

PART I: BACKGROUND	
Title	Providing Supporting Information as Evidence for Decision Making
Authors	Maggie McDermott and Nicole Gullekson- UW LaCrosse
Contact	Maggie McDermott- mmcdermott@uwlax.edu Nicole Gullekson- ngullekson@uwlax.edu
Discipline(s) or Field(s)	Marketing & Management
Submission Date	June 2013
Course Name	Principles of Marketing
Course Description	<p>Principles of Marketing is an introduction to the study of marketing in business and other organizations. Topics include: the marketing environment, marketing strategies and decision-making, marketing ethics and the international dimension of marketing strategy.</p> <p>Marketing 309 is a requirement for all College of Business majors. There were 28 students in the course, most of which fit the traditional age and demographics of college students and were in their junior year of college. The lesson was one class period (one hour and twenty minutes) and occurred at week 3 of the course. The lesson learnt was then to be transferred to a follow-up assignment and team final project.</p>
Abstract	<p>This lesson study aimed to better understand the process students use to evaluate information in a SWOT analysis. The ultimate goal was for the students to be able to identify what makes for a good SWOT analysis and to use this knowledge to successfully develop a team SWOT analysis. For the lesson, students reviewed three example SWOT analyses, were asked to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to develop criteria for a good SWOT analysis. Observers noted the students' discussion points and process of approaching the task. Findings revealed that students focused on superficial details of the examples, rather than on content or the quality of information. Additionally, team members did not appear to engage in debate or critique one another's ideas. General conclusions and recommendations for future lesson studies are included.</p>

PART II: THE LESSON

Learning Goals

Broad Student Learning Goals:

- Demonstrate understanding of the purpose of a SWOT analysis
- Identify what makes a good SWOT analysis
- Successfully develop SWOT analyses

Specific Student Learning Goals:

- Critically analyze and evaluate the quality of information/evidence presented
- Recognize relevant vs non-relevant evidence
- Compare and contrast varying levels of support in existing work
- Utilize findings to complete a SWOT analysis based by relevant data for class project

Our Goals for the Project

In addition to these student learning goals, the goals of the lesson study itself was to gain a better understanding of the process students use to develop a SWOT analysis. The SWOT analysis is a core fundamental concept to laying the ground work of the marketing plan. In previous semesters students were required to read in their text about what a SWOT is, likely answer test questions about it conceptually and when they applied it to their marketing project would often have less than desired outcomes in terms of quality. Some of the issues observed from our perspective included but were not limited to:

- irrelevant information
- confusion over internal vs external dimensions,
- not cite where they found information,
- give opinions as opposed to facts
- provide supporting evidence for findings

Given this, for our lesson study then we specifically wanted to understand how students evaluate potential SWOT analysis information and decide what makes for an acceptable amount and quality of evidence need to support a claim. We also hoped that through observation we could learn more about what students perceived the issues to be with the examples. In past semesters, additional time was spent covering the content of a SWOT analysis but it did not appear to yield different results when it came to applying the concepts. We also hoped in observing the process we could learn something more than just the SWOT analysis- more broadly, we aimed to understand how students look at any evidence for decision making in a business context.

Lesson Plan

The lesson taught to the students involved understanding and developing a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis is often used in marketing to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats involved in a business venture. The students previously read a chapter with information on what is a SWOT analysis, reviewed an example, and explored how and why a SWOT analysis is used in the marketing discipline. A lecture expanded on the material from the chapter, as well as exemplified the concepts by walking through a brief impromptu example of a SWOT analysis for UW-L. The reading was assigned prior to the lecture, and the lesson study was one class period after the lecture.

With the foundational knowledge of SWOT analyses, the lesson for this class was to evaluate 3 prior student final project examples of SWOT analysis.

The lesson began with an introduction of the faculty observers and told they would be observed completing their in-class assignment for her purposes, but this was unrelated to the *content* of the course. Students completed an informed consent form and then got settled for the lesson which involved the following:

1. Students sat with members of their marketing plan groups, which had been assigned a class period before. They spent a few minutes introducing themselves to group members with whom they were not familiar.
2. Students were given three different SWOT analyses (included in appendix) and told to review each one independently. These three examples were selected from previous students' work and represented three different issues that often arise in students' SWOT analyses. Example 1 was extremely lengthy with an abundance of irrelevant data. Example 2 had good data but often failed to include the source of the data. Example 3 was very brief, had limited evidence and presented opinions rather than empirical evidence for claims. Students were given approximately 30 minutes to review the examples. Ideally, they would be identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the examples.
3. To begin, each group appointed a note-taker. They were asked to record everything the group discussed in the 30 minute session. This was an attempt to document the way the group tackled the assignment, in addition to the observers recordings.
4. Then, each group was tasked with discussing what they saw in each example that was good/bad or made the SWOT analysis weak or strong.
5. Finally, groups were asked to come to a general consensus on what made for a good SWOT analysis and the note-taker was to record and turn in findings.
6. The instructor then led a discussion, including what the groups identified in the examples, what they felt made for a strong SWOT analysis, and which example they felt was the strongest. Through the discussion the instructor provided feedback and walked the students through each example. helping them to see what was strong/weak about each.
7. Then the class brainstormed a set of criteria to be used for their own team SWOT analyses, including criteria necessary for good SWOT analysis with proper evidence for their future work.
8. As a final demonstration of good SWOT techniques, the class talked through an example of a SWOT analysis using the template for Wheaties. (20 minutes)

PART III: THE STUDY

Approach

As mentioned, one of the aims of the lesson study itself was to explore how students evaluate information in SWOT analyses to better understand why they include/exclude information in their own SWOTs. Below is the approach for lesson.

