Justification/Recommendation Report Project
E-Mail Policy

As the management of a mid-sized engineering firm, your team realizes that members of your company frequently use e-mail and the Internet for private messages, shopping, and games. In addition to the strain on computer facilities, you worry about declining productivity as well as security problems. For example, when one of your team walked by one worker's computer, he noticed what looked like pornography onscreen. Although workplace privacy is a hot-button issue for unions and employee-rights groups alike, employers have legitimate reasons for wanting to know how employees are using company computing resources. Moreover, a high percentage of lawsuits involve the use and abuse of e-mail.

Your team is convinced that management should establish an e-mail policy. Your engineering firm's executive council is generally receptive to sound suggestions, especially if they are potentially inexpensive. At present, no e-mail policy exists, and your team ins convinced that the executive council is not fully aware of the dangers of failing to provide a comprehensive company policy dictating the uses and abuses of e-mail and online resources. After a discussion with your team, you decide to write a justification/recommendation report.

Among your team members, first discuss the need for an e-mail policy in your engineering firm. Using InfoTrac and the Web, you can find information about which firms use such policies. Look for examples of companies struggling with lawsuits over e-mail abuse. In your report, consider whether your team should

(1) describe suitable e-mail policies at other companies,

(2) recommend computer monitoring and surveillance software,

(3) create a policy to cover cell phones, wireless pagers, and instant messaging.

Your final report should address your company's executives, provide a recommendation or series of recommendations and should draw from your research and discussion.

Business Report Project:
Forces of Change

As we have discussed in class over the course of the semester, businesses do not exist in a vacuum. Changes in political leadership, legislation, the economy, and social trends all affect the business environment. Consequently, for this team project, you will need to choose one external force that has had, or will have, a powerful impact on business currently and select a company that would be strongly affected by these changed conditions.

Examples of forces include
• changes in copyright law that affect copy shops (Kinko's, Target Copy, etc.);
• the Digital Millennium Copyright Law and its impact on Internet music distributors (Kazaa, LimeWire);
• the US war with Iraq and how it affects international banking (Citicorp, Bank of America);
• Florida hurricanes which impacted everything from grocery stores (difficulties in restocking merchandise) and the insurance industry (damage assessments, claims, and increasing premiums) to utility companies (costly repairs), retailers (slow supply chain; damage to goods), realtors (rising housing costs due to scarcity of housing in some locations), and builders (scarcity of materials; labor issues).

To complete this assignment, choose a company and identify a significant event, then analyze the impact of the event on the company on multiple levels. For this team project, you will work in small groups of 3-5 members, role-playing a consulting business that will present a client—the company you've selected—with an analytical business report that explains fully the effects of a force (war, laws, natural disasters) on the company's operations, productivity, and profitability. You should examine everything from the event's impact on sales, marketing, hiring, financing, or product design, development, or supply to larger, general economic impacts. Your 10-15 page report and oral presentation should also make recommendations for how your client can respond to these impacts.

Corporate Website Recommendation Report

For this project, you and your team are employees of Web Page Solutions (WPS), a company that advises other companies about website design and implementation. WPS works to research the feasibility, the design, and the costs of a website for its corporate clients. As a group, pick a local, Gainesville-based business that currently has no website and respond to their request for a feasibility report concerning their need for a website. Research and write a 15-25 page analytical business report that provides all the necessary information that would allow the company to decide whether or not to create a website and makes recommendations regarding this process.

Your report must investigate information on the advantages and pitfalls of e-commerce, the value and purpose of company websites, whether and when websites are beneficial, and cite some advantages and limitations of web-based sales and marketing campaigns. You must then tailor your report to deal with the unique needs of your specific client. Once you have provided your initial study, you must propose action for your client— whether to design and implement a website or not, and suggestions as to what they should include on this website. Be prepared to justify costs for implementing and maintaining the website and to present your recommendations in an oral presentation.

Opening a Business Overseas

For this team project, your consultancy is working for a client with an established business in the US that now aims to open a business abroad. Choose a US-owned and – based company, which can be local or global, and analyze the cultural environment, challenges, risks, profit potential, marketing and hiring issues, and any other factors that will potentially affect the business for a country of your choosing. While you may select any company or country, you should avoid choosing a company that has already expanded successfully into foreign markets (for example, McDonald's into Russia or China; Starbucks into Great Britain). You can, however, focus on a well-established company that is only just beginning to expand into an overseas market (like Starbucks into country that invented espresso, cappuccino, and macchiato, Italy).

For this project, you will need to examine trends in business abroad, research the company in the US, the industry (or service sector) abroad, and explore public policy and trade resources. Your analytical 10-15 page business report should make recommendations to your client on whether to establish the office/business/service in the country you've chosen, cultural differences between the US and your selected country that will influence marketing, management, and employment, as well as profitability, current business trends in that country, challenges to production/distribution/service due to local conditions, and potential for both risks and profits. Your team will also need to conclude the project with an oral presentation to the client.

TEAM PROJECTS
GUIDELINES

You and your team will work on this project through the rest of the semester, even as you complete your writing assignments individually, so you should carefully note the deadlines for the various components of this extended project.

A 10-15 page report, single-spaced, containing the following elements:
- Title page (not included in total page count)
- Executive summary (1 page)
- Table of Contents
- List of Illustrations/Tables/Figures
- Text of report
- Works cited
- Appendices (if applicable, not included in total page count).

You may use MLA, Chicago, or APA style for your report, but you must use a single style guide consistently throughout your report.

Additional Materials

1. **Project proposal**: a memo to your instructor in which you explain your purpose, audience, necessary research, challenges, and solution. *(50 pts)*
2. **Gantt chart or timeline visual**, providing timelines for completing tasks, such as research, drafts, editing, collation, presentation preparation, practices, etc. *(25 pts)*
3. **Progress report**, explaining the progress your team has made, research completed, and state of the report, using memo form. *(25 pts)*
4. **Oral Presentation**, with PowerPoint or other visuals. (100 pts)

Grading
Your grade will reflect your performance in using all the information you have learned throughout the course about professional communication in business, including
- purposeful writing for action
- focused attention to audience
- appropriate tone and style
- attention to the 4Cs of writing (clarity, continuity, coherence, concision)
- effective and correct use of visuals
- proper professional format
- appropriate use and documentation of research
- logical development and organization of ideas and arguments
- professional overall presentation
- coherence of team approach.