

## 1.0 Course Work Brief

This course work is designed to connect the theory we cover in class with practice. This document explains the project choices, gives some guidelines for carrying them out and thoughts about how they will be assessed.

The projects will be carried out in a group. We will set up the groups in class. Students of all ages and backgrounds report working in group as one of the most challenging aspects of doing term projects. Life in organizations – where groups form and reform - make this a critical skill. Our class is a good opportunity to improve yours skills in forming, norming and performing as a team in a short space of time. A few quick thoughts about this:

- Look for team members who can easily participate. A group whose members are spread across different cities faces an additional challenge to coordinate.
- Get familiar with each other and start to set norms for the group – and agree sanctions for breaking these norms (e.g., use of the in-group peer-review process).
- What are process roles in the group – e.g., who manages time keeping, agendas etc.?
- Celebrate success!

## 1.2 Project choices

Please choose *one* of the following projects.

### 1.2.1 Topic 1. Listening to customers.

#### *Topic focus*

In class we have talked about listening to customers. Choose *two* methods of listening to customers and put them into practice. Think carefully how to design your approach to make best use of your methods. The aim is to arrive at a clear understanding of how your chosen organization is performing.

#### *Issue to consider (a few)*

- What is an organization that you (in your group) are familiar with?
- What methods of listening to customers might be used? What are the strengths and weakness of each method in relation to the business you are focusing on?
- How will you put these into practice?

*What am I looking for?*

A thoughtful and systematic approach to listening to customers. A clear explanation of the rationale for your approach. Clear insight into and interpretation of the data you produce.

### **1.2.2. Topic 2. Service shock and acculturation.**

*Topic*

When a service provider from one culture delivers service to customers from a different background they often feel a sense of shock or surprise. What is distinctly normal in one setting can feel odd in another as signals sent and received are incorrectly decoded by both parties. As customers, though, stay in their new cultural environment for some time they acculturate; developing the ability to decode signals sent during their service contact.

*Issue to consider (a few)*

- What experiences have you had as customers that provoke surprise or shock?
- What is going on from the providers' and customer's perspective?
- What is acculturation?
- How does acculturation work in theory (how does our understanding of service change?) and practice?

*What am I looking for?*

The group to choose examples of service surprise that demonstrate misunderstandings between the service provider and customer. Their effective

dissection to reveal what is happening theoretically. Introduction of acculturation, how it links to practice and what helps customers become socialized to service in ‘strange lands’.

## 2.0 Reporting – mid-term

### 2.1 Report (Due on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov.)

Your report should be long enough to concisely present your thoughts about the topic. Please take time to create a professional finish (e.g., cover page, section numbering, page numbering, paragraph formatting, referencing).

The report should be uploaded to the web before class. Please do not show up if the work is not uploaded! Use the following naming: [group\_name].pdf

### 2.2 Presentation (Due 20<sup>th</sup> Nov.)

Your presentations should last c.15-20 minutes. Compliment your elegant slides with practice to avoid overruns.

In class groups will give feedback (between group peer review) to each other. Please download the form from the web. It is a template so this means you can install it in your template directory and just open easily in its pre-prepared format.

Name feedback as:

[group\_you\_are\_assessing][your\_group\_name].docx (or .pdf)

NOTE: These should be uploaded at the end of class – before leaving.

### 2.3 Evaluation

I will give feedback based on the presentation and proposal document. This will be posted to the web along with the peer review notes.

- Along with your report you should include the *in-group peer review*. This is only seen by me. It should be labeled as [yourname]\_[yourgroupname].docx. This will inform grading.