Students were divided into eight groups and these were the groups they would be working in for their marketing plan the remainder of the semester. Students were asked to sit with their groups for this task. Additionally, there were three observers. These observers were each asked to listen in on one of the groups and record what they saw and heard. More specifically, they were asked to pay attention to the way in which the students approached the task and how they went about evaluating the example SWOT analyses. These notes are included in the Appendix.

Each observer sat between two groups and listened in on conversations as students discussed each of the SWOT analysis. In addition we utilized a video recorder to record one of the groups we could not listen to. The link to this video is provided in the Study Materials section.

The three examples used were SWOT analyses from final projects that were turned in a semester prior in the same course. We thought it would be beneficial to use examples that were from the same instructor and previous semesters to create an authentic task. Care was also taken to include examples from final projects- not drafts or works in progress while learning about the concepts. As noted earlier despite covering the SWOT analysis in class students routinely turned in poor SWOT analyses. The three examples were chosen specifically to highlight some of the larger issues students have in completing the SWOT for their project.

- Example 1 was extremely lengthy with an abundance of irrelevant data. This example did cite where they found information however more than 50% of the information did not apply to the project. This example did have good quality sources for the most part.
- Example 2 had some good data but often failed to include where they found the data. Example 2 was the highest grade achieved on a SWOT in the previous semester, although it still left something to be desired.
- Example 3 was very brief, had limited evidence and presented opinions rather than supported claims with empirical evidence.

Each observer recorded information on both the process students used, observation on group dynamics and the information they discussed. In addition to the observers' notes, and videotape, the group note taker handed in their papers with a summary of the groups' conclusions.

When the groups were done discussing and had identified their criteria for a strong SWOT analysis, the instructor led a class discussion. Specifically, she asked the students to share their insight on the different examples. As each group brought up points, she steered them in the direction of a strong SWOT analysis. Ultimately, helping them to see the strengths and weaknesses of each example, as well as to identify the criteria that are important (but often weak in student projects), including:

- Identifying relevant information to the company (and not including irrelevant info)
- Including quality data sources
- Including a variety of sources
- Supporting the data with citations
- Balancing the information
- Analyzing the information from the sources

Findings/ Discussion

There were several interesting and insightful findings from the lesson study – both in terms of the process used on the task of evaluating tasks (likely transferrable to other tasks too) and in the group dynamics for the task. Below we outline a few of the key findings and then discuss our overall take-away.

Task Findings:

- Students did not reference their book or previous knowledge of the topics when discussing and analyzing the examples. Rather they just appeared to discuss using their opinion and perceived knowledge (of this topic that was new to them). We did not observe a single group pull out a textbook or class notes, which would have provided an example of a strong SWOT by which they could compare the examples.
- Similarly, often times the groups were comparing the three examples as opposed to benchmarking them to their prior knowledge or understanding of a SWOT analysis. On only one occasion towards the end of time, one group questions internal versus external control, a core aspect of a SWOT. Another group member responded with “I think the answer to that is in the book”. At no time did anyone in the room reference the textbook or previous class notes.
- Students focused on superficial details such as commenting on the formatting which was not asked or expected of them. They spent significantly less time focusing on the actual content or the quality of the information that had been included in the SWOT and/or how the information contributes to the purpose of the SWOT.
- Overall student were not active readers: they did not underline or take notes; they simply read one example, discussed, read another example discussed. As such, they lost a lot of time to reading, and re-reading, each example.
- In line with the previous point, students treated the lesson as a task that needed to be completed, a check the box sort of mentality. They said things like “are we saying anything else or what” and “okay, so let’s make this easy”. Thus, the motivation for actually *learning* the lesson appeared weak, getting the task done seemed to be the biggest issue.

Group Findings:

In addition to observing how the task was accomplished, we also observed interesting group processes that may be useful to note.

- The note-taker in many of the groups did not actually participate in the discussion, but rather only assumed the role of note taker. Additionally, the quieter team members in some groups did not say anything until we were nearing the end of group time, but when they did they were very great comments/points. If they could be encouraged to speak up earlier the groups may have better (and more accurate) discussion points.
- Critical thinking and debate of one another’s ideas was weak in the groups. Members of the group did not question one another or discuss their thoughts they simply tried to brainstorm a list of items - the more the better. For example, when developing the criteria, one group just wrote down everything each member said and included it all as criteria. There was no critique or question of the ideas.

	<p>Overall conclusions:</p> <p>Taken together, our findings made it apparent that students did not always have a clear understanding of what good evidence/supporting information looked like. They were generally able to identify the one example that lacked evidence (example 3) but struggled with the other two. Some believed that example 1 (too much and irrelevant evidence) was good because it had a lot of information, while others noted it had too many quotes and that it seemed like it was copied and pasted. Additionally, the students failed to look at the both the quality of the information and its relevancy. Students generally thought the second example (the best of the 3) was the best one although they did not look at the content they “just determined” it was the best of the 3 given. However, most students could recognize that example 3 lacked factual information but there was minimal discussion as to what would have made it a better SWOT.</p> <p>Thus, for us the lesson study was very insightful, but it also begs more questions. On one hand, we have a better understanding of how our students examine SWOT analyses (e.g., the process of how they tackled the assignment and their discussion around what makes for strong and weak SWOTs). On the other hand, we still do not know <i>why</i> they tackle the assignment the way they do. Do they not identify the “right” problems because they do not know what good criteria are? Why do they not critique one another’s ideas? Do they know how to critically analyze the example?</p> <p>One could argue this was just a task that they did for class so they were less motivated to really put their effort in than they would for a heavily graded team project. Our intuition and knowledge says otherwise. Previous final papers suggest students exhibit some of the same “check box” and “let’s get this done” mentalities. Other assessments and faculty feedback suggest weaknesses in their critical thinking. Moreover, students should be motivated for assignments and lessons such as this so that they can turn in a strong paper in the future. Therefore, these results suggest to us that we make need to dig deeper into the “why” questions, and also take more time to explain the importance of the assignments and lessons to the students in an attempt to increase motivation.</p> <p>In completing this lesson study, we identified areas of improvement if this, or a follow-up lesson, was done in the future. A few recommended revisions to the lesson include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assigning the examples to be read outside of class. Reading the examples did take up a fair amount of in class time and different students had different reading speeds.• If assigned as homework, students could prepare their own ideas about each of the examples and bring them to the discussion as a starting point.• Assign a devil’s advocate within the group to stimulate a better discussion.• Give a better background of the samples, where they came from and what some of the common issues are. We did not include this in our introduction this time as we wanted to see the process unfold and to see if student could identify major flaws. Given they spend a lot of time focused on the different aspects (formatting vs content), perhaps some background information as to what we often see as issues would direct them in the right direction.•
References	The template handed out in class came from http://www.aztemplates.org/swot-analysis-template.html but there are several good ones out there this is just one!

