

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #2 (Due in Module 5)

After Writing Assignment #1 has been graded and your grade posted in Canvas. Find the instructor's comments about what was found during the grading process. Correct those issues in your paper, then continue building your project by performing the steps below. That is, Writing Assignment #2 should be added to the end of your Writing Assignment #1 after you correct it, so that the file you upload will contain the corrected Assignment #1, plus your first attempt at Assignment #2. Do this for all submissions (the file will be large in the end).

Your instructor will email you the name of a company that you will be assigned to research AFTER your Writing Assignment #1 has been graded. You cannot continue with Writing Assignment #2 until your instructor sends you the name of the company you are to do additional research on. If you do not yet have the name for a company to work on, email your instructor immediately. (NOTE: Writing Assignment #2 should be between 10 and 20 pages).

1. Go online and get the latest couple of annual report (10K filing) for your company. Read through it and take some preliminary notes.
2. What are the major competitors to your firm? (Find at least 3 that are closest in total revenue size to your company, then list their names and ticker symbols).
3. Provide your firm's mission and vision statements. Do these look to be appropriately stated? First, just retype what they say they are. THEN, do a quick analysis of them and support your answers accordingly (you'll analyze them again in a later part of the project).
4. What are your firm's major strategies and/or strategic objectives? (note: All firms have strategies and objectives, which should be in the annual shareholders' report or 10-K). Do these look to be in alignment with your firm's stated mission and vision? (NOTE: Name the type of strategy or strategies that the company says they are pursuing.)
5. Compare your firm's strategies and strategic objectives to those of the competitors. What issues do you note? Are they struggling toward the same markets, similar objectives, and similar business models, or, are they completely different? (NOTE: What you are doing here is comparing the areas, strategies, markets, etc., in which your company is actually competing with other companies.).
6. Do some non-academic research (i.e. use "Google") and find out what you can about any serious issues the members of the firm's Board of Directors might have (for example, a CEO arrested for something, turnover within the Board of Directors, vacant positions, etc.). What did you find? (NOTE: What you are looking for here are ethical and legal violations committed by members of the Board of Directors)
7. Based on information from the annual report and/or 10K, how would you describe your firm's current financial condition? Normally, one would use financial ratios and other pertinent income and balance sheet data to support an analysis. However, because many of you have not had any financial analysis courses in your educational program, it is acceptable to stick with those that are being reported by the company that you are reporting on, or those that are reported by other competitors in the industry. Remember, the information you are looking for is in almost definitely in the annual filings (10Ks) for the competitors you identified earlier. Make sure you discuss Net Income, and at least 2 other ratios reported by industry analysts or other competitors. (I suggest that you use Net Income, Quick Ratio, Return on Assets, Return on Equity, and either Market Share or Total Revenue. If you don't know how to calculate one of the ratios, you should be able to Google it fairly easily.)
8. Create a table for your financial analysis in the following format:

	Industry Avg	Your Company	Competitor 1	Competitor 2	Competitor 3
Net Income					
Quick Ratio					
Return on Assets					
Return on Equity					
Total Revenue					

9. Go back to the information you discovered when doing your PESTEL and Porter's Five Forces analyses, only this time reconsider these models in light of the company you have been assigned. Based on the information you have for your firm, plus what you have for your firm's competitors, note any areas where your company might be stronger or weaker than the competitors mentioned earlier, or the industry average.

10. Finally, review what you know about your company and the competitors mentioned earlier. Describe at least 20 strengths and 20 Weaknesses that apply to your firm in particular, as it relates to other companies (remember, strengths and weaknesses are only factors if they cause the company to be significantly different from other companies or the industry average.). Strengths and Weaknesses are similar to Opportunities and Threats, except...
 - a. Do NOT apply to the entire industry, but rather apply mostly to YOUR company.
 - b. Are clearly in the control or influence of your company.
 - c. Are discussed only as they relate to competitors and/or the industry averages.
 - d. Are NOT something the company can choose to do. That is, they are not actions a company can take.

11. Create tables of Strengths and Weaknesses in the same way as you did using the two models of the previous writing assignment (i.e. Steps 4 and 5)

Refer back to Writing Assignment 1 Step 4 & 5

STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS:

This project is broken up into pieces, or “Parts”, and is based on the basic strategic planning process commonly found in most organizations. However, while the nature of the project work itself will walk the student through observation, decision-making, change design, implementation, etc., the focus of the response from the student should be on the actions of the leader during each stage. That is, while the strategic planning process must be followed, the students should be encouraged to stay focused on the role of leadership during each stage. If your instructor permits, you can work ahead on the different parts of this project, but you must NOT be late in submitting your final project results. Note that this project will take you at LEAST a full week (40+ hours) to do properly. You absolutely cannot do this at the last minute! Students who do not make regular progress over the coming weeks should not expect the instructor to be very understanding if something happens that causes the student to miss deadlines.

