

# Sample EXTENSIVE reading assignment

---

## BOOK REVIEW ASSIGNMENT (for a 300-level Business Writing course)

During the semester, you will be required to read the Kobliner book, *Getting a Financial Life* and a second book chosen from the list below, or other books you might bring in for specific approval by me. There are two main purposes for this assignment. The first is to provide you with the opportunity to explore a range of topics related to the world of business thinking and writing in greater depth. A second purpose is to provide you with the opportunity to develop and practice your skills in critical reading and thinking, essential in both your personal and professional lives. I hope you will find the books interesting and enjoyable as well as challenging.

To write each of your two reviews (see due dates on the course outline), you should prepare a brief paper (minimum of 500 words, or two typed pages, double spaced; no maximum length). Your review must include the following four elements; it should read as a coherent essay, with a clear opening and ending.

1. Your review should summarize five (5) main ideas discussed in the book and for each major idea you summarize, you must connect it clearly and specifically to business thinking and writing issues we have discussed in class or that appear in other readings. You might try to capture each main idea in a 25 word summary (we may practice this skill in class).
2. Look up some information on the author on the Internet or in the library. Print or copy the first page of the information that you find and attach it to your review. Include a one paragraph summary of your information and discuss why you think this author wrote this book. Provide a proper citation to the material using APA citation style.
3. Choose at least **one** of the following additional features to include in your review: a) Explain what the book has to do with the course and why you think I chose it; b) Discuss the practical implications of the book for your personal and/or professional life; c) Relate your personal experience(s) to two concepts in the text; OR d) (for second review only) Compare and contrast your two books.
4. Provide an evaluation of the book, positive, negative or in between.

Possible books:

- Barofsky, N. (2012). *Bailout: An inside account of how Washington abandoned Main Street while rescuing Wall Street*. New York: Free Press.
- Berger, J. (2013). *Contagious: Why things catch on*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Bowden, M. (2011). *Worm: The first digital world war*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

- Bryant, A. (2011). *The corner office: Indispensable and unexpected lessons from CEOs on how to lead and succeed*. New York: Times Books.
- Conard, E. (2012). *Unintended consequences: Why everything you've been told about the economy is wrong*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.
- Florida, R. (2010). *The great reset: How new ways of living and working drive post-crash prosperity*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Friedman, T. & Mandelbaum, M. (2011). *That used to be us: How America fell behind in the world it invented and how we can come back*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers: The story of success*. Boston: Little Brown.
- Heath, C. & Heath, D. (2007). *Made to stick: Why some ideas survive and others die*. New York: Random House.
- Henriques, D. (2011). *The wizard of lies: Bernie Madoff and the death of trust*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.
- Isaacson, W. (2011). *Steve Jobs*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Kahneman, D. (2011). *Thinking, fast and slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.
- Morgenson, G. (2011). *Reckless endangerment: How outsized ambition, greed, and corruption created the worst financial crisis of our time*. New York: Times Books.
- Olen, H. (2013). *Pound foolish: Exposing the dark side of the personal finance industry*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin.
- Sandberg, S. (2013). *Lean in: Women, work and the will to lead*. New York: Knopf.
- Shipler, D. (2005). *The working poor: Invisible in America*. New York: Vintage/Random.
- Tercek, M. & Adams, J.S. (2013). *Nature's fortune: How business and society thrive by investing in nature*. New York: Basic Books.
- Thompson, G. (2010). *Working in the shadows: A year of doing the jobs most Americans won't do*. New York: Nation Books.