APPENDIX	
Lesson Materials	A. Informed consent B. 3 SWOT analysis that were distributed in class C. Group notes from observation D. Observers Notes E. SWOT Template
Study Materials	Here is a link to the group we videotaped https://mediastream.uwlax.edu/UWLMediasite6/Play/8549c9bac0a6476db1ce35723f80a03f1d

APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT

Lesson Study Project Informed Consent for Students 2012-13

Project Title: Lesson Study in problem solving and transfer of knowledge

Principal Investigators: Maggie McDermott and Nicole Gullekson

We are conducting a research project to explore how students learn concepts, ideas or abilities in this class. In keeping with the ethical standards for doing research with human subjects this consent form describes the project and asks for your permission to allow us to use information you produce during the class period for research purposes. Please read and sign the form. Feel free to ask questions about any aspect of the project.

Purpose and Procedure

- My participation involves taking part in class just as I would normally do in the course.
- During the class period several instructors will be present to observe and record information about the day's lesson.

Confidentiality

- The results of this study may be published in scientific literature or presented at professional meetings.
- My information/data will not be linked with personally identifiable information. Names will not be attached to class observations and will be deleted from any written work collected during the class period.
- My information will be confidential. Only the research team members will have access to the information collected during the class period.

Possible benefits

- I will benefit from the research project to the extent that I fully participate in the class period.

Permission to Use Course Material

- I agree to allow the researchers to use observations of my participation and my written work related to the lesson for research purposes.
- I understand that my grade or my experience in the class will not be affected adversely whether I grant permission or not.

Please sign the form

I understand the project and grant permission to use my course material

Participant:

Date:

Researcher:

Date:

Questions regarding study procedures may be directed to Maggie McDermott, the principal investigator. Questions regarding the protection of human subjects may be addressed to the UW-La Crosse Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, (608-785-8124 or irb@uwlax.edu)

APPENDIX B- SWOT EXAMPLES FROM PREVIOUS SEMESTERS STUDENT WORK

SWOT EXAMPLE 1

Executive Summary

The Colgate-Palmolive dishwashing detergent, Ajax Bio-D, is a bio-degradable eco-friendly product. Bio-D will obtain a sustainable competitive advantage over its competition through a number of different ways. First, it is an eco-friendly product that is lower in cost compared to its competitors who include Dawn®, Cascade®, and other generic dish washing liquids. Secondly, Bio-D is a strong cleaner yet gentle on hands. In addition, our product contains a number of aromatic compounds that together create what is known as a “heavenly scent.”

SWOT

Strengths

- Strong Brand Identity. Colgate has been a household name for over 125 years (Colgate Palmolive Company, 2012).
- Colgate has strength in emerging markets such as India and China (Datamonitor 360, 2012).
- Established in 200 countries and territories (Datamonitor 360, 2012).
- “The company’s continued ability to steadily increase its dividend rate every year for nearly 49 years is driven by its strong market leading position in the oral, personal and home care segment across several countries in the world.” (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- “During FY2011, the company’s cash and cash equivalents totaled \$878 million, an increase of 79% over the past year. Additionally, Colgate-Palmolive paid \$1,203 million in dividend during FY2011, an increase of 5% over FY2010. In March 2012, the company also announced a 7% hike in its quarterly dividend for the second quarter of FY2012, reflecting a positive outlook. This increase in quarterly dividend effectively raised the company’s annualized dividend to \$2.48 per share, which currently yields 2.6%. The company’s quarterly dividend payment rate has grown by almost 427% in the last 15 years, up from a quarterly dividend from 11.75 cents paid in 1996 to 62 cents being paid out in the latest quarter of FY2012.” (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- The company has a strong research and development section. Expenses for research and development of new products and product improvements were 262 million in 2011 and 256 million in both 2009 and 2010 (Datamonitor 360, 2012).
- AJAX Brand has been a household name for 65 years and has many brand-loyal customers. In the past 6 months, 11,047,000 people have purchased AJAX within the past 6 months (GFK MRI Reporter, 2012).
- Retail supply chains are already established.
- No/little investment is needed to the manufacturing facilities.

Weaknesses:

- Inventory is increasing faster than sales (Datamonitor 360, 2012).

“While the company is posting a healthy revenue growth consistently, the company’s inventory is increasing at a higher rate, indicating that sales have not achieved the expected mark. During FY2011, the company’s revenues grew by 7.5%, while its inventory increased 8.6%. As per industry

analysts' comparison of revenues of Colgate-Palmolive both year-on-year and quarter-to-quarter basis, finished goods inventory was the fastest-growing component. This reflects that the company's products are not moving as well as expected. Products that do not move quickly and are on the shelves for too long, may be sold for lower prices which could hurt profitability of the company. In the case of Colgate-Palmolive, if the rise in inventory levels continues to be higher than the increase in revenues, the company is at a risk of accumulating too much inventory and, in tighter economic conditions, might find it difficult to achieve expected sales." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- The company has unfunded employee post-retirement benefits (Datamonitor 360, 2012).

