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MBA 665 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

The final project for this course is the creation of an **impact of governmental action on a business paper**.

Governments at all levels—federal, state, and municipal—exert a significant influence on business. The impacts of these influences may be negative, such as the imposition of costly regulations, or they may be positive, such as the provision of financial incentives for the creation of new jobs. Both negative and positive governmental actions present challenges for businesses: the impact of the action on the business’s “bottom line,” how public opinion will be influenced by the business’s response to a particular action, and the ethical issues associated with each response, for example.

For this assessment, you will select a business that has faced, or is facing, governmental action and analyze the impact of this action on the business. In this company, your role is vice president of governmental affairs. Ideally, the business that you select will be the same one discussed in the business plan you created for MBA 560: Marketing and Strategy. If that company does not yet exist, you should choose one in the same area of focus that is facing a governmental action, regulatory issue, or political challenge, with instructor consultation and approval. This is important because the analysis you complete now should help inform your knowledge of potential situations or challenges facing your business product, service, or other idea from your business plan.

Note: If you have not yet completed a business plan in the MBA 560: Marketing and Strategy course, you will select a company of your choice.

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Two, Four, and Six**. **The final project will be submitted in Module Nine.**

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Analyze potential political challenges for determining possible impacts on business environments and sustainable operations
- Evaluate the roles and functions of business project teams for addressing government incentives or potential business-negative government regulations
- Recommend communication approaches designed to be presented to the public for mitigating possible situations that would negatively affect company image
- Determine effective solutions for addressing multi-faceted business challenges in macroeconomic and global environments
- Recommend external resources and approaches in effectively advocating for businesses by evaluating the roles and functions of lobbyists and public affairs specialists in the political process

Prompt

Your macroeconomic evaluation should answer the following prompt: Select a business that has faced, or is facing, governmental action, and analyze the impact of this action on the business. Ideally, the business that you select will be the same one discussed in the business plan you created for MBA 560: Marketing and Strategy. If that company does not yet exist, you should choose one in the same area of focus that is facing a governmental action, regulatory issue, or political challenge, with instructor consultation and approval. This is important because the analysis you complete now should help inform your knowledge of potential situations or challenges facing your business product, service, or other idea from your business plan. While your area of focus may be different from the possible topics and situations listed here, these should still give you an idea of the type of situation for which to look.

Topic examples:

- The decision of LG Corporation to construct a new corporate headquarters on the Hudson River in New Jersey, in the face of environmental concerns
- The decision of Tesla Motors, Inc. to choose among competing incentive packages from local governments for the construction of the company's new Gigafactory
- The threat of Amazon.com to move its drone research development activities out of the United States unless the Federal Aviation Administration adopts a more favorable regulatory stance
- The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration's decision to issue numerous citations to Ashley Furniture
- McDonald's Corporation and the decision by Seattle, Washington to increase the minimum wage in that city

Specifically, the following critical elements must be addressed:

- I. **Overview:** In your role as vice president of governmental affairs, your boss, the business's CEO, is considering retaining an outside consulting firm to assist the company with a government issue that it is facing. Jack Harris is the president of that firm, which is called Crisis Consulting. Jack has told your boss that he will not know if he can help until he learns more information about your company and the issue it faces. Your CEO has asked you to prepare a memo that will provide a detailed overview of your company as well as the government action that it is facing. Address the following:
 - A. **Business Profile:** Provide a brief profile of the business and the industry it occupies, including the business's market share and competitors, as well as opportunities and threats facing the business and industry outside of the particular governmental action now facing the business.
 - B. **Governmental Action:** Analyze the potential governmental action or political challenge that will affect the business in this particular situation. [MBA-665-01]
 - C. **Organization and Teams:** Describe the organization of the company, including divisions and project teams, and the manner in which the company has used these teams to respond to government regulations in the past. [MBA-665-02]
 - D. **Stakeholders:** Describe the company's internal and external stakeholders. In your description, include the actions taken by the stakeholders to date to influence the political process and advocate for the business's interests. [MBA-665-05]
 - E. **Current Environment:** Describe the current business environment, both financial and otherwise, including the initial reaction of the company to the situation and the initial position taken by political actors and other stakeholders. [MBA-665-01]

- II. **Analysis:** After submitting your overview, your boss is having second thoughts about bringing Jack Harris and his firm, Crisis Consulting, on board. Before he makes his final decision he has asked you to provide him with a thorough analysis of the situation faced by your business. He asks you to prepare a memorandum to him (the CEO) analyzing the situation that your business faces as well as the resources that are available to it. Address the following:
- A. **Business Environment:** Based on your analysis of the governmental action or political challenge, what will be the impact of the governmental action or political challenge on the business's financial situation and operations? Does the action represent an opportunity or a threat? [MBA-665-01]
 - B. **Sustainability:** Based on your analysis of the governmental action or political challenge, how will the governmental action or political challenge impact the sustainability of the business? [MBA-665-01]
 - C. **Internal Resources:** Evaluate the internal resources of the company, including the business project teams that are available to respond to the opportunity or threat. In other words, is the business adequately organized to address the opportunity or threat? [MBA-665-02]
 - D. **Communication:** How has information about the situation been communicated to various stakeholders? For example, have any public hearings been held? Have the radio, newspapers, and/or social media been used? [MBA-665-03]
 - E. **Company Image:** Assess how the situation has affected the company's public image. Has the impact been primarily positive or negative? If the impact has been primarily negative, what are the positive aspects in addition to the negative aspects? If the impact has been primarily positive, what are the negative aspects in addition to the positive aspects? [MBA-665-03]
 - F. **Response:** What are the potential courses of action to respond to the situation in the current macroeconomic and business environment? In other words, what is the range of options for the business in this situation? [MBA-665-04]
 - G. **Impact:** How will these courses of action impact the business? Make sure to consider both short- and long-term impacts, including operational, financial, and ethical implications. [MBA-665-04]
 - H. **External Resources:** Evaluate the roles and functions of third parties or external resources in the situation. Consider questions such as these in your response: How will lobbyists be involved in the situation? Will there be public affairs professionals who will argue on behalf of the government or the business? [MBA-665-05]
- III. **Recommendations:** After submitting your analysis memorandum, your CEO has decided that your business needs the additional resources that Jack Harris and his firm Crisis Consulting can provide. Time is of the essence, and so Jack has called a meeting of the team that will work on this project next week. While Jack is familiar with your business, due to your overview, the rest of his team is not. Your CEO has asked you to provide a memorandum to Jack that he can distribute to his team that will be assisting your business. Do not assume that the team knows anything about your business or the government action it faces. In addition, the CEO has asked you to include your recommendations for addressing the situation the business is facing.
- A. **Business Project Teams:** Based on your evaluation of the internal resources that are available to the company, how can business project teams be efficiently engaged to obtain the most favorable results for the company? [MBA-665-02]
 - B. **Communication:** Based on your assessment of the business's public image, recommend communication approaches or strategies designed to mitigate the impact of negative information about the business. [MBA-665-03]
 - C. **Solution:** Based on the courses of action and their impacts that you previously described, determine an effective solution for the business in the situation it is facing. How does the solution address the governmental action(s) or political challenge(s) faced by the business? [MBA-665-04]
 - D. **Political Influence:** Based on your evaluation of external resources, how should the company utilize outside resources and approaches to advocate for the business and influence the political process? [MBA-665-05]

Milestones

Milestone One: Topic Selection

In **Module Two**, you will submit a **topic selection short paper**. Key to your success is providing the background to thoroughly address each of the critical elements. The business topic will be the same one that you created in your MBA 560: Marketing and Strategy course. If the idea has not yet faced some significant government impact, you will need to identify one or more government impacts that the business idea would be likely to face. See examples in the prompt. **Note:** If you have not yet completed a business plan in the Marketing and Strategy course, you should choose an existing business as the subject.

Your short paper should identify and briefly describe the business that you propose to study and describe the government impact that it has faced or would be likely to confront. Make your case for why the business and government impact you select are appropriate subjects for the final project. If your instructor believes that your choice will not provide sufficient material for you to achieve success with the final project, you may have to select a different business and/or government impact. The topic selection short paper should be 2–3 double-spaced pages. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Overview

In **Module Four**, you will submit the **Overview** section of your final project, which continues building on what you started in Milestone One to complete Section I of the final project critical elements. You will provide the business profile and governmental action, revised according to feedback received on Milestone One, then add organization and teams, stakeholders, and current environment. Be sure to support all factual claims/positions with appropriate citations to your research materials. This overview should be 8-10 double-spaced pages. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Analysis

In **Module Six**, you will submit the **Analysis** section of your final project, which is Section II of the final project critical elements. Your analysis should include answers to all the questions in the Analysis section on business environment, sustainability, internal resources, communication, company image, response, impact, and external resources. The analysis should be 8-10 double-spaced pages. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Impact of Governmental Action on a Business Paper

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your comprehensive final project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. Make sure to include the overview, analysis, and recommendations sections in your final submission. The recommendation questions are listed in Section III of the final project critical elements and include the business project teams, communications, solution, and political influence. Make sure to support all factual claims/positions with appropriate citations to your research materials. Your final paper should be 15-20 double-spaced, pages. **This milestone will be graded using the Final Project Rubric (below).**



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