

Benefit Plan Design Analysis

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Objectives

The Course Project is designed to provide you with a real-life practical application of an organization's human resource benefits program. You will create a written analysis of a real-world organization's benefit plan design with suggested opportunities for improvement that use the concepts and knowledge introduced in this course.

Guidelines

The Course Project must be comprehensive and must adhere to the following analytical stages.

- There are eight parts in this Course Project. Different parts are due during Weeks 1, 4, and 7.
- Papers should be formatted according to APA or MLA guidelines (12-point font, double-spaced, including a cover page, table of contents, introduction, body of the report, summary or conclusion, and a works cited page).
- Even though this is not a scientific-type writing assignment and is mostly creative in nature, references are still very important. Ten or more outside resources or references are required (anonymous authors or web pages are not acceptable). These sources should be referenced according to APA or MLA guidelines.
- Appropriate citations are required following APA or MLA guidelines.
- All DeVry University Policies are in effect, including the plagiarism policy.
- Please post any questions about these papers in the weekly Q & A discussion topic.
- These papers combined are worth 310 total points and will be graded on quality of research topic, quality of paper information, use of citations,

Milestones/Grading Rubrics

Part 1: Select and Profile an Organization for the Benefit Plan (40 Points)

There are a number of ways in which an organization and benefit plan can be selected. You have the option of looking at your current employer's benefit plan, that of a previous employer, or one from a random organization of your choice whose benefit plan has a perceived need for either a revision of specific benefits, addition of needed benefits, or an overhaul of its benefits program. Provide a clear profile of your chosen organization as well as the organization's current benefits program. Present key facts that are important in understanding your chosen organization's benefits program.

Category	Points	%	Description
Profile	16	40%	Profiles the chosen organization in detail
Benefits Program	16	40%	Provides sufficient details on the organization's benefits program
Formatting	8	20%	Appropriately formats the assignment in APA format or MLA format; sources appropriately cited in APA or MLA format; appropriate external sources utilized; no typing, spelling, or grammatical errors
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 2: Statement of the Issue (40 Points)

This section should present an analysis of the major benefits issue or issues. It should include a statement of the specific benefit plan you are addressing. Some questions to ask when formulating the statement of issue include the following.

- Have I identified the basic issue or am I dealing with the symptoms?
- What is the point of the paper?
- If I have identified more than one issue, are the issues separate or

analysis reports; assessment questionnaires that can be created to probe for areas of benefit needs and employee desires; observations of how employees use or do not use their current benefits; and interviews with key management and selected employees to determine benefit issues.

Category	Points	%	Description
Basic issue	15	38%	Identifies the basic issue rather than the symptoms.
Purpose	15	38%	Describes the purpose of the paper and what will be accomplished.
Relationships	10	24%	Describes relationships between major and minor issues to be addressed.
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 3: Literature Review (40 Points)

Address what was discovered in the search of relevant literature, related articles, and the employee benefit text, as well as what was discovered in Part 2. This means not only reviewing theories, concepts, and studies discussed in the text or in class, but also reviewing websites and what other writers have to say about benefit plans. Given the limited number of weeks that a term provides and the number of steps involved in the Course Project following the literature review, no more than 2 weeks should be spent reviewing literature.

It is critical that those completing questionnaires, being interviewed, or providing information in any other manner be assured that their responses will be kept in the strictest of confidence and will not be discussed in whole or in part to any member of the organization or outside the boundaries of the classroom. It is recommended that you begin your literature search by accessing Keller's Online Library. While you may use information obtained from HR-related websites, you must also obtain information from current scholarly journals, business publications, and newspapers. Ten or more outside resources or references are required.

Category	Points	%	Description
Academic Resources and	20	50%	Identifies academic quality resources; identifies why resource is quality and

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			how it supports the resolution of the issue; shows relationships between different sources.
Presentation and Review	12	30%	Presented in a manner that tells a story and ties individual sources together; explains how the literature review relates to issue identified in the company.
Formatting	8	20%	Appropriately formats assignment in APA format or MLA format. Sources appropriately cited in APA or MLA format; appropriate external sources utilized; no typing, spelling, or grammatical errors.
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 4: Issue Analysis (40 Points)

Here we are bringing Parts 2 and 3 together. This section should provide a detailed analysis of the benefits issue that was identified in Part 2. A major objective is to clearly illustrate how the concepts of the course and gained knowledge of benefits are being used, as well as to show what was learned from the literature review. Show that you are applying course material.

