

Assignment:
Common MGT 360 Management Analysis Report
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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 20. 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 and rigorous use of evidence from the case text(s)
- 3 - appropriate and rigorous use of relevant theory from our Textbook
- 6 - appropriate and rigorous use of the class supplemental materials
- 3 - correct and proper use of In-Text Citations
- 3 - correct and proper use of a Works Cited (“References”) 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 topic sentence of the paragraph. The fourth and final technique is to repeat the three issues (summarized, of course)—along with recommendations, if any—somewhere in the final, concluding paragraph.
- *You must* use evidence from the case text(s). The evidence must be at least one direct quote. 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 issue that key, senior decision-makers should

consider. 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 demonstrated primarily by the rigorous use of appropriate theories, models, and frameworks. For this assignment those theories must originate from the course textbook readings. The theory must be at least one direct quote. There are many theories in a textbook; choosing the best one requires diligent focus, a comprehensive understanding of course approach and detail, and fervent review of technical subject matter. There are no “shortcuts” 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 an issue by the use of a relevant analogy between a fact from the case text and a fact from a (non-textbook) class supplemental materials listed on the course outline. You must use at least one direct quote from the supplemental materials. As with evidence and theory, each issue will use analogies from different supplemental materials.
- *You must* cite your references, including specific page numbers (or from WileyPlus, the Section number or name), 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. I prefer APA format, but you may use MLA format as well. For the textbook, the citation must contain the Author’s name, year of publication, and page number (or WileyPlus Section number or name). For other materials, the citation must contain the Author’s name and year of publication. 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). Again, I prefer APA format, but you may use MLA format as well. 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, and 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 (20 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 the Director of Human Resources at a Fortune 500 (i.e., large) firm. The top management team at your firm, including the CEO and the Vice-President for Talent (your immediate supervisor), recently returned from a strategic retreat. At the retreat there was a discussion regarding whether the telecommuting strategy (i.e., the “work-from-home” policy) should be changed. That change could be to increase the number of telecommuters, decrease the number of telecommuters, modify the policy in some other way, or perhaps, leave the policy as is. The executives at the retreat read the Wall Street Journal on a regular basis and so were aware of IBM’s recent change. The CEO has asked your boss for an analysis of this issue, and naturally, your boss delegated this work to you. (For the purposes of this assignment, assume that your large, Fortune 500 firm has approximately 10% of its workforce telecommuting on a regular basis.)

Write a brief management analysis report to your boss that informs the top management team about telecommuting strategy in general and recent changes specifically. Also, make a recommendation to your boss about what to do. That is, using the language of our class, describe (explain or predict) why telecommuting may be useful (or not) in your Fortune 500 firm. Be certain to touch upon how new opportunities can be leveraged and new threats can be overcome.

(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 #1 Citation:

Mims, C., (2017, June 5). More Workers Have Out-of-Office Experience. *Wall Street Journal*.

Case Text:

Full text: When Dell recently surveyed its 110,000 employees about their work habits, it discovered something surprising: While only 17% of Dell's employees were formally authorized to work wherever they prefer, 58% were already working remotely at least one day a week. That is good news, says Steve Price, chief human-resources officer at Dell. In 2013, the company had said it wanted half its employees to work remotely for at least part of their week - by 2020.

In contrast, International Business Machines recently gave thousands of its home-based employees a choice: Start working at one of IBM's regional offices or take a hike. IBM once boasted that 40% of its employees work outside traditional offices. It has its own in-house tools to facilitate remote work, and it regularly promotes telework to its clients. Other companies that have reversed course on remote work include Yahoo, Bank of America and Aetna.

Despite these moves by big companies, data indicates that the remote-work trend in the U.S. labor force is inexorable, aided by ever-better tools for getting work done anywhere. Surveys done by Gallup indicate that in 2016, the proportion of Americans who did some or all of their work from home was 43%, up from 39% in 2012. Over the same period, the proportion who only work remotely went to 20% from 15%. Amazon.com, American Express, UnitedHealth Group, and Salesforce.com allow employees to work remotely at least some of the time.

