

CEU Business School



CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY

Central European University

BUSI 5113

Business Decision Making

Support via Presentations

(1.5 credits)

(2016 Fall trimester)

Instructor	Kálmán KISS (See last page for bio sketch)
Class meets (day and time):	September 23-25, 2016
Classroom:	TBD
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Office hours:	After each class
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1. PREREQUISITIES

There are no special prerequisites but brushing up on corporate strategy and marketing is recommended. Basic computer literacy and capability to use a presentation writing software (MS PowerPoint or Keynote) are assumed.

2. POLICY ON ADMITTING NON-MBA STUDENTS

It is the general policy of the Business School to admit students from other units of CEU, provided that the prospective student meets the course prerequisites stated above.

In the unlikely case that the number of students registering for this course exceeds the maximum number, 40, priority will be given to MBA students.

3. REQUIRED TEXT & READINGS

No compulsory reading materials.

Optional reading:

- *Barbara Minto: The Minto Pyramid Principle: Logic in Writing, Thinking and Problem Solving (2010)*
- *Edward Tufte:*
 - *The Visual Display of Quantitative Information*
 - *Envisioning Information*
 - *Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative*
 - *Beautiful Evidence*

4. COURSE OBJECTIVES

In today's business world, business decisions are very often taken based on presentations. Many times these presentations are not or only partly presented, thus, the writer frequently does not have a chance to provide full information to the audience via responding to questions. However, more often than not, it is not taught or trained how to write these presentations and how to make them convincing and reliable.

The objective of the course is to improve students' ability to prepare concise, logical, interesting and action oriented decision making materials in presentation format. Simply put: how to write presentations that serve business decision making.

The course focuses on presentations that are not presented but only read. These materials bear the attributes of both written materials (i.e. need to provide full information but in as short a format as possible, need to be logical and clear) and decision making proposals (i.e. need to include complete and consistent analysis and recommend clear actions) while making use of the modularity of the presentation format.

Mastering the skill to write efficient presentations not only serves to speed up communication between top management and employees but also helps develop more solid decisions as it brings the thoroughness of academic thinking to business decisions.

Students will learn the concepts and tools on both how to write effective slides and how to weave them together into clear and powerful presentations. Students who successfully complete the course will have hands-on experience on selling their ideas to both top management and – more generally – to their audiences.

5. MAIN TOPICS

- The philosophy
 - What are the two (+ one) most important ingredients of a presentation?
 - What are the limitations we face when working with top management?
 - Why handwriting?

- What are the steps and how much time is needed for a good presentation?
- What can we eliminate while still maintaining everything important?
- The slide
 - How do we build a slide? What are its main elements? What is the no-fly zone?
 - How to give the slide a title? How to link it to the body of the slide? Why is the footnote important?
 - What size fonts should we use?
 - When should we use graphs over tables? Which graph for which analysis?
 - What needs to be checked before finalisation?
- The flow
 - What are the six tools to write the story?
 - Why is the executive summary the most important slide?
 - How can the elevator pitch help? How to build story from slides? How to use the logic tree? Why is the mind map better... ..or worse?
 - How to reflect hierarchy in a presentation?
 - How much will top management read from their materials? How can we help relieve time pressure?

6. INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

<i>Core Learning Area</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>
<i>Strategic Thinking</i>	Students will get a better understanding on how top management works, what problems one faces in communicating with them and on what basis do they make decisions
<i>Written Communication Skills</i>	Students will learn to express themselves efficiently in written presentation form
<i>Interpersonal Communication Skills</i>	Students will be able to express and supplement their own analysis and conclusions in business terms
<i>Critical and Systematic Thinking</i>	Students will be encouraged to take a second view of presentations already “finished” and how to combine structured thinking with their intuition
<i>Ethics and Responsibility</i>	Students will be motivated to consider their professional responsibilities in preparing decision materials for top management
<i>Quantitative Reasoning</i>	Students will learn the importance to prove their hypotheses and, if possible, do this via quantitative proof
<i>Technology Skills</i>	Students will understand and be encouraged to use presentation preparation software to serve business decisions – but always keep in mind the power of a simple pen and paper

7. HOW THE CLASS SESSIONS WILL BE CONDUCTED

The class sessions are a mixture of interactive **lectures**, exercises, **group work/presentation** and **homework**.

