

Project Description and Our Contributions

Our project is an investor proposal. Specifically, we have chosen to deviate from a conventional for-profit company model and act as founders of a non-profit aid group who need additional capital in order to expand our aid programs into new regions. We felt that it would be an interesting approach, as we would utilize not only quantitative data, but emotional and ethical appeals as well. The specific focus of our non-profit is to help solve the growing global water crisis, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Globally, there are at least 780 million people that are without adequate drinking water. Without access to potable water supplies, these people suffer from dramatically increased rates of disease as a result of water contamination from feces, bacterial growth, and infections carried by insects breeding in still-water.

This is a recognized global problem, and there are numerous organizations such as USAID and WaterAid conducting water projects and progress is being made. Halving the proportion of the global population without access to clean water was identified as one of the U.N. Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for 2015, and was met ahead of schedule in 2010 due to the effort of these organizations. However, as recognized by a joint WHO/UNICEF progress report, the face value of reaching this goal ahead of schedule can be misleading. Nearly half of the progress made toward improving access to clean water has been made in China and India. The target of our aid efforts, Sub-Saharan Africa, still lags far behind. 31 out of 50 countries in that region are not on track to meet the MDG by 2015 and a large disparity in between urban and rural populations. Additionally, Africa’s population is expected to quadruple in the next 90 years, with most of that growth coming from the Sub-Saharan nations, which will make water resources even tighter.

In regards to our potential investors, we want to stress that clean water shortage is a very significant cause of disease and death in developing nations. Although significant progress has been

Comment [1]: Very clear contextual detail here – succinctly stated and articulate.

Comment [2]: **Verb Tense error.** Use *present tense*, NOT *past tense*, to discuss a text, even though the text itself is written in the past about events in the past. This is the academic standard for this type of writing. Write “The book *IS* published...” or “The author *WRITES* that...” or “The goal of our project *IS* to...” instead of *was* or *wrote*, for example. Look for incorrect and/or unclear verb tense shifts in your work, and work hard to stay in the present tense throughout your discussion. Proofread carefully for this in your writing.

Comment [3]: Which can of course be articulated as factual data as well, yes? Emotional and ethical appeals don’t preclude the deployment of facts as part of their rhetorical approach or message, keep in mind.

Comment [4]: Very nice **clarification of the problem(s)** you’re responding to in your project proposal. It states the facts on the ground for us while at the same time smartly directing us toward your response/solution. Good.

made by current aid programs, not enough is being done, and our organization can help fill that gap. Our presentation will be supplemented by a PowerPoint slideshow and planned interactive element for our “investors.”

Actual duties in this presentation and paper were divided fairly evenly according to how much work we expected they would be. For instance, (student 1) would write the project description and collect and edit all of our sources. We felt that this was a pretty tall task, so he wasn’t asked to write about the other questions that were asked of us. As far as the presentation itself we tried to divide things evenly again. We will each make the slides for our portion of the presentation with one person bringing them all together to edit and format at the end. One person will present the introduction and some of the meta-problems with our topic. The next person will bring the scope more to a local level and explain what we would want to accomplish on an individual village scale. The final presenter will go a little further in depth on the local problems facing the villages and discuss what we will do to fix it. This person will then give a brief conclusion, asking for the support of the class as the investors being presented to.

What are the principal arguments of the project?

The argument took its roots in a claim that our organization will provide better water supply services to countries in need of potable water. The center of this argument is based on facts that we have accumulated through our research showing a lack of access in many nations in the world, specifically African nations in the sub-Saharan area. We have discovered existing projects, such as one from the United Nations and private water suppliers, which are looking to provide access to affordable water supplies and have been implemented to supply access. However, there are shortfalls projected, as well as organizations that do not do the job efficiently due to corruption in the government leading to broken pipes and contamination. Our principal argument, therefore is, our

Comment [5]: A good enumeration of the tasks involved and how and why you’ve divided them between team members as you have.

Comment [6]: These section headers are quite useful to me, and a smart organizational device given the number of items I want you to be covering in these group writes.

Comment [7]: **Very good.** This is exactly what I’m looking for: an indication from your group that factual information in this case rests at the base of your argumentative thrust in the project proposal.

organization will fill in the gap of the shortfalls and provide access to water through sustainable approaches, better than those that exist.

Comment [8]: Excellent. Your argument and the claim it relies on is very clearly tied to factual data, transparently and unambiguously. Very good.

How the argument is in line with fact based approaches?

The argument took into consideration the global problem of drinkable water scarcity as its foundation. We have hypothesized there will still be a water crisis in African nations even with foreign aid, because of poor management with existing water remedies and shortcomings from development of sustainable solutions. Therefore, we have made a clear claim; our organization will provide a better alternative to address this problem. The data collected provides explanation for why current solutions are not improving the water problem due to corruption in the government that leaks into the private sectors, which claim to provide accessible and affordable water supplies. Not only is water accessibility a problem, but also contamination of accessible water is an issue due to lack of regulations for farm and land projects. The resources from the United Nations, as well as the EPA and other reputable sources support our claim, using their statistical data and researches that looked into the lack of effectiveness from current projects and statistic of a population increase will weigh the issue more as evidence to move our audience to action, i.e. back our organization’s proposal.

