

# Swot analysis summary narrative essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Full-time MBA CORE, 2006 Topic: Strategy Faculty Thomas [email protected]  
ubc. ca 604-822-8476 Office: HA 266 Overview There are important performance differences across companies.

These differences are caused by both industry effects and firm-specific effects. This course is designed to increase your understanding of these effects so that the firm or organization you will work for will be a superior performer. Strategic management is concerned with the management of the whole company. Thus, strategy requires looking at an organization from different functional perspectives and deciding which are the most critical.

Regardless of what role you envision yourself holding in an organization, a solid understanding of strategy is essential if you are going to contribute to major decisions. This component of the CORE will teach you how to analyze the internal and external environments of firms, generate strategic alternatives and evaluate them. Learning Outcomes Students will learn the basic concepts of business strategy and will be able to apply them. The main learning outcomes are the ability to conduct comprehensive strategic analysis of a business and to improve strategic thinking. Learning Objectives Students will be able to: 1.

Evaluate the current performance of an organization from a strategic perspective, describe the current strategy of the organization and write a strategy statement 2. Analyze the external environment of an organization, including the ability to provide an industry overview, conduct Porter's five forces, competitor analysis and dynamic industry analysis. 3. Analyze all aspects of the internal environment, including activities and resources 4.

Determine whether the firm has a sustainable competitive advantage 5.

Generate and evaluate strategic alternatives Readings and Cases •Michael E. Porter, "What is Strategy?" Harvard Business Review, November-December 1996, 61-78. •The Pharmaceutical Industry: Challenges in the New Century (HBS 9-703-489) •Wal-Mart Stores (HBS 9-794-024) •Wal-Mart, 2005 (HBS 9-705-460) •A.

E. Boardman, D. Shapiro and A. R.

Vining, "A Framework for Comprehensive Strategic Analysis," Journal of Strategic Management Education, 2: 1, 2004, 307-342. Students'

Responsibilities •It is expected that students will have carefully read the case study/reading before class. For most classes (but not the first), students will be expected to prepare some questions/assignments, to be distributed the class before. •Students should be fully prepared to participate in class discussions and volunteer to give short presentations when presented with the opportunity.

Course Outline WeekdayDateTopicCase/Reading Wednesday6-

SepIntroduction to Strategy Porter: What is Strategy? Wednesday13-

SepIndustry AnalysisThe Pharmaceutical Industry Wednesday27-SepInternal

Analysis & Competitive AdvantagesWalMart Stores Wednesday18-

OctStrategic OptionsWalMart 2005Monday6-NovStrategic AnalysisBoardman

Shapiro and Vining Reading Friday17-NovExam Case Preparation Questions

In order to prepare for classes involving cases, you should consider the

following questions. The Pharmaceutical Industry: Challenges in the New

Century Question 1: Describe the value chain of the pharmaceutical industry.

Question 2: Perform a PEST analysis of the pharmaceutical industry. PEST stands for the political, economic, social and technological components of the macro-environment. Question 3: Perform a Porter-style industry analysis of the pharmaceutical industry, at the time of the case. Question 4: Based on the analysis of questions 1-3, do you believe the pharmaceutical industry to be an attractive industry? And which segments do you consider the most / least attractive? Wal-Mart Stores Question 1: What are Wal-Mart's competitive advantages? Make sure to distinguish between the initial competitive advantages and those that developed over time.

Question 2: How sustainable are Wal-Mart's competitive advantages?

Question 3: What would you consider Wal-Mart's internal strengths and capabilities to be? Wal-Mart, 2005 Question 1: How transferable are Wal-

Mart's competitive advantages as it moves into new formats and new international locations? Question 2: Looking forward, what should Wal-Mart's strategic priorities be? Assignments, Exams, and Assessment 20%

Assignments: There will be four individual assignments, to be submitted BEFORE class. Each assignment must be no longer than 2 pages, and must be submitted as a single piece of paper – printed on both sides. Make sure to include your name at the top of the first page. Assignment 1, due Sep 13th:

Answer preparation question 1 of the pharmaceutical industry case

- Assignment 2, due Sep 27th: Answer preparation question 1 of the WalMart Stores case
- Assignment 3, due Oct 18th: Answer preparation question 1 of the WalMart 2005 case
- Assignment 4, due Nov 6th: Based on the pharmaceutical industry case, define the core elements of the strategic direction that you would recommend to management at Merck 80%

Exam: •Essay and short answers on core strategy concepts. It might include some questions based on a case that would be distributed in advance.