

## Assignment: Strategic Analysis of a Firm (Firm Choices)

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**Course:** BUS 497a

**Title:** Capstone: Strategic Management (3 units)

“The purpose of a business is to create and keep a customer.”

“Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.”

“If you want something new, you must stop doing something old.”

-Peter Drucker (1909-2005)

### Firm

Each team will select (with my approval) their own firm to study and analyze. I'll ask for three names of firms on the date listed on the course outline/calendar well before the middle of the semester in order to eliminate any duplicates among teams and help with applicability of firm choice to this course.

### Sources for Firms

The three firms must be U.S. publicly-held and publically-traded firms. The company must also submit data to the SEC. The reasons for this are that each team needs good sources for 1), internal company financials, 2), market and industry data, and 3), supporting articles from newspapers, new magazines, and other quality sources. A simple WWW search can result in the “ticker symbol” (i.e., the abbreviated name of the company). Most publicly-held U.S. firms are traded on either the New York Stock Exchange (“NYSE”) or the Nasdaq Stock Market (“NASDAQ”).

Do not select a firm for which any student is *currently* employed. However, previous employment is acceptable.

Since “The Founder” movie was used earlier in class, do *not* choose McDonald's.

The three firms must be in *three different industries*. An easy way to determine this—once you've determined the ticker symbol—is to use the EDGAR service to locate the industry (called SIC):

<https://www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/companysearch.html>

Use the “Fast Search” on the right side. The SIC code comes up in the upper-left of the resulting screen. Then, lookup the SIC code:

<https://www.naics.com/business-lists/counts-by-sic-code/>

The Industry Titles must be *different* for each of the three firms that you choose. The main reason for this requirement is that it encourages diversity of thought both within each team and across all teams in class. If you use NAICS codes, the same rule applies. One site that shows the NAICS codes is:

<https://www.naics.com/business-lists/counts-by-naics-code/>

Please rank your three choices: first, second, and third. In general, student teams can expect to be assigned their first choice of firm. However, the instructor will make the final selections from each team's choices.