**Assignments: Descriptions, Expectations, and Grading Criteria**

**Assignment A:** Leadership

1. Identify a leader who you admire and why you admire them
2. Identify 2 techniques they used to be known as a great leader that you can use to improve your leadership skills.
3. Keep this assignment under 23 sentences**.**

Grading: Identifying a leader 20%

2 techniques they used that you can use; 40% each

5% penalty for each sentence over 23 sentences in totals

**Assignment B: Using MS Project (or similar) to create a project schedule**

***Beacon Students are NOT to do this assignment***

*Purpose/Intent:* The idea of this assignment is to give you practice building a project schedule, and using a project scheduling tool, in case you ever need to do this in industry. The project schedule will let you and your team know what is due by when, and who is responsible for each task. In industry after you create the project schedule, you would then hold status meetings to update the progress of each task to understand if the project is doing fine, or if it needs attention. You will also be able to use it to identify specific tasks that need attention. The ability of Project Managers to MS Project (or similar) is expected in industry, and by your project team.

*General Expectation:* You are to create a project schedule using MS Project (or similar). I will teach you how to use MS Project 2 class sessions before the assignment is due. The project schedule should either be for:

* An IT project you worked on, or are planning to do. IT projects based on your personal experience are strongly encouraged in order to strengthen the relationship between what we learn in class and how to use this **information in an IT environment**.
* A physical construction project (building a kitchen, building a bathroom etc.)
* Any other project you want to make a project schedule for (some people use their hobbies)

Though IT projects are strongly preferred, no matter which of the above 3 approaches you pick, you will be graded the same as anyone else.

*Specific Expectation:* Your document you save in Blackboard MUST be either a PDF (preferred) or screen prints. If this is not the case then we’ll give you a ZERO on the assignment.

*Comment:* Please don’t base this assignment on any confidential work you’ve done. Also, if you want to protect specific confidential information, feel free to fabricate information where appropriate. Just assume that in our class that there is someone working for a competitor, and they’d LOVE to know your secrets J

*Comment:* No commentary or writing should be included with this, just looking for the project schedule.

*Comment:* How to obtain MS Project software or similar

As for the software to do this, here are the options. “Option a” has proven to work the best so far for students:

Option a: You can use Project Plan 365 (PC and MAC -recommended):

Project Plan 365 can be downloaded from: <https://www.projectplan365.com/> , it has a 30 day free trial. Be sure to leave a little extra time if you use this option as a few students say they have had issues with establishing predecessors, and “auto-scheduling.” But, I have only heard this from a very few students, almost all students to date have indicated they had no issue with this software.

Option b: University Supplied Software

This method works for PC users (not MAC) users, and gives students access MS Project for a few months. You will get a letter from the University about 2 weeks after class starts for how to download this. It is not easy to get the download to work, I recommend going to the on-campus IIT library for help getting this loaded. Sorry, MS Project does not work on Apple Products.

Option c: eBay

You might be able to buy MS Project off of Ebay.

*Assignment Description and Grading Criteria:*

Create a project schedule, preferably for an IT project (but having an IT project is not required).

* There must be at least 25 rows, and no more than 50 **(20%)**
* All tasks must have a predecessor, unless they are the first task in your project schedule or a group heading (group headings should not have predecessors). Students tend to forget this, so be careful here. **(20%)**
* There must be at least 4 indented groups, each with a milestone of duration zero to signaling the completion of a group of tasks. *Strictly speaking, milestones do not necessarily need an effort of zero hours, and, they do not need to the end of a phase. But, for this assignment, milestones are to have an effort of zero hours, and are to be located at the bottom of a group of related tasks. One student had a good idea, she used “client signs approval document” as her milestones.* **(20%)**
* If task start and end dates are present, and no question marks are showing. Question marks mean that the MS Project is using a default value, it also means that the project manager has not paid any attention to that duration for that task, and is using the default value. *If you are looking at someone else’s MS Project schedule and see question marks, just assume the PM is not doing their job.* **(20%)**
* Use the “Add New Column” feature to add “% Complete” as a column on the right. In industry, during status meetings, team members are asked for their % complete, and the project manager enters that into MS Project. After the status meeting, after all % Completes are entered, the Project Manager will have a good idea if the project is on schedule, and which tasks need attention. Feel free to enter actual values in % complete if you want to, but I won’t grade on the actual presence of non-zero data, I will just check that you were able to create the % complete column. **(15%)**
* People’s **“names”** or roles are assigned to all tasks in the “resource names” field (except group headings). Please note, you can add multiple people to the “resource names” field if you separate the names by a comma. **(5%)**

**Assignment C: Team Leadership Book Quiz**

This is a quiz over chapters 1 - 10 of Mary Shapiro’s book HBR (Harvard Business Review) Guide to Leading Teams. This quiz can be found under “assignments” in Blackboard. It has 10 questions; each question is worth 1 point.All questions are true/false. This is an “open book” quiz. This quiz is simply intended to get you to read this wonderful book.

**Assignment D:** **Project Plan**

*Purpose/Intent:* The idea of this assignment is to allow you to format work you have done in real-life into a project plan template, using what you have learned in this course.

*General Idea:* Identify a project you would like to migrate into the template format provided below, and then do so. IT projects, based on your personal experience (from industry, or school), are strongly encouraged in order to strengthen the relationship between what we learn in class and how to use this information in an IT environment. But, as there are students who take this class with no IT background, it is NOT a requirement that this assignment be based on an IT project. This will NOT be presented in class.

*Comment:* If there are any proprietary or similar information that you do not wish to share, or simply don’t have, feel free to fabricate information**.**

*Comment:* The information requested below is to be captured on PowerPoint slides.

*The Assignment and Related Grading:*

Assignment E is just like filling out a template with requested information. The information requested is specifically indicatedbelow:

* **(5%)** Title slide identifying name of project, and student’s name
* **(10%)** Scope; what does this project do?:
  + Tell me functions will that will be the outcome of you competed project, what actions the deliverables of the completed project will perform, or what product your project will produce.
  + Optional: What the project does not do (0%)
* **(5%)**How
  + Methodology: State “Agile,” “waterfall”/”predictive,” blended/hybrid (Agile + waterfall, this is called a “hybrid” or “blended”), or similar. Also, please identify why you picked this methodology
  + If this is an IT project:
    - How will you test it? (Unit Testing, Integrated System Testing, User Acceptance Testing, Load Testing, Regression Testing, etc.)
    - What technologies will you use to build it? (C#, C++, JAVA, Python, MySQL, etc.)
* **(10%)**Financials:
  + Value: What is the value of doing this project (self-enjoyment, meeting company objectives, making money, regulatory requirements, etc.)? If the project is for profit, please identify the projected gross revenue by year.
  + Cost: Identify by year, what resources you will need (people, machines, licenses etc.) and the related cost.
  + Optional: Use the “value” above, and “cost” above, to calculate NPV. But this is optional (calculating NPV is worth zero percent)
* (**10%)** Time: For a waterfall project, identify the milestones. For a Scrum project, identify the major activities for each sprint/iteration for the life of the effort
* **(15%)** Monitor/Control: How are you going guide the effort as it progresses? That is, how will you monitor your project to ensure it is meeting customer expectations with respect to time, cost, and quality as it is being executed, and, what major controls will you put in place?
* **(10%)** Quality metrics: How will you confirm the “fitness of use” of the outcome of the effort/project? For example, will you create surveys and send them to end users to ensure your project, once delivered, is meeting their needs? Or in the case of Agile/Scrum, will you hold demonstrations, at least once every iteration/sprint to ensure the customer is receiving exactly what they wanted?
* **(20%)** Risk: Produce 1 slide. Identify what a risk is with respect to the project meeting its objectives and goals. On each slide identify:
  + A risk event (that is describe what the risk you are concerned about is)
  + Whether the risk is positive or negative
  + How the project would be impacted if the risk event takes place
  + For risks:
    - For adverse/pure risks: how they are to be addressed specifically mention one of the 5 methods of dealing with pure risk as listed below;
      * “Avoided,” Change the project so the risk can’t happen
      * “Transferred,” Buy insurance or write contracts that get someone else to absorb the negative impacts of a risk should it manifest itself
      * “Mitigated,” Modify the project so the risk does not happen, or, create a backup plan and implement the backup plan incase the primary plan does not work
      * “Escalated” tell your executives about it and let them figure it out (this is when corrective action is beyond the scope of the project team to address)
      * “Accepted” You just ignore the risk, and let it happen. No plan is made to address the risk should it manifest itself.
    - For a positive risk, how it is to be addressed specifically mention one of the 5 methods of dealing with positive risk as listed below:
      * Escalate: tell your executives if the opportunity is outside of the project’s scope
      * Exploit: Make sure the risk happens by applying the best resources to the effort, spending a lot of money on it, etc.
      * Share: Identify others in your organization who can benefit from this risk manifesting itself, and make sure that if the risk manifests itself, they also receive a positive benefit.
      * Enhance: Figure out how to make the risk event worth even more to the organization if it manifests itself.
      * Accept: No nothing special. If the positive risk takes place, just let it happen without any extra effort or activity.
  + Identify for the risk you identified what the impact would be with respect to meeting the project’s objectives (e.g. 1-5 where 1 is low impact)
  + How likely that the risk would take place (e.g. 1-5 where 1 is unlikely)
  + Identify the “risk score.” Risk Score = Probability \* Likelihood (In industry the risk score is used to prioritize risks, the higher the “risk score,” the more attention should be applied to the risk. )
  + Optional: How will you monitor to see if this risk manifested itself?
  + Optional: For negative risks, what can be done to decrease the probability and/or impact – if anything
  + Optional: For positive risks, what can be done to increase the probability and/or impact – if anything
* **(5%)** Summary:
  + What is the status at this moment? There are 2 ways to address this:
    - If the project is not yet complete, how is the project progressing?
    - If the project is complete, were the objectives met?
  + Retrospective (also called lessons learned or post mortem): If this project were done again, what would you recommend the team do differently**?**
* **(10%)** Student’s work is captured on a PowerPoint, and stored on Blackboard as a PPT or PPTX only (not a zip or any other file extension)
  + Even though this is in the form of a PPTX, there is no expectation of you presenting in class.

Comment: The % contribution of each area is in parenthesis before the work is described. .5% will be deducted from the total score for each typo, misspelling, grammar error, etc.

Comment: To improve your score, use the above bullet points as a check list when you are done to make sure you addressed all the areas requested. The biggest reason students miss points on this assignment is they forget to address an area as indicated above. You can add extra information if you like, but, the only way to accumulate points is by meeting the specific expectations identified above.

\* When I say "when a risk manifests itself," here is what I mean.  In Japan, they built a nuclear power plant on the edge of a very large body of water.  They knew there was a possibility of a 15-meter tsunami wave (a tsunami wave happens as the result of an earthquake in an ocean).  Up until the moment the 15 foot tsunami wave hit Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant, that event was only a possibility, or as we would say; a "risk." When the wave actually struck the nuclear power plant\*\*, it became an "issue." An issue is a known activity that a team must deal with to be successful. At the very moment in time that the 15 foot wave hit the nuclear power plant, it became an issue (because the event actually happened). This moment of time,when the risk became an issue, is what I am referring to as the risk "manifesting itself."

\*\**If you'd like more information on this event that took place in Japan at, Fukushima, on March 11, 2011, please:* [*http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-accident.aspx*](http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-accident.aspx)