"The company has significant unfunded pension obligations. Colgate-Palmolive provides retirement benefits for most of their employees, either directly or by contributing to independently administered funds. In FY2011, the company's pension benefit obligations stood at \$2,785 million as compared

to planned assets of \$1,863 million, resulting in an unfunded status of \$922 million. Volatility in financial markets (equity and debt) led to decline in pension fund asset values. Unfunded pension obligations will force the company to make regular cash contributions to bridge the gap between pension assets and liabilities, pressurizing the liquidity position of the company." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- Our product retail price is low and consumers may conclude that the product is of a lower quality.
- Consumer may have a biased belief that "green" products will not be as effective at cleaning dishes as a traditional dishwashing liquid.

Opportunities:

- "The company's largest revenue-generating regions in the world are the emerging economies. In FY2011, the oral, personal and home care segment derived more than half of its revenues from Latin American region (32.8%) and Greater Asia/ Africa (22.5%) regions, reflecting a strong presence in the emerging markets. With a long-standing presence in the emerging markets, the company is well positioned to leverage opportunities like robust GDP growth, large base of population, low product penetration and consumption rates, higher category growth rates and loyal consumers in these regions. For instance, in India, where the company has a presence for over 50 years, Colgate was ranked as the number one Most Trusted Brand in the country in 2011, across all product categories, in the prestigious Brand Equity Survey published by The Economic Times, a leading Indian publication." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- "The company launched a number of new products in the recent period, which include Colgate Wisp, Colgate Max White and Sensitive Enamel Protect toothpastes, Palmolive Aroma Sensations hand dish liquid, Speed Stick Pro and Lady Speed Stick Spa deodorants and Colgate Max White manual toothbrush. In addition, the company also introduced Speed Stick Stainguard and Lady Speed Stick Stainguard with Stain Defense technology. It introduced Colgate PROCLINICAL, a new line of professionally inspired daily toothpaste formulated with clinically proven technologies. With the launch of Colgate Sensitive Pro-Relief toothpaste, a new toothpaste that offers faster relief in the treatment of tooth sensitivity, in August 2011, the company extended its technology leadership to the sensitive segment in treating and preventing sensitivity pain." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- "As per Datamonitor's latest estimates (2010), children aged 0–14 years of age consist of nearly 15.8% of the oral care market in Brazil, Russia, India and China (BRIC countries). At the same time,

MarketLine's latest estimates indicate that birth rate in these countries in 2011 was at an average of 15.5 births per 1000 population, as compared to 11.6 births in the developed countries (US, UK, Germany and France) in the same year. Additionally, the combined population in the BRIC countries is more than five times the combined population of the developed countries. In 2011, the BRIC nations had a population of nearly 2,882.3 million, compared to 519.6 million in the developed countries. Despite high birth rates, the market for children's oral care products in these countries has very low penetration rates. While a lot of innovation is happening in the developed countries in the children's oral care segment, the emerging markets remain largely unattended. For instance, in Germany, Colgate-Palmolive recently launched three highly segmented child-variant toothpastes: Smiles 0–2, Smiles 2–6 and Smiles 6+ under its Colgate brand. It also introduced junior toothpaste under the Elmex brand, while Unilever also introduced a new junior toothpaste under its Signal brand. By attempting to narrow this gap in oral care product offerings for children in emerging and developed countries, companies like Colgate-Palmolive can leverage the largely untapped markets and expand their presence in newer product segments in emerging countries." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- Colgate's strategic acquisitions will help entry into newer markets (Datamonitor 360, 2012).

"Colgate-Palmolive entered into an agreement to purchase the Sanex personal care brand from Unilever, in March 2011. Sanex is a premium-priced personal care brand with a distinct positioning around healthy skin and strong market share positions in Europe. Sanex's unique positioning around skin health is a complement to Colgate-Palmolive's natural extracts and skin care positioning, as well as to the company's Protex brand which focuses on antibacterial protection for skin. During FY2011, the addition of Sanex business contributed 1% to worldwide net sales and growth in volume sales for the company. In particular, the Sanex business contributed 4% to Colgate-Palmolive's Europe/South Pacific sales and volume growth in FY2011. Through the acquisition, the company also gained several intangible assets including trademarks of \$403 with an indefinite useful life and customer relationships of \$193 with customer lives ranging from 15 to 18 years. This will greatly strengthen Colgate-Palmolive's positions in the shower gel and deodorant categories in several key countries in Europe and its overall personal care business in that region besides ensuring a longer customer life-time value through the Sanex brand in the longer term." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- "Herbal toothpaste for the Indian market. While the company offers the same toothpaste in 28 countries of Central Europe, Latin America, Malaysia and China, for the Indian market, the formulation combines Indian herbs, such as 'neem' – a natural antiseptic; clove – a household panacea for tooth ache; mint (pudina) for refreshing taste; and 'tulsi' known for its therapeutic properties. Another marketplayer, Splat-Kosmetika, a Russian-based oral care products company, launched the new Splat Strengthening Toothpaste in a Siberry variety in August 2011. The new Siberry variety toothpaste is said to be exclusively recommended for "Siberians and their friends." The product features extracts of wild strawberry, sea buckthorn, juniper, and cowberry, and according to the packaging is able to strengthen enamel, recondition gums, regulate pH, and eliminate plaque. Based on deep consumer insights captured at its four consumer innovation centers located in the emerging economies, Colgate-Palmolive also launched several innovative products targeting consumers in these countries in FY2011. One of the breakthrough innovations featuring local ingredients is Colgate Plax Fresh Tea mouthwash

for the Chinese market, which helped drive the company's share of mouthwash market in China to a record high level during the year. By offering more such products to suit local tastes, Colgate-Palmolive can expand further in local markets, while at the same time gain access to newer customers in the local markets." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- There is a growing demand for environmentally friendly products (Business Green Staff, 2012).

