

BUS 230: Business and Economics Research and Communication

In-class Exercise: Exploring Research Project Ideas

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Fall 2012

Directions: Answer the questions below. The questions help you dissect your research ideas to determine their potential, and how you will begin going about conducting the research.

Step 1: Take the two best ideas from your group, and the two best ideas from another group (for a total of 4 ideas), and answer the questions below for each idea. Answer all the questions for a given research idea before moving to the next research idea. Note: some research questions might not lend themselves very well to these questions, which may be evidence that the idea needs some altering or some more development. You may consider changing a research idea slightly to answer these questions.

Do the two ideas from the other group *first*. After class, e-mail your answers to the discussion leader of the other group, so that they can benefit from your work.

Type up your answers in the appropriate D2L dropbox.

1. Briefly (one or two sentences) describe the idea.
2. What group had this idea?
3. What is the potential problem or opportunity?
4. If you identified a problem, list 3 possible symptoms? If you identified an opportunity, list 3 possible pieces of evidence that the opportunity exists.
5. List 3 possible alternatives for either solving the problem, or taking advantage of the opportunity.
6. Write a single sentence for your problem / research question. Remember, a problem well defined is a problem half solved.
7. Who is your target population?
8. Write at least 3 survey questions that would be useful in answering this research question.

Step 2: After answering the above questions for the two sets of research ideas for a particular group, pick the research idea that you think is the better one. Write a couple sentences or a paragraph to explain why. Address the following,

- How clear is the problem or opportunity?
- How *important* is the problem or opportunity? Would people seriously hesitate to make a decision before understanding the conclusions of this research project?
- How likely is it that the research question is *measurable*? That is, can well written survey questions get the right data to analyze to answer the question?

Perform this “Step 2” twice, once for the ideas from your group, and again for the ideas from the other group.