Memorandum

Date: April 5, 2019

To: BCOM 3113 Students

From: Dr. Tara Lockwood 7Z

Subject: Problem-Solving Short Report Assignment, due May 1, 2019

The main purposes of this assignment are for you to

- Gather information from at least three sources for specific readers and purposes,
- Organize and format information, and
- Demonstrate your ability to apply all the principles of effective written communication.

Problem-Solving Short Report Topics

Choose one of the three options below for your short report:

1. **Recommending a Charity for Your Company to Support:** You are part-time assistant to the business manager of a successful veterinary clinic with four locations in the greater _________ area (you pick the city). The practice’s three owners have been building the clinic’s image as a strong supporter of the community. They have created a thriving employee-volunteer program, they sponsor community events, and they convey their genuine interest in animal welfare in their advertising.

Now they want to add another piece to their social-responsibility portfolio: adopting a charity to support.

They’ve asked your boss, Mary Martinez, to come up with three charities who would make worthy recipients of donations from the company. From these, they will choose one. Since you’re a college student with good writing and research skills with free access to your university’s extensive online resources, she asks you to tackle this task. You decide you’ll start your research by consulting your library’s resources on corporate philanthropy and on veterinary philanthropy in particular. You’ll also look at the websites for various relevant charities.

Once you believe you’ve found everything useful, you’ll present the results in a well-organized, well-written memo report (attached to a transmittal message) that your boss can hand over to the owners during her meeting with them next month.
2. **Researching the Risks of Going More Social:** Your company (you decide what kind) is deciding whether to up its social media game. Right now, it has a blog and a Facebook page, but these sites don’t get a lot of action or attract much attention. So your boss, John Lundberg, one of the marketing staff, has asked you, an intern, to gather data on the potential risks involved in becoming active on Twitter. What kinds of problems have other companies encountered in the Twitterverse? How have their marketing efforts gone awry? What have been the consequences? How can such problems be prevented—and can they all be prevented?

Your task will be to gather lessons and information that will help your boss, his boss, and the company president decide whether/how to jump into Twitter. You will not recommend a course of action, but you can help your company decide what to do by relating the facts you find to the situations that are likely to come up for your company if it decides to move forward.

Write your report in memo form attached to transmittal message.

3. **Helping Colleagues Interact with New Colleagues outside the United States:** You work in the human resources department of a clinical research organization with about 2,000 employees. Like other companies in the industry, your company arranges, runs, and reports on clinical trials of new drugs, biomedical devices, and promising medical treatments. Your company recently expanded beyond U.S. borders for the first time by opening a new research facility in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Your boss, Martha Smith, wants to be sure that all U.S. employees who’ll be interacting with the Costa Rican employees understand that Costa Rica has its own culture. Toward that end, she has asked you to prepare a short report on what people should keep in mind when working with those who manage and work at the Costa Rica branch. For example, how formal are the Costa Ricans in their correspondence? Do they value directness or indirectness, or does it depend on the circumstances? What’s their attitude toward hierarchy? What might be topics or wording to be careful about? And when visiting the Costa Rican site, what should U.S. employees know about the business and social protocol that is likely to be used there?

Write your boss a report in which you convey a helpful, accurate picture of the culture in Costa Rica and offer well-researched advice for U.S. employees that she can share with them. Write your report in memo form attached to a transmittal message.

**Format**

Remember these tips as you are composing your short report:

- Organize your information in an easy-to-read memo report.
  - You will compose in memo format.
Design a business logo for the top of the memo that is related to the business in your chosen prompt. Type **Memo Report** underneath the logo.

You will have your *transmittal message in e-mail format*. Because yours is a short report, you do not need to summarize your report in the transmittal message.

- An e-mail message to your boss
- Length will be about ½ page
- E-Mail Format

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From: 
To: 
Cc: 
Bcc: 
Subject: 
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- Keep in mind your reader’s *interests* and the *purpose* for the information. The report will probably be about **two – four single-spaced** pages (not including the transmittal message), although it may be more depending on the amount of information you include.
- Avoid overly casual language and explain well, since the report will be read by your boss and may be passed on to other supervisors or executives.
- Include a brief introduction before the first heading and a short conclusion at the end.
- Decide how to carefully organize the information in a functional, helpful way with appropriate *headings* for each section of the report. You may use bulleted lists or other graphic aids, such as graphs, charts, or pictures, if they will help present the information concisely and clearly. Most of the report, however, should be in written in paragraph form. *Chapter 4* of your textbook includes many tips on using visuals.
- **Remember that when memos are more than one page, you should use a continuation-page header.** On the left, write the recipient’s name (in this case, the name of your boss), in the middle, put the page number, and on the right is the date.
- Keep all information accurate and up-to-date!

### Research

Please follow these guidelines for your informal short report:

- Use **Chicago Format**.
- **Do not forget to cite sources within your report** using *citation footnotes*.

### Footnotes:

The style of Chicago requires footnotes rather than in-text or parenthetical citations. Footnotes acknowledge which parts of their paper reference particular sources. Generally, you want to provide the author’s name, publication title, publication information, date of publication, and page number(s) if it is the first time the source is being used. For any additional usage, simply use the author’s last name, publication title, and page number.
Footnotes should match with a superscript number at the end of the sentence referencing the source. You should begin with 1 and continue numerically throughout the paper. Do not start the order over on each page.

1 Henry James, The Ambassadors (Rockville: Serenity, 2009), 34-40.

When citing a source more than once, use a shortened version of the footnote.

2 James, The Ambassadors, 14.

When using a footnote, insert a number formatted in superscript following almost any punctuation mark. Footnote numbers should not follow dashes (—), and if they appear in a sentence in parentheses, the footnote number should be inserted within the parentheses. Below is an example of a footnote number inserted within the text of the document:

Scientists examined—over several years1—the fossilized remains of the wooly-wooly yak.2 (These have now been transferred to the Chauhan Museum.3)

When using the footnote function in a word-processing program like Microsoft Word, place all footnotes at the bottom of the page on which they appear. Indent five spaces on the first line of each footnote.

- The Reference Page: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/
  Including a Reference Page will be up to you. Analyze your reader. You do not need a Reference page unless you feel it would be beneficial to your reader.
- Do not plagiarize!

Helpful Sources for Guidelines

Chicago Style Format: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/
Footnotes and Headings: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/02/

Work Days – April 24 and April 29, 2019

Bring all the materials you need to work on your report.

Conferences (optional) – April 26, 2019

Sign up for a 15-minute time slot. Bring a rough draft or outline of your informal report for individual consultation about the assignment.

Due Date for Short Report – May 1, 2019

Bring all your drafts with you in both paper and electronic form (flash drive), and bring your folder and textbook. You will peer edit your completed report with a partner and turn in your rough and final drafts (report and transmittal message) to me and submit your final drafts to D2L Dropbox.
**Evaluation Criteria**

Remember that the most important aspect of a report is usability. The information must be well-organized, clear, **100% accurate**, and verifiable. This report must be in your own words.

**Please use the Message Planning Checklist, page 29, Figure 2-1: Planning – Drafting – Revising!**

**Grade:** Transmittal Message – 15 points
Informal Short Report – 100 points

Points will be assigned based on how well you apply the principles of business communication discussed in the textbook and in class (see the Scoring Rubric in the syllabus).