KALCH Distribution Company (KDC) IT Decision Paper Assignment

Before you begin this assignment, be sure you have read the "KALCH Distribution Company Case Study," any feedback on your proposed IT project from your ITSP Part 2 assignment, and the previously assigned course materials.

Purpose of this Assignment

This assignment gives you the opportunity to apply the course concepts to develop an IT Decision Paper to explain and defend an IT project at KALCH Distribution Company (KDC). This assignment specifically addresses the following course outcomes to enable you to:

- Apply best practices in information technology management and governance to make, defend, and justify an IT decision.

IT Decision Paper for Your Proposed IT Project

For your ITSP, Part 2, you proposed an IT project for KDC. Leona, the CIO at KDC, has asked you to write an IT Decision Paper to explain your proposed project. She wants to use the Paper to gain approval from the Governance Board to move forward with the project. This assignment uses a format for a Decision Paper that has been tailored to the course material covered in this class. You may work for an organization that has a format for IT decision papers, and it would be a good idea for you to take a look at it, but it will likely be structured a little differently from this one. Each organization develops tools and techniques that will work for them.

Assignment

You will develop an IT Decision Paper, using the outline below. Each of the topics to be included in your outline is covered in the course content readings assigned thus far. In addition to the course materials, at least one external resource (resource other than those provided in the class) must be used. **Two or more cited references will earn top credit. Use a separate References page to list just the references you have cited.** Remember to use the APA formatting rules and correctly cite and reference your sources with APA format. Use the Grading Rubric to be sure you have covered everything. Submit your paper as a Microsoft Word document, or a document that can be read using Word, **with your last name included in the filename.**

Please use this outline to build your IT Decision Paper. Use the numbering and headings shown below.

1. Project Description – In two or three sentences, describe the IT project you proposed for KDC in Part 2 of your ITSP. Describe what major function(s) the system would perform and who would use it. (Do not provide a technical description with hardware, software, etc.)

2. Strategic Alignment – In a short paragraph, explain how the proposed project aligns to the business strategic objectives in Part 1 of your ITSP, and how the proposed project aligns to the IT strategies in Part 2 of your ITSP. Your proposed project must be aligned directly with at least one business strategic objective and one IT strategy shown in your ITSP.

3. IT Portfolio Alignment – Briefly explain where this project fits into the IT Portfolio roadmap you included in Part 2 of your ITSP. What functional area does it support? Where should it be included in the timeline – i.e., should it take priority or be done before another project in the IT Portfolio?

4. <u>IT Architecture</u> – Briefly explain how this project fits in with other systems in place or in development at KDC. Explain whether it should interface with (share data of any kind with) other systems either in place or in development. Explain whether it replaces another system or multiple systems in use at KDC. Refer to the Inventory of Current IT Projects in Part 1 of your ITSP and the IT Portfolio in Part 2 of your ITSP.

5. <u>Benefits:</u> Describe at a high level at least three benefits the project provides to KDC. The benefits should correspond to the business strategies and the strategic alignment discussed in section 2 above. Discuss this relationship/alignment for each benefit. Refer to course content readings from Week 4 on Value Attainment. External research may also be beneficial.

6. <u>Requirements</u> – List and briefly explain the high level requirements for the project. First, explain the primary driver of the project (major need of the business identified in the Case Study). Refer to course content readings regarding requirements. External research may also be beneficial. Develop at least 8 requirements for the project, and include what category of the requirements below your presented requirements fit into:

    a. Business/user requirements
    b. IT/system requirements
    c. At least one system performance requirement

7. <u>Cost Estimation</u> - During the Assessment Phase, Cost Estimation consists of estimating the size and complexity of the project, not the effort required or the actual projected dollar costs. Copy the table below and place an X (or other indication) in the box that most closely describes the size and complexity of your proposed solution. Use your judgment and then write a short paragraph to introduce and explain the assessments in your table. Refer to course content readings from Week 4 on Cost Estimation, especially the Assessment Phase.

Assessment of Project Size and Complexity			
Size/Complexity	Small	Medium	Large
Very Complex			
Moderately Complex			
Straightforward			

8. <u>Performance Measures</u> – This section explains how KDC will know whether the project is achieving the benefits identified above in section 5. Review the benefits, and take a look at the requirements you identified, and come up with three performance measures that will indicate the extent to which the projected benefits have been achieved. (For example, if you had identified a benefit that the project would result in more repeat customers, then a measurement for that would be the number of repeat customers with the goal that the number would increase.) Refer to course content readings on Performance Measurement. This may be a good area to do some web research. The measures should be presented in a table with an introductory sentence or two:

Benefit to Business	Measure
1.(example: increase in repeat customers)	(example: number of repeat customers)
2.	
3.	

9. <u>System Development</u> - Describe how you will use the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC) process to approach this project. Include the following 5 stages: Plan, Design, Build, Test, Launch. In two to three sentences each, explain how each stage would be handled by Leona's IT team and who else in KDC should be involved in each stage. Refer to course content materials on SDLC.

The "right" and "wrong" answers have to do with whether or not you correctly incorporated the course concepts from the course content and addressed all parts of the assignment. You need to do some external research on at least one aspect of the assignment - your choice - and incorporate it and cite/reference it in APA format in your response. The project you propose is not as important as that it makes sense in light of the course content and the Case Study. Use the Rubric below to be sure you have covered all aspects of the assignment.

GRADING RUBRIC:

Criterion	90-100% Far Above Standards	80-89% Above Standards	70-79% Meets Standards	60-69% Below Standards	< 60% Well Below Standards	Possible Points
Project Description	**5 Points** Description of the project is clear and concise, covers functions and users, and sets the stage for the remainder of the paper; demonstrates understanding of course concepts, analysis and critical thinking.	**4 Points** Description of the project is clear and concise, covers functions and users, and sets the stage for the remainder of the paper.	**3.5 Points** Description of the IT Project includes what it does (functions it performs) and who uses it.	**3 Points** Description of the project is unclear, not concise, and/or does not set the stage for the remainder of the paper.	**0-2 Points** Little or no description of the proposed IT project is included.	**5**
Strategic Alignment	**9-10 Points** Explanation of proposed project includes clear and well-supported alignment to at least one business objective in Part 1 of the ITSP and one IT strategy in Part 2 of the ITSP; explanation is very appropriate to the Case	**8 Points** Explanation of proposed project includes clear alignment to at least one business objective in Part 1 of the ITSP and one IT strategy in Part 2 of the ITSP; explanation is appropriate to the Case Study and tied to the proposed IT project.	**7 Points** Explanation of proposed project includes direct alignment to at least one business strategic objective in Part 1 of the ITSP and to at least one IT strategy in Part 2 of the ITSP.	**6 Points** Explanation of business objectives and/or IT strategies are incomplete; and/or are only partially appropriate to the Case Study or the proposed IT project.	**0-5 Points** Explanation of Strategic Alignment is minimal or not included.	**10**

	9-10 Points	8 Points	7 Points	6 Points	0-5 Points	
	Study and clearly tied to the proposed IT project.					
IT Portfolio Alignment	This section thoroughly explains the relationship of the proposed IT project to the IT Portfolio Roadmap in Part 2 of the ITSP, including a full explanation of the functional area supported, and where this project fits in the timeline.	This section clearly explains the relationship of the proposed IT project to the IT Portfolio Roadmap in Part 2 of the ITSP, including a good explanation of the functional area supported, and where this project fits in the timeline.	This section has an explanation of the relationship of the proposed IT project to the IT Portfolio Roadmap in Part 2 of the ITSP, including: where the proposed project fits into the IT Portfolio roadmap; identification of the functional area it supports; and where it should be included in the timeline in the ITSP.	This section includes only part of the required information on the relationship of the proposed IT project to the IT Portfolio Roadmap in Part 2 of the ITSP (where it fits, the functional area supported, and the timeline); and/or is not relevant to Case Study.	This section minimally covers the relationship of the proposed IT project to the IT Portfolio Roadmap in Part 2 of the ITSP, or does not cover it at all.	10
IT Architecture	A correct and convincing explanation of the IT Architecture includes how the project fits with, interfaces with and/or replaces other systems; explanation is clearly relevant to the Case Study and the proposed project; demonstrates thorough understanding of course concepts,	An accurate explanation of the IT Architecture includes how the project fits with, interfaces with and/or replaces other systems; explanation is relevant to the Case Study and the proposed project; demonstrates understanding of course concepts, analysis and critical thinking.	Explanation of the IT Architecture includes: how the proposed IT project fits in with other systems in place or in development at the business in the Case Study; whether it should interface with other systems either in place or in development; and whether it replaces another system or multiple systems in use at the	IT Architecture explanation partially covers how the project fits with, interfaces with and/or replaces other systems; is not relevant to the Case Study or the proposed project.	IT Architecture explanation is minimal or not included.	10

	9-10 Points	8 Points	7 Points	6 Points	0-5 Points	
	analysis and critical thinking.		business in the Case Study.			
Benefits	**9-10 Points** Three or more business benefits are thoroughly and convincingly explained; are clearly aligned to the business objectives above; benefits are highly applicable to and appropriate for the proposed solution and the Case Study.	**8 Points** Three or more business benefits are fully explained; are aligned to the business objectives above; benefits are clearly applicable to and appropriate for the proposed solution and the Case Study.	**7 Points** At least two business benefits that the proposed IT project provides to the organization in the Case Study are described at a high level. The benefits correspond to the business strategies and the strategic alignment discussed in section 2 above.	**6 Points** Fewer than 2 business benefits are shown; benefits are not aligned to business objectives above; are not applicable to or appropriate for the proposed solution and/or the Case Study.	**0-5 Points** Business benefits are minimally addressed or not included.	**10**
Requirements	**9-10 Points** This section includes an effective and well-written introduction that is applicable to the Case Study and thoroughly and convincingly explains the primary business driver for the proposed IT project. At least 10 unique requirements are identified and are clearly applicable to the Case Study; requirements cover items a-c in the assignment; demonstrates thorough understanding of course concepts,	**8 Points** This section includes a well-written introduction that is applicable to the Case Study and fully explains the primary business driver for the proposed IT project. At least 9 unique requirements are identified and are clearly applicable to the Case Study; requirements cover items a-c in the assignment; demonstrates understanding of course concepts, analysis and critical thinking.	**7 Points** This section includes an introduction that explains the primary driver behind the system (major business need). Then, at least 8 requirements are listed and briefly explained, and include: (a) business/user requirements, (b) IT/system requirements; and (c) at least one system performance requirement.	**6 Points** This section does not include an introduction identifying the primary driver for the system; 8 or fewer requirements are identified; requirements are not applicable to the Case Study; and/or items a-c in the assignment are not covered.	**0-5 Points** This section minimally addresses requirements, or requirements are not included.	**10**

	analysis and critical thinking.					
Cost Estimation	**9-10 Points** This section includes an effective and well-written introductory paragraph that is applicable to the Case Study and thoroughly and convincingly justifies the assessments in the table that follows. Cost estimation table is included, with appropriate selection for size and complexity.	**8 Points** This section includes an appropriate introductory paragraph that is applicable to the Case Study and provides a good explanation of the assessments in the table that follows. Cost estimation table is included, with appropriate selection for size and complexity.	**7 Points** This section includes an introductory paragraph that explains the assessments and applies to the Case Study. Cost estimation table is included; selections are made for size and complexity.	**6 Points** This section does not include an introductory paragraph; and/or cost estimation table is included, but selection for size and complexity are not appropriate or adequately justified.	**0-5 Points** This section provides little or no information on the cost estimation; cost estimation table is missing; and/or information presented does not apply to the Case Study.	**10**
Performance Measures	**9-10 Points** This section includes an effective and well-written introductory paragraph that is applicable to the Case Study, the proposed solution and the table that follows. The completed table contains all required information, accurately reflecting the Case Study and the proposed solution; demonstrates thorough understanding of course concepts, analysis and critical thinking.	**8 Points** This section includes an appropriate introductory paragraph that is applicable to the Case Study, the proposed solution and the table that follows. The completed table contains all required information, accurately reflecting the Case Study and the proposed solution; demonstrates understanding of course concepts, analysis and critical thinking.	**7 Points** This section includes at least one or two sentences that introduce the table. Performance Measures Table is included showing three benefits and three measures that are appropriate to the proposed solution and the Case Study.	**6 Points** This section includes fewer than three benefits and associated performance measures; measures do not align to benefits; benefits and measures are not appropriate to the Case Study and the proposed solution; and/or introduction is missing.	**0-5 Points** This section provides little or no information on Performance Measures; table is missing; and/or information presented does not apply to the Case Study.	**10**

System Development	9-10 Points	8 Points	7 Points	6 Points	0-5 Points	10
	The five stages of the SDLC are thoroughly covered; explanation is tied directly to the project and to the case study; includes IT team responsibilities and appropriate involvement of others at the business in the Case Study; demonstrates thorough understanding of course concepts and vocabulary.	The five stages of the SDLC are fully covered; explanation is includes discussion of the project and the case study; includes IT team responsibilities and appropriate involvement of others at the business in the Case Study; demonstrates understanding of course concepts and vocabulary.	The five stages of the SDLC are covered: Plan, Design, Build, Test, Launch. Two to three sentences are used to explain how each stage would be handled by the team and identify others who need to be involved at the business in the Case Study.	The five stages of the SDLC are not all covered; explanations are not appropriate to the project and the Case Study; and/or do not include IT team responsibilities and/or appropriate involvement of others at the business in the Case Study.	The stages of the SDLC are minimally addressed or are not included.	
External Research	5 Points	4 Points	3.5 Points	3 points	0-2 Points	5
	Two or more sources other than the course materials are incorporated in two or more sections of the paper and are used effectively. Sources used are relevant and timely and contribute to the analysis. References are appropriately incorporated and cited using APA style.	At least one source other than the course materials is incorporated and used effectively. Source(s) are relevant and contribute to the analysis. References are appropriately incorporated and cited using APA style.	At least one source other than the course materials is used and properly incorporated into the text. Reference is cited using APA style.	A source other than the course materials may be used, but is not properly incorporated or used and/or is not effective or appropriate and/or is not relevant or timely; and/or does not follow APA style for references and citations.	No external research is incorporated or reference listed is not cited within text.	
Report Format	9-10 Points	8 Points	7 Points	6 Points	0-5 Points	10
	Report is very well organized and is easy to read. Very few or no errors in	Report reflects effective organization; has few errors in sentence	Report has some organization; may have some errors in sentence	Report is not well organized, and/or contains	Report is extremely poorly written, has many	

sentence structure, grammar, and spelling; presented in a professional format.	structure, grammar, and spelling; presented in a professional format.	structure, grammar and spelling.	several grammar and/or spelling errors.	grammar and/or spelling errors, or does not convey the information.	
				TOTAL Possible Points	**100**