**BUSINESS OPERATIONS RESEARCH TIPS 2018**

**As of 9/26/2018**

**GENERAL FORMATTING:**

Times New Roman, 12pt Font

Single Spaced – New this year!

No Pronouns or Contractions

Utilize Desktop Publishing Features

Additional sub-headings may be added but do not use letters or numbers with the added ones

Graphs, Charts, Tables and Maps always a plus

**SECTION II: INTRODUCTION**

1. **Description of the business**

Focus on history of business, mission/vision statement, business atmosphere/environment, product/service line, pricing, staffing, location, competitors, and any other relevant information to give reader a true sense of the business.

Use quotes from the owners/managers

Consider pictures to enhance description

1. **Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic, and socioeconomic)**

**Economics:** Current economic conditions in the area of the business, unemployment statistic, major businesses in the area

**Geographics:** Location in relation to major infrastructures, populations, location to competitors

**Demographics:** Age, gender, income, ethnicity

**Socioeconomics:** Values of the community and how they spend their money, (housing market, unemployment, lifestyle, etc.)

Economic values put into giving and charitable contributions

Relate each of the above to your specific business. What is the “so what” for your business of the above data.

1. **Description of the business or organizations current corporate social responsibility**

Current Corporate Social Responsibility

* CSR Philosophy
* CSR Past Programs
* CSR Specific Strategies

Effectiveness of Current Strategies

Data to Support (Qualitative and Quantitative)

Do not forget to add the **research problem** in a role play context

Ex) As a hired consultant for Business X, I have been tasked with analyzing Business X’s customers perceptions regarding their current corporate social responsibility. This paper will detail a plan to help Business X to develop a cause marketing campaign that aligns with their core values.

**Section II 911’s**

**SECTION III: RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY**

***Create Interview Questions and Survey’s to go in the Appendix***

1. **Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study**

**Manager**

Under each you discuss why you asked the questions you did and reference the appendix.

NO RESULTS OR ANALYSIS

Ex) See Appendix A for Full Manager Survey

**Employee**

**Customer**

**Focus Group**

**Secondary Research**

1. **Process used to conduct the selected research methods**

**Manager**

Dates and times that interviews or surveys were passed out. Make sure to note number of surveys handed out and number returned for employee to customer

NO RESULTS/ANALYSIS

**Employee**

**Customer**

**Focus Group**

**Secondary Research**

End SECTION WITH A SUMMARY CHART OF METHODS, DATES AND TIMES

**Section III 911’s**

**SECTION IV: FINDINGS AND CONCULUSIONS OF THE STUDY**

1. **Findings of the Research Study**

Organize by either Manager, Employee, Customer, Focus Group, Secondary Research or by topics

Minimum 3 to 5 data pieces per group

Data needs to be relevant and lead the reader some where

Graphs should be the same size if possible, visually appealing, with data labels and titles

1. **Conclusions Based on the Findings**

List and describe top conclusions – at least 3 to 5

Lead in about what is a SWOT, PRIMOF, and PESTLE and how they were used in this analysis

Use SWOT as conclusion

**Section IV 911’s**

**SECTION V: PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN**

1. **Objectives and Rationale of the Proposed Plan**

Lead in with Acronym for Plan

List of 3-5 objectives needed (big picture ideas such as give X amount to CSR Cause, build customer base by 5% through increased favorable perception)

Need to be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, result focused, time bound) Objectives/Goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely)

Justify/describe why you selected these objectives

1. **Proposed Activities and Timelines**

Lead in and list or table format of activities

Activities should support the objectives

Very detail specific so this plan theoretically could be implemented

Need a timeline and/or timeline chart

1. **Proposed Metrics or Key Performance Indicators to Measure Plan Effectiveness**

Ties back into your SMART goals

Predicted CSR impact in time frame of SMART goals and beyond/future implications

**Section V 911’s**

**SECTION VI: PROPOSED BUDGET**

1. **Costs Associated with Proposed Strategies**

Everything has a cost – identify hard costs to costs such as staff training, labor promotion, etc needed to implement activities

Budget Chart/Table

Research Costs

ROI to close

Cite Sources

**Section VI 911’s**

**VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Needs 10 plus sources in MLA Format

**VIII. APPENDIX**

**Appendix A: Manager/Owner Interview**: (15-20 Interview Questions)

***General Questions***  
History of Business

Mission and Vision Statement

General Product/Service Information

Current CSR Mission/Philosophy

Current CSR Strategies

Employee Training Programs in CSR

Specific CSR Opportunities to Consider

Hits and Misses

Past Strategies

Statistics to Support Each

SWOT of the business

**Appendix B: Employee Survey:** (minimum 10 – forced choice, but could leave a few open)

Employment History – length of employment, position

Training in CSR Philosophy

Perceptions about Company CSR

Contributions in CSR

Specific CSR Opportunities to Consider

Hits and Misses – What is working, what is not?

**Appendix C: Customer Survey:** (minimum 10 – forced choice, but could leave a few open)

Age, Gender, Income Levels

Buying Habits (how often, what they buy, how much spend)

Perceptions about Company CSR

CSR as a Driver for $ Spent

Hits and Misses of Current CSR

Competitors – Why do they choose other companies? How often they go elsewhere?

Competitors CSR – What they like about other companies efforts in this area.

Specific CSR Opportunities to Consider

**Appendix D: Focus Group:** (a manager, a few employees and a few customers – Min 10 Topics)

Topics or Open Ended Questions from Above