

## Competitive Advantage Final Assessment: Outline & Rubric

**Competency:** Competitive Advantage

**Competency Statement:** Demonstrate knowledge of competitive advantage and strategic positioning.

**Final Assessment Submission Title:** Competitive Advantage Paper with Literature Review

**Competency Objectives:**

Demonstrate an understanding of ways to create low-cost competitive advantage through value-chain management.

Develop an understanding of ways to create competitive advantage through quality management.

Develop an understanding of ways to create competitive advantage through innovation.

Develop an understanding of ways to create competitive advantage through customer focus.

**Program Learning Outcomes:** NA

**Institutional Learning Outcomes:** ILO 2 – Innovation and Creativity: Construct a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product.

### Purpose of This Assessment

In this assessment, you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of competitive advantage and strategic positioning. You should clearly evaluate and prioritize the competitive advantage options, providing an evidence-based rationale for the prioritized list of competitive advantages. You are expected to demonstrate your ability to compare and contrast multiple approaches, integrate ideas from alternative perspectives, and use innovative thinking strategies. You may use the new venture or existing privately owned business you identified in the Strategic Fundamentals and Environment competency, if you wish.

### Items Required for Submission

The item for submission is a 15- to 25-page Competitive Advantage paper with a literature review of at least five pages (1,250 – 1,500 words, excluding the title page and reference list), following APA guidelines and included as an appendix. Please note: an abstract is not required for this assignment.

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## Step ONE: Preparation

The **Information Literacy** competency provides much more detail and opportunities for practicing the activities included in a literature review. Please refer to the competency materials if you would like additional information.

This sample literature review from Purdue University provides a general sample you may find helpful as you plan your own review:

[http://faculty.mwsu.edu/psychology/Laura.Spiller/Experimental/sample\\_apa\\_style\\_litreview.pdf](http://faculty.mwsu.edu/psychology/Laura.Spiller/Experimental/sample_apa_style_litreview.pdf)

- Determine a topic and related research question that address competitive advantage and justify the strategic positioning of that new venture or existing privately owned business in your community that you will examine through your literature review.
- Go to the Brandman.edu library: <http://www.brandman.edu/current-students/resources/library>. Review articles, books, or other scholarly works on the topic from various journals and databases located through the Brandman online library.
- Select 12 sources (from at least 8 different authors/works within a collection) that you will utilize to examine your topic area within this literature review.

You may opt to create an annotated bibliography to assist in beginning to assess the key points, strengths, and weaknesses within your sources. If you have prepared for the assessment by completing your annotated bibliography, you should be in great shape to begin your literature review. For a refresher on annotated bibliographies, review <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>.

Examples of annotated bibliographies are available at <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/03/>

Note: A literature review is not a traditional paper; it is a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between sources identified through research. The main purpose of the literature review is to examine and synthesize current content competitive advantage from academic sources and to demonstrate your ability to conduct research in competitive advantage field. This is not simply a summary of each of the sources.

Create an outline for your literature review. The format and content of a literature review can vary depending on its purpose the discipline for which you are writing, which in this case is the competitive advantage of your selected business.

- I. Introduction – In the introduction you should:
  - a. Define or identify the general topic, issue, or area of concern
  - b. Point out overall trends in what has already been published
  - c. Establish your point of view for reviewing the literature (Include your research question!)
  - d. Indicate the organization of the review
- II. Body – In the body you should:

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- a. Group research studies and other relevant literature according to a common theme [for example, you may find prevailing theories and/or practices involved with your research; you can use these as thematic sections for the body of your literature review]
  - b. Summarize each item of the literature appropriately according to its significance
  - c. Compare and evaluate each item of the literature
  - d. Provide topic sentences at the beginning of paragraphs and summary sentences at the end of sections to help the reader understand the main issues.
- III. Conclusion – In the conclusion you should
- a. Summarize the literature maintaining the focus presented in the introduction
  - b. evaluate the current "state of the art" [or state of the topic that represents your research question] [by] pointing out gaps in the literature, inconsistencies and issues that are important for future study
  - c. conclude by giving some insight into the relationship between your topic and a larger area of study or area of professional practice ("What is the structure of a literature review," p. 3)
- IV. Reference Page – With respect to references you should:
- a. Start the reference list on a separate page following the literature review
  - b. Include the word References centered at the top of the page
  - c. Properly format your citations in your reference list using APA guidelines and verify that these sources are correctly incorporated as in-text or parenthetical citations throughout the body of your literature review

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### Step TWO: Editing Your Literature Review

Once you have completed a draft of your literature review, read it out loud, ask another person you trust to read it for clarity and consistency, and make the necessary edits to polish your draft into a well-written final version.

### Step THREE: Completing Item 2 - Competitive Advantage Paper

Use the information in your Literature Review to support your discussion and include the Literature Review as an appendix to your paper. Include each of the following sections in your Competitive Advantage Paper, using at least 12 references, with primary sources noted throughout the paper.

