the type(s) of culture the company exemplifies and supports identification with specific cultural traits for the type(s) identified.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Describe the organizational culture of EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapter 1 & Google search *Competing Values Framework*. For example, discussions can be found at http://www.thercfgroup.com/files/resources/an_introduction_to_the_competing_values_framework.pdf and at http://changingminds.org/explanations/culture/competing_values.htm

Organizational culture refers to the complex set of ideologies, symbols, and core values that are shared throughout the firm and that influence how the firm conducts business. Select the appropriate culture from the four cultures in the Competing Values Framework. Use examples from the case study to demonstrate how EZ-Pleeze exhibits the culture you selected. **Be sure to describe this as the company's organizational culture, not it's organizational structure.** The culture must be described as Clan (collaborate), Hierarchy (control), Market (compete), and Adhocracy (create), or any combination.

Directly from the Rubric

A1. Mission Statement: The discussion identifies the components of an appropriate mission statement and justifies the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the company's mission statement based on its adherence to the components

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Discuss the appropriateness of the current mission statement for EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapter 1. **In your discussion, use information from Chapter 1 to describe the elements of a good mission statement. Then discuss whether or not the EZ-Pleeze mission statement contains those elements. If it does, say it is appropriate and state why. If it does not, state that it is not appropriate and provide your reasoning.**

A mission statement describes the company's current business and purpose. It addresses who we are, what we do, and why we are here.

The ideal mission statement sufficiently:

- Identifies the company's product or service
- Specifies the buyer needs it seeks to satisfy
- Identifies the customer groups or markets it is endeavoring to serve
- Specifies its approach to pleasing customers
- Provides the company its own identity

Directly from the Rubric

A2. Vision Statement: The discussion identifies the components of an appropriate vision statement and justifies the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the company's vision statement based on its adherence to these components.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Discuss the appropriateness of the current vision statement for EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapter 1

A vision statement should be distinctive and specific to a particular organization and avoid generic, feel-good statements. A winning vision provides organizations, "where we are going and why." An appropriate vision statement is forward-looking, aspirational, and specific enough to describe just one company. The vision statement should articulate the ideal description of the organization. An effective vision stretches and challenges. An appropriate vision reflects a firm's values and captures the heart and minds of the employees. **In your discussion, use information from Chapter 1 to describe the elements of a good vision statement. Then discuss whether or not the EZ-Pleeze vision statement has those elements. If it does, say it is appropriate and state why. If it does not, state that it is not appropriate and provide your reasoning.**

Directly from the Rubric

B. Strategic Team Structure: The description identifies the names and positions of strategic team members and discuss each of their roles in the team, as well as the influence they have in strategic planning.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Describe the structure of the Senior Executive Leadership Team (Strategic Team) at EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapters 10 – 13, especially Chapter 11.

Describe the members of the Senior Executive Leadership Team (Strategic Team) and their roles in detail. Strategy and structure have a reciprocal relationship, and if aligned properly, performance improves. Characterize the existing structure as simple, functional, or as multidivisional (see Chapter 11).

Be sure to give the name and position of all 6 members of the strategic team. Include whether the team member formulates strategy, implements strategy, or does both. You will need to list all 6 members of the strategic team by name, their titles and general job duties for those roles; you may have covered this in previous courses (if you don't know you may Google for this information). Once you have **completed this portion**, you **now** describe how each member **influences** the strategic direction of the company. It is essential to have a sentence that states how they 'influence' strategy. Use what you know about the organizational structure, culture, and job duties to make this determination. **You may also use Google or other resources to form your opinion.**

Directly from the Rubric

C1. Internal Influences: The discussion identifies the company and industry-specific driving forces or resources within company control and evaluates how these forces or resources affect strategic decision-making for the company.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Discuss **three** internal influences **that have an impact** on the strategic decision-making process at EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapter 3 and Chapter 2. The strategic decisions that managers make about their firm's internal organization are non-routine, have ethical implications, and significantly influence the firm's ability to earn above-average returns. These decisions involve choices about the resources the firm needs to collect and how to best manage them. These internal influences can be negative or positive (strengths or weaknesses)

