

Assignment:
Common MGT 360 Management Analysis Report
wayne.smith@csun.edu
[updated: Monday, May 30, 2016]

Course: MGT 360
Title: Management and Organizational Behavior (3 units)

“Theory is about the connections among phenomena, a story about why acts, events, structure, and thoughts occur. Theory emphasizes the nature of causal relationships, identifying what comes first as well as the timing of such events.”
--R. Sutton and B. Staw

Goal:

The Department of Management strives to ensure that all students enrolled in MGT 360 are critical thinkers and strong writers. In essence, the Department wants all students to be able to demonstrate competency and efficacy in applying the principles of management and organizational behavior to the issues of a contemporary organization and its broader environment.

Objective:

In narrative essay format, I want you to address a business/organization case study using multiple concepts from class. The case question and case text begin on page 5 of this document.

Building upon your knowledge from MGT 360, students should demonstrate their best understanding of management and organizational behavior theory, and the application of those ideas to improve the understanding of various issues. You need to clearly identify at least *three* distinct, substantive issues. For each issue you need to 1), identify evidence from the case text that shows why this issue is important, 2), use theory from our textbook as a base for your analysis, and 3), draw an analogy from something in class other than the textbook (e.g., supplemental materials, lectures, class discussions, movie clips, etc.) to strengthen your argument. You also need to use appropriate in-text citations and provide a “Works Cited” (Reference) page.

Additionally, building upon your skills from general education and lower-division core courses, students should demonstrate their best composition and technical writing skills.

Length:

This essay is to be no less than three full pages and in length and no more than four full pages in length. Other relevant formatting requirements (“style guide”) are linked from the course web page. The “Works Cited” page is *in addition to* the

required page length (i.e., the “Works Cited” page *doesn’t count* as one of the 3-4 pages).

Deliverable:

This assignment is due on the date specified on the course outline.

Performance Measurement:

There will be two different scores for this assignment. The *first* score will be for content, and the maximum numbers of points for content will be 15. The scoring rubric for the content portion of this assignment is as follows:

- 2 - clearly identifying at least three key issues to be addressed
- 3 - appropriate use of evidence from the case text
- 3 - appropriate use of relevant theory from our Textbook
- 3 - appropriate & rigorous use of supplemental materials/lectures/discussions
- 2 - correct and proper use of In-Text Citations
- 2 - correct and proper use of a References (“Works Cited”) page

The details for earning strong scores are enumerated below.

Requirements Rationale:

- *You must* clearly identify at least three key issues. Readers, especially important readers whose time is valuable and decision-making you want to influence (which eventually will be *you*, at some point after graduation), can’t be guessing as to what you are writing about. Four techniques can help immensely to improve clarity in this regard. The first is to identify the three issues by the end of the first paragraph, probably in the last line of the paragraph. This first step is crucial because it sets the expectations for the reader. The second is to use sub-headings liberally (think of sub-headings as “signposts”). The third is to repeat the issue in the first or second sentence of the paragraph that will address the issue. You might use slightly different words, but the issue, in essence, is the thesis (or topic) sentence of the paragraph. The fourth and final technique is to repeat the three issues (summarized, of course) somewhere in the final, concluding paragraph.
- *You must* use evidence from the case text. It will likely be a direct quote, paraphrase, or summary (all of which need a proper citation). Without some supporting evidence, there is no way to demonstrate that the issue you wish to discuss is even an issue, much less a distinct and substantive one. There might even be more than one piece of evidence, even from a single, journalistic article.
- *You must* lead the reader through the process of inference. That is, apply the general principles (theories, models, and frameworks) from this course to explain a phenomenon that occurred in the past or predict what

phenomenon is likely to occur in the future. Both explanations and predictions require a deep understanding of “why”. Support for “why” is evidenced primarily by the rigorous use of appropriate theories, models, and frameworks. For this assignment those theories originate from the textbook readings. There are many theories in a textbook; choosing the best one requires diligent focus, a comprehensive understanding of course approach detail, and fervent review of technical subject matter. There are no “short-cuts” to using the best theory, models, or frameworks in an objective, purposeful manner.