Threats:

- "The impact of operating environment in the Venezuelan economy." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
"Like any other multinational that operates across nearly half the globe, Colgate-Palmolive is directly at the risk of impact from changes in the operating environments in the country of its operations.
During FY2010, the company's operational performance was deeply impacted by hyperinflationary environment and the subsequent currency devaluations in Venezuela. As a result of the Venezuelan currency devaluations, local currency operations of the company's Venezuelan subsidiary translated into fewer US dollars during the year.
In November 2011, the country also implemented a new price control law that is expected to affect Colgate-Palmolive's current pricing strategies in the country. This also implies that the company will find it more challenging to offset the effects of inflation in Venezuela. The Venezuelan government also imposed import authorization controls and currency exchange and payment controls, which allow the company to have only a limited access to US dollars at the official rate only for its' imported goods
(Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- The company has experienced low brand loyalty in its personal care product category which currently has led to product substitutions (Datamonitor 360, 2012).
"As revealed by the latest Datamonitor consumer survey conducted in 2011, a majority (nearly 46%) of consumers across the world say that they "keep an eye out for new products" when buying bath and shower products. On the other hand, about 67% of consumers indicated that they either have a few brands on mind or none at all before entering the store to purchase bath and shower products. In contrast, only about 25% of consumers globally are very clear in mind about the brand of product that they would purchase before entering the store. This indicates that majority of consumers are open to new brands in the store, which in turn means that brand loyalty is not very high in this category of personal care products. This implies that the category is prone to threat of substitutes that offer more value for money or those that offer more product diversification. This increases the pressure on manufacturers to continuously engage and retain their consumers from switching to another brand. Since Colgate-Palmolive operates in the bath and shower category with various products, the company is equally prone to the threat of substitutes from private label manufacturers or competitors that offer more differentiated products. This prompts the company to invest and focus highly on continuously innovating its personal care products, in order to retain its customers and thus meet its sales expectations." (Datamonitor 360, 2012)
- Threats from fraudulent or fake products.

“Counterfeit or fake versions of Colgate-Palmolive’s products have been in circulation in various markets during recent past. For instance, towards the end of 2008 and in 2009, thousands of tubes of fake Colgate toothpaste were recalled by Sainsbury's and Boots, retail chain companies located in the US. Fake Colgate products were discovered to contain a chemical ingredient used in anti-freeze. In addition, from time to time, third parties also sell counterfeit versions of its products. Purchasers of the authentic Colgate brand could confuse its products with products that they consider inferior, which could cause them to refrain from purchasing its brands in the future. This could impair brand equity and adversely affect Colgate-Palmolive's business.”
(Datamonitor 360, 2012)

- Other companies may produce a bio-degradable dishwashing liquid which would be in direct competition with AJAX. For example, Dawn has a bio-degradable dish washing liquid and other producers may also create a similar product.

SWOT EXAMPLE 2

Colgate-Palmolive sells a variety of consumer products in the categories of oral care, personal care, home care, and pet nutrition. Hill's Science Diet is the pet nutrition brand under Colgate-Palmolive creating a healthier dog food choice for consumers. Canine Bio-Diet would take this idea of a healthier dog food to the next level. This dog food is 100% organic, meaning no preservatives, vaccinations, herbicides, pesticides or growth hormones in the animals or plants that make up the ingredients. This organic dog food is priced at a reasonable cost for the consumer. The product should be offered to provide the best food for customers' canine companions without breaking their budgets.

SWOT Analysis

Colgate-Palmolive Company listed the following risk factors stated in their 2011 financial statements. The following quoted items are taken directly from the aforementioned 2011 financial statements. (Colgate-Palmolive Company ⁶)

Strengths:

- The Company has built a solid reputation and become a well-known household name.
- The company competes in a diverse range of businesses.
- Long-term successful global operations provide the Company with a mature distribution network around the globe.
- The company invested heavily in R&D to meet requirements of local markets around the world.
- Colgate-Palmolive has a good record of maintaining employer-employee relationship.

Weaknesses:

- "Changes in the policies of the retail trade customers and increasing dependence on key retailers in developed markets may adversely affect the business."¹
- Any type of damage to Colgate's reputation could potentially harm the business, as with any business in any industry.
- Every business in this industry is subject to product liability claims.
- "A failure of a key information technology system could adversely impact the Company's ability to conduct business."
- "Colgate's success depends upon our ability to attract and retain key employees and the succession of senior management."²

Opportunities:

- The United States economy is recovering from the recent recession and consumer spending is on the up-swing.³
- Economic growth in developing countries with large population (Latin America, India & etc)

¹ Colgate-Palmolive Company ⁶

² Colgate-Palmolive Company ⁶

³ Chandra, 2012

- Innovative and new products that the industry has not been introduced to are required in order for a business to grow.
- The company started restructuring program to increase profitability.
- The pet nutrition and pet food industry is on the rise, according to the APPA.⁴
- The amount of families that own pets is increasing⁵

Threats:

- “Colgate-Palmolive faces risks associated with significant international operations, including exposure to foreign currency fluctuations.”
- An increasing amount of competition
- The dependence on specific suppliers could slow down profitability or could reduce the awareness of more beneficial business relationships
- Governmental laws, regulations, and policies could slow down the industry
- “Colgate-Palmolive is subject to the risks inherent in global manufacturing and sourcing activities.”

