

The Report

The major assignment for this class is a team report and presentation on a *management-related* topic. You may write on any topic, venture, or question that intrigues the team. The paper could be on research team members are pursuing in another class or in a UROP, or something team members have come into contact with on a job or volunteer activity but want to know more about. The key criterion is that you envision and write the report for a *real world audience*—people who need information, or who have to be convinced about something.

The report might:

- ✓ describe the results of a new marketing or feasibility study
- ✓ present an economic, financial, or strategic analysis
- ✓ recommend a new product
- ✓ evaluate the pros and cons of a company entering a new market

Your team could consider such projects as:

- ✓ requesting funding from an outside agency for a MIT project
- ✓ analyzing an industry for potential investors interested in buying stock
- ✓ recommending the purchase of a particular stock
- ✓ consulting with a small organization
- ✓ working with an MIT student organization to develop a marketing strategy

Think about what you can reasonably do given the resources you have to work with. For example, if you want to do a strategic analysis, don't analyze Microsoft; instead choose a local software company or a retail distributor. Every report must present factual findings and reach some conclusion or make a specific recommendation

The report should be at least 10 pages (typed, single spaced), including front matter (transmittal memo and Executive Summary), tables and graphs, and appendices. At least six consecutive pages must be your narrative and analysis (i.e., the body of the report). Please include, as well, footnotes and a bibliography.

THE WRITING PROCESS

The process of writing this report will take place over a significant portion of the semester. It will begin with a discussion of teamwork in class on **Wednesday, October 12 or Thursday, October 13** followed by an opportunity to brainstorm with your team members on potential topics on **Monday, October 17 or Tuesday, October 18.**

The remaining parts of the process include the following (due dates are in parentheses):

Proposal I (Monday, October 24 or Tuesday, October 25)

Write a one-page memo in which you describe concisely:

- ✓ the topic or question you will investigate
- ✓ the real world audience that the report will inform or persuade

- ✓ possible research sources (including interviews, published materials, and research in progress)

Address all memos to your instructor and TA and assume they have no prior experience with or knowledge of the subject of your proposal.

Proposal II (Friday, October 28)

Resubmit your original proposal based on feedback you were given. Add research sources that you have found in the interim.

Report Draft (Friday, November 18)

The draft of the report that you submit should be as close to completion as possible. The more polished this draft is, the better feedback we can give you. We reserve the right to return any draft we don't feel is far enough along to warrant our reading it.

Outline of Presentation (Monday, November 21 or Tuesday, November 22)

We would like a brief outline of the presentation you will be giving. Again, the more complete you can make the outline, the more guidance we can give you on creating a successful presentation. This outline should include what role each team member will take during the presentation.

Presentations (In class the last two weeks of the semester)

Give a 20-minute presentation based upon your research report. If your report is primarily informative, the presentation should describe your most innovative, interesting, or unique finding and use evidence to further our understanding of that point. If your report is primarily persuasive, you should use direct structure, presenting your recommendation first and then supporting it with sub arguments and evidence. Use appropriate visual aids.

At the time of the presentation, give your instructor and TA the following information, *in writing*:

- ✓ a brief description of your situation (including the subject, the audience, the context, and your credibility)
- ✓ an outline of your presentation
- ✓ two (2) hard copies of your overheads

You will also describe the audience and context orally before you begin the presentation.

Allow time for questions and discussion at the end of the presentation.

Final Report (Friday, December 9)

This is the finished product complete with transmittal memo, executive summary, list of footnotes, and bibliography.

GRADING

The entire report is worth 20 points with the first draft worth 8 and the final draft worth 12. The oral presentation is worth 15 points with 10 points awarded on the performance of the team, and 5 points awarded on the performance of each individual team member.