



Final Project Guide

WMBA 6030: *Managing Business Information Systems*

Week 2

Business Memo—Selecting the Organization to Study

As you continue exploring topics related to business information systems over the next five weeks, many of your assignments will build toward your Final Project, which will be due in Week 7. Playing the role of a consultant to the general manager and/or CEO of your organization, your goal will be to make recommendations for how business information systems can best support the organization's efforts in building and sustaining a competitive advantage, based on the weekly topics and themes:

- Week 2: Roles and Actions
- Week 3: Utilization of Data Resources
- Week 4: Driving Value from Business Information Systems
- Week 5: Process-Oriented Organization
- Week 6: Security and Ethical Issues
- Week 7: Business Continuity Planning

Your Final Project will include:

- Your recommendations for improving the organization's use of data resources, data storage and processing, and related information systems that promote informed decision making by managers who are responsible for communicating business IT decisions across various functional and cross-functional departments within the organization.
- Your recommendations for how the organization can best uphold its legal and ethical responsibilities in relation to the management of information and information systems.
- Your recommendations for mitigating or eliminating security risks that your organization faces or could face.
- An explanation of the alignment between the organizational structure and the choice of information systems/technology, as well as the implications of misalignment between the two.
- The options the organization has to adapt its structure to its information systems, or vice versa.

As a consultant, you will need to understand your organization from various perspectives. Often you will need to make assumptions about systems, processes, or operations if you are unable to find the exact information. In situations where you do not have access to such information, you are encouraged to study other organizations of similar size or in a similar industry that might have made such information public. Then you can draw conclusions about how that organization's choices mirror yours. In other instances, you may have to make educated and reasonable assumptions based on what little information you can find, or what you think is true. When you make assumptions, be sure to document them. The validity of your assumptions could affect the soundness of your recommendations.

Please review the weekly Assignments, Discussions, and the Final Project Assignment. Also review the Final Project rubrics. Your Instructor will evaluate your work according to the associated rubric(s).

As a first step, you will need to select a company out of the three options provided. You will be researching and using this company as your own "case study" throughout many of the Discussions and Assignments for the balance of the course. Please review the following options to make your selection:

- Wal-Mart (large retail chain)
- Amazon.com (online business)
- MyPreschool (new small local preschool startup)

If you have questions about the organization you plan to use, please discuss your choice with your Instructor using the Contact the Instructor link in the classroom. Your choice of an organization will be important so that you can maximize your learning throughout this course.

From this point forward, for the Final Project, this organization will be referred to as "your organization."

Once you have selected your organization, provide a (business style) memo addressed to the Instructor that does the following:

- Identifies your chosen organization and your rationale for selecting it
- Identifies at least five (5) resources you have found that you can use in your investigation and a strategy for further researching the organization or the industry in which it operates. Be sure to describe these resources and what types of relevant information they provide. You should provide the appropriate citation using APA format at the conclusion of your memo.
- Identifies the types of information system management issues your organization will likely encounter at some point (example: you can relate this to the issues that were identified in Week 1). Include some preliminary discussion about why these are important to address, and be sure to account for any assumptions you made in the process.

Refer to the Week 2 Application Assignment Rubric for specific grading elements and criteria. Your Instructor will use this rubric to assess your work.

General Guidance on Assignment Length: Your Week 2 memo to your Instructor describing your chosen organization will typically be 2–4 pages (1–2 pages if single spaced), excluding a title page and references (which are not necessary for this application).

Other Important Notes Related to Selecting the Organization You Will Study:

- You may not survey or systematically interview employees at a company. If you wish to pursue interviews or surveys, you will need to follow the standard university procedures to obtain prior approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Collecting data from human subjects without IRB approval can result in dismissal from the program.
- You will need to produce your recommendations based on analysis of documents and information that is publically available or that we provide to you.
- You will need to be careful that no proprietary, sensitive, or confidential information is disclosed, should you have access to it.

Note: If you are unable to find relevant information, you may want to look for similar information at other similar publically traded companies. You may find relevant information that will enable you to make appropriate inferences about your organization and make reasonable assumptions so you can proceed with your project.

Week 3

Business Memo—Selecting and Using Data Resources and Systems

In Week 3 you will continue to work on your Final Project. By **Day 7**, you will submit a business memo, written to your Instructor that explains how you plan to incorporate your learning from the week into your Final Project. This will not be a “perfect” synopsis at this point, but it should capture the main themes and important ideas from the week. Your memo should include the following:

- Your preliminary summary of how you are planning to incorporate this week’s learning into your Final Project
- Your ideas and recommendations for how your organization can mitigate the short-term and long-term issues that can arise when selecting and using data resources and systems
- Brief descriptions of the types of data resources, data processing, and storage systems chosen
- An explanation of how the organization might manage the potential implications of those selections, while taking advantage of the opportunities they afford to sustain the business or gain a competitive advantage

- Other relevant recommendations or issues that you identified, with a brief analysis of why they are important.

