Weeks 2–7 Assignment Overview
Business Leaders' Requests

Scenario Overview

You have recently been promoted to the role of Vice President of the Information Technology group for a global apparel company, and your promotion is bittersweet. You are excited about this new opportunity; however, you quickly become concerned because during the recent "Welcome: Getting to Know the Leadership Team" meeting, several senior business executives expressed their disappointment with various Information Technology functions and departments within the organization. They are looking to you to make recommendations for how things could be improved and will want to schedule follow-up time for you to present your ideas to them.

Over the coming weeks, you will review all of the executives' requests and conduct research to provide the information they require. In Weeks 2–6, you will answer each executive's questions or requests for that week's Assignment. In Week 7, you will create a PowerPoint presentation that synthesizes the executives' prior requests into one cohesive set of recommendations that will support development of the company's global strategy.

Following is a "transcript" of the conversation with each executive in the "Welcome: Getting to Know the Leadership Team" meeting. Read each scenario in preparation for that week's Assignment, and conduct research using the Walden Library and any other credible scholarly sources to provide the requested information.

Week 2 Scenario: Knowledge Management
Executive A's Request

Welcome to the team! I am glad you are in this role and have no doubt that you will address the team's concerns. Let me begin by sharing my sincere appreciation that you accepted this fantastic opportunity. We know you would like to start working on your organization's strategy, but we all have immediate concerns that we hope you will help us with first.

Last month, I met with some of the Information Technology (IT) technicians who are now part of your team, and they asked me to fund a project related to knowledge management. They mentioned the ICT tool and its relationship to EDI. They also explained how we are not using the ICT tool to promote employee knowledge and innovation. I delayed my decision because I didn't have the information I needed to move forward. To be honest, I was quite embarrassed that I did not understand the technical terms or how this project would be beneficial to our organization. In fact, I did a little research, found various definitions of the term *knowledge management*, and became confused about the definition's relevance to our group and whether this is a viable project to fund. When we next meet, I need the following information from you:

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- Compare and contrast the various forms of knowledge.
- Compare and contrast the various definitions of *knowledge management*.
- Explain the ways knowledge management is relevant and critical for operational processes, human resources, and the organizational culture. Explain your rationale.
- Define information communication technology (ICT) tools and employee-driven innovation (EDI) and explain how these concepts will benefit or not benefit the organization.

If you can assist me with this as I plan my strategy, I can follow up with my team with more definitive direction. I know you will have recommendations during the follow-up meeting.

Week 3 Scenario: Social Commerce and Electronic Commerce
Executive B's Request

Greetings! I know you have a great deal on your plate, but perhaps you can help me with the following issue I am having. Social media infused with electronic commerce is generating such a high volume of data that understanding my customer base is problematic. Although I understand some of my user or customer characteristics (i.e., gender, age, income, and marital status), these things are speculative based on purchases. I want to improve my customers' satisfaction, and I need to form a strategy to understand the integrated social media and e-commerce customer. For our next meeting, I need to know the following:

- What things should I consider as I measure my social media and e-commerce customers' characteristics and behaviors?
- What challenges do you foresee with trying to improve e-commerce customer satisfaction? Provide one or more examples of challenges other companies or business leaders have experienced to illustrate your point.
- Based on your experience and any research you've done, what are some best practices for understanding e-commerce customer satisfaction? Explain your rationale for any best practices you identify.

If you can provide this preliminary information prior to our upcoming follow-up meeting, I believe it will ensure we are communicating effectively, and it will help expedite my business colleagues' exchange of ideas during our strategy meeting.

Week 4 Scenario: Information Systems Resource Options
Executive C's Request

Like my colleagues, I am delighted to have you on board with us! I don't want to overwhelm you, but I have an important decision I need to make because it is imperative that we reduce costs and increase sales. I know your Information Systems Development personnel are working on priority initiatives and cannot devote time to

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some of my business projects that I need to be completed quickly. There are discussions taking place among my colleagues concerning the use of information systems consultants (i.e., outsourcing, offshoring, and crowdsourcing). Although I am familiar with outsourcing and offshoring, I am unfamiliar with crowdsourcing and how leaders are using this type of resource. I have two projects that need to be completed quickly and am unsure of the consultants I should consider, if any. Here is a summary of my current concerns:

- I need a modification to my existing website so that it will accept all the various forms of global social and e-commerce transactions. This will require software development expertise.
- The other upcoming project is to update some of our clothing lines; however, we do not know what our customers would like to purchase. What we do know is that our sales are dropping.
- I need someone to help me understand this e-commerce sales drop and generate innovative ways to increase sales. Additionally, I need to know what we are doing wrong and what new clothes customers will purchase.