PRELIMINARY:

Your instructor has chosen the industry below for this assignment:

Industry: SOFT DRINK MANUFACTURING (NAICS CODE: 312111)

Perform basic research on the industry that you have been assigned. The companies in this industry are almost exclusively publicly traded, which means that each company must make certain documents available to investors, the government, and to the general public. In later portions of this assignment, you will need basic information on a number of the competitors, so while you are gathering information, save everything you can about the industry and competitors to a folder on your PC. This might include URLs, 10K filings, and more. Then, for the first part of this assignment (listed below), prepare a single Microsoft Word document in standard APA format (I’m checking this closely). In this document, prepare a response to each of the questions asked and make sure that you completely answer all portions of each question. In addition, make sure that you do the following:

1. Put your name and student ID number in the document header. Include APA page numbers, but no cover page or abstract page is needed.
2. Make sure your work (all portions, no exceptions) is in Times New Roman, 12pt font, 1” margins.
3. Use Microsoft Word’s built-in “Source Manager” to handle your citations and references. To do this, click on the “References” ribbon bar in Microsoft Word. The “Citations & Bibliography” section has everything you need to do a reasonably good job handling your references and citations.
4. List the industry name and NAICS code somewhere near the top of the first page of your document. (NOTE: After Writing Assignment #1 has been graded, your instructor will assign a company to each student in the class. Once you know the company to which you are assigned, enter that company’s name, ticker symbol, and stock exchange right under the industry name and NAICS code – Students will not be permitted to choose their own company for this assignment.).
5. Make sure to number your response(s) to each of the questions.
6. Immediately prior to submitting your document to Canvas, proofread your document THOROUGHLY. Many faculty highly recommend Grammarly’s free add-in to Microsoft Office, which will show up on the ribbon bar in Microsoft Word. This is the PRIMARY method that the instructor uses to check student work for errors. (Note: Each grammar/spelling/style error generally results in a 2-3 point deduction from the final submission grade).

WRITING ASSIGNMENT #1 (Due in Module 3)

1. Perform basic INDUSTRY research for the industry you have been assigned and look for issues by following the PESTEL model's major categories. Outline at least 3 major issues for EACH of the PESTEL categories that affect the industry. Describe each and support your statements (NOTE: This is an INDUSTRY analysis, not a company analysis. It should be at least 5 pages of body text.).
2. Perform additional basic INDUSTRY analysis for the industry, but this time use "Porter's Five Forces" model. Identify at least 2 major issues for EACH of the forces in the model. Describe each and support your statements (NOTE: Again, this is an INDUSTRY analysis, not a company analysis. This should also be at least 5 pages of body text.
3. Using this information, list Opportunities and Threats (numbered O1, O2, O3, etc. and T1, T2, T3, etc.) that would apply to the majority of the companies in your firm's industry. (**note: If you provide an opportunity that is worded as though it is something a company can do, your answer is completely incorrect and I may not grade it. Just because a company says that something is an opportunity for them does not make it an opportunity. Many companies often get this incorrect.**) Opportunities and Threats ALWAYS meet the following criteria:
 - a. They represent phenomena or trends that currently exist and are not hypothetical future problems unless there is strong and sufficient evidence that suggests that the phenomena will PROBABLY exist (and your evidence must be clear and strong, with solid sources to back it up).
 - b. They represent phenomena or trends, not actions that a company or the industry might do about them (**this is an automatic show-stopper**). Read each one aloud and ask yourself if you are saying that a company can do something. If yes, then I stop grading here. If no, then probably okay.
 - c. They apply to most of the industry and not just one or only a few companies.
 - d. They are not under the control or direct influence of only one or a few companies.
4. Create a table in the following format with the information from your PESTEL analysis:

	Opportunities	Threats
Political/Legal	O1. O2.	T1. T2.
Economical	O3. O4.	T3. T4.
Sociocultural	O5. O6.	T5. T6.
Technological	O7. O8.	T7. T8.
Ecological	O9. O10.	T9. T10.

5. Create a table in the following format with the information from your Porter's 5 Forces analysis:

	Opportunities	Threats
Customers	O11. O12.	T11. T12.
Suppliers	O13. O14.	T13. T14.
New Entrants	O15. O16.	T15. T16.
Competitors	O17. O18.	T17. T18.
Substitutes	O19. O20.	T19. T20.