

**MCCOMBS SCHOOL OF  
BUSINESS**

**MAN 374H: STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT**

**SPRING 2010**

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**COURSE MATERIAL**

Course Packet: There is one course packet for the course.

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

Strategic management uses the case method to examine how general managers create and maintain competitive advantage for organizations. This course considers how managers determine strategic direction and manage the strategy process. Recognizing that most general management decisions are inherently multi-functional in nature, we employ explicit frameworks for strategic action while also integrating lessons from functional area courses to explore and reconcile the tensions that accompany decisions that involve the entire enterprise.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Understand the nature of strategic competitiveness and develop the ability to analyze the competitive environment facing a firm, assess the attractiveness of the industry and isolate potential sources of competitive advantage and disadvantage.
2. Integrate knowledge and apply analytical techniques from various disciplines, including finance, accounting, marketing, economics, operations, organization theory and organizational behavior. The goal is to identify and analyze strategic issues and develop solutions in the form of actionable plans with the purpose of developing and sustaining competitive advantage.
3. Discriminate among the types of data that general managers need to evaluate alternative scenarios. Develop logical, coherent and persuasive analyses for a desired course of action. Consider how to effectively implement plans within the constraints imposed by the complex behavior of individuals within organizations. Each student should be able to effectively communicate his or her conclusions in both oral and written form.
4. Develop the ability to view the corporation as a whole and to assess it in relation to business unit goals and objectives.

**CLASS FORMAT**

**The Case Method: Why We Rely on Discussion Learning**

Much of our class time will be spent discussing business cases. Why do we rely on the case method so extensively? The case-study method brings a “real world” approach to business education in at least three important ways. First, case discussions generate a dynamic process of vigorous questioning and responding, examination and debate among students and discussion leader. Because strategy issues are often characterized by ambiguity, complexity or uncertainty, this course is more about *asking the right questions* than it is about knowing the right answers. Rather than simply lecture about the current state of “best practices,” we recognize that theories change over time while reasoning skills survive. The case method helps students to refine their skills as insightful questioners, rather than just good answer-finders. In this model of learning, it is the journey more than the destination that matters. In addition, discussion learning requires all students to participate *actively* in the learning experience. The MBA degree is about more than just acquiring a toolbox of analytical skills. It is also about developing the ability to contribute to the group so that we expand the boundaries of everyone’s learning. Just as in management, there is no formula that you can follow for every case. Nevertheless, over the course of the semester, students gradually build on the combination of theory and analysis, judgment and experience to develop for themselves the ideas that the teacher seeks to communicate. While the case method requires a high level of student commitment, it also causes students to personally engage the problem and “own” the solution, so that the case method is inherently a student-oriented process. Walter Wriston has said, “Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment.” As in the “real world,” the case method replicates the trial-and-error experience of seasoned managers, thereby deepening judgment. It also does so in the low risk environment of the classroom where career casualties are not at stake.

Second, the case method trains students to think as administrators (rather than as scholars), so that they: (1) see a problem looking for solutions rather than a concept looking for applications, (2) focus on defining and prioritizing a maze of tangled problems and determining which one(s) to attack with the limited time available, (3) appreciate differing agendas and points of view, and (4) *take action*, not just report findings.

Third, by linking analysis with individual action taking, the case method encourages moral awareness by requiring students to *take a stand*. The give-and-take of case discussion often brings to the surface subtle ethical dilemmas that might otherwise be missed. The case method helps students learn to assess and embrace the tradeoffs among different stakeholders' interests. The case method requires students to use all of their knowledge, skills and experience to respond in real time to the questions raised in class and to effectively communicate their ideas to their classmates and help to lead them to a greater shared understanding of the problem at hand. Thus, the students become the teachers.

