One of the best ways to learn any topic is to actually do it rather than just reading about it. Over the years, people have learned to do many things around the home simply by reading about the process or watching a YouTube video or a do-it-yourself program and then doing it. After learning the basics of how to get started, one of the greatest teachers becomes the learning process of hands-on experiences. For example, if you could see the first ceramic tile floor someone installs and then look at the most recent one installed, you would see that with practice, people learn a lot.

Marketing research is the same way. While you will learn a lot while reading the text, viewing the slides, and watching the AVPs for this class, the best way to learn it is to do it. As they say in the do-it-yourself industry, you have to get your hands dirty to accomplish your goals. So now it is time to get your hands dirty.

The toughest part of the learning adventure is trying to figure out where to begin. So here are a few ideas for you to consider. Then, if none of these interest you, maybe they will work as a catalyst for another idea you might have.

**Personal interests**: One place you could start is by looking at some things you have always thought were interesting concepts or questions but you had never thought about. As an example here might be some ideas to consider:
- Is there an interest in my community to have a dog park?
- Is there an interest in my community to begin a *biking league* (you fill in the term)?
- If someone opened up a shooting range, would people in my community support it? Would they use it?
- How many of my neighbors also think we should ________________?
  (Again, you fill in the blank.)

**Work-related**: We work with the people around us on a daily basis, but how much do we really know about them? Are there issues or interests at work that have not been explored or considered that might be interesting to explore? Here are just a few examples:
- What are the interests of my colleagues, and which would they want to pursue in terms of starting a group that supports one of our local charities?
- What do my colleagues think about Habitat for Humanity (or some other non-profit group), and what would they be willing to do to support the group?
- Would my co-workers and managers be willing to adopt and support a local park or elementary school playground?
- What new extracurricular activity would my fellow workers enjoy seeing and participate in if it is offered at work? Before work? After work? Over lunch?
- What aspects of our current work environment (or other work-related issue) would my fellow employees like to see changed?
- Is there a topic related to my business unit or company that I could complete a quick marketing research project on and help the company? (Many former students have been able to do this one and then use it in their work. One actually resulted in a major contract for the company and kudos for the student.)
**Friend-related:** Many times people may come up to us and ask what we think about a project, an idea, or a concept. You can take these and develop them into ‘mini-research’ projects. They might be topics of interest, new products, or new business concepts. Take these and run. Here are a couple of examples:

- A pork version of Chik-fil-a. Yes, fried pork tenderloins are a big thing in the Midwest. You may want to search the term Snappy Lunch (Mt. Airy, NC) on the Internet.
- A breakfast-only food truck specializing in biscuits and gravy (from scratch).

Just remember, someone had to think of that fun thing you use all of the time, like the go-pro stick.

**Ideas of others:** Now, if none of these have helped, visit the website for the Saint Leo Polling Institute ([http://polls.saintleo.edu/](http://polls.saintleo.edu/)) and look at some of their topics. Do any of these interest you? Would it be interesting to know if the people you associate with are similar to the findings or different? You can even look at the survey questions they used in the collection of the data. This will help you in the development of your survey whether you pursue one of their topics or not.

Are you ready to start? Well, it is time. Over the next eight weeks, you are going to create a research problem and question. Then you will develop a survey instrument to use, collect some data, and then using Excel or some other data analysis software to which you have access, complete some basic data analysis, and finally, cap this project off with a research report. You are going to show your reader the answer you discovered for your research question. You are going to support that answer with your data analysis. Your paper will be submitted during Module 8. The paper must follow APA guidelines, be between 7 and 10 pages in length (does not include title page, table of contents, references, or appendices), and be double-spaced. At this time, you may want to go to Chapter 23 in the text and review the Report Format section (pages 729-732). As you review this, realize that you are limited in space and some of these items will not be included in your final report.

Here are the steps you will need to follow to get there:

**Module 1: Research Topic**
You will be submitting your research project topic to the professor for proposal. In the submission of this component, make sure to review the materials in Chapter 2 of the text. For this assignment, please provide the following:

- Discussion of the topic you want to explore and how you came to this topic.
- The potential research question you will be exploring in the research project.
- What you hope to discover through this project.

Submit this assignment to the Dropbox **no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT**.

**Module 2: Variables and Design**
In this section, you will present and define the variables you will be exploring in your study. These variables will be based on secondary data and possibly on some primary exploratory projects. You do need to provide the sources of your information.
Module 3: Secondary Research and Research Question
In this section, you will present your secondary research you have used and any exploratory research you may have used to this point. You will also present your final research question.

Module 4: Research Design
In this component, you will now add to the information in the first three modules. After your research question has been approved, you will now develop the methodology, the research design you will use to find an answer to your research question. In this section, you will identify the type of research design you will be using (exploratory, descriptive and/or causal). You will need to state why you have decided to use these in your research approach.

