

## The Formal Executive Proposal

The culminating project of this course is a group proposal that reinforces the tenets of business communication that we have discussed throughout the semester. This type of communication requires you to balance the demands of a variety of audiences within a single project/document, including but not limited to one's colleagues, supervisors, investors, outside analysts, a client, or that client's consumers. And it is this balance, coupled with the rhetorical techniques that you have learned throughout this course, that will prove essential for your team to successfully complete the project.



While we have focused on internal communication (memos, reports, etc.) so far, this project will ask you to turn **externally** – to advertising, marketing, and publicity campaigns. Businesses regularly produce advertisements, design websites, publicize coordinated events, and compose other documents to correspond with customers and clients, using one or more of these mediums to accomplish their goals. In this group project, your team will propose a new marketing strategy for the non-profit organization that you have already chosen.

This campaign should reflect your team's understanding of your client, their customer/client base, and the larger market structure of the industry/field in which they operate. Where your Individual Short Research Report (ISR) looked into the client's current marketing plan (at least in part), the bulk of this Formal Executive Proposal (FEP) will require you to build off of this work to make an effective proposal. This will probably necessitate new research, addressing a new audience, and reassessing the proposal's organization and argumentation. This is, after all, *a new document and a new rhetorical situation*.

In addition to composing an externally-oriented business proposal, your team will also be asked to prepare a professional presentation by developing a working example of the marketing strategy that you are recommending. Each group will create one collaborative Digital Media Project (DMP), or model advertisement(s), that effectively represents your campaign in action. This component will offer a creative outlet and an alternative means for justifying the implementation of your plan. Think of this as the final proof of the effectiveness of your marketing strategy and a chance to impress your client with a working model of your proposed plan at work.

### Learning Outcomes

This unit will help you develop several of the learning outcomes for the semester, including

- Understanding and adapting the writing process to diverse situations, audiences, and purposes.
- Employing the standard conventions and forms of professional writing
- Organizing documents clearly and effectively for the intended audience
- Demonstrating an awareness of the ethical implications of your rhetorical choices

- Understanding that document design is a crucial element in business communication, intricately linked to decisions about audience and purpose
- Producing accessible, well-designed print documents
- Gathering, evaluating, interpreting, and applying information accurately, logically, and ethically
- Employing professional revision and editing skills
- Exhibiting a professional voice and a clear, concise writing style
- Develop teamwork skills and collaborate effectively in teams

