The Business Brief Assignment

The Business Communication Lab,

Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas

Business writing assignment: business brief

Due on October 15th at 11:59 pm

To Recap…

Business Communication vs. Academic Writing

- Audience-driven
- Goal-minded
- Front-loaded

- Personal opinions
- "Fluff" language
- Build-up to reveal

"We are losing all of our talent!": how to help large companies create sustainable retention programs

Prompt:

You have been hired as an outside consultant by the VP of Human Resources at Walton, Bumpers, & Fulbright (WBF), a firm that employs 80,000 people in the U.S.A. WBF has had success hiring high-performing diverse candidates from MBA programs and from undergraduate business schools across the country. Over the past five years, however, WBF has struggled with retaining the diverse/inclusive hires it has made. The company has robust recruitment initiatives in place and does not seek to change them. Instead, it hopes to learn what the current research is on retaining diverse/inclusive talent *and* what initiatives and programs other large firms have for retaining diverse/inclusive talent. Your job will be to conduct this research and provide 2 recommendations for the firm.

Compose a 2-page, single-spaced business brief answering what 2 programs/initiatives you recommend WBF adopt to improve its retention of diverse/inclusive talent.

Note: avoid recommendations that, if implemented, could expose WBF to litigation. You are welcome to apply concepts recently learned in BLAW regarding constitutional law and torts to this business brief.

Note: you will need to cite four (4) different sources in APA on your references page. Your references page will **not count** towards the 2-page requirement. When citing sources, use parenthetical citations (see *Publication Manual of the APA* §6.11-21) instead of footnotes.

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Freshman Business Connections 2017 Business Brief Rubric

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory
Purpose & Audience	- Student misunderstands the purpose of the brief - Student provides 0-1 recommendations - Student addresses the wrong audience	- Student understands the purpose of the brief - Student provides 2 recommendations - Student address the correct audience
Organization & Synthesis	- Brief not organized in a logical way - Brief lacks synthesis of ideas; student simply states facts - Brief lacks evidence to support its recommendations	- Brief is organized in a logical way - Student synthesizes information into a coherent, plausible recommendation - Brief contains factual support for all recommendations
Professionalism & Style	- Student uses inappropriate tone - Style is too informal or unprofessional - Student uses slang, jokes, or jargon - Student does not demonstrate appropriate level of cultural/global sensibility and awareness - Brief suffers from wordiness/unnecessary information that prevents easy understanding	- Student uses a professional yet conversational tone - Style is appropriate yet engaging - Student does not use slang, jokes, or jargon - Student demonstrates an appropriate level of cultural/global sensibility and awareness - Brief uses concise phrasing and precise language; an average reader could easily understand information on first read-through
Grammar & Punctuation	Brief contains extensive errors in the areas below that would distract the average reader *or* make comprehension difficult for the average reader: - Spelling - Grammar - Punctuation - Word choice	Brief may contain some minor spelling, grammar, punctuation, or word choice errors, but not enough to distract the average reader. Also, the average reader would have no trouble understanding the brief on the first read-through. In short, the writer's credibility would not suffer due to the frequency of these types of errors.
Genre conventions & Format	- Brief fails to follow the format given in the model - Brief lacks correct parenthetical citations - Brief lacks a reference page *or* reference page contains incorrectly cited materials	- Brief follows the format given in the model - Brief contains a reference page *and* all sources are cited correctly per APA formatting guidelines given in the assignment prompt - Brief contains correct APA parenthetical citations

Business brief

- Is front-loaded and audience driven

- Has a clear recommendation

- Synthesis > Summary

The focus

- **What recommendations do you make for retention policies?**
  - Always back-up your recommendation!

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Audience

- Who is your audience?

- What do they know?

- What do they need to know?

How do I start?

- Consider your audience: **WBF executives**
- Consider your job: **Research and recommend**
- Consider what is needed: **2 concise suggestions**

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How do I do my "job?"

- Analyze facts
- Locate patterns
- Rank importance
- Provide recommendation

SYNTHESIZE, DON'T SUMMARIZE!