IBM has said it hasn't found remote work saves money. It also said the shift away from remote work isn't aimed at cutting costs -- though inevitably some employees leave as a result. Other companies, though, cite saving on rent among a variety of reasons for letting employees work remotely. They say it also improves employee satisfaction, helping retention and recruiting.

The larger truth is that nearly every company that employs knowledge workers is still learning which jobs can best be done remotely, as the tools to accomplish remote work become increasingly powerful.

Making the transition in a big company isn't easy, Dell's Mr. Price says. What is absolutely essential is getting everyone the right tools. This can be expensive and time-consuming, even for companies whose primary purpose is building those tools.

To understand the issues, it is helpful to look at a company that has always been almost entirely remote. Automattic, maker of WordPress, the content-management system that powers 28% of all websites, has 558 employees spread across more than 50 countries, up from 302 in December 2014.

Despite its growth, the company is getting rid of its custom-designed, light-filled, 14,250-square-foot office in a hip San Francisco neighborhood. On an average day, maybe five workers will show up, dwarfed by the cavernous space and nearly outnumbered by the Ping-Pong and foosball tables that mostly sit idle.

With teams that may be spread across a dozen time zones, Automattic relies on Slack for synchronous communication, Zoom for weekly videoconferences and its own internal system of threaded conversations for documenting everyone's work and for major decisions.

When everyone is forced to communicate through these tools, no one is left out, says Mark Armstrong, whose site, Longreads, was acquired by Automattic in 2014. "Everyone knows that feeling where you're the one on the conference call and everyone else is in the room together," he says.

A distributed workforce can have other benefits, says Julia Amosova, a "happiness engineer" at Automattic. The online communication required allows for radical transparency, since anyone in the company can search across all internal communications. "Most of the meetings were held behind closed doors at other places I worked at," she says. "I didn't have the same feeling of unity and inclusion."

Unless you're a pure software company like Automattic, being 100% remote probably isn't an option. Dell isn't planning to get any more of its employees working remotely, Mr. Price says. "Engineering, leadership, R&D, sales and customer support -- those are roles that don't lend themselves very well to remote work. Not everybody gets to do it." Roles where it does work include HR, legal, marketing, analytics, data science and other support functions, he adds.

For workers in an office, collaboration occurs naturally, says Jason Owen-Smith, a professor of sociology at the University of Michigan who has studied collaboration and innovation at academic research institutions. His research indicates that for every 100 feet of overlap between the typical daily walking paths of people in a building, there is a 17% increase in the likelihood two researchers who have not previously worked together will collaborate on a new project -- and a 20% increase in the likelihood they will get their project funded.

In one building Dr. Owen-Smith and his team studied, the men's and women's restrooms were at opposite ends of the facility: Same-gender collaborations went up and mixed-gender collaborations were suppressed. Famously, at Pixar, Steve Jobs put the bathrooms in the center of the building, to force people to cross paths multiple times a day.

Case #2 Citation:

Simons, J., (2017, May 19). IBM Says No to Home Work. *Wall Street Journal*.

Case Text:

Full text: International Business Machines Corp., a pioneer and champion of the work-from-home concept, is reversing decadeslong policies and calling thousands of employees back to the office.

The 105-year-old technology giant recently told U.S.-based remote workers they must either stop working from home and return to a regional hub, or find another job.

The shift is particularly surprising since the Armonk, N.Y., company has been among the business world's staunchest boosters of remote work, both for itself and its customers. It has sometimes boasted that more than 40% of employees spent their workdays outside traditional company offices. IBM markets software and services for what it calls "the anytime, anywhere workforce," and its researchers have published numerous studies on the merits of remote work. A May 4 post on the company's Smarter Workforce blog stated that "telework works."

IBM says the move will improve employee collaboration and accelerate the pace of work. The changes come as IBM copes with 20 consecutive quarters of falling revenue and rising shareholder ire over Chief Executive Ginni Rometty's pay package. IBM cut several thousand employees in 2016, but Ms. Rometty has said the company plans to add 25,000 jobs in the next four years.