Category	Points	%	Description
Analysis	20	50%	Describes issue analysis and relates to previous discussions from literature review.
Apply concepts	20	50%	Describes how concepts from the course help identify the true issue.
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 5: Issue Solutions (40 Points)

Create a developmental strategy. Offer several solutions or options that are appropriate for the benefits issue or issues. The solutions should follow logically

Category	Points	%	Description
Logical Solution	20	50%	Develops a logical solution based on the literature review and class information.
Pros and Cons	12	30%	Identifies all feasible solutions and provides pros and cons of each.
Formatting	8	20%	Appropriately formats assignment in APA format or MLA format; sources appropriately cited in APA or MLA format. Appropriate external sources utilized. No typing, spelling, or grammatical errors.
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 6: Solution and Its Implementation (40 Points)

This segment should outline your recommended solution to the identified issue. The solution will be one or a combination of the solutions provided in Part 5. This part should be specific, stating what benefit plans are recommended, timing for implementation, and in what sequence. It includes not only what should be done, but also *how* it should be done. A specific solution should indicate what benefit is most appropriate for the issue and how it will be implemented in the organization. Some questions to keep in mind when writing the solution section include the following.

1. Has an awareness of the problem of implementation been addressed?
2. Have you been too general?
3. Do the solution and implementation address the issues identified earlier?
4. Does your solution take into account the identified pros and cons?
5. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented benefit plan?
6. What process checks or procedures will you put in place to institutionalize the improvement?
7. Was the realism of your proposed action plan assessed? For example, are there adequate time, money, and other resources for your solution?

Category	Points	%	Description
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Problem and Solution			sufficient detail is provided in the solution.
Plan and Measurement	12	30%	Sufficient detail is provided in the solution; it identifies how success will be measured.
Formatting	8	20%	Appropriately formats the assignment in APA format or MLA format; sources are appropriately cited in APA or MLA format; appropriate external sources are utilized; no typing, spelling, or grammatical errors,
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 7: Justification (40 Points)

This section of your analysis should, using course knowledge and concepts, tell why your solution and implementation would work. A major objective is to clearly show how you are applying course concepts and content to arrive at a workable solution and implementation for the issue identified. Some questions to ask when writing your justification segment include the following:

1. Have you applied the appropriate course material?
2. Do you support your conclusions and recommendations with appropriately referenced facts, quotes, readings, and class activities?
3. Does your justification recognize the pros and cons identified earlier?

Category	Points	%	Description
Pros and Cons	8	50%	Recognizes pros and cons from solutions.
Conclusions	16	30%	Conclusions are adequately supported.
Course Materials	8	20%	Course material is applied appropriately.
Formatting	8	20%	Appropriately formats assignment in APA format or MLA format; sources are appropriately cited in APA or MLA format;

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			typing, spelling, or grammatical errors.
Total	40	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Part 8: Reflection (30 Points)

Think about this assignment and write a well-thought-out reflection statement about how this assignment influenced your thinking about benefits.

Category	Points	%	Description
Reflection Statement	24	80%	Reflection statement is substantive and detailed: your thoughts on the project overall, actions taken, choices made over the course of the project, what learning and growth have occurred, your thoughts on the role of a project like this in developing professional understanding and competency.
Formatting	6	20%	Appropriately formats assignment in APA or MLA format. Sources are appropriately cited in APA or MLA format. Appropriate external sources are utilized. No typing, spelling, or grammatical errors.
Total	30	100%	A quality paper will meet or exceed all of the above requirements.

Best Practices

The purpose of an introduction or opening:

1. Introduce the subject and why the subject is important.
2. Preview the main ideas and the order in which they will be covered.
3. Establish the document's tone.

- **Body of Your Report**—Use a header titled with the name of your project. Example: The Development of Hotel X—A World Class Resort. Then proceed to break out the main ideas. State the main ideas, state major points in each idea, and provide evidence. Break out each main idea you will use in the body of your paper. Show some type of division such as separate sections that are labeled, separate group of paragraphs, or headers. You would include the information you found during your research and investigation.
- **Summary and Conclusion**—Summarizing is similar to paraphrasing but presents the gist of the material in fewer words than the original. An effective summary identifies the main ideas and major support points from the body of your report. Minor details are left out. Summarize the benefits of the ideas and how they affect the subject.
- **Works Cited**—Use the citation format as specified in the Syllabus.

Additional hints on preparing the best possible project are as follows.

1. Apply a three-step process of writing: Plan, write, and complete.
2. Prepare an outline of your research paper before you go forward.
3. Complete a first draft and then go back to edit, evaluate, and make any changes required.
4. Use visual communication to further clarify and support the written part of your report. You could use example graphs, diagrams, photographs, flowcharts, maps, drawings, animation, video clips, pictograms, tables, and Gantt charts.

The following are best practices that should be used in preparing this paper:

- **Cover Page:** Include your name, who you prepared the paper for, the course name, and the date.
- **Table of Contents:** List the main ideas and sections of your paper and the pages on which they are located. The illustrations should be included separately.
- **Introduction:** Use a header on your paper. This will indicate that you are introducing your paper.
- **Subtitle each section:** Use the section titles to indicate in the body of your paper each individual section (i.e., Statement of Issue, Literature Review, Issue Analysis, etc.). Each section should be clearly marked.
- **Body of Your Report:** Use a header titled with the name of your project. Example: "The Development of Hotel X— A World Class Resort." Then proceed to break out the main ideas. State the main ideas, state major points in each idea, provide evidence. Break out each main idea you will

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