⁴ American Pet Products Association

⁵ American Pet Products Association

SWOT EXAMPLE 3

Nestle has decided to venture into the energy supplement market, with a never before seen energy chocolate bar called the Nestle Easy Vibe Energy Bar. This bar is healthier than all competing energy bars/drinks on the market in that its ingredients are of all natural substances. This ever-growing energy market gives way to new products such as the easy vibe with staggering profit margins that shatter past confectionary products for the last 20 years.

12. SWOT Analysis

- **Internal Strengths (favorable)**
 - Ability to leverage strong brand name to generate sales
 - Ability to customize products to the local market conditions
 - Strong Global operations with diversified revenue base
 - Research and development capabilities

- **Internal Weaknesses (favorable)**
 - Increasing instances of product recalls hampering brand quality

- **External Opportunities (favorable)**
 - Transition to a nutrition and well-being company
 - Focus on developing and emerging economies
 - Booming out of home eating market
- **External Threats (unfavorable)**
 - Compliance issue resulting in penalty payments
 - Macro economic factors
 - Allegations of unethical business activities

APPENDIX C – Student Group Notes

Group 1

(1) Green:

- Too much detail
- Numbers were good but paraphrasing quotes would've been nice
- Green is good for investors in the emerging markets
- Understandable for Finance major

(2) Pink:

- Has 2011 financial statements to back up points
- Best in our opinions. Hybrid of Blue and Green.

(3) Blue:

- To the point
- More used internally for the company
- Favorable and unfavorable is irrelevant
- Vague "opinions" as bullet points.
 - Ex. "Macro economic factors"

All:

- Really like the executive summary. Gives background.

Criteria:

- Simplicity
- Paraphrasing quotes
- Numbers are great but can't be drawn out
- Executive summary for background
- At least 3 bullet points for SWOT
- Short explanation of statements if needed
- SWOT detail varies on use. Finance wants numbers. MCT maybe Green. MKT Blue or Pink.
- For our use in class Blue might be best with analysis from Pink.

Group 2

Example 1:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Condense it and then consider the strengths
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Put some internal aspects in opportunities, few of them were relevant.
 - b. Opportunities aren't exactly opportunities
 - c. Keeping the pieces where they should be
 - d. Large amounts of irrelevant information
 - e. Too much of a financial paper
 - f. Organization is bad

Example 2:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Easier to read and more condensed
 - b. Most opportunities are relevant
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Organization
 - b. A lot of irrelevant information
 - c. Too general and not MKTing related
 - d. There are some general statements and not relating to the product

Example 3:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Some good points
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Not enough detail
 - b. Too broad and unspecific
 - c. Not enough weaknesses stated. No company has that few.
 - d. Not very helpful in MKTing terms.

Criteria:

- Make sure to have the statements accurate and not too long or broad
- Organized well and in correct area
- Little information but as much as needed
- Evidence as well

Strengths and Weaknesses:

- Internal
- Find a balance while being honest

Opportunities and Threats:

- External

Group 3

Example 1:

1. Strengths:
 - a. A lot of info./points
 - b. Cited everything
 - c. Growing business (lots of markets)
 - d. Made points relevant
 - e. Showed good statistics/proof
 - f. Showed flaws and was honest
 - g. Good executive summary and SWOT heading
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Wrote or copied or quoted? A lot, maybe summarize more constructively
 - b. Some irrelevant information
 - c. Inconsistent with flow or information, some had a ton, others not so much
 - d. Subheadings are bolded, different from each other

Example 2:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Summary gave good descriptor of product
 - b. More consistent lengths of points
 - c. Easy to read
 - d. Brief SWOT description
 - e. SWOT headings clear
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. No statistics, numbers to back up
 - b. Short point, very broad, not enough information
 - c. Weird citations?
 - d. Questionable weaknesses? Are they really a company weakness? – not specific
 - e. All quotes, no explanation
 - f. Threats not exactly specific to the company
 - g. Need main heading

Example 3:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Okay summary, promoted product
 - b. Fairly good points under each category
 - c. Points a lot more specific
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Still brief and maybe exaggerated, any proof or back up information?
 - b. Way too broad of points
 - c. Need more information

- d. No citations
- e. No statistics
- f. Hard to understand, need to elaborate to understand more
- g. Headings a tad unnecessary as far as how descriptive they are
- h. Title? Or main heading?

Criteria:

- 1. Clear headings
- 2. Organized bullet points
- 3. Avoid unnecessary information
- 4. Cite your sources (in-text), foot style citations look better
- 5. Focus on important points that have direct impact on company, not necessarily general common weaknesses
- 6. Utilize statistics/numbers to back up points whenever possible
- 7. Summarize points, don't copy and paste, no need for quotes
- 8. Executive summary:
 - a. Clear summary, what is your product?
 - b. What are they about?
 - c. Target audience
 - d. Any positives? Goals? Mission?
- 9. Make points clear, easy for average person to understand

Strengths:

- 1. Supply chain operations
- 2. Good market share
- 3. Beat competition?
- 4. Profits
- 5. Technological advancements
- 6. Location
- 7. Achievements
- 8. Research

Opportunities:

- 1. Economical
- 2. Broadening target market
- 3. Expansion
- 4. Social transitions (green movement)

Threats:

- 1. Competitors
- 2. Crowded markets
- 3. Regulations
- 4. Product failure

Group 4

Example 1:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Detailed analysis
 - b. Use of statistics
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Too long and wordy
 - b. Too many numbers/statistics listed in strengths
 - c. Needs to be straight to the point
 - d. What are Colgates strategic acquisitions?
 - e. Unnecessary points/facts
 - f. Counting on strong brand name

Example 2:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Cites sources at bottom
 - b. Condensed points
 - c. Explains products differences and how it'll appeal
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Generic
 - b. Unable to identify Hill's with Colgate

Example 3:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Well written Executive Summary
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Contradicting about recalls and brand name
 - b. Generic
 - c. Unethical business – about Nestle?
 - d. Unrealistic markets for energy bar
 - e. Rough draft
 - f. No statistics
 - g. Label Executive Summary

Group 5

Example 1:

- Lots of company wide facts and not just the specific product
- All about cleaning products, not dog food, etc., like in Ex. 2
- Almost too much/too long, talk about sticks, get away from topic a bit
- A lot of info. off website, just copied and pasted info.
- Should paraphrase more, condense it more

Example 2:

- More specific than Ex. 3
- Needed more examples/stats, things to compare the product to
- Footnotes good, helpful, SWOT is balanced
- Product liability claims, put it in?