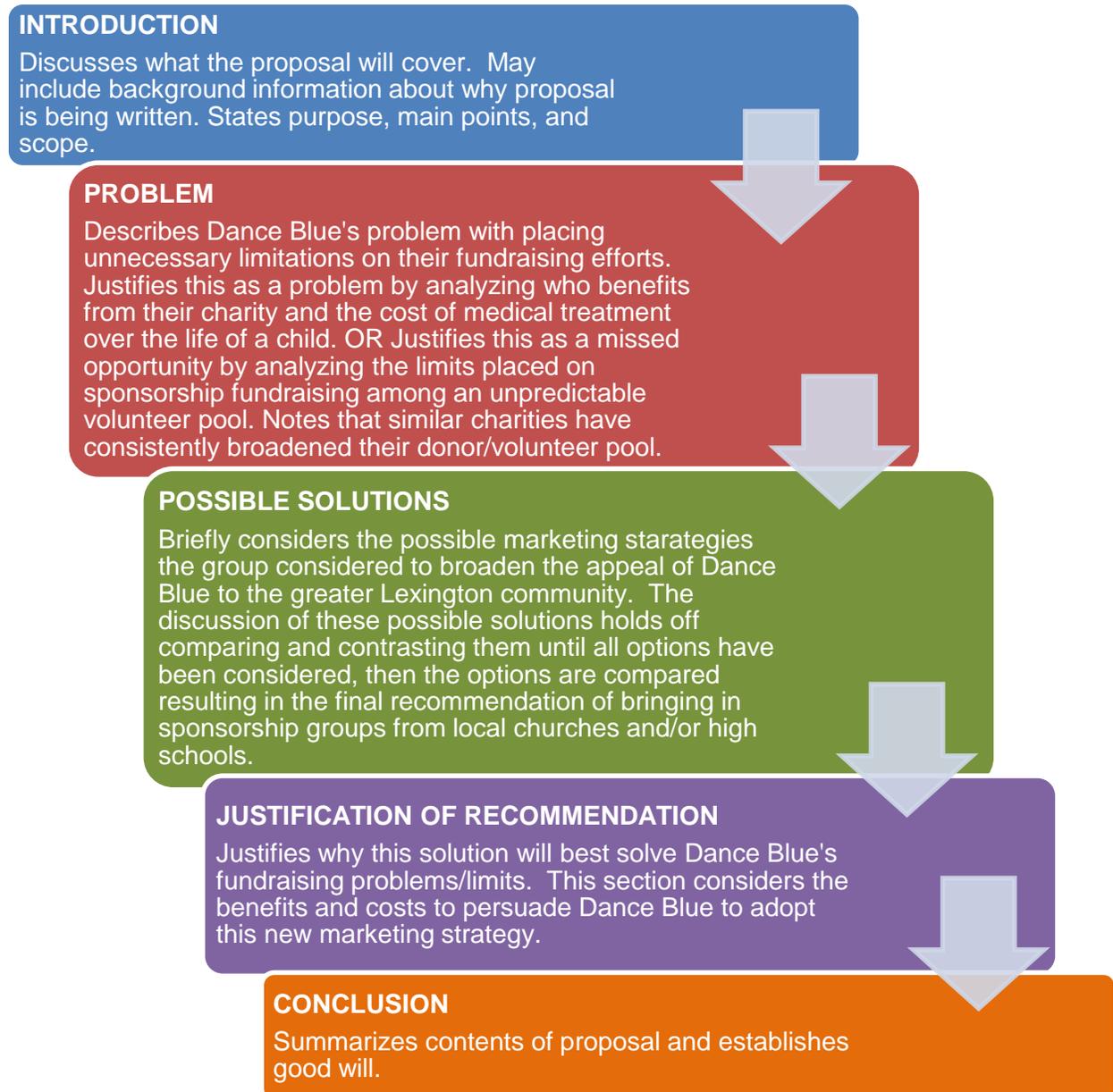


Figure 1: Link Blue Team's Proposal Outline for Expanding Link Blue's Donor Pool

### Group Proposal Prompt

For this project, your group will recommend that your non-profit client implement a new marketing strategy (with one type of advertisement method). In order to accomplish this, you will write a **6,000 word** (minimum) **proposal** that analyzes the deficiencies of your client's current marketing strategy (or a group that they have yet to target), offers an alternative (or complementary) strategy, **and** justifies this new campaign. The goal of your proposal should be to (a) increase your client's revenue, (b) attract new customers, (c) promote the organization's stated goals, and/or (d) improve the client's image. Your project, as a result of this, will be judged according to how effective you are at accomplishing one or more of these objectives. **Each team will turn in only one report.**

It should be obvious, but your primary audience for this Formal Executive Proposal is your client. You will want to consider what the client needs (and wants) to know as well as what they already know (or are doing). For example, you don't need to tell them the history of their own company, but they would be interested in knowing the advantages of taking on a new approach with their target audience or in marketing their product to a new demographic group. Demonstrating *You-Attitude* will be essential as you decide how to structure your proposal and what information to include. Pleasing your client and demonstrating in-depth knowledge of their company/organization, their product(s), and their needs is the goal. You must also consider how to justify the recommendation that you are making to persuade your client that you are trustworthy, that you have completed extensive research on the topic, and that you have a clear and logical proposal.

#### E-mail of Transferal to Client

The final aspect of the FEP project is to submit your completed proposal to your client. This detailed and specifically targeted "memo" must follow the conventions of both a professional e-mail and an externally-oriented memo. While I would encourage you to submit this to your client, you will not be required to do so. However, to receive full credit for this assignment you will need to craft a letter of transmittal to this client. Remember that your proposal may be unsolicited, so if you do send it to the non-profit (or campus) organization that you chose, you will need to explain the purpose of your e-mail and what is contained in the attachment.

