Business Plan Workshop – Learning the basics

Library Session for Management 101 – *Business Management Practice*

Management 101 – *Business Management Practice* – is a requirement for all entering students. In the course, groups of students must create a business plan for a new business devoted to the selling of a product or service of their choosing. At the outset of this project, students come to the library to learn about databases and resources, both print & online, that will enable them to successfully collect targeted information that will help students create a sound business plan. The business plan requirements are set out by the Management faculty.

This Library run workshop focuses on the tools and resources students will need to complete their business plan assignment and engages them in the research process by having each business plan group explore a resource, and then teach their peers what they have discovered. Groups must investigate a resource or set of resources to find necessary industry, demographic, company, and/or competitor information for a common product or business designated by Librarians. Most recently, a gourmet popsicle shop was the business for which groups sought out different sets of information and data that would inform the creation of a business plan.

In the Library session, students first participate in a Librarian led presentation, and then break into their groups to explore the assigned database or resource for which they must develop a presentation with the goal of teaching their peers how that resource can be used in developing a business plan. Each group is given a set of guidelines including tasks they must complete within the resource, and deliverables they must present to the class from the assigned resource.

Classes are generally 80 minutes long and broken down as follows –

First 25-30 minutes: introduction/discussion led by librarians

As most students in this course are first year students, this discussion includes a brief overview of keyword selection, Boolean operators, searching strategies, a review of the course research page, an introduction to WMS’ Discovery, and the kinds of information available from the sites sponsored by the US Census Bureau—with a few sample searches therein.

Next 20-25 minutes: groups work together to complete tasks and develop presentation

Two librarians are present during every session to answer questions, and provide help when questions or problems arise

Final 25-30 minutes: group presentations of 4-6 minutes.

[The exact breakdown of time depends on the number of groups, and the size of the section.]

The resources student groups explore, evaluate, & review can be tailored to those available at your institution. At our library, students typically evaluate and prepare presentations for: *Business Source Complete*, B*usiness Insight: Essential*s, *American Factfinder*, the *U.S. Census Bureau’s Economic Census, and County Business Patterns*, and a set of books that contain detailed demographic and economic information about American consumers. These include: *Demographics USA*, published by Neilson, New Strategist Publications including books in the Who’s Buying Series, and the American Generation Series, and the SRDS Lifestyle Market Analyst, among others. All groups must also use the NAICS website or reference book to determine the industrial code or codes that best align with their business or product.

These resources may change over time as new resources are added to the collection.