Example 3:

- Not specific enough, too short, too broad to explain the topic
- No references

Strengths:

- Strong market share
- Facts
- Innovations
- Research
- Keep specific to the business
- How are employees happy? How do they view the company? (Could be strengths or weaknesses)

Opportunities:

- Be specific to where in the world there's growth and expansion, or other companies they might own

Weaknesses, opportunities and threats should be explained more than strengths because strengths are already established

Balance the specifics, but also make it to the point

A combination of Ex. 1 and Ex.2 would be the best SWOT analysis

Group 6

(1) Green:

- Way too long
- Don't need quotes all the time
- No executive would want to read this
- Opportunities is two pages long with a few bullet points
- Good citing (Credibility)
- Thorough with fact based numbers
- Good executive summary

(2) Pink:

- Bullet points could have a little more information
- Easy to read
- Citation
- Laid out nicely
- To the point/short

(3) Blue:

- What does favorable or unfavorable mean?
- Inconsistent format
- Some words don't make sense
- What is 12?
- Bad format with bullet points
- Short and to the point
- No sources
- Too wordy executive summary

Criteria List:

- Expect to see:
 - Executive summary should be paragraph at most like an introduction
 - Easy citation (maybe at the end of the document)
 - Fact based points with statistics
 - Consistent formatting
 - Explanation of words
- Not expect to see:
 - Page long quotations
 - 6 page manuscript
 - Citation in every bullet point (footnote citation is good)
 - No internal/external or favorable/unfavorable
 - Big words that can throw the reader off

Group 7

Example 1

- Way too wordy
- Proof with stats. and percentages
- Slim it down
- Put strengths in opportunities
- Liked that they cited sources

Example 2

- Worst
- Based on chance – no facts
- Why footnotes?

Example 3

- Kept internal/external separate
- Needed more facts/ too general and generic
- Elaborate more

Criteria that We Would Use

- Executive summary of company

Strengths: Internal affects company positively

- Facts, proof and cite sources
- Be as specific as possible
- Flow

Weaknesses: Internal, negative affects

- Facts/specific/flow

Opportunities: External, positive

- Facts, specific/flow – untapped market
- Proof

Threats: external: external, negative

- Competitors, society

Group 8

Example 1:

1. Strengths:
 - a. The amount of facts and numbers made it more credible
 - b. Also touched on multiple areas, and a wide variety of facts came from different areas such as market position, population, and age.
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. The numbers also made it more time consuming and the main point was harder to come across
 - b. Almost too much info to handle

Example 2:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Easier to understand and gets to the point
 - b. Number of bullet points in each section (Balanced)
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. There are no facts to prove what they are saying
 - b. Did not cite sources

Example 3:

1. Strengths:
 - a. Easy to read
2. Weaknesses:
 - a. Lower quality in general
 - b. Doesn't follow the same format throughout the paper
 - c. Not in depth
 - d. Did not cite sources

Strengths:

1. History of company
2. Past and recent success (Market Positioning)
3. Future
4. Communicate product well
5. Communicate brand well

Weaknesses:

1. Problems you have had
2. Sales figures
3. How competitors are doing compared to you
4. Word of mouth
5. Failed markets

Opportunities:

1. What direction you want to take
2. Untapped markets
3. New products
4. Expansion/growth
5. Growing economies/populations (Markets)

Threats:

1. Existing companies
2. Future companies
3. Economy
4. Regulation
5. Rising cost to produce

Format:

1. Don't overlook one section/have good balance
2. Communicate point with facts and numbers
3. Don't put in irrelevant numbers and facts
4. Make point specific and stay away from vague generalization
5. Keep format the same throughout
6. Cite sources

APPENDIX D OBSERVER NOTES

OBSERVER 1 NOTES

Observer notes from group 3

Example 1

- noted how many quotes were in example 1
- "copy and pasted-- I don't think this is how it is supposed to be"
- good example has lots of points
- cited everything that was good
- good statistics
- maybe they could have summarized it better

Example 2

- this example talked more about the product
- not enough info
- very consistent
- weakness is all quotes
- questioned some of the weakness
- not specific to the company
-

Example 3

- A little brief
- A little bold saying it was healthy
- Sounds like they know what they are talking about but would have helped to have actual examples

Formatting Conversation

- Layout of 2nd was done right
- 1st one was a mess heading doesn't match
- 3rd one is underlined
- 2nd one gives brief overview of what a swot analysis is
- 1 is too much

Content

- "I'm confused about internal vs external"
- Another group member "I think the answer might be in the book"

Recommendations

- Clear heading
- Focus on specifics
- Using stats and numbers to back it up
- Needed to be summarized
- No need for " " when summarizing

- Like footnotes hard to look at in text

Group 4

Example 1

- How does dental care have to do with ajax
- Should be more specific to the brand
- Everything is the same- generic info just change the name of the brand
- Trying to figure out what the point is

Example 2

- ? on strengths
- some strengths and some weakness
- good

Example 3

- they were looking at details of 3rd one (strengths compared to weakness)
- trying to be specific
- not a lot of quality

