Week Assignment 2

Project Plan and Formal Proposal

Introduction

In week 1, Riipen team members developed a team charter to clarify and document the direction for your capstone project. For this assignment, you will complete a project plan.

For all other learners, you should now have a firm grasp on the scope of your project based on the feedback you received from your instructor on the project summary submitted in week 1.

Whichever project you are on, it is important that you clearly understand the scope of your project. In fact, if someone asks you what your project is about, you should have an "elevator speech" prepared. That is, you should have memorized 1–3 sentences that explain the topic, problem, and scope in a clear and concise way. With just these few sentences, explaining your project to someone while on a short elevator ride would be no trouble at all! Additionally, having such a clear vision will help you with creating a project plan (Riipen teams), project proposal (individual path), and the project overall. Create an elevator speech and incorporate it as part of your introduction in this assignment, whichever path you are taking.

Scenario

Path 1: Riipen Team

By this point you should have either met with your client or have a meeting scheduled for this week. Now it is time to work with your team members to develop a project plan which clearly specifies the deliverables that will meet both the needs of your client and the needs of the course. Your plan will include project objectives, a SWOT analysis, project scope, a work breakdown structure that specifies responsibilities for each task, a project schedule, and a communication plan.

Use the Project Plan Template linked in the Resources to complete the following:

1. Write an executive summary. This is described on the first page of the Project Plan Template.
2. Identify project objective(s), course milestones, and client deliverables. Based on your initial meeting with your client, prepare a brief description of the project objective, course milestones, and client deliverables. In addition, describe what the project will accomplish for the client or what benefit it will provide. Hint: This is where the "elevator speech" can come in handy.
3. Complete a brief SWOT analysis based on the client meeting notes and research you conduct on your client. Your ﻿focus should be on gaining a better understanding of what will help make your project a success.
4. Define a clear, well-bounded project scope. Develop a very focused description of your project's scope, following the guidelines in the Project Plan Template. Your project should be very well-bounded and should reflect the expectations of what your client hopes to achieve with the project as well as what is and what is not to be included in the project. For example, if your project involves recommending a new software package to solve a problem for the client, you might include what problem the client hopes to solve with the software package, that it is in scope for the team to analyze different software and produce a recommendation that meets client needs, but it is not in scope to install the software or train client personnel.
5. Describe the work breakdown structure based on the project objectives, course milestones, and client deliverables. Include all of the tasks that will be necessary to achieve the project objectives. Identify which team members will complete which tasks. Make sure you include as deliverables those expected by the client as well as the course milestones and tasks as listed below:
   1. Week 1: Team Charter.
   2. Week 2: Project Plan.
   3. Weeks 3 & 4: Conduct Research and Investigate Options.
   4. Week 5: Preliminary Solution/Recommendation With Justification.
   5. Week 6: Potential Legal, Ethical, Policy, Social, and Global Implications of Proposed Solution/Recommendation.
   6. Week 7: Initial Draft of Project Report for Submission to Smarthinking.
   7. Week 9: Presentation of Project Results to Client.
   8. Week 10: Final Project Report.
6. Complete the communication plan as described in the Project Plan Template.
7. Create a time schedule that clearly shows who will complete each task in the work breakdown structure and when it ﻿will be completed. Your time schedule may require days as units, given the relatively short duration of the project. It should also account for adequate time for team members to provide input and feedback on work completed.
8. Create a project quality plan that indicates how the team will ensure quality output in the form of deliverables, solutions, and recommendations.

Important: After the project plan is complete and ready for submission to the courseroom, all members must sign the document (digital signing on a PDF is appropriate, as is printing, signing, and scanning back to PDF). Every deliverable is a team deliverable. This means that each person must submit the same project plan for grading that their peers submit. These are not deliverables that need to be shared with the client unless they are requested; although sharing the project plan may help the client understand how you will be approaching the project and give them confidence in the final results.

Please keep in mind that this project plan is a "living" document that should help guide your team's work throughout the rest of the course. By clearly specifying due dates and responsibilities, you will help your team operate more efficiently.