In sum, we teach with case studies because the method embodies important values of professional education. The case method is not simply a technique; it is a rich philosophy about judgment, analysis, action and learning. (*Adapted from an article by Robert F. Bruner*)

The key requirement of this course is that you THINK. This course requires that you synthesize material that you have learned in prior classes in your business education in conjunction with new concepts we will introduce. I will ask that you add a dose of common sense and filter these ideas through your own experiences and "world view." We will reach consensus on *some* issues, yet many among you will have differing interpretations as we proceed through the course. This is the nature of strategy and policy issues. You may find yourself occasionally frustrated by the ambiguity and the difficulty of assimilating conflicting points of view. Welcome to real life.

Case discussions are intended to present dilemmas as they are encountered by managers, so it is important to deal with the cases as you find them (i.e., no "Monday morning quarterbacking" based on knowledge of what happened after the time frame of the case). In case discussions, the present tense should be interpreted as referring to the time frame of the case or its end. Please do not prepare for the class discussion by seeking out additional or more recent data on the firms or industries in the case.

Our readings and case discussions are designed to help you understand how firms formulate and implement strategies under the impetus of competition, technology, government action, and other important contextual forces. This, in turn, requires a deep understanding of the functional strategies associated with marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Our challenge in this course will be to integrate your learning from other courses in a synthesis with new material introduced here to see how general managers develop functional strategies into overall business and corporate strategies and to see how their chosen strategies are implemented. While this may not happen overnight, over the course of the semester, you can expect to begin to see how the "pieces fit together." You will be better prepared to enhance your careers with a more comprehensive vision of the firm as a whole and your role in it.

#### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Unethical behavior by corporations has been linked with negative performance outcomes; the same is true of unethical student behavior. As such, I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty. It is expected that students will neither participate in nor condone activities such as cheating or plagiarism. You may not use the internet to look up any case analyses or additional information about the companies that are the subject of these cases. **Sharing ideas is encouraged but sharing words is a violation of academic integrity.** By placing their names on assignments, students are affirming that the contents are their original work and that they have abided by the Honor System described at <http://mba.mccombs.utexas.edu/students/academics/honor/index.asp>.

#### EVALUATION

There are three components to your grade in this class:

- 20% Contribution to Class Discussion (See Appendix A for more details)
- 35% Individual Case Analysis (Due March 10 - See Appendix B for more details)
- 45% Group Presentation (See Appendix C for more details)

A minimum level of performance in each grade component will be required for passing the course. In determining the final course grades, I will add up each student's grade on the components, weighted by the appropriate amount. I will then assign the final grades based on natural break points in the distribution.

For the Current Event Presentation, groups should be 4-6 person self-selected teams. *It is expected* that all group members will contribute to the current event presentation and written case analyses, and that all members should receive the same grade. Peer evaluations (see Appendix D) may be used and adjustments will be made to the grades on the basis of these evaluations if warranted.

Grade disputes on specific assignments are handled in writing. Submit a memo describing the disputed item, and why you feel the grade was incorrect. Grading errors are possible, but please be aware that errors can be overly generous as well as overly harsh. Accordingly, the grade on your re-marked assignment may stay the same, be increased or lowered. Grade appeals must be submitted within one week of grade receipt.

### **MCCOMBS CLASSROOM PROFESSIONALISM POLICY**

The highest professional standards are expected of all members of the McCombs community. The collective class reputation and the value of the Texas BBA experience hinges on this.

Faculty are expected to be professional and prepared to deliver value for each and every class session. Students are expected to be professional in all respects.

The Texas MBA classroom experience is enhanced when:

- Students arrive on time. On time arrival ensures that classes are able to start and finish at the scheduled time. On time arrival shows respect for both fellow students and faculty and it enhances learning by reducing avoidable distractions.
- Students display their name cards. This permits fellow students and faculty to learn names, enhancing opportunities for community building and evaluation of in-class contributions.
- Students minimize unscheduled personal breaks. The learning environment improves when disruptions are limited.
- Students are fully prepared for each class. Much of the learning in the Texas MBA program takes place during classroom discussions. When students are not prepared they cannot contribute to the overall learning process. This affects not only the individual, but their peers who count on them, as well.
- Students attend the class section to which they are registered. Learning is enhanced when class sizes are optimized. Limits are set to ensure a quality experience. When section hopping takes place some classes become too large and it becomes difficult to contribute. When they are too small, the breadth of experience and opinion suffers.
- Students respect the views and opinions of their colleagues. Disagreement and debate are encouraged. Intolerance for the views of others is unacceptable.
- Laptops are closed and put away. When students are surfing the web, responding to e-mail, instant messaging each other, and otherwise not devoting their full attention to the topic at hand they are doing themselves and their peers a major disservice. Those around them face additional distraction. Fellow students cannot benefit from the insights of the students who are not engaged. Faculty office hours are spent going over class material with students who chose not to pay attention, rather than truly adding value by helping students who want a better understanding of the material or want to explore the issues in more depth. Students with real needs may not be able to obtain adequate help if faculty time is spent repeating what was said in class. There are often cases where learning is enhanced by the use of laptops in class. Faculty will let you know when it is appropriate to use them. In such cases, professional behavior is exhibited when misuse does not take place.
- Phones and wireless devices are turned off. We've all heard the annoying ringing in the middle of a meeting. Not only is it not professional, it cuts off the flow of discussion when the search for the offender begins. When a true need to communicate with someone outside of class exists (e.g., for some medical need) please inform the professor prior to class.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) is housed in the Office of the Dean of Students, located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. Information on how to register, downloadable forms, including guidelines for documentation, accommodation request letters, and releases of information are available online at <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/index.php>. Please do not hesitate to contact SSD at (512) 471-6259, VP: (512) 232-2937 or via e-mail if you have any questions.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

**Mon. Jan. 18: No Class – Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday**

**Class 1, Wed. Jan. 20: Introduction**

**Read:** Class Syllabus

**Class 2, Mon. Jan. 25: What is Strategy?**

**Read:** Porter, “What is strategy?”

**Class 3, Wed. Jan. 27: The Strategic Process (Part 1)**

**Case:** Alaskan Gold Mine (in class)

**Class 4, Mon. Feb. 1: The Strategic Process (Part 2)**

**Read:** Collis & Rukstad, “Can you say what your strategy is?”

**Case:** Avon.com (A)

**“Avon” Case Discussion Questions**

1. Who is Avon’s target market?
2. Should Avon sell direct to the consumer? Why or why not?
3. What is the potential for channel conflict here? How might Avon avoid it?

**Class 5, Wed. Feb. 3: Industry Analysis**

**Read:** Porter, “How competitive forces shape strategy.”

**Class 6, Mon. Feb. 8: The External Environment and Industry Analysis**

**Case:** Cola Wars

**“Cola Wars Continue: Coke and Pepsi in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” Case Discussion Questions**

1. Across the various stages of the value added chain (from suppliers of sweeteners and packaging, through concentrate manufacturers, bottlers, and retailers) which is the most attractive? Why?
2. What are the consequences of the competitiveness of the soft drink industry?

**Class 7, Wed. Feb. 10: Game Theory**

**Read:** Brandenburger & Nalebuff, “The right game: Use of game theory to shape strategy.”

**Class 8, Mon. Feb. 15: Competitive Dynamics**

**Case:** Ryan Air

**“Dogfight over Europe: Ryanair” Case Discussion Questions**

1. What is your assessment of Ryanair’s launch strategy?
2. How do you expect Aer Lingus and British Airways to respond? Why?
3. How costly would it be for Aer Lingus and British Air to retaliate against Ryanair’s launch rather than accommodate it? Can the Ryan brothers make money at the fare they propose? Be specific (**come in with numbers**).