Sodium + Chlorine → Sodium chloride
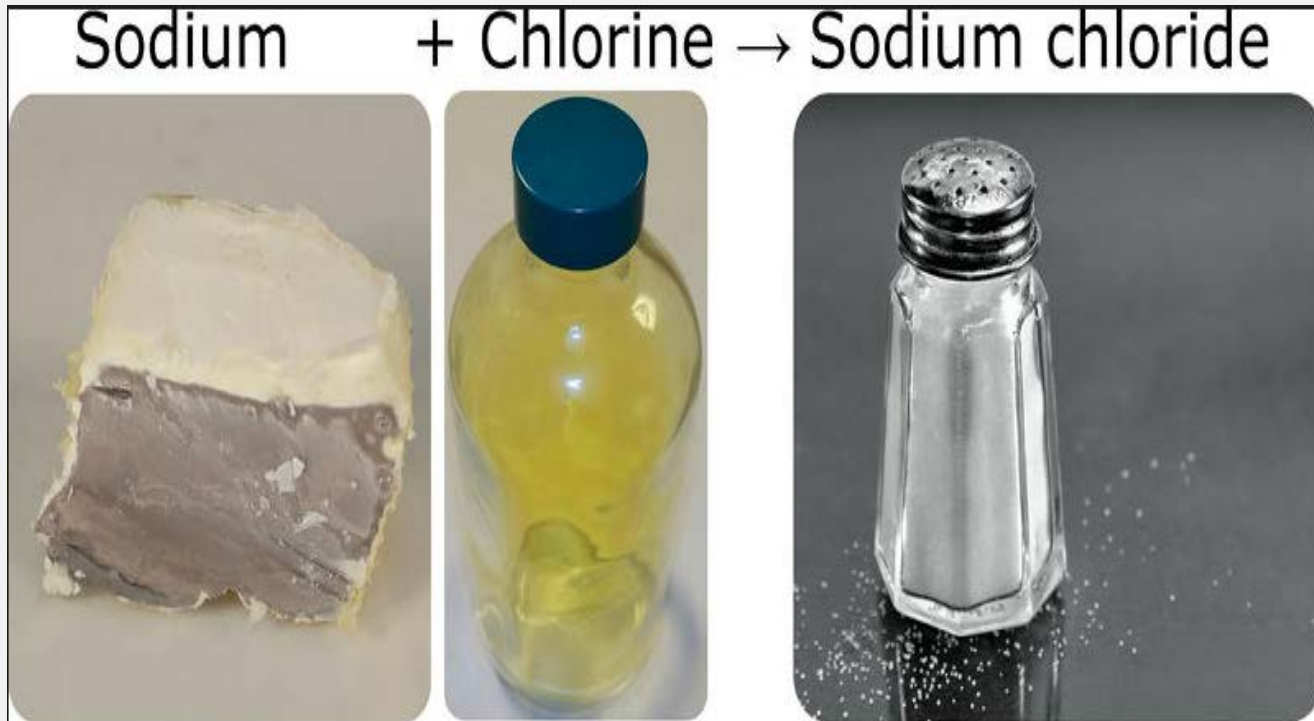
Synthesis means putting parts of an element together to make a whole.

How do I approach the readings?

- What matters?
- What matches?
- Where did it come from?

Integrating sources

Using in-text citations:

Author is stated	According to Scott (2013), "A good manager is more like a friend than a boss" (p. 199).
Author is not stated:	He stated, "Everyone loves a stick of gum" (Scott, 2013, p. 199), but he did not offer an explanation as to why.
Paraphrased with author	According to Scott (2013), business is always personal.
Paraphrased without author	The office is like a family (Scott, 2013, p. 199). *page number is not required but suggested

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Correct references page format

Have a centered title

List your sources alphabetically in APA format

References

Rizy, C., Feil, S., Sniderman, B., & Egan, M.E. (2011). *Fostering Diversity through a Diverse Workforce.* New

York, NY: *Forbes|Insights.* Retrieved from www.forbes.com/forbesinsights.

Have a space between resources

Format your "References" page exactly like this. Be sure the full citation of your sources are on the page.

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Correct brief format

Your name
Date
WCOB 1111
Instructor name

No page numbers needed

Retention Program Recommendations for Walton, Bumpers, & Fulbright Human Resources

Title with a line break

Left-aligned

Your first sentence should **summarize the purpose of your business brief in an interesting, engaging way**. Your first sentence should not say "The purpose of this brief is to inform you about *x*" or something equally wordy and boring; instead, say something more interesting like "While Walton, Bumpers, & Fulbright has seen great success with its recruitment programs, retaining diverse talent remains a challenge." Please note that you may *not* use the sentence quoted above as your first sentence; say something equally engaging and impactful that also signals *why* you are writing to your reader. After that initial sentence, you will want to provide an overview of your recommendations. In short, succinctly state what two initiatives/programs you recommend. Do not go into great depth as to *why* you are recommending them or *how* you recommend WBF implements them, as that will be what the body paragraphs do. Your introduction's final sentence(s) should summarize in one or two points how your solutions will benefit WBF.

1 inch margins

1 line break

Your first body paragraph should go into greater depth about the first initiative/program you

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Revise, revise, revise

Re-read

Edit

Repeat

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Use your resources!

