**The Recommendation Assignments**

This assignment links to course objectives 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, & 10.

**Type of Assignment and Weight:** The Recommendation Report, the Recommendation Presentation, and the Recommendation Outline receive separate grades. The Report (including a Draft and Peer Review) is worth 175 points or 17.5% or your grade; the other two Recommendations assignments are worth 175 points. This is an individual, not group, assignment.

**Situation:** You and a couple of your fellow FAU friends created a startup business. It has been so successful that you and your partners are ready to establish a headquarters. While you all still live in Florida, you, your partners, and the company’s advisory board are not sure Florida is the best location. Therefore, you have agreed to research the issue, write an analytical recommendation report, and prepare and deliver a persuasive recommendation presentation that is paired with an outline of this presentation.

**Audience:** Your partners and your company’s advisory board

**Your Role/Task:** The partner tasked with finding the best location in which to headquarter your business, comparing and contrasting that location with Florida, and recommending whether the company should establish its headquarters in Florida or the other state.

**Assignment:** Follow these steps:

1. Determine the type of start-up company—e.g., accounting, entertainment, finance, healthcare, hospitality, international business, manufacturing, marketing, merchandizing, technology. It could also be a retail store or a non-profit.

Here’s an article and a link to other resources to give you some ideas:

America’s coolest college startups:

<http://www.inc.com/diana-ransom/coolest-college-startups-2014.html>

U.S. Small Business Administration:

https://www.sba.gov/business-guide

1. Create a name for your company and brief description of it.
2. Identify three critical factors (criteria) in determining the best state in which to locate your business. Additionally:

* All criteria must be statistics-oriented unless approved by the instructor.
* One of the three criteria must be general, or one that applies to all start-ups. An example of a general criterion is *state sales tax* or *minimum wage laws*, though the latter would not apply to a high-tech start-up where employee salaries would far exceed the minimum wage, so be careful when you choose your criteria.
* Two of the three criteria must apply specifically to your business. An example of a specific criterion for a restaurant is the *number of tourists.* An example of a specific criterion for a surf shop is *weather.* If you want to use a target demographic as one of your specific criteria, narrow it down to a specific targeted population, and make it percentage or ratio, not numbers. Example: your start-up is an assisted living facility, and your target demographic is senior citizens 65+. Use the *percentage of senior citizens* in each state, or number per capita, or number out of 100,000 instead of raw numbers of 65+ year olds.
* Do not use any of the following criteria: *population* (too general, favors highly populated states), any criterion based on *state population*, and *cost of living*.
* Do not use any criterion that results in a tie (less than a 5% difference between the two states). That is, a number equal to or greater than the 5% threshold will be considered a statistically significant difference; a number less than 5% will be considered a tie. This includes any criterion with dollar amounts. The only exception will be tax percentages, which can be less than 5%. Keep a record of the information and sources for any ties, as this information will need to be documented.

Use the following sources to get started:

Small Business Administration--Tips for choosing your business location.

http://www.sba.gov/content/tips-choosing-business-location

United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation: Enterprising states dashboard. http://www.uschamberfoundation.org/enterprisingstates/#map/T/WY/

1. Using your research, compare and contrast Florida with the other state based on chosen criteria--analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the two locations.
2. Recommend which location is best for the company’s headquarters, present your rationale, and acknowledge any disadvantages—explain why you’d recommend the location despite those disadvantages.

**Format/Organization:** Use the **memo report format**. **Use headings** and **organize your report using the indirect approach** of stating the problem, analyzing which state provides the best location in terms of critical factors, and stating/justifying your recommendation. It is mandatory to use the given Skeleton (document format) for every Recommendation assignment. See more specific information in the Mediasite presentations.

**References:** To demonstrate that you are basing your analysis and recommendation on substantive and credible evidence, use a **minimum of 3 *different sources that you will cite* in-text; include** an APA 7th formatted References list. Of these three sources, one must come from the university’s library. Sources must be credible; nothing without a year, nothing older than five years; as well as Wikipedia, wikis, blogs, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, etc. are not to be used and will not count. Though it is incorrect APA format to do so, include in brackets as the last element the library /database information for any Reference entry from the library, so that it’s clear which of your sources come from the university’s library.