- A. **Industry Analysis:** Describe the industry your new venture occupies by showing sophisticated, innovative thinking in drawing the information and sources from the literature review. Be sure to consistently integrate multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives.
- B. **Comparative Analysis:** Perform a comparative analysis of the similarities and differences between the sources you selected for your literature review.
- C. **Market Conditions:** Describe the successes and failures within the market space that you want to occupy.
- D. **Competitive Advantage:** Describe five competitive advantages of your new business
- E. **Business Plan Descriptions:** Provide information for the HOW, WHY, WHAT, WHEN, and WHERE of your Business Plan.
- F. **Target Market:** Describe your target market and explain how the target market demographics are changing (e.g., older, richer).
- G. **Segmentation:** Describe the segment of the population you are going to target; use eight criteria for each target, and explain why you chose those targets.
- H. **Conclusion:** Summarize in one paragraph why your product has a competitive advantage.

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### **Step FOUR: Checklist for Submission**

Before you submit, check to see if you believe you have met the criteria noted below.

Did you....

- Demonstrate sophisticated, innovative thinking in drawing the information and sources from the literature review into the competitive advantage paper?
- Consistently integrate multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives?
- Present a sophisticated comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences between the sources evaluated?
- Provide comprehensive, detailed, and well-researched information for the required sections of your competitive advantage paper, following all of the standards provided?
- Provide inclusive, varied sources that are well-aligned with your selected business with accurate references of the sources, and include your literature review as an appendix?
- Demonstrate APA academic writing and a sophisticated presentation of all material, displaying clarity, conciseness, and correctness?

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## Step FIVE: Submit Your Work

Your completed final assessment documents should be submitted through the Final Assessment page of your competency.

- Please note, for files smaller than 10MB (i.e., most Word documents), use the corresponding “+UPLOAD STUDENT FILE” button to upload your final assessment assignments. For larger files of any type (i.e., voice-over PowerPoint files, videos, or image-heavy documents), please use the optional TEXT EDITOR to provide a URL where your grader can download your file.

The screenshot shows the submission interface for Assignment 5. At the top is a navigation bar with the Brandman University logo and links for Dashboard, Competencies, and Learning Journal. Below the navigation bar, there are two upload areas: one for a file named 'SRM FA Doc1.docx' and another for additional files. The assignment details for 'Assignment 5' are shown, including a description: '5. A 10- to 15-slide PowerPoint presentation with supporting voice-over'. A 'Use File Uploader' button is present. Below this is a text editor with a toolbar containing bold, italic, bulleted list, numbered list, link, and unlink icons. The text editor contains the text: 'Download URL for Assignment 5: <https://fwk.box.com/s/2nwjgkwooz6pa7wm8uzojjwerzb7sl2>'. At the bottom is a red bar labeled 'Comments (Optional)'.

How you create a download URL is up to you, but various free online providers, including Google Drive, Box.com, or Dropbox, offer this service. Please make sure that the URL you provide can be accessed by anyone with the link. For further instructions on how to create public links for uploaded files, consult the support pages for your chosen provider.

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### Final Assessment Rubric: Competitive Advantage

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>EMERGING (1)</b>	<b>DEVELOPING (2)</b>	<b>PROFICIENT (3)</b>	<b>EXEMPLARY</b>
ILO – Innovative Thinking	Does not demonstrate innovative thinking in drawing the information and from the literature review into the competitive advantage paper.	Partially demonstrates innovative thinking in drawing the information and sources from the literature review into the competitive advantage paper.	Demonstrates adequate innovative thinking in drawing the information and sources from the literature review into the competitive advantage paper.	Demonstrates sophisticated innovative thinking in drawing the information and sources from the literature review into the competitive advantage paper.
ILO – Embracing Multiple Perspectives	Presents minimal or no integration of multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives.	Partially integrates multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives.	Adequately integrates multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives.	Consistently integrates multiple ideas from alternate sources that may offer contradictory perspectives.
ILO – Analysis	Presents minimal or no comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences between the sources evaluated.	Presents partial comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences between the sources evaluated.	Presents adequate comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences between the sources evaluated.	Presents sophisticated comparison and contrast of the similarities and differences between the sources evaluated.
Knowledge	Provides information for some of the required sections. Includes fewer than 12 references. Either does not follow, or follows to a limited degree, the standards provided.	Provides adequate information for most of the required sections, including at least 10 references. Follows most of the standards provided.	Provides adequate information for all of the required sections, including at least 12 references. Follows all of the standards provided.	Provides comprehensive, detailed, and well researched information for all of the required sections, including at least 12 references. Follows all of the standards provided
Literature Review	Provides limited sources that are not clearly related to the selected business; references some sources, with substantial errors.	Provides some sources that are related to the selected business; references some sources, with errors.	Provides appropriate sources that are aligned with selected business; accurately references sources, with a few minor errors, and includes literature review as an appendix.	Provides inclusive, varied sources that are well aligned with selected business; accurately references sources, and includes literature review as an appendix.

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Writing Mechanics	Writing is unfocused, rambling, or contains serious errors. Entire assignment (Literature Review and Competitive Advantage Paper) is not the required length.	Demonstrates APA academic writing with some clarity or conciseness and contains some errors. Entire assignment (Literature Review and Competitive Advantage Paper) is 18 to 30 pages in length.	Demonstrates APA academic writing in terms of clarity and conciseness and contains minimal errors. Entire assignment (Literature Review and Competitive Advantage Paper) is 18 to 30 pages in length.	Demonstrates APA academic writing and a sophisticated presentation of all material, displaying clarity, conciseness, and correctness. Entire assignment (Literature Review and Competitive Advantage Paper) is 18 30 pages in length.