Note: If you are unable to find relevant information, you may want to look for similar information at/for other similar publically traded companies. You may find relevant information that will enable you to make appropriate inferences about your organization and make reasonable assumptions so you can proceed with your project.

If you have questions about how to apply what you are learning, or how to find the most relevant information for your organization's needs, please discuss your choice with your Instructor using the Contact the Instructor link in the classroom.

General Guidance on Assignment Length: Your Week 3 Assignment will typically be 1.5–3 pages (0.75–1 page(s) if single spaced), excluding a title page (not required for this Assignment) and references.

As a best practice for this course, as you engage and complete your weekly activities, you will capture notes on your learning for each week and add them to your **Final Project Portfolio**, which you will use to formulate your Final Project. By the time you turn in your **Final Project** in Week 7, your working **Final Project Portfolio** document will contain your notes on the resources you found relevant in each week, as well as your ideas for how your organization can improve its business information systems management with respect to each week's main themes. You should also include your analyses of the implications of your recommendations, as well as reasons why your recommendations are important. You will update your **Final Project Portfolio** each week.

This week you are encouraged to begin setting up your presentation in PowerPoint. You should complete a title slide and 1–2 slides with your preliminary recommendations for your organization as they relate to this week's learning.

Note: Neither your **Final Project Portfolio** nor your preliminary slides will be submitted for grading this week.

Forward Thinking:

You will want to continue building your bibliography to support your Final Project. You should plan to carefully review the Shared Practice Discussion this week, identifying the topic areas and resources that are relevant to your organization. Be sure to add these articles to your **Final Project Portfolio** and include notes on how they have helped you develop related recommendations to improve your organization's business information systems.

Week 4

Business Memo—Driving Value From Business Information Systems

In Week 4 you will continue to work on your Final Project. By **Day 7**, you will submit a business memo, written to your Instructor that explains how you plan to incorporate your learning from the week into your Final Project. This will not be a “perfect” synopsis at this point, but it should capture the main themes and important ideas from the week. Your memo should include the following:

- Your preliminary summary of how you are planning to incorporate this week’s learning into your Final Project
- Your ideas and recommendations for how your organization can drive value from business information systems
- Other relevant recommendations or issues that you identified, with a brief analysis of why they are important

Note: If you are unable to find relevant information, you may want to look for similar information at/for other similar publically traded companies. You may find relevant information that will enable you to make appropriate inferences about your organization and make reasonable assumptions so you can proceed with your project.

If you have questions about how to apply what you are learning, or how to find the most relevant information for your organization’s needs, please discuss your choice with your Instructor using the Contact the Instructor link in the classroom.

General Guidance on Assignment Length: Your Week 4 Assignment will typically be 1.5–3 pages (0.75–1 pages if single spaced), excluding a title page (not required for this Assignment) and references.

As a best practice for this course, as you engage and complete your weekly activities, you will capture notes on your learning for each week, and add them to your **Final Project Portfolio**, which you will use to formulate your Final Project. By the time you turn in your **Final Project** in Week 7, your working **Final Project Portfolio** document will contain your notes on the resources you found relevant in each week, as well as your ideas for how your organization can improve its BIS management with respect to each week’s main themes. You should also include your analyses of the implications of your recommendations, as well as reasons why your recommendations are important. You will update your **Final Project Portfolio** each week.

This week you are encouraged to continue setting up your presentation in PowerPoint. You should complete a title slide and 1–2 slides with your preliminary recommendations for your organization, as they relate to this week’s learning.

Note: Neither your **Final Project Portfolio** nor your preliminary slides will be submitted for grading this week.

Week 5

Business Memo—Organizational Structures and Processes

In Week 5 you will continue to work on your Final Project, which is due in Week 7. By **Day 7**, you will submit a business memo, written to your Instructor that explains how you plan to incorporate your learning from the week into your Final Project. This will not be a “perfect” synopsis at this point, but it should capture the main themes and important ideas from the week. Your memo should include the following:

- Your ideas and recommendations on how your organization can modify its present organizational structures to be more efficient and effective in the future, making better use of information and information systems for decision making
- Your recommendations for alternative approaches the organization might take to promote and implement better processes to support better decision making within the current organizational structure(s)
- Other relevant recommendations or issues that you identified, as they relate to the content and your learning from the week

Be sure to record good notes in your Final Project Portfolio, including a brief analysis of why your recommendations are important. Please make sure you describe the type of organizational structure(s) and processes that your organization is currently utilizing, as well as any assumptions you have made.

Note: If you are unable to find relevant information, you may want to look for similar information at/for other similar publically traded companies. You may find relevant information that will enable you to make appropriate inferences about your organization and make reasonable assumptions so you can proceed with your project.

If you have questions about how to apply what you are learning, or how to find the most relevant information for your organization’s needs, please discuss your choice with your Instructor using the [Contact the Instructor](#) link in the classroom.

General Guidance on Assignment Length: Your Week 5 Assignment will typically be 1.5–3 pages (0.75–1 pages if single spaced), excluding a title page (not required for this Assignment) and references.

