**RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

**Thesis:** In your Critical Self-Reflection form, you request help with your thesis/focus. I think it will help to begin by reviewing the Assignment Guidelines for this essay.

UNDERSTANDING THE ASSIGNMENT SHEET

·         Read the assignment sheet all the way to the end.  Reread the assignment sheet, circling important words, that explain what you are being asked to *do* or the steps you are being asked to take to accomplish the objective.   Hint:  Go for the NOUNS & VERBS!

·         Then, write the goal or objective of the assignment in your own words.  Then write:  What skill does the professor want you to develop by doing this assignment?

Here is a video discussing this strategy:

**Understanding the Assignment**

<https://northeastern.hosted.panopto.com/Panopto/Pages/Viewer.aspx?id=a7524b98-5f29-4ad5-87bc-ac0e0104ea8e>

If we use this strategy, we pull out the following important words that explain what you are asked to do and the steps you are being asked to take:

**WHY:**    This assignment will give students the opportunity to apply course concepts to the analysis of organizational meetings (textbook Case 8.1) and propose actions to strengthen positive communication strategies within the work environment.

**WHAT:**    Based on [case 8.1 in the Zaremba textbook (Links to an external site.)](https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:5c16fc3f-d750-449e-9047-cf92a9c7e5a1#pageNum=1), analyze the communication strategy issue Richard Hilton is facing in his department and with his team. Through investigating this case, a recommend should incorporate understanding of the organization’s culture, communication networks, and best practices for effective team meetings.

Your analysis and recommendations should consider the following questions:

Analysis:

* Based on the information provided within the case 8.1, what are the organization’s practices and values influence the organization’s culture?
* As described in the case 8.1, how are team members communicating if there is a problem? What does the current action tell us about the communication networks and effectiveness of team meetings?
* Consider the needs should the team meetings be virtual and include team members who are remote.

Recommendations for communication strategy:

* In order (first, second, third), who are the target audiences and what messages will you deliver to each of them?
* Why will you deliver them in that order?
* How you will deliver them?

You must apply what you've learned about culture, communication networks, and meeting management as you construct your analysis of the case situation and develop recommendations to support Richard Hilton in next steps.

I think a key detail is that you want to, “apply course concepts to the analysis of organizational meetings (textbook Case 8.1) and propose actions to strengthen positive communication strategies within the work environment.” Thus, as you work on your next draft, I urge you to reread Zaremba’s Chapter 8: “Meetings and Teams: Conflicts and Interventions” to help you dig deeper into your analysis of the causes of the problem and recommended solutions.

For example, Zaremba provides a lot of discussion on the role an agenda plays in successful meetings, referring to it as “a roadmap.” Could you think about how you could apply this information to your analysis? Could this absence of an agenda be something you discuss as a possible cause of the issues in the case study?

Zaremba also discusses primary and secondary tensions and provides examples of these tensions and the impact they can have on meetings. You may want to review this discussion as you continue to develop your analysis on the causes of the problems in the case study. I could see this information working well in your discussion on how a problem in the case study is that team members arrive to the meetings late and that meetings can be planned whenever a member feels like they have something to share.

With regard to suggestions, I would review some of the interventions Zaremba discusses in this chapter to help you develop the second part of your essay. In Chapter 8, Zaremba discusses various type of interventions, including:

Buzz Groups

Brainstorming

Nominal Group Technique

Perhaps you could review these interventions and think about how Hilton might use one or more of these interventions to address the problems he and his department face.

Once, you have applied information from Zaremba to your analysis, you can work to develop a thesis statement that clearly identifies the causes of the problem you will analyze in the body of your essay as well as your recommended solution. As discussed in previous letters, you can use the Thesis Statement Model to help you.

Richard Hilton's communication challenge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ caused by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ can be solved if \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ does \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  (Feel free to list more causes and recommendations).

If you have questions as you work on this, please let me know.

**Organization:** You also want to use the Rhetorical Arrangement provided in the Assignment Guidelines to help you organize your essay.

Just as with the last essay you wrote, the Assignment Guidelines provides an organizational model you must use to organize and develop your draft. This arrangement is the same as the last assignment with the addition of an Appendix.

Thus, as you work to develop and organize your next draft, you want to **use the headings** from this arrangement as well as the bulleted points under the “Guidelines” to help guide your essay.

Essentially, your essay should look like this:

**Executive Summary**

* One to two paragraphs in length
* Summarize the critical events from the case that will be covered in the analysis
* Briefly identify the major problems facing the main player
* Summarize the recommended plan of action and include a brief justification of the recommended plan

**Key Stakeholders**

* Identify the key players in the case
* Include stakeholders who are impacted because of the critical events
* For each key player, identify events in the case that the stakeholder finds troublesome and would consider a problem; in doing so, quote the case

**Statement of the Problem**

* State the problems facing the main player
* Identify and link the symptoms and root causes of the problems
* Differentiate short-term from long-term problems

Conclude with the decision facing the main player

**Causes of the Problem**

* Provide a detailed analysis of the problems identified in the Statement of the Problem
* In the analysis, apply theories and models from the text and/or readings

Support conclusions and /or assumptions with specific references to the case and/or the readings

**Suggestions for Solutions**

* Identify criteria to evaluate these solutions (i.e. time for implementation, communication strategies, acceptability to management)
* Explain each criteria in 1-2 sentences
* Brainstorm two or three possible suggestions for solutions
* Evaluate the pros and cons of each suggestion against the criteria listed
* Suggest additional pros/cons if appropriate
* Using models and theories, identify why you chose these suggestions, how they would work, and why

**Recommended Solution, Implementation and Justification**

* Identify who, what, when, and how in your recommended plan of action
* Solution and implementation should address the problems and causes identified in the earlier sections
* Evaluate the recommended plan via the criteria in the previous section
* Include a contingency plan(s) to back up the ‘ideal’ course of action
* Describe the difficulties you expect to encounter in actually implementing the course of action under consideration, including any new problems

**Appendix (a separate page after your “References” page)**

* Include a sample communication after the close of the case analysis in an assigned Appendix. Provide the communication sample incorporating your recommendation and in a format that would be adopted by Richard Hilton, i.e. an e-mail communication, script at the opening of a meeting, a protocol to support the organization’s culture, etc.

Again, if you have questions as you work on this, please reach out.

**WRAP-UP:** Thank you for your hard work on this essay.

* Does what I wrote in this letter of analysis make sense to you?
* Do you need assistance understanding any writing strategy presented here?
* Do you have other questions about writing or about this assignment?

Mingda, it has been a pleasure working with you this term. I appreciate your participation in the OWL and wish you very best as you continue with your studies!