**Class 9, Wed. Feb. 17: The Internal Organization and Analysis (Part 1)**

**Read:** Prahalad & Hamel, “The core competence of the corporation,

**Class 10, Mon. Feb. 22: The Internal Organization and Analysis (Part 2)**

**Read:** Collis & Montgomery, “Competing on Resources”

**Class 11, Wed. Feb. 24: The Internal Organization and Analysis (Part 3)****Case:** Gucci Group N.V. (A)**“Gucci” Case Discussion Questions**

1. Map the competitive positions of the different players in the luxury good business. Who are the best-positioned players? Why?
2. Where was Gucci positioned in 1990? 1994? 2000? What were the critical moves made by DeSole to reposition the company?
3. Describe and evaluate Desole’s latest strategic move to buy Yves Saint Laurent (YSL) and Sergio Rossi.

**Class 12, Mon. Mar. 1: Guest Speaker – Kin Lee****Class 13, Wed., Mar. 3: Review Concepts for Midterm, hand out Midterm case: TA available for questions****Class 14, Mon., Mar. 8: No class – Prepare for Midterm****Class 15, Wed., Mar. 10: No class – Midterm case analysis due by 10pm****Mar. 15 and Mar. 17: HAPPY SPRING BREAK!****Class 16, Mon. Mar. 22: Corporate Strategy****Read:** Collis & Montgomery, “Creating corporate advantage.” Porter, “From competitive advantage to corporate strategy”**Class 17, Wed. Mar. 24: Corporate Strategy – M&As****Case:** PepsiCo Restaurants**“PepsiCo Restaurants” Case Discussion Questions**

1. Should PepsiCo acquire Carts of Colorado and California Pizza Kitchen? Why or why not?
2. If PepsiCo does choose to acquire these companies, how should they be integrated into PepsiCo’s organizational structure and processes? To whom should they report?

**Class 18, Mon. Mar 29: Global Strategy (Part 1)****Read:** Porter, “The competitive Advantage of Nations.” Bartlett & Ghoshal, “What is a global manager?”**Class 19, Wed., Mar. 31: Global Strategy (Part 2)****Case:** Ingvar Kamprad & IKEA**“IKEA” Case Discussion Questions**

1. What were the sources of IKEA’s successful entry in the furniture retailing business in Sweden? And in expanding internationally?
2. What was Ingvar’s role in IKEA’s development, and what will happen after his departure?

**The articles for your group presentation are due today****Class 20, Mon. Apr. 5: Guest Speaker - Professor Marjorie Knowles, Georgia State Law School**

***Class 21, Mon., Apr. 7: Corporate Governance and Execution***

**Read:** Pages 16-22 of Warren Buffett's letter to shareholders, Forbes article, "Fading into History"

**Case:** Nordstrom: Dissension in the ranks

**"Nordstrom" Case Discussion Questions:**

1. When so many other U.S. department stores are going out of business, why is Nordstrom actually prospering and growing?
2. If Nordstrom were to start paying its employees for all "off-the-clock" work, how much extra would that add to Nordstrom's expenses in the future? **Come in with numbers, please.**
3. What should Nordstrom do in response to the challenges that it faces in 1990 and why?

***Class 22, Mon., Apr. 12: Guest Speaker – Ing. Rafael Vadillo***

***Class 23, Wed., Apr. 14: Course Conclusions***

Read: "The Parable of Sadhu" and Das, "Local memoirs of a global manager"

***Class 24, Mon Apr. 19: Student Presentations***

***Class 25, Wed, Apr. 21: Student Presentations***

***Class 26, Mon Apr. 26: Student Presentations***

***Class 27, Wed, Apr. 28: Student Presentations***

## APPENDIX A: CONTRIBUTION TO CLASS DISCUSSION

Managers must often “sell” their ideas to others in order to get their acceptance and support. The classroom provides a laboratory in which you can test your ability to convince your peers of the appropriateness of your approach to complex problems. Furthermore, it tests your ability to carefully listen to others’ perspectives and understand why they may reach a different conclusion. Before you can effectively sell your ideas to others, you must understand what is motivating them, what issues they feel are important, and what assumptions they are making that may be different from your own.

Most of your learning will occur in preparation for and participating in the case discussions. To enhance your preparation and learning, I strongly encourage you to form study groups to discuss the cases prior to class. To guide you in your preparation, this syllabus includes discussion questions for each case.