You are submitting the first half of your final project with the above information (Modules 1-4). You should use each of the modules as sections within the paper. Please review the report and presentation chapter in the text. Realize that not everything included in the outline may be included in your report, but it does provide a basic overview of how a report should appear.

You should use APA formatting as this will appear as a professional business report. Following the overall guidelines, this component should be between 2 and 4 pages in length.

Submit this assignment to the Dropbox no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT.

Module 5: Questionnaire and Sampling Design
It is now time to develop the questionnaire. This is not an easy process. In this process, you will need to determine the scales you will use, the questions associated with the scales, and the flow and design of the survey (see Table 10.1, page 323). You also need to discuss/describe the sampling design and size you will use in your project (see Table 11.4, page 356).

Module 6: Data Collection
It is now time to collect your data and prepare your data for analysis. It is important for you to write up both of these processes.

Module 7: Data Analysis
Complete the data analysis of the data collected. Determine an answer to your research question.

Module 8: Research Project Report
It is time to submit your final report. Your paper must follow APA guidelines, be between 7 and 10 pages in length (does not include title page, table of contents, references, or appendices), and be double-spaced.

Appendices: These should include but not be limited to the following materials:
- Questionnaire/data collection instrument
- Data Analysis Results in a table format

Note: The plagiarism policy is strictly enforced on this project. It is critical you follow the APA guidelines in terms of citations and references. If you violate these policies, actions
will be taken in accordance with the student handbook and plagiarism policy. Please review the plagiarism policy for the MBA program.

Submit this assignment to the Dropbox no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT. (This Dropbox basket in linked to Turnitin.) See the rubric below for grading criteria.

Research Project Report Grading Rubric:

Note: A “D” score is considered failing in graduate-level courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A (180-200 points)</th>
<th>B (160-179 points)</th>
<th>C (150-159 points)</th>
<th>D (120-149 points)</th>
<th>F (0-119 points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Information is presented in a very logical manner that makes it easy for reader to follow. There is a logical sequence to the different sections of the paper.</td>
<td>Information is presented in a very logical manner that makes it easy for reader to follow. There is a reasonable sequence to the different sections of the paper, although some sections could be better placed within the overall flow of presentation.</td>
<td>Information is presented in a logical manner that makes it easy for reader to follow. However, some sections of the paper are out of sequence or duplicated.</td>
<td>Information is hard to follow because the writer jumps around a lot - it is almost impossible to follow along.</td>
<td>Information cannot be followed because there is no sequence for the information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject/Contact Knowledge</td>
<td>Student demonstrates complete knowledge (more than required) of the material. References are of high quality (recent, relevant, and reliable).</td>
<td>Student demonstrates most of the knowledge expected for this type of presentation. References are of reasonable quality (somewhat recent, relevant, and reliable).</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an average level of knowledge expected for this type of presentation. References are okay (somewhat recent, relevant, and reliable), but could be stronger.</td>
<td>Student does not demonstrate adequate knowledge expected for this type of presentation. References are of poor quality (not recent, relevant, nor reliable).</td>
<td>Student does not demonstrate any knowledge on the topic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>Length of paper matches the specifications. The materials are very professional and demonstrate a great deal of preparation. No misspelled words.</td>
<td>Length of paper matches limits. The materials are professional and demonstrate some preparation. Has 1-2 misspelled words.</td>
<td>Length of paper matches expectations. The paper is adequate and demonstrates some preparation. Has 3-4 misspelled words.</td>
<td>Length of paper does not match expectations. The materials are inadequate and demonstrate last-minute preparation. Has 5-6 misspelled words.</td>
<td>Length of paper does not match expectations. The material is inadequate and demonstrates no preparation. Has more than 6 misspelled words.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results and Graphics (figures, graphs, tables, etc.)</td>
<td>All figures clear, readable, and contain pertinent information. Significance exceptionally well explained. Results displayed using graphics that are explained and reinforce the text.</td>
<td>Most figures clear, readable and contain pertinent information. Results displayed using graphics that explain text.</td>
<td>Some figures clear, readable, and contain pertinent information. Results are displayed using graphics that relate to the text but miss some information and pertinence. Significance explained marginally.</td>
<td>Figures missing, lacking clarity, and information.</td>
<td>Few figures used and not pertinent.</td>
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<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Use of English is consistently correct. No grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Use of English is acceptable. Has 1-2 grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Use of English is acceptable. Has 3-4 grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Use of English marginal. Has 5-6 grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Use of English is poor. Has more than 6 grammatical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>Restates the main purpose, argument, and conclusions of topic. Leaves the reader with a clear understanding of main ideas.</td>
<td>Restates the main purpose, argument, and conclusions of topic. Leaves the reader with a somewhat clear understanding of the main issues.</td>
<td>The main purpose and conclusions of topic are only briefly reviewed. Leaves the reader with a general understanding of main ideas.</td>
<td>The main purpose and conclusions of topic are omitted. Leaves the reader with a vague understanding of main ideas.</td>
<td>No conclusion is offered, reader left confused.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Score: _____/200