**Path 2: Individual Project**

For this assignment, you will create a project proposal, including an outline. Your project proposal should be organized using these sections to organize the document:

* Executive Summary.
* Introduction. [Hint: Put your elevator speech here.]
  + Summarize the capstone project topic, scope, and components; saying that your capstone will comprise a paper and presentation is not enough.
  + Establish the premise of your paper; for example, if your plan is to talk about how Dillard's department store can come back after a huge financial loss, you should include citations that establish its dramatic financial loss.
* Strategy and Scope.
  + Provide a general action plan explaining how you will research, analyze, and identify recommendations or solutions to this business challenge or opportunity.
* Data Sources. Provide at least 3 sources you are considering, in full APA style and format.
  + Discuss the general type of data sources you will be using to inform your analysis. Provide at least two specific sources that you are considering. These resources should be from credible sources such as the*Wall Street Journal*, IBIS, et cetera. Use the excellent Research Guide – MBA for locating credible resources from the Capella library's business databases and article collections.
  + Include the process or steps on how you will access the data necessary for analysis of a business topic or challenge.
* Action Plan and Timeline. How will you get this done and what is your plan?
* Outline of the Capstone paper. A preliminary outline of the sections that you will include in your actual capstone, including Executive Summary, Table of Contents, Introduction, SWOT Analysis, Ethics, Recommendations, and References, as well as any other sections that you deem appropriate.
* Conclusion.
  + Include a wrap-up that ensures your supervisor or client that your project will meet all requirements, be valuable to them, and be completed on time.
  + Be sure to conclude by asking for permission to continue to the next step.
* References: Use APA Style for all sources.

Assignment Description

For Riipen team members, complete the Project Plan Template clearly and completely. Include a title page and references page.

For all others, write a 3–4 page project proposal that formally asks for permission to continue, just as you might propose a project to a supervisor or client, including:

* Analyze a business challenge or opportunity.
* Define the strategy, scope, and action plan that you will use to complete the capstone project.
* Explain data sources that will support the analysis of the business topic or challenge.
* Write a conclusion.

Refer to the scoring guide to ensure that your work meets the grading criteria for this assignment.

Submission Requirements

* Style:
  + The project plan should be written in a professional tone.
  + The project summary should follow professional style, as described in the corresponding MBA Academic and Professional Document Guidelines (available in the MBA Program Resources), including single-spaced paragraphs. It should use subheadings and be well organized and well written.
* Communication: Ensure written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message and quality.
* APA guidelines: Format your citations according to current APA style.
* Resources: Use at least two citations from credible sources.
* Length: 3–4 pages (single-spaced, professional style).
* Font and font size: Use 12 point, Times New Roman.

**Week 2 Discussion 1**

Growing Towards the Future

In our modern world, technology is changing at a tremendously fast pace, and new knowledge is being created in virtually every field daily. With this continuous knowledge creation, it is impossible to remain static in your growth and expect to be continually successful. In other words, to stay relevant and effective in the workplace, you must always be learning and growing. Having a growth mindset is an important part of continuously updating your skillset. Now, as you are about to complete your MBA, is a good time to rededicate yourself to lifelong learning.

At this point in your MBA program you may also be thinking about how to leverage your new skills and MBA for upward career mobility. The Capella Career Center can help, but simply taking time to think through your achievements and goals is also really important.

Discussion Resources

View the following video for a brief overview of how growth mindset differs from a fixed mindset, considering how a growth mindset can be valuable to you in your career and life:

* Spencer, J. (2017). [*Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset* [Video]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1CHPnZfFmU) | [Transcript](https://media.capella.edu/CourseMedia/MBA5910/transcripts/MBA5910_MindsetsFixedVsGrowth_transcript.asp). YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1CHPnZfFmU

Review these optional resources from the Capella Career Center for detailed tips on how and where to leverage your accomplishment statements:

* [Accomplishment-Focused Bullet Points [PDF]](https://campustools.capella.edu/redirect.aspx?linkid=2802).
* Capella Career Center (2015). [*LinkedIn upgrades: Introduction* [Video]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB4ElTkYlHg&list=PL4zQKMBl7HgyBZ6PjpMVA6eaE5eIGqNII) | [Transcript](https://media.capella.edu/CourseMedia/MBA5910/transcripts/MBA5910_LinkedInUpgrades_transcript.asp). YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wB4ElTkYlHg&list=PL4zQKMBl7HgyBZ6PjpMVA6eaE5eIGqNII
* [Interviewing](https://campustools.capella.edu/redirect.aspx?linkid=2454).
* [Networking](https://campustools.capella.edu/redirect.aspx?linkid=1940).
* [Portfolio and Work Samples](https://campustools.capella.edu/redirect.aspx?linkid=2346).

Discussion Instructions

Hold some conversations with your classmates designed to help you think through your plan for how you will develop or meet your career goals, and how you will keep a growth mindset as you move forward in your career. Consider the following questions in your discussion:

* How are you developing your growth mindset and commitment to lifelong learning? What resources are you pursuing as you develop your growth mindset?
* Describe something you have achieved in your program that you are proud of.