As noted earlier, the complexity of the course material relies heavily on discussion learning. This process allows the cumulative insights of your colleagues to contribute to the evolution of the class’s learning. Thus, the entire class learning experience relies on each of you taking responsibility for contributing to the discussion. **In order to do so, it is imperative that each of you be present and fully prepared each day. Consequently, excessive absences or tardiness will result in a significantly lower grade for this component.**

As is the case with real world work environments, you are judged not by what you know but by what you **contribute**. Even if you feel that you know the material, unless you share your insights with the class, I cannot adequately evaluate your preparedness and contribution. Students are never penalized for making comments that don’t appear to be the “right answer.” It is only through consideration of many diverse opinions and viewpoints that we will move toward a greater shared understanding of the multi-dimensional material that this course entails.

For some students, advocating or challenging a position during class is uncomfortable. However, research has shown that most of a manager’s day-to-day duties require discussions with others and interactive problem solving in real time. The skills needed to contribute to the case discussion are the same as those needed to be an effective manager.

It is expected that you will come to class each day fully prepared to share your views in the classroom discussion, whether voluntarily or when called upon. You have an obligation not only to learn the material but also to assist in the learning of your classmates. To do so, you must make a meaningful contribution when you have the floor. Blandly summarizing case facts, repeating prior points of discussion and/or simply agreeing with your classmate’s arguments does not constitute a meaningful contribution. Focus on making comments that pass the “so-what” test. This can range from helping to sort out the salient facts in a complex case to providing insightful analysis that *builds upon the prior discussion* and moves our thinking forward.

**Every student is important to the class discussion. It is equally important that we listen carefully to one another and attempt to build on or constructively critique prior comments. Try to resist the temptation to jump to topics that are not specifically open for discussion. Some of the specific things that will have an impact on effective class participation and on which you will be evaluated include:**

- Are you a good listener?
- Are your contributions relevant to the discussion? Do your comments related to the comments of others and to the themes that the class is exploring together?
- Do your comments add to our understanding of the situation? Are you incisive? Do you cut to the core of the problem?
- Are you willing to challenge the ideas that are being expressed? Can you do so in a manner that is respectful and not contentious?
- Are you willing to test new ideas, or are all comments “safe”? (For example, repetition of case facts without analysis or conclusions, or repeating comments already been made by someone else.)
- Do you integrate material from past classes or the readings where appropriate? Do your comments reflect cumulative learning over the course and the MBA curriculum, or does the participant merely consider each case in isolation?

**In grading class contribution, we will be assessing the extent to which you have established a meaningful presence in the classroom, over the course of the semester, by making solid contributions on a regular basis. Your friends in other sections, who have already discussed the case in class, may offer to assist you with understanding the case, or you might be tempted to research what happened to the company after the case was written. Engaging in such activities is *strongly discouraged*. Not only does it impair your learning, but it will also disrupt your section’s learning when you speak up in class. It is important for the class to work through the issues based on case facts. Collective reasoning and discovery are critical to the success of the case method.**

Your class contributions will be graded each day. In addition to your professor’s assessment, peer graders will also evaluate each case discussion. This means that each student in the course will be evaluated on his/her contribution to the class

discussion by both his/her professor and his/her peers. Grades will be based on the value-added of your contribution. Quality is much more important than quantity, although a lack of contribution will negatively affect your grade. **Please note that students who leave class early will be penalized on their participation grades for that class.** People within organizations are evaluated on the value they add to the experience of customers, suppliers, and co-workers, not just their boss. Class contribution is about creating value for the class as a whole, not just trying to tell your professor what you think he/she wants to hear.