Identify **three internal factors or forces** within the company's control that **impact** the company's **strategic decisions**. **Then, state how they** affect strategic decision-making for the company. Examples might include labor costs, access to financing, access to raw materials, existing distribution, logistics, technology, and the company's core competencies. **The forces you discuss here may be used to help complete the Strengths and/or Weaknesses section of your SWOT analysis in Task Two.**

Directly from the Rubric

C2. External Influences: The discussion identifies the company and industry-specific driving forces or resources outside company control and evaluates how these forces or resources affect strategic decision-making for the company.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Discuss **three** external influences on the strategic decision-making process at EZ-Pleeze. Review Chapter 2. **The factors or forces that you identify here may be used to help you complete the Opportunities and/or Threats portion of your SWOT analysis in Task Two.** Identifying opportunities and threats is an important objective in **understanding** the general external environment.

An **opportunity** is a condition in the general **external** environment that, if exploited effectively, helps a company reach strategic competitiveness.

A **threat** is a condition in the general **external** environment that may hinder a company's efforts to achieve strategic competitiveness.

Directly from the Rubric

D1. Advantages: The explanation identifies 2 company-specific resource strengths, capabilities, core competencies, and/or business-level strategies and logically justifies how these elements are advantageous to the company's strategic planning and industry competitiveness.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Advantages Review Chapters 4 – 9; Identify and discuss **two** advantages that might contribute to the company's competitiveness. These must be different from the internal or external factors identified in C1 and C2.

Directly from the Rubric

D2. Disadvantages: The explanation identifies 2 areas in which the company has industry-specific deficiencies in relation to competitiveness and logically justifies how these elements are disadvantageous to the company's overall competitiveness. These must be different from the internal or external factors identified in C1 and C2.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

Disadvantages Review Chapters 4 – 9; Explain **two** disadvantages of the current strategic plan at EZ-Pleeze.

You may describe any advantages and disadvantages that you feel are relevant or appropriate.

Although you are not required to do so, some students choose to describe the advantages and disadvantages of the company's business-level strategy (**also called pricing strategy or product strategy**). **A Business-level Strategy** is an integrated and coordinated set of commitments and actions the firm uses to gain a competitive advantage by exploiting core competencies in specific product markets. There are five business-level strategies (cost leadership, differentiation, focused cost leadership, focused differentiation, and integrated cost leadership/differentiation). You can find this information in Chapter 4. HINT: The company uses 'integrated cost leadership/differentiation' found in Chapter 4.

Directly from the Rubric

E. Sources: The submission includes in-text citations for sources that are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized and a reference list that accurately identifies the author, date, title and source location as available.

Course Instructor Tips: How to Complete the Prompt

List all sources to support ideas and elements in the assessment, the submission **MUST** include APA formatted in-text citations with a corresponding reference list for any direct quotes or paraphrasing. Examples of common resources are provided.

Cameron, K. (n.d.). An introduction to the Competing Values Framework. Retrieved from https://www.thercfgroup.com/files/resources/an_introduction_to_the_competing_values_framework.pdf

Changing Minds. (n.d.). The Competing Values Framework. Retrieved from http://changingminds.org/explanations/culture/competing_values.htm

Hitt, M. A., Ireland, R. D., and Hoskisson, R. E. (2015). Strategic management: Concepts, competitiveness and globalization. Cengage Learning. ISBN-13: 9781285425184

Western Governors University. (n.d.). EZ-Pleeze Food Company: Company and industry profile [Course artifact]. Available from <https://my.wgu.edu/courses/course/5580001/course-material>

*Note: When using sources to support ideas and elements in an assessment, the submission **MUST** include APA formatted in-text citations with a corresponding reference list for any direct quotes or paraphrasing. It is not necessary to list sources that were consulted if they have not been quoted or paraphrased in the text of the assessment. For tips on using APA style, please refer to the APA Handout weblink included in the APA Guidelines section.*

