

March 2011

MEMO TO: IDSc 4301 (IDS Capstone Course) Students
Spring 2011

FROM: Norm Chervany

SUBJECT: Group Project [Draft 10-13-2010]

As noted in the syllabus, the Group Project for IDSc 4310 (IDS Capstone Course) requires you “to identify and develop a detailed overview of a strategically important Information Technology/Information Systems (IT/IS) project for a small business of your choice”. This memo provides the details of the Group Project.

If, during the course, you have any questions about the project requirements, please contact me at once.

Group Project Learning/Development Objectives:

The learning/development objectives of the Group Project are to help you enhance your skills at:

1. Understanding an organization’s business strategy and translating that business strategy into in an IT/IS project that will support the business strategy.
2. Using the concept of distinctive competence as a design principle, define the specific roles that. Through this project, IT/IS can play in (a) delivering value to an organization’s customers/clients and (b) executing the critical processes that deliver these customer/client values.
3. Selecting the appropriate IT/IS vendors, existing commercially available software packages, and other IT/IS resources required to implement the required IT infrastructure and IS application.
4. Developing a budget and associated time line, for the development and installation of the recommended IT/IS project.

Small Business Organization Options:

Each team must select one of the following three options for the small business for whom they will develop an IT/IS strategy.

- Option #1: An existing small business with which you are familiar. (In order to develop your recommendations, you will need to be able to get detailed information from the business.)

- Option #2: A small business that you would like to start. (If you choose this option, you are expected to be able to access detailed secondary data that will help you develop your recommendations.)
- Option #3: Brookside Resort, Park Rapids, MN. (See www.brookside-resort.com. The owners of the Resort, Dave and Mary Jane Keller, are close friends of Carol and me. I will be standing in for them as you gather the detailed information required to develop your recommendations.)

Each Team will be comprised of 4-5 students. With the projected 40 – 48 students to be enrolled the course, this means that there should be between 8 to 10 project teams.

You are to form your own teams. You need to select your team no later than Wednesday, March 23, the second class session. Ideally, you will have your teams identified by the time you come to the first session on March 21. You are to have the organization you will be analyzing no later than Monday, March 28, the beginning of the second week of class.

If anyone needs help in this regard, please let me know.

Please email this information as soon as you have it, but no later than the dates identified above.

Group Project Contents:

The Group Project Report is to cover, at the appropriate level of detail, the following topics. [We will work together to define the appropriate level of detail in the different topic areas.]

1. Overview Description of the Business
2. Definition of the Business Strategy
3. Summary of the Business's Competitive Situation
4. Description of the Business's Key Strategic Processes
5. Description of the Existing IT/IS Status of the Business
6. Recommendations and Rationale for Specific Project, including projected benefits, projects costs/investments, recommended vendors, major implementation risks, and the plan to overcome/ameliorate these risks.

A description of the deliverables for the Group Project is defined below.

Project Schedule:

March 21 - 23 – Project Team Defined

March 28 – Project Organization Defined

April 11 – Regularly Scheduled Team Meetings with Instructor Start

May 2, 4, & 7 – Project Team Presentations

Project Deliverables:

The project deliverables will consist of two Power Point Decks and an in-class presentation. The first Power Point deck will provide the details of your analysis and recommendations. The second Power Point Deck will support your in-class presentation.

The in-class presentation should be no more than 20 minutes, with a 15 minute question & answer session to follow. [Please practice your presentation. Your formal remarks will be stopped after the 20 minute allotted time.] Both your instructor and your classmates will be permitted to ask questions.