Comment [9]: Use a colon to introduce a statement or list item, not a semicolon.

Comment [10]: Comma spliced run-together sentence. Commas may only be used to join complete sentences together when you use a coordinating conjunction (*for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so*) with them. Otherwise, choose a different solution to bridge these sentence ideas, like a period or a semicolon or a subordinating conjunction (*after, although, because, that, as, while, when, etc.*) without a comma. Proofread carefully for this error pattern in your work.

Comment [11]: ww - research

Comment [12]: sp - statistics

Comment [13]: The information is good here, the phrasing is not – it’s fairly convoluted and confusing.

Proofread more carefully for these kinds of fluency errors and omissions in your sentence and paragraph work. Move off the computer screen and onto paper to do this work – you will catch more of your own sentence errors if you do this work on paper. Reading aloud or having your work read aloud to you can also be particularly helpful in identifying these kinds of sentence errors that need to be eliminated before submitting your work for evaluation.

What argument structures and appeals are used?

When the group first formed, we intended to use a Rogerian approach for the presentation. It wasn't until later that we understood that by taking certain aspects of different argumentation structures we could make stronger appeals and hopefully make our argument more soundly. We plan on starting the presentation using a classic oration approach. We will state who we are and what our organization does. We will use the facts of our accomplishments to give ourselves credibility in the eyes of the audience. Then we will start our problem statements. I say 'statements' because the problem we are tackling is a fairly complex one. There are many layers to the problem, but we intend to put our efforts into the most pressing one. This section shows some aspects of the Toulmin structure because we are making claims based on our research. Much of this, however, is presented as fact, with very little cause and effect, thus aspects of the Toulmin approach. Later we start to dial in the argument and take on a Rogerian approach. We empathize with the audience, and recognize that they have questions. We try to answer some of those questions while quietly pushing our organization into their conscious until we finally let the point of our argument sink in.

We start the presentation using an ethos approach. We want to educate the audience on what is going on in the world with regards to clean water and what we do to help people. We are showing the audience that we are very civically and ethically minded. We move from there to a more pathos approach. We explain that millions of people die a year, and hope the audience begins to be moved into action my emotions. From here we dial the argument into a more local scale, giving the statistics faces and names. This is meant to play on both the ethos and pathos, breaking down some barriers that the audience may have with the extent of human suffering, and allowing us imbed a point in their minds. We follow this with an appeal to logic; the companies that are currently trying to fix the problems are failing, here is what we will do differently. After this we conclude with a strong plea to

Comment [14]: ...which would have been a very smart (and logical) choice, given the nature of your topic and argument.

Comment [15]: Why? This isn't clear or self-evident, and needs elaboration. Multiple approaches or strategies is not, by definition, better or more effective in every instance. In fact a narrower focus and strategy set is often better because it narrows the field for you, allowing you to exercise tighter control over the components of your argument. Add strategies and you potentially begin A) diluting the brand and B) losing control over all of the pieces, which you don't want.

Comment [16]: Eliminate singular 1st person speech (I, me) from academic writing – Singular 1st person speech makes the writing feel less formal and more subjective, which is not the tone you typically want to establish in academic work because, read as subjective interpretation, it tends to undermine the credibility and authority created elsewhere in your narrative by relying on logic, research, definition work, etc. Those latter types of speech are the currency of academic and professional writing, not the former. Keep the focus on the text or subject, not on you. If you need to refer to yourselves as a speaking group, use "we" or "us" instead.

Comment [17]: This is excellent explanation of how your project work fits those approaches and rationale for you've chosen them, and it's exactly the kind of meta-analysis of your own work I'm looking for here. Very good.

Comment [18]: ww – using ethos as our approach OR establishing a particular ethos

the pathos and ethos of the situation. Help these people and do the right thing. It doesn't take much; you just have to sign the check.

Comment [19]: This is really nice exegesis of the project construction and explication of your rhetorical choices, laying out quite succinctly how you've deployed these appeals and why you've chosen them. Very good.

What are the potential problems, limitations, challenges for your group in making this kind of fact-based argument?

We need to prove that education will actually help with maintaining the functions of the existing water developments. We must convince the audience that the government of these nations will not present problems that may limit our ability to successfully conduct our project, through corruption. The latter issue will be most difficult to address. However, another potential problem we may have not considered is the actual amount of water available in these areas to proceed with well digging projects.

Comment [20]: Eliminate 2nd person speech (*you, your, you're*) from academic writing – 2nd person speech makes the writing feel less formal and it allows a writer to assume shared knowledge that the reader may not have. Keep the focus on the text or subject, not an invisible reader, and only refer to a general audience as "we," "us," etc.

Comment [21]: Okay, but I want much more discussion here than this. Work harder in the next cycle to critically examine the strengths and weaknesses of your argumentative structure as you deploy it here. Don't pay this question lip service or gloss over its importance to your group write. I want a deep consideration of what does and doesn't work in a fact-based argument structure given the constraints you've set for yourself, why you think so, and what other methods might address those perceived problems better.