Content

- 1st lots of research
- 3 is like a rough draft found 10 bullets and put it together
- 3rd says favorable but does not describe and is personal option
- executive summary on 3rd gives better overview that is the most descriptive par

Recommendations

- strong executive summary
- explain
- even though thinking about future needs to be looking at past- otherwise it is speculative
- observing weakness is the only way to succeed

OBSERVER 2 NOTES

Group 8

- Began by reading the first SWOT analysis (then read the others). When they were reading there was no underlining or note taking at all (either group 6, 7 or 8). They spent about 10 minutes reading through the examples.
- They made the group decision to review one at a time.
- Green
 - Strength - “used a lot of facts and numbers”
 - “ya, compared to the purple one”
 - “all the numbers could be a weakness too, made kind of confusing and more time consuming”.
 - “painful, main point harder to come across”
 - “are we saying anything else or what” – the group seemed to dive into the task, find one strength and weakness and then end the discussion. Just trying to check the box, not really get into it.
 - They did talk about other areas/breadth such as market segmentation and position.
- Moved to the pink example.
 - Reading.
 - “What do you think about this”
 - “Simpler, easier to understand, no stats to back it up with though”
 - “Each had 5-6 bullet points – green had a varied amount”
 - (Group 6 mentioned that the pink had few bullet points and could use more info)
 - “so that’s enough?”
 - The groups appear to be focusing on the superficial issues, not on the content of what is written.
- Now reading the blue page
 - “lower quality in general, looking at the formatting it is very generic”
 - “any strengths?”
 - All on one page so you don’t have to read too much
 - Very easy to read
 - (group 6 saying it was way too short; some just doesn’t fit or make sense)
- “okay, next...now we develop criteria to use”
 - History of company is included to build credibility
 - Market position is important – so past and future success...are you growing.
 - Where you want to go – future endeavors
 - Get in depth without overdoing it
 - Communicate product well – what is the product is
 - “I feel what most did was talk about the brand”
 - So make sure cover product specifics info – both product and brand
 - “okay, so let’s make this easy”
 - Criteria
 - Sales – in here they talk about inventory
 - Position – how competitors are doing compared to your company
 - Markets that haven’t been tackled
 - Word of mouth (customers view/reputation, trusting what other customers say)
 - Untapped market – could be opportunity or threat
 - The group appears to be brainstorming about the criteria – there is no critique of one another’s ideas, everything goes on the criteria list...just writing everything someone says down as if it is a good idea.
 - (criteria cont.)
 - New products expansion/growth
 - “going to have to find this data monitor thing – have to find their stats”
 - “a couple of these mention their growing economy”
 - “and markets”
 - Deregulation...costs – “you know you have to get all your stuff tested”
 - “Okay we got them all”

- “want me to write strengths/internal?” – ya, some strengths and weaknesses are internal...opportunities and threats are external
 - “I think we need to talk about the technicality of it”
 - “I think the point [of this exercise] is that we should make it like this [green sheet] but we will wait and see.
 - “thinking we should have format, rather than just say what is in each section”
 - Have the same number of points in each section
 - **don’t put unnecessary info and numbers, make as relevant as possible.
 - **make points specific – like this macro economic factors)
 - [this student had not said much until this point but brought up the important issues at the end]
 - Keep formatting the same throughout
 - “think that pretty much covers it”
- (Group 6 saying must keep consistent formatting)
 - Also...”are these realistic opportunities or are they just do you can get something down on paper?
 - Want to give weakness but ones can can improve – don’t want to hurt them
 - Be specific, who is your competition
 - (seem to be hitting good points)
- General discussion
 - A lot of detail in green but too much
 - Some info not relevant and did not fit
 - Need to stay on point, bringing up info (oral care product) that is not relevant to their product – went broad in terms of the company
 - Like specific facts they had to support claims (gave example)
 - Like how 1st one cited sources
 - Stuff in quotes – could be paraphrased so they did not really analyze
 - Example 3 – only one weakness, unbalanced, not much thought
 - Example 2 – had 5-6 points each

OBSERVER 3 NOTES

- groups discussed very superficial concepts
- group dynamic issues were of interest
- group was focused on formatting and other things first and really only got to substance at the end
- groups read 1 then discussed, read 2 then discussed etc.
- Groups did not debate or critique one another’s ideas, simply recorded anything that was said

APPENDIX D SWOT TEMPLATE

SWOT Analysis Template			
<p>Advantages of proposition?</p> <p>Capabilities?</p> <p>Competitive advantages?</p> <p>USP's (unique selling points)?</p> <p>Resources, Assets, People?</p> <p>Experience, knowledge, data?</p> <p>Financial reserves, likely returns?</p> <p>Marketing - reach, distribution, awareness?</p>	strengths	weaknesses	<p>Disadvantages of proposition?</p> <p>Gaps in capabilities?</p> <p>Lack of competitive strength?</p> <p>Reputation, presence and reach?</p> <p>Financials?</p> <p>Own known vulnerabilities?</p> <p>Timescales, deadlines and pressures?</p> <p>Cashflow, start-up cash-drain?</p> <p>Continuity, supply chain</p>
<p>criteria examples</p> <p>Market developments?</p> <p>Competitors' vulnerabilities?</p> <p>Industry or lifestyle trends?</p> <p>Technology development and innovation?</p> <p>Global influences?</p> <p>New markets, vertical, horizontal?</p> <p>Niche target markets?</p> <p>Geographical, export, import?</p> <p>New USP's?</p>	opportunities	threats	<p>criteria examples</p> <p>Political effects?</p> <p>Legislative effects?</p> <p>Environmental effects?</p> <p>IT developments?</p> <p>Competitor intentions - various?</p> <p>Market demand?</p> <p>New technologies, services, ideas?</p> <p>Vital contracts and partners?</p> <p>Sustaining internal capabilities?</p>