
IS 628: Computer-Based Information Systems

Business Process Redesign IT Proposal

Spring 2016

Your group is to prepare and turn in to the instructor, a report containing the following: a) a description of the business process you have selected for analysis, b) your analysis of the failings or shortcomings of the process that you believe can be improved upon, c) potential IT solutions to that business process that your group has considered, and d) the solution that you recommend as the best of the alternatives and the reasoning for that selection. Note that in part c) “solutions” is plural. There are usually many approaches that can be taken to any particular business process problem and your group should explore pretty much any credibly viable solution.

Structure the report into five sections:

- Executive Summary
- Overview
- Analysis
- Suggestions/Recommendations
- Conclusion

Executive Summary

Once you have completed the other components of the report, your group should write a summary that neatly encapsulates the report. The executive summary should describe the problem, indicate that (vast) amount of research that went into developing and examining alternatives to the existing process, and convince the reader that the solution recommended is the best of the alternatives. This section needs to sell the executive on the severity of the problem the amount of effort that has been put into studying solutions to the problem and most importantly, the need for the organization to implement the solution you recommend. If you can't do those things in the executive summary, it is unlikely you will convince an executive (necessary in the decision process) to either buy-in to the project or bother to read the rest of the report. The executive summary should not exceed two pages.

Overview

In this section, your group should describe the existing business process and the business problems and issues associated with that process. This section should not exceed one fourth of the report. Please keep in mind that I am the audience of the report and as such, am not familiar with the process in question. Therefore, I recommend that your discussion be aimed towards someone who has general business and IT management knowledge but may not be familiar with the industry/business environment in which the process exists. That means that you should avoid too much in the way of industry-specific jargon.

Note that you should present this information from as objective a perspective as possible. That is, focus in the “what” of the process and associated problem(s); not the “why.”

Analysis

To begin this section, you should perhaps consider what criteria or constraints exist that affect the alternative solutions you may consider. The criteria are the things that your solution will have to do to show that the problem has been solved. The constraints are the things that limit what solutions you can consider. Constraints are related to the making of the business case, but are more about restrictions on the alternatives that your group can reasonably consider. In the Overview section, you described *what* constitutes the problem, now you need to describe *why* the existing process is problematic.

Next, present the alternatives your group has considered that could potentially resolve the problem (i.e., those that you think will fulfill the criteria) given the constraints. This will likely constitute the bulk of research of your report. Note that I am not likely to be convinced that, ‘There were no other alternatives that could reasonably be considered’. There will be at the very least, for example, similar applications that will manage the process similarly. So, why would you choose a particular vendor’s application over another?

Normally, you would not put all of the content I request in this section in a proposal, you will just get more straightly to the recommended solution. I request it for obvious reasons. I need to see that you’ve researched the possible alternatives sufficiently that you can recognize the differences between them and that you have not simply chosen the first alternative that you felt would provide a “satisfactory” solution (i.e., *satisficing*).

Suggestions/Recommendations

Now you identify and justify/rationalize the solution your group has chosen. The discussion needs to convincingly make the point that the solution selected is the best considering the criteria and constraints.

Be sure to avoid being overly presumptive of the acceptance of your solution. You need to garner the executives’ buy-in to the project.

I am not requiring your group provide discussion specific to systems development and implementation, but your group should express to some degree, credible frameworks for development and implementation. Also, nowhere in this report am I expecting to see detailed budget analysis or return on investment. However, some of the discussion should make the general business case for the alternative selected.

Conclusion

Simply tie up any loose ends and provide a brief summary of the prior three sections.