As a best practice for this course, as you engage and complete your weekly activities, you will capture notes on your learning for each week and add them to your **Final Project Portfolio**, which you will use to formulate your Final Project. By the time you turn in your **Final Project** in Week 7, your working **Final Project Portfolio** document will contain your notes on the resources you found relevant in each week, as well as your ideas for how your organization can improve its BIS management with respect to each week’s main themes. You should also include your analyses of the implications of your recommendations, as well as reasons why your recommendations are important. You will update your **Final Project Portfolio** each week.

This week you are encouraged to continue setting up your presentation in PowerPoint. You should complete a title slide and 1–2 slides with your preliminary recommendations for your organization, as they relate to this week's learning.

Note: Neither your **Final Project Portfolio** nor your preliminary slides will be submitted for grading this week.

Week 6

Information System Security and Ethical and Legal Issues

In Week 6 you will continue to work on your Final Project, which is due in Week 7. By **Day 7**, you will submit the following:

- Describe your ideas and recommendations about how your organization can mitigate the short-term and long-term issues that can arise with respect to data and information system security, legal, and ethical issues.
- Analyze how **at least two** of the following topics potentially cause legal and ethical issues/challenges when using or managing information and information systems in your organization:
 - o Social media
 - o Identity theft
 - o Intellectual property rights
 - o Workplace privacy
 - o Software piracy
 - o Patent/Copyright protection
 - o Patent/Copyright infringement
 - o Employee computer use
- Review the code of ethics from your organization and identify how the code of ethics can assist the firm in making the proper decisions to control the legal and ethical challenges it potentially faces. Please be specific and provide examples. If you see discrepancies or areas where the code is not comprehensive or inclusive, offer suggestions to further improve the policies. If you think the code is comprehensive and inclusive in its coverage as it relates to the use and management of information or information systems, describe why you think that. In either case, defend your position with sound rationale and relevant examples.
- If the organization does not have a code of ethics, explain why a code should be created and how it could assist them. Analyze the implications and risks of not having a sound code of conduct/ethics.
- Include your analysis of the effect not having a code of ethics might have on your organization if it has global operations or desires to move into the global market place. How would such an expansion require a different approach to information security, and what potentially might the organization need to consider?

- Offer other relevant recommendations or issues that you identified with a brief analysis of why they are important.

Note: If you are unable to find relevant information, you may want to look for similar information at/for other similar publically traded companies. You may find relevant information that will enable you to make appropriate inferences about your organization and make reasonable assumptions so you can proceed with your project.

If you have questions about how to apply what you are learning, or how to find the most relevant information for your organization's needs, please discuss your choice with your Instructor using the Contact the Instructor link in the classroom.

Note: You will not formally submit anything this week. You should continue to keep your Final Project Portfolio updated, and add 1–2 slides to your final presentation that represent your preliminary recommendations to your organization, based on your learning this week. The content from this week should provide you with additional ideas for how your organization might improve its use and management of information and information systems. Your Final Project presentation will be due in Week 7.

Week 7

Putting It All Together

It is time to put on your “creative thinking cap.” Your Final Project will require that you utilize all the information from the previous weeks, including your draft slides and your notes in your **Final Project Portfolio**, and apply your learning to the following situation:

You have been hired as a consultant to your chosen organization, and you have been called in by the CEO of the organization to conduct a presentation to the upper level and mid-level managers. The CEO would like you to provide your best recommendations on what their organization can do to become more successful at effectively using and managing their information and business information systems.

Utilizing the above scenario, prepare a 10- to 12-slide final presentation (excluding title slide and reference slide). You must provide narrative and the speaker note section at the bottom of each slide so that the reader can follow along better. Your speaker notes should include your rationale and assumptions that pertain to your slide. You also need to have a minimum of 6–8 citations and references to support your direction.

Note: You may elect to include additional slides as part of an appendix if you have information you might reasonably assume that a CEO or upper management might want. It is not required that you do so.

Here is a suggested outline for the Final Project. You may decide that an alternative organization schema works better for you, or that you need to emphasize certain issues and trends that you think are most important to your chosen organization. Be prepared to make your case either way.

- Title slide: Chosen organization
- Background on organization
- Issues/trends affecting the organization (see note below)
 - o Week 2: Roles & Actions
 - o Week 3: Utilization of Data Resources
 - o Week 4: Driving Value from Business Information Systems
 - o Week 5: Process-Oriented Organization
 - o Week 6: Security and Ethical Issues
 - o Week 7: Business Continuity Planning
- Summary of major findings or issues that are likely to cause the most concern to this group
 - Recommendations for action based on your evaluation of your organization and the learning and readings from the course
 - References in the form of an annotated bibliography in APA format
 - Appendices (optional)

Hint: Each of these sections utilizes the information that you provided in your Shared Practice Discussions and Assignments for that respective week. You will likely need more than one slide for your summary of major findings and your recommendations.