- *You must* make a strong argument in your analysis. Convincing another smart person that your thinking is right or best is some of the most difficult work you’ll do after you graduate. In addition to evidence and theory, another critical piece of a strong argument is the elegant use of an analogy. You offer additional support for your analysis of your issue by the use of a relevant analogy between a fact from the case text and a fact from a (non-textbook) class-related material or activity (e.g., supplemental materials, lectures, class discussions, movie clips, etc.).
- *You must* cite your references, including specific page numbers, in-text (i.e., “in-line”) in the sentence in the narrative. You cannot make crass, unsubstantiated arguments or use ambiguous references. You need to provide tangible support for your reasoning. You build authority and credibility by acknowledging and referring to the work of others. Put another way anything you write that isn’t cited is assumed to be your own work. If you intentionally or unintentionally let the reader assume that the work of other individuals is your own work, you are plagiarizing. You cannot do this...ever...in either academic or professional work. You may use APA or MLA format. There are examples of in-text citations in the APA Style Guide summarized nicely by the CSUN Library:

http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/apacitation_quickguide.pdf

- *You must* use a “Works Cited” page (sometimes called a “References” page). Someone else must be able to locate and use each reference on the “Works Cited” page. Multiple, In-text citations from the narrative that refer to the same reference in the “Works Cited” page are listed only once in the “Works Cited” page (even if different elements are used in the In-Text citation). You may use APA or MLA format. There are examples of how references are to be formatted on “Works Cited” pages in the APA Style Guide summarized nicely by the CSUN Library:

http://library.csun.edu/egarcia/documents/apacitation_quickguide.pdf

Other Tips:

- *Don't* write haphazardly. *Do* balance breadth (broad coverage of multiple issues) with depth (sufficient, detailed analysis of each distinct issue). These issues emerge from your reading of the article, your education and experience, and your understanding of what the firm needs to succeed. You'll write a better paper if you identify issues that resonate with you viscerally because you'll have more acumen and concomitant passion for those issues.
- *Don't* focus on principles, concepts, and materials from *other* business classes (lower-division or upper-division). *Do* focus on principles, concepts, and materials covered in *this* course—MGT 360. Take the perspective that the materials from this class on “Management and Organization Behavior” are unique and distinctive from other upper-division business courses. Here are two tips: 1), review the titles of the textbook chapters, HBR and supplemental readings, 2), review the organizational structure and details of the course outline.
- *Don't* just use concepts from the current part of the course, or materials just after the mid-term exam. *Do* use materials from the entire course, including from materials on leadership and change near the end of the course. Therefore, you need to review prior materials and you need to read ahead. This class doesn't have a cumulative final exam. However, this assignment is indeed a cumulative assignment.
- *Don't* arbitrarily ignore General Education courses. *Do* incorporate materials from one or more of G.E. courses if you feel those materials strengthen your thinking.
- *Don't* write like you speak. *Do* organize your thoughts well. The main body of the report are the issues. Additionally, the first paragraph of the report should be an introduction, and the last paragraph should be a conclusion. The last sentence of the introduction might be a summary of what is to come in the main body, while the conclusion might be a summary of what was said and final recommendations.

The *second* score will be for writing, and the maximum numbers of points for content will be 10. The scoring criteria for the writing portion of this assignment will be similar to the writing scoring criteria used previously in this class.

Although the *raw* scores differ for Content (15 points) and for Writing (10 points), both scores are *weighted* equally (i.e., half of 10% overall is 5% for Content and 5% for Writing).

Case Question:

Assume that you are a consultant to the Board of Directors at Goldman Sachs, a large and influential Wall Street investment banking firm headquartered in New York (note: the Board hires the CEO). The Board of Directors at Goldman Sachs has hired you to assist them in better understanding the latest initiative regarding the change in why and how performance evaluations are conducted. Write a brief management analysis report that informs the Board and provides specific recommendations. That is, using the language of our class, describe (explain) any substantive issues that suggest that change is needed and prescribe (predict) what the CEO and managers should do to successfully implement such changes.

(If you need to make any assumptions or background regarding anything you might have read in the case text, simply state them as needed.)

Case Citation:

Gellman, L., and Baer, J., (2016, May 27). "Goldman Workers Are More Than a Number" *Wall Street Journal*.

Case Text:

Full text: Goldman Sachs Group Inc. is shaking up performance reviews for its roughly 36,500 workers.

Starting next month, the Wall Street bank will no longer rate staff each on a scale of one to nine. And this fall, the firm will experiment with an online system through which employees can give and receive continuous feedback on their performance.