RUBRIC EHP Task 1 (0116)a

	value: 1.00	value: 2.00	value: 3.00	Score/Level
Articulation of Response (clarity, organization, mechanics)	The candidate provides unsatisfactory articulation of response.	The candidate provides weak articulation of response.	The candidate provides adequate articulation of response.	
A. Organizational Culture	The description is not provided, discusses cultural traits irrelevant to the company's organizational culture, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The description misidentifies the company's type(s) of culture, includes no examples of specific cultural traits, or is not accurately aligned to the Competing Values Framework.	The description maps cultural elements from the case study to the Competing Values Framework, identifies the type(s) of culture the company exemplifies, and supports the identification with specific cultural traits for the type(s) identified.	
A1. Mission Statement	The discussion is not included, does not accurately identify the company's mission statement, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The discussion inaccurately identifies the components of an appropriate mission statement or does not logically justify the appropriateness of the company's mission statement, based on components of an appropriate mission statement.	The discussion identifies the components of an appropriate mission statement and justifies the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the company's mission statement, based on its adherence to these components.	
A2. Vision Statement	The discussion is not included, does not accurately identify the company's vision statement, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The discussion inaccurately identifies the components of an appropriate vision statement or does not logically justify the appropriateness of the company's vision statement, based on components of an appropriate vision statement.	The discussion identifies the components of an appropriate vision statement and justifies the appropriateness or inappropriateness of the company's vision statement, based on its adherence to these components.	
B. Strategic Team Structure	The description is not included, does not identify names or positions of <i>any</i> strategic team members, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The description does not accurately identify names and positions of <i>all</i> strategic team members or does not logically discuss their roles and influences.	The description identifies the names and positions of strategic team members and discusses <i>each</i> of their roles in the team, as well as the influence they have in strategic planning.	

	value: 1.00	value: 2.00	value: 3.00	Score/Level
C1. Internal Influences	The discussion is not included, does not identify the company- and industry-specific driving forces or resources within company control that affect strategic decision-making, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The discussion misidentifies forces or resources external to the company as internal or does not logically evaluate the effect internal forces or resources have in strategic decision-making for the company.	The discussion identifies the company- and industry-specific driving forces or resources within company control and evaluates how these forces or resources affect strategic decision-making for the company.	
C2. External Influences	The discussion is not included, does not identify the company- and industry-specific driving forces or resources outside company control that affect strategic decision-making, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The discussion misidentifies forces or resources internal to the company as external or does not logically evaluate the effect external forces or resources have in strategic decision-making for the company.	The discussion identifies the company- and industry-specific driving forces or resources outside company control and evaluates how these forces or resources affect strategic decision-making for the company.	
D1. Advantages	The explanation is not included, does not identify any company-specific advantages, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The explanation does not accurately identify 2 company-specific advantages or does not logically justify why the identified elements are advantageous.	The explanation identifies 2 company-specific resource strengths, capabilities, core competencies, and/or business-level strategies and logically justifies how these elements are advantageous to the company's strategic planning and industry competitiveness.	
D2. Disadvantages	The explanation is not included, does not identify any company-specific disadvantages, OR is otherwise fundamentally unacceptable.	The explanation does not accurately identify 2 company-specific disadvantages or does not logically justify why the identified elements are disadvantageous.	The explanation identifies 2 areas in which the company has industry-specific deficiencies in relation to competitiveness and logically justifies how these elements are disadvantageous to the company's strategic planning and industry competitiveness.	

	value: 1.00	value: 2.00	value: 3.00	Score/Level
E. Sources	The submission does not provide both in-text citations and a reference list for sources that are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized.	The submission includes in-text citations for sources that are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized, and a reference list; however, the citations or reference list is incomplete or inaccurate.	The submission includes in-text citations for sources that are quoted, paraphrased, or summarized and a reference list that accurately identifies the author, date, title, and source location as available.	

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