

Starting and Organizing a Business: Can We Quote You on That? and Rubric

Project Description:

This project gives students the opportunity to learn first-hand how a business owner runs his/her business and how s/he works to keep the business operating day-to-day. In groups, students will interview a local business owner and become subject-matter experts on different types of business ownership, how business models work, and how the organizational design of a business can set up a business for success. They will then make a 5-10 minute podcast highlighting the business, its owners, business model, and organizational design. The podcast will include audio from the interview as well as narration and discussion from group members.

Step-by-Step Guide:

- Divide the class into groups of three or four students each.
- Each group should choose a local business that group members want to interview. If students are unsure about what business to select, encourage them to reach out to family members or friends who own a business.
- Instruct students to research the local business that their group has selected. Group members should learn about the business's products or services, its employees, and the business's founding, if possible.
- Groups should work together to write interview questions before their interviews. Questions will vary but should address the organizational design of the business, the business's owner(s), its business model, how the management oversees workers, and different departmental responsibilities. Students should also prepare questions to help them learn what a normal day is like for the owner, as well as questions about how the business model may have changed over time and why those changes may have occurred.
- After preparing their interview questions, groups should reach out to the owners of their chosen local businesses to interview them. Students should get permission to record the interview for their podcast from their interview subject(s). This interview can be done over the phone, in person, or, as a last resort, by email. **Note:** If students aren't able to record their interviews—either because their interview subject(s) refuse to give students permission to record their interviews or because the students and business owners only communicate via email, their group's podcast could focus strictly on discussion from the group members about their findings.
- After talking to the business owners, groups should prepare a 5-10 minute podcast highlighting their business, its owners, business model, and organizational design. In most cases, the students' podcasts will contain portions of their interviews with their selected business owners, along with a narration or discussion of their own research findings. Students should use a free audio editing software program such as Audacity to edit their interview. Students can get inspiration for their own podcasts by listening to NPR's "Up First" podcast or an excerpt from *The New York Times*' "The Daily." Upon completion of this work, students should play their podcasts for the class. If possible, students should also share their podcasts with the local business owners who were interviewed, as well as members of the local chamber of commerce.

Starting and Organizing a Business: Can We Quote You on That?—Rubric for Podcast

Criteria	Professional	Experienced	Developing	Novice
Content Information shared in the podcast; the purpose of the assignment. 60 points	Podcast clearly and thoroughly explains the team's chosen business, its owner, business model, and organizational design.	Podcast mentions the team's chosen business, its owner, business model, and organizational design, but could use more detail.	Podcast leaves out important pieces of information related to the team's chosen business, its owner, business model, and organizational design.	Podcast does not address the team's chosen business, its owner, business model, and/or organizational design.
	Podcast presents relevant, up-to-date information about the team's chosen business.	Podcast presents relevant information about the team's chosen business, but some of the information is outdated.	Podcast presents relevant information about the team's chosen business, but the information is obviously incorrect and/or outdated.	Podcast wanders from topic to topic and/or includes information that is completely unrelated to the team's chosen business.
	Sources that the team used to obtain information about its chosen business are reliable and appropriate.	All but 1-2 sources that the team used to obtain information about its chosen business are reliable and appropriate.	Half or more of the sources that the team used to obtain information about its chosen business are not reliable or appropriate.	None of the sources used by the team to obtain information about its chosen business are appropriate or reliable.

Criteria	Professional	Experienced	Developing	Novice
Organization The way in which the information is put together; the flow of the podcast 20 points	Podcast is structured with a definite beginning, middle, and end.	Beginning, middle, and end are present but not clearly identified.	Beginning, middle, and end are difficult to discern.	Beginning, middle, and/or end are missing.
	Podcast's main points are easy to follow and logical with points building on each other.	Podcast's main points are generally easy to follow and logical.	Podcast's main points are logical but difficult to follow.	Podcast's main points are so difficult to follow that their logic can not be determined, or they are illogical.
	Transitions from point to point flow smoothly.	All but 1-2 transitions from point to point are smooth.	3-5 transitions from point to point are awkward.	Transitions from point to point are bumpy or nonexistent.
	Introduction engages audience in topic and outlines what the podcast is about.	Introduction is interesting and provides a partial description of what the podcast is about.	Introduction is standard for the topic and hints at what the podcast is about.	Introduction is overly simple and fails to outline what the podcast is about.
	Podcast comes to a suitable conclusion with main points clearly summarized.	Conclusion is satisfying, but the summary of main points is unclear.	Conclusion is abrupt and unsatisfying, and/or the summary of main points is vague.	Podcast ends abruptly without a conclusion or summary of key points.

Criteria	Professional	Experienced	Developing	Novice
Communication Ability to express oneself to be understood by others 20 points	Podcast hosts use correct grammar and standard English.	Podcast hosts use correct grammar but occasionally incorporate slang (1-2 times).	Podcast hosts make grammatical mistakes and/or often use slang (3+ times).	Podcast is hampered by grammatical mistakes and reliance on slang.
	Podcast hosts pronounce words correctly and clearly, making it easy for the audience to understand what is being said.	Podcast hosts speak clearly but mispronounce 1-3 words.	Podcast hosts occasionally mumble and/or mispronounce 3-5 words, making it difficult for the audience to understand what is being said.	Podcast hosts frequently mumble and/or mispronounce words, making it almost impossible for the audience to understand what is being said.
	Vocal pauses are used for emphasis rather than being filled with dead words.	Vocal pauses are not used for emphasis.	Podcast hosts occasionally fill pauses with dead words (3-5 times).	Podcast hosts frequently fill pauses with dead words such as “uh,” “and,” or “like.”