The company won't say how many of its 380,000 employees are affected by the policy change, which so far has been rolled out to its Watson division, software development, digital marketing, and design -- divisions that employ tens of thousands of workers.

IBM says its co-location plan isn't a cost-saving measure. Laurie Friedman, a company spokeswoman, said employees who can't join an in-person team can apply for one of more than 5,000 open jobs in the U.S.

IBM may be part of a broader rethink under way at large companies, as corporate leaders argue that putting employees in the same physical space hastens the speed of work and sparks innovation. Employers tread a fine line, however, since workers rate flexible-work programs highly, and research has found telecommuters often work more effectively than their cubicle-bound counterparts.

Yahoo Inc.'s decision to call telecommuters back to the office in 2013 set off a furor among employees and workplace experts. Yet more-recent decisions at Bank of America Corp. and Aetna Inc. to greatly reduce telecommuting have elicited little outrage.

Big Blue's leaders want employees to work differently now, said Ms. Friedman. The company has rebuilt design and digital marketing teams to quickly respond to real-time data and customer feedback, collaborations that happen more easily when teams work shoulder to shoulder, Ms. Friedman said. She added that the "vast majority" of IBM's telecommuters have chosen to join their teams in person.

Workers in affected IBM divisions have been given 30 days to decide whether to move to office space that can be hundreds of miles away from their homes.

The changes have stunned longtime IBM employees like marketing manager Ron Favali. The 15-year company veteran has spent the past 12 years working from an office in his home outside Tampa, Fla., and considered himself a remote-work success story.

His team uses IBM's Sametime instant-messaging voice and video chat software to stay connected and on task, despite being scattered in three states. Working remotely came with career trade-offs, he said. "I was never going to be named vice president of marketing for anything, but I'm OK with that." He has declined IBM's offer to return to a company workspace, and will leave the company next month to start a marketing firm.

Companies began offering generous remote work policies because they expected large savings in office and real-estate costs, said Jennifer Glass, a University of Texas professor who studies telecommuting and advises companies on remote-work strategies. Those savings haven't materialized, Ms. Glass said, so workers are being called back to the office.

Relocating offices or asking employees to move can sometimes be read as layoffs in disguise, since a certain percentage of workers won't be able to relocate.

Working from the master bedroom in her Ogden Dunes, Ind., home, Penny Schlyer helped market IBM mobile software and services for companies reliant on workers who aren't bound to a desk, such as retail employees, financial advisers or doctors.

Her seven years telecommuting with IBM could have been plucked from one of her marketing campaigns: She has logged work hours from the sidelines of her sons' sporting events and used Sametime to communicate with colleagues.

The 48-year-old mother of three was dismayed when IBM requested that she move to the company's New York City office. "The irony is definitely not lost there," she said.

Though IBM offered to pay for the move and make a small cost-of-living adjustment to her salary, Ms. Schlyer declined. "I could never afford to live in New York City, and probably not anywhere close."

She has found a new job leading product marketing for SA Ignite, a Chicago-based software company, but her office won't change; she is still in the master bedroom.

Why Firms Return

Workers to Office

Technology like video calls and instant messaging applications like Slack were supposed to augur a future in which employees could clock in from anywhere in the world. But recent decisions at Bank of America Corp. and Aetna Inc. to greatly reduce telecommuting reflect an emerging consensus that chat apps and video calls are no substitute for in-person face time.

Bank of America scaled back its work-from-home options to strengthen company culture and develop its workforce. Leaders concluded that remote work was "overdeployed" on some teams, an executive told the Charlotte Observer in a 2015 interview.

Aetna's changes have a dual aim: The health insurer wants some workers to be more accessible to clients, said spokesman T.J. Crawford. Also, he said, "there's a small group of managers with larger teams who can benefit from seeing their people back at the office."

Managers' comfort is a big issue in remote work, said Ken Matos, vice-president of research at Life Meets Work, a consultancy that advises firms on workplace policies.