For Library sources: go to <http://www.fau.edu/library/>

Then click on “Research Guides,” then “All Guides,” and scroll down to “GEB 3213: Communicating Business Information.” Click on the most recent version of this course guide; then navigate to the home page. Business Databases and Best Census & Statistical Sites are most relevant to our course, so be sure to click on these tabs.

**See the Mediasite presentations for full information.**

**Here is the sequence of Recommendation assignments:**

* **Draft of Recommendation Report (approximately halfway done, for peer review worth points).**
* **Draft of Recommendation Report (completely done, now worth 25 points).**
* **Final Recommendation Report (completely done, worth 150 points).**
* **Recommendation Outline (completely done, worth 75 points)**
* **Recommendation Presentation PowerPoint (completely done, worth 100 points), includes the PowerPoint plus the Presentation.**

**Grading: See the Rubrics below for grading criteria for the Recommendation Report Draft and Final Recommendation Report.**

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Criteria for Recommendation Report Draft:** |  | **Max. Points** | | **Brief Details:** | Max. Pts: |
| Completeness of Content | Draft must be complete with these 5 elements to earn full points (deduct -5 for any element that is partially or fully incomplete, or off topic):   * p. 1, title page; * p. 2, four introductory sections/paragraphs; * pp. 3-4, 3 criteria paragraphs; * p. 4, Figure 1; * p. 5, References | 25 |
| Overall: | Timeliness: Deduct 1 pt. for lateness, even one minute late, per 24 hour period: -1 pt. for first 24 hours; -2 pts. for second 24 hours; -3 pts for third 24 hours; -4 pts for fourth 24 hours; -5 pts for fifth 24 hours. After this point, no submissions are accepted and become a 0/F. | 25 |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Criteria for Recommendation Report (Final):** |  | **Max. Points** | | **Brief Details:** | **Max. Pts:** |
| Format | The report's format precisely follows the assignment's requirements. | 15 | |
| Organization | The introduction fully establishes the report’s objective in its proper context and previews the remaining sections of the report. The report’s body includes all the sections/subsections necessary for presenting a complete analysis of the relevant factors. Each paragraph relates to a main idea, and transitions are varied, clear, and smooth. The conclusion (1) summarizes the report’s major points and (2) states the recommendation and rationale. | 15 | |
| Content (Development of Ideas and Use of Evidence) | Content fully supports the report’s overall objective by providing logical explanations and makes a well-justified recommendation supported by credible evidence (e.g., facts, quotes, and visual data). | 30 |
| References (APA Reference page and in-text citations) | Parenthetical references correspond precisely with the reference list, and both conform to the APA 7th format. The report cites the assignment’s required number of sources, and they are credible sources. | 30 |
| Clarity, conciseness, style and tone | A strong sense of the targeted audience is evident throughout the report. The style and tone are professional, dynamic (varied sentences), original, tactful, bias-free, and positive. The report precisely conforms to the assignment’s word/page limits. Sentences are concise and active. Word choices are consistently correct, economical, and precise. | 30 |
| Writing Mechanics | The report contains virtually no spelling, grammar, or punctuation errors. | 30 |
| Overall: | Overall: Any plagiarism of any kind, including Stealing of Idea, Stealing of Wording of Idea, or both, will be -10 pts deduction per sentence or 10 pts deduction per missing in-text citation. Format errors (title page, headers, headings, font, spacing, capitalization, etc.) are -1 pt. deduction each. Quotation errors (quoting ideas instead of paraphrasing/summarizing as appropriate) are -5 pts deduction each. Any citation error (Reference or in-text) is -1 pt. deduction each. Missing/copied-and-pasted chart/graph is -15 pts deduction. Grammatical errors (run-ons, fragments, verb errors, plural/possessives, wrong/missing words, and commonly confused words) are -1 pt deduction each. | 150 |