Goldman's changes are part of a bigger shift among large companies in the way they track and grade workers' performance. Accenture PLC recently scrapped annual performance reviews in favor of more-frequent check-ins between managers and employees, while General Electric Co. is testing a similar system with some employees. Gap Inc., Adobe Systems Inc. and Microsoft Corp. have abolished numerical ratings, which executives say can grind down employee morale.

While subtle, the changes at Goldman mark a softening of Wall Street's typically tough, numbers-driven management culture, and is the latest in a wave of changes at big banks intended to make finance jobs more welcoming to younger employees.

Goldman, which announced the changes in a pair of companywide memos, isn't doing away with annual performance reviews. Instead, the bank will focus on giving employees specific directives on improving their work rather than grading performance for the previous year, said Edith Cooper, the bank's global head of human capital management.

Bank employees want "more direction with respect to how they can improve," Ms. Cooper said. In internal surveys, Goldman staffers requested "more frequent and constructive feedback," according to one of the memos.

New regulations have crimped profits, forcing banks to retreat from certain businesses and cut staff. More electronic trading in many markets has made large numbers of traders and salespeople expendable. Annual bonuses ebb and flow, but they are well below where they were in the years before the financial crisis.

Goldman has outperformed nearly all of its peers since the crisis, yet it hasn't been immune from the pressures facing an industry still finding its role in the new era. Goldman has been shrinking its senior staff, in part by limiting the size of its biennial partnership classes, and hiring more people in lower-cost offices such as in Salt Lake City and Bangalore.

All that has made the relative happiness of junior bankers more important. The drive has picked up in the past year as investors and corporate executives show flagging confidence in the global economy.

Ranking a year of employee performance on a numerical scale can be tough on all workers, and particularly young ones, who are hungry for more-constant feedback from bosses, surveys show. More firms are eliminating numerical ratings for workers as bosses realize "the person receiving the rating is now stuck with the number for an entire year that labels them," said Josh Bersin, a principal at Deloitte Consulting LLP who advises companies on talent management.

Goldman will keep its 360-degree annual review, in which an employee solicits feedback from his or her manager and a select group of colleagues, including peers and reports.

Ryan Frankel, who was an analyst in Goldman's special-situations group from 2006 until 2010, said providing employees with more-frequent feedback is a natural move at an organization with a famously competitive internal culture.

Additional assessments will allow employees to "course-correct and elevate their own performance," said Mr. Frankel, who since leaving the bank founded a language-translation startup, VerbalizeIt, which was recently sold.

To be sure, many Wall Street workers look beyond performance reviews to their annual bonuses as a gauge of how well -- or poorly -- they are doing.

"As the industry shrinks, firms need to gain a larger piece of a smaller pie; it becomes increasingly critical for firms to employ top professionals," said Michael Karp, chief executive of Wall Street search firm Options Group. "Bonuses represent their accomplishments and firms' recognition and appreciation of them."

Performance reviews play a role in determining employee bonuses and promotions at Goldman, and will continue to do so, Ms. Cooper said. She declined to say how much weight those evaluations carry.

Along with J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. and Citigroup, Goldman has enacted several management changes focused on retaining junior bankers. Last fall, the bank announced it would speed the path to promotions for top-performing analysts and associates and would try to eliminate some of the grunt work that often falls to younger employees.

Goldman typically culls roughly 5% of its workers early in each calendar year, in part to make way for new hires. This year, though, the cuts have been deeper in some of the businesses, like debt trading, that are mired in a prolonged slump.

Employee pay has been in decline. The firm's annual compensation and benefits expenses have dropped 2% from 2012 to 2015 even as its total head count swelled by 11%.

The firm also is paring the maximum number of designated reviewers per employee from 10 to six to decrease demands on colleagues' time, she said.

Review conversations will now take place over the summer rather than in the fall, giving employees additional time to improve their performance ahead of bonus decisions and annual cuts.

In addition, Goldman will try out a Web-based tool for some employees to give and receive performance feedback at any time, Ms. Cooper said. The hope is that the additional input will lead to more frequent one-on-one conversations with employees and managers, she said. The bank hasn't determined which departments will try out the system.

Colleagues at Goldman frequently have informal conversations about performance, said Elizabeth Reed, a vice president in the investment-banking division. The new guidelines help set expectations for how often managers should be checking in with their staff members, she said, adding the new tool is a "medium to express that more regularly."