Lectures will be given by the instructor.

Exercise and **group presentation** discussions will be held using an interactive, participatory format with the instructor acting as moderator.

Students will be asked to form groups to develop a **group presentation** that will be discussed in class during the last two sessions. Group sizes will depend on the number of students in the class. Not presenting students are expected to be prepared to provide feedback in the framework of active class participation.

Homework assignments are an important part of the course and timely completion of these is a must.

8. POLICY ON THE AVAILABILITY OF LECTURE NOTES

Class materials will be made available through the Moodle e-learning system.

9. MINUTE PAPERS

There will be no minute papers.

10. POLICY ON CLASS ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance at every class session is a requirement of all degree programs at CEU Business School. Each class covers material not found in the readings. Furthermore, participation in class discussions is an important part of the learning experience for all students as well as a factor in grading. If illness or another unusual circumstance requires missing a class, please do your best to inform the lecturer (or, if he cannot be reached, the Program Coordinator) in advance. A grade of “AF” (Administrative Fail) may be assigned for failure to regularly attend a course (i.e. to be present in at least 70% of classes), to drop the course in time, or to complete requirements on time. This is a general CEU regulation that the Business School also follows. The “AF” grade earns no credit, 0 points, and affects your GPA in the same way as a regular “F” grade.

11. CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation in class is expected as many of the classes will be practical exercises and analysing co-students’ presentations. A separate grade for class participation will be given, however subjective this may be (as a result, it will affect students’ grade with a limited weight). Nevertheless, the instructor will do his best to be as fair as possible. Finally, it must be noted that the quality of participation is as important as its quantity.

12. GRADING

Final presentations (2 x 22 points, Group points)	44 points
Three homework assignments (3 x 15 points)	45 points
Class participation	<u>11 points</u>
Maximum total	100 points

Final presentation

Student groups will have to select a presentation either from their work environment or from their CEU studies. Ideally, it should be a business decision making presentation. They will then have to hand in a first version of their final presentation that should reflect all the learnings of the course. Following a consultation with the professor, students will be required to hand in a second, final version. Both versions will be eligible for a maximum of 22 points, each.

Important: for the final presentations, Group points will be awarded. I.e. the group will receive a pool of points and it is up to the Group to decide how they allocate the points awarded to them among each other. The maximum amount of Group points will be calculated as 22 points multiplied by the number of group members for each version. The maximum points allowed to be allocated to one single team member will be 22 points. (I.e. in the case of a 4-person team the maximum is 88 points; assuming they are awarded 72 points, each member can get either 18 points or any other mix they prefer as long as no one gets more than 22 points.)

Homework

In order to get a passing grade, 2 out of 3 homeworks need to be submitted.

Grading

Grade	Assessment	Points
A	Outstanding	100-88%
A-	Excellent	87-76%
B+	Good	75-64%
B	Fair	63-52%
B-	Satisfactory	51-46%
C	Minimal pass	45-40%
F	Fail	39- 0%

13. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Business School expects all students to adhere to the fundamental principles of academic integrity in any and all behaviours associated with their course work and otherwise, as stated in the CEU Honour Code (see Student Handbook). Attempted cheating of all forms is treated extremely seriously and can result in dismissal from the School and University.

14. LIBRARY AND INTERNET LIBRARY RESOURCES

The CEU Library, at Nador St. 9, has the largest collection of English-language materials in the social sciences and humanities in Central Europe: 180,000

monographs and 30,000 volumes of periodicals, working papers, dissertations and so on. CEU faculty and students have access to 30,000 electronic journals, searchable via the Journal Search tool on the library catalogue page (<http://goya.ceu.hu/>; the icon is in the upper right corner).

