

# International Business Assignment

## (a.k.a. the Group Project)

### Rationale:

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A significant goal of this course is to develop an understanding of, and appreciation for, international business activities. As our world becomes more and more connected it is important to recognize the need for understanding and empathy for international business partners. Your role in this assignment is to work with three to four other students to develop a business plan for launching a new business in a foreign country that would appeal to the consumer market (no business-to-business or government contractors for this assignment). As you sign up for groups, you will also be selecting which city you want to focus on as your target for this new business.

### Details:

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Groups of three to four students will be assigned an international city in which to start a new business. The business may be focused on whatever the team thinks will be successful in that market, and will include research into the country selected, the demographics of the specific city, as well as a study of the political and economic environment in which the new business will operate. Some of the types of information that should be gathered are outlined below

1. Team will research the following demographics for the city selected:
  - Population
  - Age
  - Gender
  - Race
  - Religion
  - Income
2. You will also research the economic and political environment of the country.
  - Economics will include:
    - Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
    - Unemployment Rate (is your city significantly different?)
    - National Deficit of Nation
    - Consumer Price Indicator (CPI)
    - Trade Surplus
    - Trade Deficit
  - Political Environment will include:
    - Type of Government
    - Sample of Laws
    - Currency
3. The Infrastructure of the city to include the city's main commodities
4. You will also research the target group whom you are marketing your product or service to.

Your group will use this information as a basis to propose a business that will likely be successful in that environment. The business may offer a consumer product or a service, based on your analysis. The classroom presentation will include a summary of your research, the type of business you propose, and your reasons for believing a business like this would be successful in this city. The written documentation will include similar information as the presentation, which could be used as a marketing piece in presentations where your group is attempting to raise funds (think “Shark Tank” types of proposals and what would you want to leave with potential investors to convince them to take a chance on your company).

### Business Proposal

The proposal should be a one-page document listing the members of the group, the city selected, and a brief summary of what type of business you are suggesting. This proposal ensures the group is making some forward progress, and allows me to provide some feedback regarding potential pitfalls in the country or with that product or service. The document should be professional (lack of typos and grammatical errors) but does not need to follow a specified layout.

### Business Presentation Plan

The presentation plan is a chance for the group to determine which members will be responsible for which parts of the presentation. This plan should have an outline of what will be discussed (it should not be word-for-word script since being convincing while reading from a script is difficult for all but highly trained actors to accomplish). The outline will indicate which team member will be presenting the topic, and who is the alternate presenter if the first team member is not present, as well as what types of audio-visuals will be used (likely a PowerPoint presentation). The team does not have to have the final PowerPoint slides complete at this time, but should have a pretty good idea of what content will be included in the slides.

### Presentation

The group will be given twenty minutes to present the findings of their research, the business they want to start, and their reasons for believing this will be a successful venture. This presentation is a chance to inform your audience about the climate where you wish to open the business (economics, demographics, politics among others), show them what you think will be successful, and sell them on your idea. Part of this proposal should include some fundamental financial forecasts – how much money do you need before your company can start paying its own bills? You can think of this as a sales pitch to potential investors who might just bankroll your idea. You should dress professionally, develop professional looking visuals, and practice your presentation several times to work out timing and transition issues before coming to class. You do not need to turn in the PowerPoint presentation used for the presentation. Your presentation will be filmed, and a copy will be posted on Blackboard. You should review this at some point after the project to evaluate your personal presentation skills. You may also want to use a portion of the video or a still image from the recording when developing your personal portfolio. These clips (please do not use the ENTIRE 20 minute presentation) or images can be attached to your portfolio as artifacts to support progress toward your learning goals.

## Business Analysis

The paper for this project is a three to five-page document submitted by the group which summarizes the findings, proposal, and reasons to believe. This should include the group members, the name of the company, some of your research findings, your product/service suggestion, and why an investor should be interested. This should **be a marketing piece** with information designed to help convince an investor.

## Peer Evaluation

The final step is to complete a peer and self-evaluation of your team's work on the project. Your peer evaluations will be provided (anonymously) to the other members of your group, and you will receive their evaluations of your work. In addition to peer evaluations, you will also be providing a self-evaluation of your contribution to the team's success. The form for the evaluations will be posted on Blackboard and the class web site. The evaluation should be submitted to Blackboard one week after the final group's presentation.

## Grading:

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The written sections of the project are to be turned in via MyMC in stages. There will also be a twenty-minute group presentation of your business proposal. The written elements should be in MS-Word and/or MS-Excel (if you prefer) format and include the company name and the team member names. The written material should be turned in by one team member and the entire group will receive a common grade. The presentation will be completed during class time.

This project is worth 100 points and will be based on the quality of your research, the degree to which it seems your business might be successful, and your ability to convince an investor to bankroll your project. Your business plan should realistically identify strengths and weaknesses in your destination city's ability to support the business you are proposing (if there were no weaknesses then someone else would already be doing that business in that city).

Points will be allocated as follows:

- Business Proposal– 10 points.
- Presentation Plan – 15 points.
- Presentation – 25 points.
- Analysis – 20 points.
- Peer/Self Evaluation – 10 points.
- Believability – does it sound like something that could be done – 10 points.
- Professionalism – spelling, grammar, presentation – 10 points