Appendix III-A-1: Experiential Learning Project

An Experiential Approach to Developing Behavioral Skills for Project Managers

Section D: Project Planning Guidelines

The project plan represents the blueprint for this semester project. It is where the project’s mission and structure are clarified, and where the scope, stakeholders, and resource requirements (monetary and other) of the project are described. The audience is the course instructor and any other stakeholder that has an interest in your project (e.g., student life, potential investors, etc.). The project plan must answer the following questions:

- What is the name of your project?
- What is the purpose (mission) of your project, team members’ roles, and your team’s values?
- What service or product does your project provide and what needs does it fill—that is, what value are you providing?
- Who are your project’s stakeholders, what is the value proposition for each of them?
- How will you market the value your project provides to your stakeholders?
- What milestones have you established to track progress in the project?
- What potential risks have you identified? How do you plan to mitigate these risks?
- What are your financial assumptions and projections?
- What will be your project team’s policies and procedures?

Format

This is a professional document and should be written accordingly. Include a cover letter to the instructor that introduces the project and briefly summarizes the project plan. Submit an electronic copy of the complete project plan by the deadline. Prepare a 10-minute oral overview of the plan to be delivered at the time and place specified. Write concisely—say what is needed to get the main points across to your audience. Avoid wordiness, use attachments or appendices whenever appropriate, use headings and bullets to highlight important points and improve the visual appeal of the plan. Proofread carefully so that it is free of all grammar, spelling, and other errors.

Discuss all the required topics—nothing hurts credibility more than submitting an incomplete document (except maybe sloppy writing and technical errors). Finally, make sure that the project plan is written in “one voice”—this means that even though different people write different sections of the plan, it must be reviewed and edited so that it appears written by one person and it flows logically from topic to topic (use transition sentences, include a table of contents, number your appendices, etc.).