#### Parameters

- ✓ At least **6,000 words**; single-spaced in 12 pt. font (with the exception of appropriate headings, labels and footnotes); headings, illustrations and bibliography do not count toward the total word count.
- ✓ **At least 3, but no more than 6 original illustrations**, which can include graphs, tables, photographs, diagrams, etc. These *must* to be original illustrations, so they cannot be cut and paste from sources even if they are cited. These illustrations also need to be relevant to the content of the report and employ the guidelines established in *Business Writing*.
- ✓ **At least 2 levels of proper headings** (see *Business Writing*).
- ✓ **A Letter (or Email) of Transmittal**.
- ✓ **An Executive Summary/Abstract** (This does not count toward your total word count.).
- ✓ **At least 12 well-chosen and credible sources in Chicago Manual style** (Up to 8 of these can be recovered from your team's ISR reports.).
- ✓ **Adherence to the report format found in Business Writing**

## Evidence

At least **12 well-chosen and credible sources**, cited in an appropriate style (MLA, Chicago, APA, etc.). These sources should come from professional/scholarly journals, academic books, trade magazines, or other credible sources. Do not use sources derived solely from Google, Wikipedia or About.com. As this project is built upon the work done in your individual ISRs, you may recover up to **9 sources** from your team's ISR reports. These sources must be cited, as a lack of citation is plagiarism and will negatively impact your grade.

## Evaluation

The qualities of a passing report (70% or higher) will make an persuasive proposal tailored to your client and using specific evidence, complexity of thought, sensible organization, grammatical correctness, and a clear, professional style. The report will also follow the format laid out by the textbook as well as in class lectures/notes.

*Every member of the group will receive the same grade*, unless the Project Manager has notified the instructor of group mates failing to participate in the proposal project as outlined in the course syllabus. There are 3-5 people working on each report, and the proposal will be sent to a client, so you must have a clean style and no formatting or GSP errors.

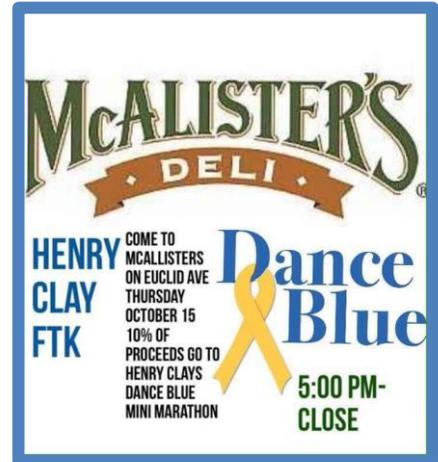
This proposal will make up **25%** of your final grade. I will evaluate essays according to the rubric provided to you on Canvas.

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## The Digital Media Project Prompt

The collaborative group Digital Media Project (DMP) should exemplify and implement the new marketing strategy that you are proposing in the FEP. Your group should draw on the research and analysis from your individual ISRs and FEP to explore the client's needs, the target market, and how to appeal to this market. This project provides you with an opportunity to create the multimedia component of a professional portfolio you can show to future employers. Successful DMPs will demonstrate not only your abilities as communicators, writers, and researchers, but also your capacity to design, produce, edit, and use various computer programs/applications. In a more general sense, it allows you to apply your research in a real-world situation.



Consider what rhetorical and visual strategies will persuade the target market (your audience) to take whatever action (donate money, visit the client's location, volunteer, etc.) outlined in your Formal Executive Proposal. Consider also what medium will best convey the message: television, radio, print, or the web to name just a few. Your DMP will be created in the same medium (the medium that propose in your FEP). If you think a TV commercial would reach and affect the greatest part of your target audience (for example), your group will want to design, shoot, edit, and upload a sample TV commercial for your DMP.

The purpose of the Digital Media Project is twofold. First (1), your group will create an advertisement that best represents the marketing campaign that you are proposing, and second (2), your group will appeal to the target consumer market and meet their expectations. In other words, this multimodal project will follow the established conventions of the advertising media that you choose in an effort to show the value of your strategy *and* effectively reach your target demographic.

### Memo and Bibliography

To help your coworkers (your classmates and instructor) understand the context of your Digital Media Project, your team will submit a memo with your final project. The memo should be a standard 1-2 page formal memo (750 words min.) that recalls the FEP and details the design of your advertisement, etc.