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Comments & Grade Marks (20 + 20 point project rubric)

Group write, project proposal, and presentation are all good work for this first cycle. The project is well conceived and meets the needs of the assignment by effectively deploying principal aspects of the argumentative strategy, the group write provides appropriate context for the project and design process, and the presentation is a well executed articulation of the project.

Group Write

See marginal notes below.

Despite my many critical comments below, your Group Write is excellent and for the most part precisely what I'm looking for (save for the last section which needs attenuation – see notes below). You've gone to great pains to try and describe how and *why* your project work actually deploys the argumentative approach (e.g. fact, definition, etc.), the frameworks (i.e. Classical, Rogerian, Toulmin), and the audience appeals (i.e. pathos, ethos, logos) you're pairing with it. This is just what I want to see in the Group Write – a close consideration of how you're using persuasive speech in the service of your project goals. This gives me a sense that you're aware of the speech choices available to you as you're also aware of their possible limitations in specific contexts. You've also organized the response quite effectively with section headers while you've worked to give roughly equal time to all sections, making sure your discussions throughout are actually consistently pinned to the questions I've asked you to respond to. And you've worked hard to make yours a metacognitive analysis of your reasoning, approaches, rationales, etc. (instead of just an extended description or defense of your project) which again is precisely what I'm looking for. The sentence control and paragraph development are likewise strong and clear and adeptly handled. Really fine work.

Project Proposal

Your project work is well-conceived and convincing because it's focused and clear: it's careful not to say too much while essentially repeating its core message in almost every slide, effectively keeping that message simple and direct to reinforce the verbal arguments and analysis you offer to us in your oral remarks to accompany the slide show. The data included in your project seems very well informed: you've clearly done your research and sourced your conclusions exhaustively, using fact-based analysis and argumentation in your rhetorical approach to very good effect. Logically conceived and well organized, it effectively addresses the problems you've articulated for us that your project proposal is responding to. And it's well balanced between text and image in fairly uncluttered slide work.

Presentation

Your presentation work, while seemingly well rehearsed, was probably the weakest link in your project work, for a few reasons. You clearly understood what you were trying to argue, and you seemed to know how you wanted to do it in order to appeal to your imaginary target group. You identified yourselves up front and moved quickly into your presentation work. And you used video in support of your other more standard slide work to very good effect, letting the prepared media do your selling for you, just as you should be using media materials. Those are all good things.

The blank check at the end of presentation was also a smart strategy as well, for a couple reasons: it gets us off the screen and back in our senses and likely makes us more *present* in your pitch for that reason, paradoxically, and it cleverly returns us to a consideration of the actual reason we and you are here – to get our material support. So on multiple levels the blank check is a key feature designed to reinforce the core argument – with money as your actual facts! – of your project. An ingenious device to further the rhetorical goals of your project work.

Three things:

I would caution you to not read from or stare at the screen when making your points. Talk to us, and let your media and slides do their own work. If your visual media is well designed it should allow you to appear as if you're responding to our needs, almost extemporaneously, reinforcing just a few key points repeatedly as you go and looking for cues from us as we absorb your pitch. If you talk to the screen you lose us because you appear tentative, underprepared, afraid, or not believing in your own product, all of which would immediately kill a project proposal out of the gates.

I would caution you not to tell us what's on the screen verbatim. We can read. Again, let your media do its own work. You're there to highlight and clarify and repeat only a few core concepts. We've all been to slide presentations that merely recapitulate in other or the same terms what we're already looking at, and those presentations can tend to be not so effective for their lack of real emotional engagement or presence in the moment with us. So talk to us, don't read to us. Acknowledge and engage us, gauging our responses to your work and responding to it, instead of reading to us. You want the presentation to **add** a dimension to your project work, not repeat it.

The presentation went very long – 18 minutes, much too long and well over the 10 I was looking for. Please work during the next cycle to keep your presentation more tightly controlled and focused and down well within that 10-minute window.

Group Write & Project:

Assignment -	requirements & proofreading	4/4
Form & Focus -	statement of purpose / thesis position	4/4
Language -	focus & coherence	4/4
Paragraph -	development & support	4/4
Sentence -	control & clarity	4/4

Total = final grade **20/20**

Presentation: (Distinguished = 10; Intermediate = 5; Novice = 0)

see the **Oral Presentation Rubric in the course for a detailed breakdown of the evaluative criteria for each of the items below*

Volume	10/10	Organization	20/20
Rates	10/10	Content	20/20
Mannerisms	5/10	Visual Aids/Handouts	10/10
Engagement	10/10	Length	5/10

Raw Total **90/100**
Raw total ÷5 = final grade **18/20**

Remember that I **only mark error patterns, not every error** – you are expected to note these patterns and then actively apply the lessons I include on fixing those error patterns to all of your essay work, on your own. Revisions will be evaluated based on whether or not those error patterns have been effectively addressed throughout the entire essay, especially the areas of the essay not marked up. You can review some of the most common error patterns along with detailed explanations in Proofreading Notes and other editing documents found within the course.