

## **Scenario Four (The Canine-Feline Destination)**

It's 1:10 pm on October 24, 2022.

Felicia likes the emphasis on a remote work model in the proposal. Mark is more grudging but sounds willing to accommodate. No firm decision has been made yet, but it looks like Spectrum will be on a far more remote configuration before long.

In the meantime, Felicia has a new task for you.

"Have you ever written a feasibility report?" she asks. "It's like a proposal. But it's more about helping someone make a decision than arguing for a specific decision. More data-driven, less explicit persuasion. We write a lot of them. I have a small one pending. You should be able to do it yourself. It's pro bono, so the stakes are low."

Felicia explains that one of Spectrum's longstanding clients has a family member starting a small business that offers deluxe boarding options for pets. They want to open a location in the Houston metro area but do not have a site identified yet.

"You can call it a site selection study too, but ultimately it's a kind of feasibility study," Felicia says. "Find three or four site possibilities that balance cost, location, traffic, square footage, utilities, etc. Get as much raw data on each of them that you can, and then analyze the pros and cons of each site, especially in terms of how they compare against each other. Then make a recommendation based on the client's needs that is based on the data."

You hear the voice of Frank, one of your new co-workers, from across the Covid-distanced office. "You seen that *For Rent* show on HGTV? Like that, but a 10-page report!"

Felicia rolls her eyes.

"You write one," Frank continues, "You've written them all. Same structure. Abstract, executive summary, introduction, method, data, discussion, recommendation. Rinse and repeat. They're not pretty. But they work for a reason. They separate the data from the recommendation. The trick is to get enough data, and to never cross the streams."

"Cross the streams?" you ask.

Felicia laughs. "He means never mix the data with the discussion."

"If you mix the data with the discussion you take all of the objectivity out of the report," Frank says, "and you might as well have not written it. You leave the data by itself in its own section, the client can read it for themselves. It's clear where your judgement is – separate."

"Any more nuggets of wisdom to share today, Frank?" Felicia says.

“Of course,” Frank says. “The first three sections are for different kinds of readers. The abstract is for deciding to read further or not. The executive summary is for people who don’t want to read the rest of the report but want the recommendation. Which is most everyone, naturally. The introduction is only for people who are going to read it all.”

Felicia cocks her head, like she hasn’t heard that nugget of wisdom before. “So, anyway. The client’s daughter is Alicia Jones. She works at the Houston Chronicle but is switching careers and has some investors backing her. The report should go to her by the end of the week. It’s a favor, but no reason to do it halfway.”

“What does she need in a site?” you ask.

“The parameters are broad,” Felicia says. “It should be at least a half-acre, as near as many suburbs as possible, with easy access. She’s going to build a custom facility, so the more money she can save on the property, the better. \$1.2 million is what she wants to spend on the land, but you might want to push her a little higher if the area is great. Fiber access is a big plus, so check if it’s available.”

You are about to ask a question, but Felicia interrupts. “Yes, I know what you’re going to say. It would make more sense to investigate the feasibility of opening a pet hotel in the first place. It’s a saturated market - not exactly a shortage of them in Houston. But we’re not trying to stop her plan. It sounds like it’s her dream. We’re facilitating only a specific part of it. Remember what feasibility means. It’s whether something will probably work, not whether it will work. Nobody can guarantee that.”

You consider this. Should you be suggesting a feasible site for a business that will probably fail? Still, businesses fail all the time, for all kinds of reasons. But you feel like you just helped steer Spectrum in the right direction.

**Option A: Write the feasibility report and emphasize site selection.**

- Study the “Feasibility Report Tips” file in the Scenario Four folder for the basic structure and requirements of the feasibility report genre.
- Do research on the commercial real estate market in Houston, using online sources, and locate properties for Jones to consider.
- Analyze the data that you find about the properties and make a recommendation for one or more of the sites. Your goal in this option is to determine the feasibility of the sites you’ve chosen. They may all be feasible.
- Jones has specifically requested this kind of recommendation.

**Option B: Write the feasibility report but focus on the feasibility of the idea.**

- Study the “Feasibility Report Tips” file in the Scenario Four folder for the basic structure and requirements of the feasibility report genre.
- Explore the viability of opening a pet hotel in Houston, examining the size of the potential market, startup costs, licensing, personnel – anything you believe would be relevant. Note this is not a business plan, which would fall under the proposal genre – such a plan might follow a feasibility study.

- Your goal in this option is to determine the feasibility of the pet hotel idea. Your recommendation should therefore be whether to continue with the idea, modify it, or abandon it as unfeasible.
- Jones has not asked for this kind of recommendation, but it may prevent her from making a bad decision – or help reinforce a good one, if Felicia’s estimation is wrong. Given Jones has already decided to build, a report that advises her not to may not be received well in Option B unless it is very closely argued.

**Due Date:** November 9, 2022, at midnight. Submit your documents on BB as a single .doc or .docx file.

Scenario Five will appear on BB on November 14, 2022, along with your grade for Scenario Four. As before, the exact nature of Scenario Five, your final assignment, will be different for each student depending on the options that you chose in previous scenarios.

If you have any questions about this assignment, email me at [duncanm@uhd.edu](mailto:duncanm@uhd.edu).