A few closing tips for meaningful class contribution:

- Trust your own experiences. The course is designed to give you a theoretical framework for making sense of your everyday work experiences. Draw on your experiences to interpret material and illustrate your arguments. Equally important, be prepared to reinterpret your experiences in light of new insights gained from the course.
- Be aware of your own values and biases. "Where you stand depends on where you sit." Your values inevitably influence how you perceive and interpret situations. Rather than deny or hide them, make them explicit (at least to yourself).
- Value the contributions of others. There is never a one-best-way to manage, and different people often come to different conclusions about how they would handle a problem. You can learn as much from listening to your classmates as you can from any book.
- Do not be satisfied with shallow analysis and pat answers of your own, your classmates, or your professor. In the interests of saving time and making a point, we often gloss over subtleties: if something does not sound right, then it probably is not right.

## APPENDIX B: INDIVIDUAL CASE ANALYSIS

You will be asked to write one individual case analysis (you will have a choice of two and need to hand in the analysis at the beginning of class the day we discuss the case). Analyze the case to the best of your ability. While there is no one right way to analyze a case, you should address three core topics:

### 1. Identify the strategic issues in this case

- a. A strategic issue is any issue that has the potential to fundamentally affect the company's competitive position, its strategy, its operations and its prospects. Typically, it is the issue addressing which resolves all other issues. More importantly, the number of strategic issues facing an organization is limited in number - at the most there are two or three such issues. Prioritize. Look not at the symptoms but the underlying cause.
- b. To identify the strategic issues one needs to examine the firm's competitive positioning. The firm's competitive positioning is arrived at after an analysis of the firm's environment (industry analysis), the firm's resources and capabilities (internal analysis) and the firm's strategies and its outcome. The strategic issue is something that has the potential to affect the firm's competitive positioning and may be due to changes in the environment, internal resources and capabilities, questionable strategies and the like.
- c. Third, to examine the competitive position you need to consider all relevant information in the case. Question any hidden assumptions. Make explicit all assumptions you make in order to arrive at your conclusions. Assess your logic and arguments for coherence and consistency.

### 2. Identify alternative courses of action

- a. The relevant alternatives are those that most directly address the strategic issues that you have identified in the first step. The relevant alternatives should be based on the analysis that you have performed earlier. In other words they must be consistent with the industry analysis, the internal analysis and the firm's strategies that you have identified.
- b. Second, examine whether these alternatives are really alternatives. In other words, can the firm simultaneously undertake one or two or all of the alternatives? Some decisions like a Make or Buy decision are truly mutually exclusive. On the other hand, in some other cases a firm may not be able to pursue all alternatives because the firm does not have the resources and capabilities.

### 3. Evaluate the alternatives and recommend one course of action. Justify your decision.

- a. To recommend any one of the alternatives that you identified in the earlier step you need to evaluate all the alternatives. What are the pros and cons of each alternative? Why are some alternatives not feasible options for the firm? It is this analysis that enables you to identify and recommend the alternative that you think best addresses the strategic issue that you have identified. Present your recommendations with specific implementation details and support your decision by arguing its merits vis-à-vis the alternatives.

Evaluate your entire analysis in terms of its consistency, coherence, brevity and logic. Does it make any assumptions that you have not made explicit? Is the information used factually correct? Are the conclusions justifiable? Are they based on opinions, personal beliefs or logic and facts?

Additionally, in preparing your paper there are several common errors to avoid:

- *Focusing on minor issues* on which there is little data. Let the case facts and questions guide you to the selection of issues. If there is little or no data on an issue, you can identify it as being potentially important, but do not dwell on it in the analysis.
- *Rehashing the case.* Someone has already written the case, and the instructor has certainly read it. Do not summarize the case; begin by stating the key issues. Present facts from the case to support your line of reasoning.
- *Drawing conclusions without providing the data to back them up.* Don't make unsupported statements or draw conclusions that the available data does not, or cannot support.
- *Drawing generic conclusions.* For example, all companies need to be profitable and to satisfy their customers. For each case, show clearly what this particular company needs to do so that it resolves the issues specific to its competitive situation, available resources, management objectives, etc.
- *Non-critical evaluation of case data.* Before using a "fact" presented in the case, ask if it was collected in a sound manner, is unbiased, and directly relevant to the issue. Qualify conclusions reached by considering the quality of the data on which conclusions are based.
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- *Failure to provide a rationale for eliminating alternatives not selected.* It is important to show that the recommended course of action is likely to deal effectively with the problems identified. It is equally important to provide a rationale for dismissing other alternatives as less effective or desirable.
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- *Failure to present analytical work in an understandable manner.* When doing computations, be sure that you present the step-by-step analysis you conducted, including data sources and the formulas you used. This kind of information should be presented as exhibits.
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- *Fuzzy recommendations.* Avoid making recommendations that lack clarity, are impractical, are not integrated into the analysis, fail to address a key issue in the case, or fail to recognize the importance of short and long-term timing issues. Provide viable, specific, actionable recommendations
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- *Incomplete analyses.* Incorrect computations, improper use of data, making inappropriate assumptions; or failure to draw on theories and techniques presented in this course.

ALWAYS PROVIDE AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. CASE WRITE-UPS SHOULD BE FIVE PAGES IN LENGTH, SINGLE-SPACED, AND WITH 1" MARGINS.

## APPENDIX C: GROUP PRESENTATION

This assignment is intended to develop and test your ability to recognize issues of 'strategy' that are present in the periodical press and apply the frameworks, concepts and ideas raised in the formal readings and case discussions to the current 'real world'.

Each team (4-6 students per team) will identify a recent news article\* that meet the following set of requirements: (1) the article must have been first in press during our semester, (2) the article must be new news - not a re-hash of previous news, (3) the articles must center on a specific company or organization and (4) the article must relate to a course topic (e.g., competitive strategies, value creation, core competence, strategy under uncertainty, etc.).

Each group will make a presentation (15 minutes) that:

1. Quickly describes the company and the situation presented in the article
2. Explains how the company's situation is related to (or is an example of) what we've covered in class
3. Analyzes the situation (using additional information e.g. financials, competition, etc. not necessarily included in the article) and
4. Makes a recommendation as to what the company should do (and why - How will it help performance?).

The presentation will be followed by 5-10 minutes of Q&A with the class regarding the analysis and recommendations. Presentations should be professional (clear, concise, based on fact, with references) but students are encouraged to have fun with this. Think of it as an opportunity to practice your communication and analytical skills in a very friendly environment. And, you don't have to dress up!

Some Specifics/ Details to note:

- a) The order of presentations will be determined and posted on Blackboard.
- b) Presentations will take place during the last two class sessions.
- c) The length of the presentation and Q&A will be strictly monitored and maintained. No additional time will be allowed. If you run over-time on your presentation it will negatively affect your grade.
- d) All members of your group should help prepare the presentation, although you may choose as many (or as few) members to do the in-class presentation as you wish.
- e) You will be expected to provide qualitative and quantitative data to support your analysis and recommendations as part of the presentation.
- f) Deliverables: The **article** of choice must be decided by March 31 and be included in your presentation. On the day of your presentation each team is required to hand in a paper copy of the **presentation slides (including backup slides) and a full list of references (all sources of information)**. A copy of the slides should also be posted on the class Blackboard site.

\*You may also choose a strategic issue that your firm is currently facing to analyze.

### APPENDIX D: TEAM EVALUATION SHEET

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Use this form to evaluate the contributions that your team members made to the overall performance of the group. This will be used to adjust the group portion of each person's grade. As such, individual grades of group work can be either above or below the actual group. If you do not turn this form in when a group project is due, I will assume that you rate each member of your group equally.

Note that you are not evaluating your own contributions, but the contributions of the others in your group. You may comment on your own performance in the "additional comments" section.

In the section below, list the names of group members. Next to that, allocate points to each member, based on their contribution.

- You have a total number of 10 points per team member (other than yourself). Thus, points = (# of group members - 1) x 10; for example, a team of six will have 50 points to allocate. Keep in mind that 10 points is the average rating. If you allocate 10 points to each member, you are saying that each person contributed equally.

Names:

Points

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Additional Comments: