

Strategy, Generative AI, and Thematic Analysis

TIM 175 WEEK 1 LAB

In this week, you will be doing two things to lay a foundation for the rest of the course. First, you will reflect on the use of generative AI in organizations in connection to frameworks on business strategy. Second, you will manually carry out a thematic analysis of interviews for YFIOB's What-To-Be podcasts. This assignment only has an **individual deliverable due Saturday 11:59pm**.

Readings: We mark up to two readings with a ★ that we suggest you read

- [a generative AI reset, McKinsey](#) ★
- [turning GenAI magic into business impact, BCG](#)
- [Can GenAI destroy incumbent firms' competitive advantage](#) - summary of an HBR article
- [Michael Porter's 3 great strategy contributions, Roger Martin](#) - great overview/refresher of strategy
- [thematic analysis of user interviews, Interaction Design](#) ★
- [qualitative market research](#) - shows how qualitative research is useful in a startup

Submission Link

[Homework 1 Lab \(Individual Submission\) Google Form](#)

Brief Task Overview

Business Strategy and Generative AI

- ☐ Read and reflect on business strategy and Generative AI
- ☐ Share one substantive takeaway on how organizations should be thinking about Generative AI when considering their business strategy. Use a business framework in your discussion and illustrate your thoughts with concrete examples/implications for real organizations (one-pager plus concise one-paragraph and one-sentence versions)

Thematic Analysis of What-To-Be podcast

1. Make a copy of the two podcast transcripts ([078_Kayla Baumgardner Firefighter Paramedic](#) [084_Lauren DelCarlo_CaliforniaHigh PatrolOfficer](#)) and review the research question: "What career insights, perspectives or tips do professionals have that might be helpful for a young person who is just beginning their career journey?"
2. Do initial coding of the two transcripts to produce codes / themes
3. Copy codes/themes and quotes into a spreadsheet (make a copy of the [themes and codes spreadsheet template](#) for this)
4. Organize your set of themes into higher-level themes
5. Create a table of your themes (make a copy of the [thematic analysis summary and narratives doc](#))
6. Write a narrative for just ONE theme and add it to the same doc as your table

You can use ChatGPT or other GenAI tools to inform any part of the assignment but: (1) you need to first form your own independent thoughts, (2) every word included in the submission needs to be something you've read,

thought about, and decided to include, and (3) you should strive towards submitting the highest quality work you can rather than mediocre work that meets the requirements.

Detailed Instructions and Walkthrough (Individual)

Business Strategy and Generative AI

Read and reflect on business strategy and Generative AI. Read the McKinsey article, [a generative AI reset](#), and optionally, the other provided articles about the use of Generative AI in organizations and for business strategy. You may also consider using the “Deep Research” function of Generative AI tools like OpenAI to find and summarize additional articles on the topic.

Using the frameworks discussed in class relevant to business strategy (e.g. Porter’s five forces, SWOT, Business Model Canvas, Playing to Win), reflect on how Generative AI will affect organizations when thinking about their strategy and what organizations need to consider.

Share one substantive takeaway on how organizations should be thinking about Generative AI.

Focus on one important substantive takeaway that you want to communicate. Write a response to the following prompt:

Share a reflection of how organizations should be thinking about Generative AI when considering their business strategy. Use a business framework in your discussion (focus on 1 rather than covering a several in a shallow way) and illustrate/expand on your thoughts with concrete examples/implications for real organizations (for-profit or non-profit are all ok),

You will need to submit varying length versions of your reflection:

- **A one-pager** (single-spaced, 12-pt font, Times New Roman) – this is your full reflection, write it in a document to check the length, but then copy-paste it into the submission form,
- **A one-paragraph abstract** – concisely summarize your reflection in a substantive way (should still mention the business framework you touch on and your illustration),
- **A one-sentence takeaway** – concisely state the main message for an organization.

Thematic Analysis of What-To-Be Podcast

Make a copy of the podcast transcripts and review the research question. You will be doing thematic analysis for the following two What-To-Be podcast episodes, whose transcripts are linked to below.

Make a digital copy of these transcripts so that you can easily annotate them:

- [078_Kayla Baumgardner Firefighter Paramedic](#)
- [084_Lauren DelCarlo_CaliforniaHigh PatrolOfficer](#)

You will be looking to answer or share insights around the research question:

“What career insights, perspectives or tips do professionals have that might be helpful for a young person who is just beginning their career journey?”

You may also want to read / reference [How to do a Thematic Analysis for User Interviews](#) or the 4/1 lecture slides/recording when working on this.

Do initial coding of the two transcripts to produce codes / themes. Starting one transcript at a time, read through your interviews and use Google Doc's commenting feature to add codes / themes relevant to the research question.

- As you add themes, you may want to begin grouping them together into categories or higher-level/lower-level themes so that you can begin to see the structure
- You should code everything that you observe as relevant to the research question
- Be particularly attentive to any quotes that are particularly salient, evocative, or essence-capturing, i.e. quotes that really make something come to life and help bring people into a scenario or the context. When you communicate your findings, you'll want to use these particularly evocative quotes.

Pro Tip 1: Consider writing your annotations in the format “[theme / category] - [subtheme]”. For example, if coding for a research question on *Strengths and Weaknesses* of an organization, one way to group codes together might be to use “**W - [theme]**” for *weakness* related codes and “**S - [theme]**” for *strengths* related codes, or even “**S - Services - [theme]**” to group together *strengths* related to services. Writing your codes in this way will help with beginning to group similar codes together.

Pro Tip 2: Phrase the code itself to not just be a passive label, but to actually articulate an insight/answer to the question. For example, if looking for *Strengths and Weaknesses* of an organization, instead of the code “**S - finances**”, using the code “**S - stable revenue through school districts**” will make it much easier for you when reviewing and synthesizing. Or if looking for challenges or barriers for youth career exploration, instead of the code “**relationships - parents**”, you'll find it easier to remember what you meant if you phrase the code as “**relational - parent-child tensions cause stress**” will make it much easier for you when reviewing and synthesizing

Pro Tip 3: Thematic analysis is an iterative process of evolving your annotations or how they are categorized as you develop a bigger picture view of your findings. A common approach is to make at least two passes through the transcript. In the first pass, the annotator writes what immediately comes to mind for the annotation labels. Then after getting a bigger picture view, they make a second pass to rephrase the initial category/theme/subtheme labels so that they are more coherent and more effectively communicate the “shape of the data”.

Copy codes/themes and quotes into a spreadsheet. Make a copy of the [themes and codes spreadsheet template](#) for organizing your observations. The template has one editable tab: “All Quotes”.

- Transfer all the annotations you made in the transcript to the “All Quotes” tab, with each annotation corresponding to one row. If you added multiple codes/themes for a single quote, you should add multiple corresponding rows for that quote,

- The *actual quoted text* should go in the fourth column and include the interviewee name, e.g. “(Interviewee) Quote Text”,
- The *initial code/theme* you wrote should go in the third column,
- Leave the first and second columns blank for now. Those will be where you can write higher-level themes/subthemes.

Organize your set of themes into higher-level themes. Now reflect on your initial codes / themes and reorganize or combine them together into higher-level themes or subthemes so that you can more clearly see the ‘shape’ of your data

- In both columns one and two of the spreadsheet, you can either enter new text or select from themes/subthemes you've used earlier
- Drag-and-drop rows to cluster together quotes that have the same theme/subtheme,
- If you read and followed the “Pro Tips” above, your annotations already reflect partial work trying to categorize your annotations and make sense of the higher-level structure.
- Make your best attempt at categorizing ALL the quotes you annotated into themes or subthemes. It is completely OK if a particular subtheme only has a single quote if you think it might illustrate something that we might find in additional future interviews (since you have only annotated a few transcripts from people in different roles).

Your themes and subthemes should be:

- **coherent**, i.e. quotes for a given theme should represent / support the same observation,
- **distinct**, i.e. it should be clear when a quote belongs in one theme versus another, and
- **grounded**, i.e. the themes should be grounded in the quotes (given your best interpretation of the quote given the context),

Create a table of your themes. Make a copy of the [thematic analysis summary and narrative Google Doc](#). Create a table representing your 1) themes, 2) subthemes, and 3) one illustrative quote per subtheme.

- Choose quotes that are the most evocative, salient, or essence-capturing, or that are most effective at illustrating, showing context, and providing nuance and insight to present a rich picture for readers
- Quotes that I would **not** use to illustrate the theme are those that: (1) simply state the theme, or (2) are an abstract assessment/judgment of what others *might* think rather than something based on their own experience (it's a lot less interesting to have a quote saying, “I think other teachers experience this problem” compared to someone saying, “I personally observed this for my students when...”).

Example: This is what a table might look like summarizing themes and subthemes answering the research question: “What are the perceived benefits and limitations of social media-based #DayInTheLife videos for supporting youth career exploration?”

Theme	Subtheme	Illustrative Quote
Benefits for career identity formation	Provides firsthand depiction of how their life works	Yeah, usually like, since they give kind of like a more personal like picture of what's going on? Like usually I use those videos to kind of like understand, like, what would I be getting myself into, like, if I want to pursue it?
	Facilitates reflection, reaffirmation, and reevaluation of goals	But I think like watching these videos, kind of reaffirms that sense, if that makes sense. Like, oh, coz like, I'm still thinking like, what I want to do post grad. And sort of like, I don't know, it's kind of nice to have, like, some reinforcement on what I think are potential paths for me.
Benefits for behavior change	Reduces barriers through casual, digestible formats	It is a one minute max video. So it's not like it's too much of a commitment. It's just you watch the video and you kind of like, get a general vibe.
	Creates entry points for potential further exploration	It gives you an outlook, it gives you an idea and then it just gives you enough to know if you want to continue looking into it deeply.
	Motivates and inspires lifestyle improvements	Okay, yeah so there's this guy whose name is Singh in USA. And he's like, he got an internship at Microsoft and that was the first one I watched. And then after that, it gave me like, kind of motivation to work more, so I can work at Microsoft too
Limitations from Format, Focus, Context, and Representation	Short-form nature and lack of integration insufficient for decision-making	You can only get so much in 60 seconds. I think that's one limit, especially for like complicated careers. I would say. Like for CEOs, I don't know what CEOs actually do, but I imagine it's complicated
	Nature of social media context not conducive for reflection and follow-up	I mean, I don't think there are any benefits of using Tiktok. Because you get distracted a lot. You know, there will be some funny videos coming in, you would start watching them and you know, lose attention. Even if you're working on something very important. Just one video can change your mind. And you can just get distracted, you know.
	Entertainment / influencer dimension takes away from career focus and realism	TikTok is more geared towards entertainment, that I don't find many videos like that, that are like very, like, have like all this explanation about like, what they do. And like, one of the views I saw on there was more geared towards a lifestyle than the actual like, like lifestyle outside of work than what they do during work
	Lacks representation of or personalization to diverse backgrounds and values	it's always for big tech companies. And I don't, even though I'm a CS major, I actually am not the most interested in working at like, any famed company, because they seem kind of, well, I don't know, corporate.

Table 1. The themes and subthemes pertaining to the Benefits and Limitations of #DayintheLife videos for career exploration

Write a narrative for just ONE theme and add it to the same doc as your table. Write a short narrative (max one-page) that concisely but richly communicates one theme related to *career insights, perspectives or tips of professionals*. Use inline quotes and block quotes for that theme to make your narrative richer. Please italicize quotes.

- Create a “title” / “section header” for your them, and “subsections” for your subthemes. These titles could just be the theme/subtheme itself, but make sure it’s phrased in a way that makes the answer clear and skimmable so that a reader can quickly get a feel for the challenge/need,
- Within the theme section, clearly and concisely summarize the entire theme,
- Within the subtheme sections, clearly and concisely summarize the subtheme. Whenever possible, use the voice of the user in your summary with inline quotes from the set of quotes you’ve categorized to this subtheme,
- Within the subtheme sections, integrate in blockquotes of your most essence-capturing, evocative, illustrative, or salient quotes for that subtheme,
- For each given subtheme, make sure each interviewee with a quote categorized into that subtheme is represented either in an inline quote (if their quote is relevant, but not very rich) or a blockquote.
- Quotes should be italicized and should have the pseudonym of the person saying the quote, e.g. *“I love teaching” (Gabe)*.
- Use good writing practices, e.g. have a clear thesis statement and write in a way that surfaces the logic of what you are communicating in a clear and compelling way,
- You will likely need to clean/trim down the quotes so that any inline quotes grammatically fit with the summary and so that blockquotes highlight the most insightful parts. Here are some tips on how to clean your quotes:

- You can use “...” to get rid of parts that you don’t need,
- You can use [bracket text] to paraphrase a few words, often helpful when you just need to change the tense to make it fit with the larger sentence,
- You can feel free to remove excessive amounts of “like”, “um”, “so yea”, etc. I personally like to keep some of them in (when not distracting) as it feels more personal/authentic when reading,

Example: Here is an example of a narrative for one theme and one subtheme for a (different) analysis where the research question is: *“What are the perceived benefits and limitations of social media-based #DayInTheLife videos for supporting youth career exploration?”* You can see in this excerpt how the subtheme summary uses inline quotes from different participants which then culminates in a small number of more illustrative blockquotes that make the subtheme come to life ([full analysis here](#)).

5.1 Benefits for career identity formation

As mentioned in Related Work, the Meeus-Crocetti model describes identity formation as a process of making commitments and then engaging in exploration and reconsideration of those commitments towards authentic commitments [15]. Participants described DITL videos as providing a lightweight way to explore “firsthand” depictions of a profession and described how it facilitated reflection, reaffirmation, and reevaluation of their lifestyle goals and aspirations.

5.1.1 Provides personal “firsthand” depiction of “how their life works”. Participants appreciated how the DITL videos provided a “more personal picture” (P6) into specific careers, expressing that these personal accounts were “firsthand information” (P8) helpful for understanding “what people in various careers are going through in the day to day basis” (P8), “how it works... how your work schedule is gonna be” (P10), and “what would I be getting myself into, like, if I want to pursue it (P6)”. Some elaborated on their specific career exploration contexts:

“I’m like a business major. So a lot of them are like daily life of a big four accountant... it’s like interesting to like, see, like how their life kind of like works... how stressful it is... like hybrid schedules and stuff. I felt like that was pretty interesting. And it gave me like a better scope of like, what these jobs would entail.” (P6)

“I know I want to work in a hospital I kind of already knew like, what to expect like, but I guess for different like jobs and by the hospital, there’s different like call times and stuff, which it showed which was nice.” (P4)