I need to select the most appropriate consultant type for each of my projects (i.e., processing transactions and changing clothing lines). Could you please provide the following information before our next meeting?

- Compare and contrast the various types of information systems consultant resource options (i.e., outsourcing, offshoring, and crowdsourcing). Explain the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Describe a company or institution that is using one or more of these various types of information systems consultants and why. What are some best practices? Provide a rationale for each best practice identified.

Week 5 Scenario: Information Systems and Decision Making
Executive D's Request

Welcome to the organization! We run a lot of reports here on a lot of different things, but after some consideration, I noticed our reporting is antiquated. As such, we are not getting the right information at the right time to make the appropriate decisions and are, therefore, not maintaining the competitive advantage. I'd like to get your recommendations about the use of decision support systems (DSS). Before our next meeting, could you provide me with the following?

- Explain how the use of DSS can influence an organization's success, and identify risks associated with their use.
- Provide a list of at least three DSS options and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

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I know in the follow-up meeting you will provide your recommendation for the most effective DSS and your rationale, but in the interim, it would help me if you provide this information before our follow-up meeting.

Week 6 Scenario: Business Continuity Planning and Risk Management
Executive E's Request

Nice to meet you! I am the person responsible for business continuity and oversee the Business Operations staff. We are hoping that you, as the Information Technology leader, can help us understand the various IT components needed to ensure minimal risk to the organization. We need your input as we collaborate to create a business continuity plan that aligns with our organizational strategy. In order to help us get started, we need you to do the following:

- Compare and contrast at least two types of business continuity plans, being sure to explain the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Delineate the appropriate steps needed for business continuity planning.

I know in the follow-up meeting you will have recommendations for my business continuity strategy, but if you could provide this information prior to the follow-up meeting, it would be helpful.

Week 7: Information Systems Strategic Direction
Presentation to the Executive Leadership Team

This week you will submit a 10- to 12-slide PowerPoint presentation in which you synthesize the research you have compiled over Weeks 2–6 and provide your strategic recommendations to the team of executives. Your presentation should contain 1 to 2 slides per topic area, with detailed notes explaining your rationale for the theories and recommendations you chose. Be sure to include a cover slide and References slide(s) as well. Your presentation should include the following headings and must address the bullet points provided:

Knowledge Management (Executive A)

- Briefly summarize (in 2 to 3 bullet points) the relevance and importance of knowledge management to the organization.
- Identify a theory, model, or framework relevant to knowledge management that you believe Executive A can use to gain an understanding of why this topic is helpful to the organization. Include a rationale for your proposal and appropriate scholarly citations to support your assertion.

Social Commerce and Electronic Commerce (Executive B)

- Describe two or more theories, models, or frameworks that can help the executive define characteristics of his/her customers and develop a strategic

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approach to e-commerce customer satisfaction. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Recommend at least one strategy for how to increase e-commerce customer satisfaction for this company.

Information Systems Resource Options (Executive C)

- Provide at least two theories or models that might help the executive as he or she decides how and where to begin. What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these theories or models?
- Based on the evidence you provide, recommend the appropriate consultant resource type(s) for the executive's projects.

Information Systems and Decision Making (Executive D)

- Identify at least two theories or models that might help the executive in implementing the most appropriate DSS for the organization.
- Recommend one or more DSS options for this organization, including a rationale for your recommendation.

Business Continuity Planning and Risk Management (Executive E)

- Identify at least two theories or models related to business continuity that might help the executive and his or her team begin the process of developing a business continuity plan.
- Recommend one or more business continuity plan approaches for this organization, including a rationale for your recommendation.

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