

MGMT-250 Professional Communication  
Who Is Your Best Boss?  
Justification Reports

### **Assignment Background Information**

The word *boss* usually denotes the person in charge of a workforce. A related connotation of *boss* is used as a slang term to describe someone who is really good at what they set out to do. We have much to learn about communication and professionalization from the stories and experiences of bosses from the world of business.

Therefore, this project tasks you to explore the stories of three different entrepreneurs via the podcast *How I Built This*, where host Guy Raz interviews entrepreneurs and “dissects the genesis of familiar brands like Clif Bar, Sam Adams Beer, Instagram and Patagonia...” (NPR, 2016). You will be given three numbers in class, and those numbers will represent your assigned podcasts on the Podcast List on Blackboard.

This exercise is an opportunity for you to demonstrate a variety of skills, such as performing research that you incorporate into an informative message via two different channels – written and spoken—that follow best practices for professional communication.

More importantly, this assignment aims to give you some things to think about in terms of what qualities make for an ideal boss, what qualities make one successful, and how you want to approach and live out your own professional persona.

### **Approaching the Assignment**

Use the following two steps as a springboard for this assignment. These questions are only to get you started thinking about the qualities and traits that engender a best boss.

**Step 1:** Take a few minutes and brainstorm a list of what traits you think a best boss should have generally. What kind of traits do you think best bosses should avoid or not cultivate? If you took notes during our class discussion, you will already have a good start.

**Step 2:** After listening to all three of your assigned podcasts (and taking good notes!), think about your three bosses specifically:

What kind of character traits seem to enable their success? What traits allow them to handle failure...or not?

How does each one approach the idea of “business”? Have the boss traits been in them forever, or did they have to learn through experience?

Because the podcasts are randomly assigned, you may end up with three very different stories from three very different personalities. Or, you may immediately see common threads among all three narratives.

Take what you learned from the podcasts in Step 2 and consider that information through the lens of what your thoughts were in Step 1.

### Accessing the Podcasts

The *How I Built This* website is not intuitive to finding less recent podcast episodes. However, you can easily find the podcasts by entering “How I Built This” (Be sure to enclose title in quotation marks) + [Entrepreneur’s Full Name]. You may listen directly from the npr.org website or any other podcast platform that you like.

NOTE 1: Each podcast has a different run time depending on the length of the interview.

NOTE 2: Make sure that you have the correct podcast by name. You are looking for just *How I Built This with Guy Raz*. You do **NOT** want *How I Built Resilience: The Resilience Series* or any other spinoff.

NOTE 3: Do not forget to take good notes as you listen to the podcasts.

### Deliverables Checklist

- |                                  |      |
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| A.) Draft of 1 Executive Summary | p. 2 |
| B.) Justification Report         | p. 2 |
| C.) Best Boss Presentation       | p. 3 |

### Deliverables Content

#### A. DRAFT OF 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Thursday, 19 November** Due to Blackboard by class time

#### Content Details

Writing an Executive Summary is an important skill that combines interpreting information and conveying that information in a concise and complete manner.

Choose 1 of the podcasts assigned to you and prepare a draft Executive Summary for class discussion. The summary will be more than half of a page but less than one complete page.

#### B. JUSTIFICATION REPORT

**Tuesday, 24 November** Rough Draft due to Blackboard by class time

**Tuesday, 1 December** Final copy due to Blackboard by class time

#### Content Details

The justification report is an informative communication. The report will have 4 sections that do the following:

I.) Provide an Executive Summary for each of the three podcasts. Each summary will be more than half of a page but less than one complete page.

II.) Compare and contrast what you learn about the entrepreneurs by considering three separate traits or qualities. While you do not have to compare/contrast all three bosses to each trait or quality, you do have to address each boss at some point in the compare/contrast section.

For example, you can compare Boss A to Boss B for Trait 1, Boss B to Boss C for Trait 2, and Boss A, Boss B, and Boss C with Trait 3. The compare/contrast possibilities will all depend on who your entrepreneurs are. Mix and match as you choose; just make sure you include all three in the compare/contrast section of the report. This compare/contrast sections should be at least 1.5 pages total.

III.) Make a recommendation as to which person you would choose to work for and justify your choice with concrete evidence from their interview and your research. This section should be at least half a page but no more than one full page.

IV.) Provide 3 questions, along with a rationale for each question, that you would ask your top choice from Number 3 above. These questions must be original and not already asked within the podcast. This section will be brief: the numbers 1 – 3 will denote a question followed by its specific rationale.

### Source Details

While the bulk of this assignment should focus on the podcasts, you will need to:

+ Incorporate **one additional credible source per entrepreneur**. Use outside source content to develop and support sections II and III described above.

+ Include **at least 1 direct quotation from all sources (podcasts and outside sources)**, not just summaries and/or paraphrases.

+ Use APA format for all sources, including in-text citations, as well as a References page at the end of the report. At a minimum, the References will contain 6 sources (3 podcasts + 3 outside sources).

### Report Formatting

The Justification Report must be in standard business format, **at least 3.5 pages** and no more than 6 pages in length, **not** including the References page.