You should explain who your client is, who your target market is, the problem that you are attempting to solve, and how you have chosen to solve it. Please use this space to justify why you have chosen this target market. The next paragraph(s) should examine *where you would place* your Digital Media Project. This should be something more specific than just the general location of the ad (TV, a magazine, etc.). Your team should determine a specific location (and time, if applicable) for the advertisement. For example, our hypothetical group would need to indicate which high schools/churches to place flyers in and how they tailored these flyers for the demands of each site(s). Write a paragraph detailing where each advertisement is going, why, and how it appeals to the specific audience targeted by that venue if you choose to create advertisements for more than one specific location.

## Parameters

- ✓ **A Digital Media Project based on your proposal.** (The minimum length of which is determined by which medium your group chooses).
  - This DMP must consider the established conventions of the chosen medium.
  - It must contain original material and appropriately-cited information (using the *Chicago Manual of Style*).
- ✓ **A 750 word Memo** with appropriate bibliography (Bibliography does not count toward word total).

Depending on the medium you choose, your DMP will have different requirements concerning length. Table 1 provides some general guidelines for a variety of media types that you may choose for your DMP, but it is good practice to consult with me about appropriate length based on your specific proposal.

Table 1: Length Minimum per Medium Selected

Medium	Length
<b>Print (magazine, newspaper, etc.)</b>	At least one full page layout (or several smaller ads equaling one page of space)
<b>Video (television or internet commercial)</b>	At least one 30 second commercial (or two 15 second commercials)
<b>Audio (radio)</b>	At least one 60 second commercial (or two 15 second commercials)
<b>Social Media</b>	A website or social media account equivalent to a Facebook page, fully populated
<b>Website</b>	A Website with two full pages

If your group comes up with a campaign that does not fall under any of these categories (billboard campaign, etc.), make sure to send me an email as soon as possible.

## Evidence

The majority of the DMP should be original content. You may include *some* content from outside sources in your original Digital Media Project. For instance, you may use a song from someone else in your ad made up of otherwise original content. You may use your client's intellectual property (logo, mascot, etc.). However, any non-original content (songs, images, etc.) that you use must be included in a separate bibliography page (attached to the memo for this section of the project). If you have questions or concerns about the originality of your DMP, feel free to ask me.

Other sources may be required as you put this together. You should use previous research (as well as any additional material) to make decisions about the kind of media to use, to fact check your project, and to supplement the ads' original content. *These too will need to be cited.*

## Required Components

### Group Proposal

- ✓ **At least 6,000 word (or about 10 pages)**; single-spaced in 12 pt. font (with the exception of appropriate headings, labels and footnotes); headings, illustrations, front and back matter do not count toward this total.

- ✓ ***At least 3, but not more than 5 original illustrations*** created by you that can include graphs, tables, photographs, diagrams, etc. These *must* to be original illustrations, so they cannot be cut and paste from sources even if they are cited. These illustrations also need to be relevant to the content of the report and employ the guidelines established in *Business Writing*.
- ✓ ***At least 2 levels of proper headings*** (see *Business Writing*)
- ✓ ***A Letter of Transmittal***
- ✓ ***An Executive Summary/Abstract*** (This does not count toward your total word count.)
- ✓ ***E-mail to the client*** (Cced to the instructor) ***with the FEP as an attachment***
- ✓ ***At least 12 well-chosen and credible sources in Chicago Manual style***
- ✓ ***Adherence to the report format found in Business Writing***

### ***Evaluation***

This multimodal project will be graded based on how successfully your group chooses a medium, analyzes the target market's interests and purchasing power, and analyzes the client's image and goals. The DMP should be a professional document that follows the conventions of the advertising medium you have chosen. Your group should also be able to articulate where this advertisement would appear and why.

*Every member of the group will receive the same grade, unless the Project Manager has notified the instructor of group mates failing to participate in the proposal project as outlined in the course syllabus. There are 3-5 people working on each report, and the proposal will be sent to a client, so you must have a clean style and no formatting or GSP errors.*

The Digital Media Project will make up **10%** of your final grade and will be assessed using the rubric provided to you on Canvas.