Check out our online resources
https://wordpressua.uark.edu/bclresources/

Make an appointment with the BCL

walton.mywconline.com

Secure | https://walton.mywconline.com

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Walton Business Communication Lab

First visit? Register for an account.
Returning? Log in below.

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PASSWORD:

CHOOSE A SCHEDULE:
Fall Schedule 2017 ▾

Check box to **stay logged in:** ☐ ?

LOG IN

Having trouble logging in? Reset your password.

Using screen reader software? Access the text-only scheduler.

Please note that for e-tutoring appointments, we estimate that we can provide feedback on 10-15 pages per hour. This page range assumes we receive a relatively polished draft that the author has already proofread.

Please bring a **hard copy/printout** of your work to your appointment. Also bring your assignment prompt and rubric if you have it.

Welcome to WCOnline 5.1! To get started, register for an account by clicking the link to the left.

The Walton Business Communication Lab is here to assist you as a Walton College student with all your written and oral communication needs. Our tutors can explain how to write, revise, and proofread your papers, and we can also help you organize and polish speeches, presentations, or even videos. However, just like you wouldn't go to a math tutor simply to get the answers to your homework, our primary focus isn't a single paper or speech. We want to help you become a better writer and speaker.

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FBC Writing Exercise

Edit Mode is: ON

FBC Writing Exercise

Build Content ⌄   Assessments ⌄   Tools ⌄   Partner Content ⌄   Discover Content

WCOB 1111 - FRESHMAN BUSINESS CONNECTION (1179-THEUA-WCOB-1111-SEC045-16117)

Home Page
Announcements
Information
Content
Discussions
FBC Writing Exercise
Send Email
My Grades
Tools
Help

COURSE MANAGEMENT

Control Panel
Content Collection
Course Tools
Evaluation
Grade Center
Users and Groups
Customization
Packages and Utilities
Help

WALTON COLLEGE | FBC BUSINESS BRIEF WRITING EXERCISE

FBC Business Brief Exercise

Due Date: Sunday, October 15th, 2017 at 11:59PM(Central).

Everything you need to complete the FBC Business Brief Exercise can be found on the Business Communication Lab website (link below), including instructions, the rubric, required readings, and supplemental resources. The answers to most of your questions can be found here as well, but if you have any trouble completing the assignment, you are encouraged to make an appointment with one of the tutors at the Business Communication Lab (link below). Once you have completed the final draft of your business brief, submit it using the Blackboard assignment link titled "Submit Your Business Brief Here."

For assignment materials and additional resources, click here.

To make an appointment with the Business Communication Lab, click here.

Submit Your Business Brief Here

Enabled: Statistics Tracking

Use this link to upload the final draft of your business brief. Make sure that the file you upload is in Microsoft Office format (.doc or .docx) and not in any other format (.pages, .pdf, .zip, etc.).

After You've Submitted:
Once your brief has been evaluated, you will see either a "Pass" (rubric score of 3 or greater), "Consult Recommended" (rubric score of 1 or 2), or "Fail" (rubric score of 0) in the My Grades section of Blackboard. Regardless of which of these you see, you should come back to this link, click on your submission, and read the comments. They will probably benefit you, even if you weren't asked to consult. Anyone recommended to consult is encouraged to make an appointment with the Business Communication Lab, as is anyone who has any questions about the evaluation comments.

If you see "Incomplete," this likely means that there was a technical problem opening your submission or the due date may have passed. You need to resubmit your final draft as soon as possible.

To make an appointment, go to the Business Communication Center website and register for an account.

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Edit Mode is: **ON**

Preview Upload Assignment: Submit Your Business Brief Here

You are previewing the assignment - your submission will not be saved.

ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION

Due Date	Points Possible
Sunday, October 15, 2017	**5**
11:59 PM	View Rubric

Content loading...

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Text Submission   Write ~~Submission~~

Attach Files   Browse My Computer   Browse Content Collection

ADD COMMENTS

Comments

*When finished, make sure to click **Submit**.*
*Optionally, click **Save as Draft** to save changes and continue working later, or click **Cancel** to quit without saving changes.*
You are previewing the assignment - your submission will not be saved.

Cancel   Save Draft   Submit

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- Grades will be posted within 2 weeks of the deadline
- Your score is determined by a rubric
  - Purpose & Audience
  - Organization & Synthesis
  - Professionalism & Style
  - Grammar & Punctuation
  - Genre conventions & Format

Final tips

- Front-load
- Consider your audience
- Recommend with facts
- Synthesize
- Edit and get feedback!

Visit the **Business Communication Lab**, WCOB 118

Check our website, online schedule, or social media (#WaltonBCL, @Walton_BCL) for additional resources