CEU Business School core faculty, students and staff are automatically eligible for full membership in the Library, after registering at the Circulation Desk. (To use the Library, adjunct faculty should first obtain a pass at the B School Academic Office Rm 311.)

The CEU Library has 5,000 business-related titles, supplemented by leading electronic databases, accessible through <http://www.library.ceu.hu/databases.html> (Click on the icons and then click on the tag next to “connect to”). The Ebsco Host Business Source Complete contains 3,700 periodicals in full text, many monographs, some case studies, and videos of the Harvard Faculty Seminar Series. *Emerald Management Journals* collection has a portfolio of 175 journals in management, marketing, econ and finance.

New business databases include *OneSource*, the most comprehensive company & executive information. *Global Market Information Database* has comprehensive data and reports across industries, countries and type of consumers. *Thomson One Banker* provides data on internationally quoted companies, international stock exchange indices, private equity, and financial deals. *Science Direct* is an extensive full-text database covering authoritative titles from the core scientific literature. *The Company Dossier* in Lexis Nexis Academic allows users to browse in-depth company profiles and industry reports. Core statistical databases include IFS, GFS Online, OECD Main Economic Indicators, National Accounts Statistics, and Tax Statistics. *Econlit* at the CSA/Proquest platform provides bibliographic coverage of a wide range of economics-related literature.

Business dailies and weeklies can be accessed through the library. **Business Eastern Europe** by EIU is a weekly briefing on operating a business in Eastern Europe. **Country Reports** also by EIU provide in-depth economic, political and business analysis and short-term market outlooks. Electronic versions of *The WSJ* are in PressDisplay. *The Economist* is included by EbscoHost. For *The Fin. Times online*, see Journal Search.

News on economic and social developments in the Caucasus and Central Asia can be downloaded directly (not via the CEU Library): <http://www.icegec.hu/eng/index.htm>.

Help with Case Studies and Research Projects

Available on CEU Library reserve is a reference work that students preparing case-study assignments or undertaking individual or team research projects should find helpful, *Business Case Studies: Preparation, Teaching and Learning* (compiled, with contributions, by Susan Harmeling, Lead Case Writer, Harvard Business School, and Paul Marer, Professor, CEU Business School). This work, whose reference code is CM-GSB, can be found on the shelf marked Business School Readers, right behind the Circulation Desk, at the CEU Library on Nador utca.

The VPN access makes it easy to reach from outside of the CEU network the full version of UIS and all CEU Library databases and journals. (Visit <https://vpn.ceu.hu>, accept the security-certificate, and enter: **User name:** ceubs **Password:** Ceubusi987. The password is case sensitive, and to enter it, only the virtual keyboard

appearing on the screen can be used. Once logged in, the "built in" browser can be used to access the respective sites: UIS: <https://infosys.ceu.hu>.

15. COURSE OUTLINE AND SESSION ASSIGNMENTS

Session	Description
Session 1: The Philosophy	Introduction (course structure, requirements, etc.) Review of the philosophical concepts (handwriting, Boards' limitations, less is more, etc.) and deep dive into exercises demonstrating techniques of the Philosophy section
Session 2: PowerPoint basics and tips	The basics and not so basics of PowerPoint
Session 3: The Slide	Review of slide writing rules (text slides, MECE, graphs, slide titles, etc.) and deep dive into exercises demonstrating techniques of the Slides section
Session 4: The Flow I.	Review of four of the six flow writing concepts (mind map, logic tree, elevator pitch, etc.) and deep dive into exercises demonstrating techniques of the Flow section
Session 5: The Flow II.	Review of the remaining two of six flow writing concepts (mind map, logic tree, elevator pitch, etc.) and deep dive into exercises demonstrating techniques of the Flow section
Session 6: Closing	Discussion of students' presentations

16. BRIEF BIO OF THE INSTRUCTOR

Please visit LinkedIn for instructor's bio:
<http://hu.linkedin.com/in/kisskalman>