This course requires that you be passionate about service!

Monday 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Instructor: Professor Praveen Nayyar
Office: KMC 8-75 Phone: 212 998-0286
email: pnayyar@stern.nyu.edu
Office Hours: By Appointment.
Admin Assistant: Stephanie Roit 212 998-0441

KEY DEADLINES FOR THIS COURSE

EVERY SESSION: CLASS CONTRIBUTIONS

September 29, 2014: Submit Service Company Name for Group Project
October 20, 2014: Submit Letters for Letter Writing Campaign
October 27, 2014: Submit “Heard on the Street” Article
November 10, 2014: Submit Press Releases
November 24, 2014: Send list of three Breakthrough Service providers
December 8, 2014: Submit Group Project
December 15, 2014: Final Exam
COURSE MATERIALS: TEXT and CASES

TEXT: Purchase from any bookstore. (Also available as an ebook.)


CASES: Purchase the assigned cases from Harvard Business School Publishing following the links below:

Course link: Service Operations and Strategy Fall 2014
https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/29799188

You need to register on the site to create a user name if you do not already have one. Once you have registered, you can log in to see the course materials.

The course materials are in PDF documents. You can open them with Adobe Reader.

You will have access to these materials for 6 months.

After you register, you can get to the course again by doing the following:
1. Visit hbsp.harvard.edu and log in.
2. Click My Courses, and then
   • click this course name: Service Operations and Strategy Fall 2014

COURSE DETAILS
Professor: Praveen Nayyar
Course Name: Service Operations and Strategy Fall 2014
Course Number: OPMG-GB.3357.10
Course Start Date: September 11, 2014
Course End Date: March 10, 2015
Reference Code: 29799188

For technical assistance, please contact the Harvard Business Publishing Tech Help line at (800) 810-8858 (outside the U.S. and Canada, call 617-783-7700); or email techhelp@hbsp.harvard.edu. Their business hours are 8am-8pm ET, Monday-Thursday, and 8am-7pm ET on Friday.

Additional Materials may be distributed in class or on the web as needed.
IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Code of Conduct
Please review Stern’s Code of Conduct:

Academic Accommodation
If you have a qualified disability and will require academic accommodation during this course, please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD, 212 998-4980) and provide me with a letter from them verifying your registration and outlining the accommodations they recommend. If you will need to take an exam at the CSD, you must submit a completed Exam Accommodations Form to them at least one week prior to the scheduled exam time to be guaranteed accommodation.

Default Course Policies
Please see the attached handout entitled “Default Policies for Stern Courses.”

Laptops
Please note that laptops may be used in class to take notes or to refer to your notes and electronic documents for this course. Laptop use must not distract you or others.

Preparation. I will be prepared for class; I expect you to be prepared too.

Value-added. Please let me know immediately if there are any aspects of the course that may cause you any concern about your ability to maximize your learning from the course. I will try to address everything I can.
INTRODUCTION

Services are a major part of many economies. Services are intangible although a good may be involved in the total product offered to customers.

The objective of this course is to focus attention on some of the unique aspects of services and relate these aspects to service operations and strategy. For example, some of the issues this course covers are:

1. What impact does intangibility have on corporate and business strategy and operations in service businesses?
2. What is the impact of simultaneous production and consumption of services on how service delivery systems are designed and managed?
3. What impact does the customer have on service quality and the productivity of service firms?
4. What unique organizational designs are needed to manage a service business?

In this course, we adopt the perspective of top management who must be concerned with the overall viability of the firm. Thus, we consider both strategy formulation and implementation in services. We will emphasize the close inter-relationships between what a firm wants to do and how it can go about doing it so that its customers are completely satisfied.

This course should enable those who are considering continued affiliation in the service sector to more effectively formulate, evaluate, and implement strategies for a wide range of services in both goods-producing and service businesses. Consistent with the top-management perspective adopted, we will emphasize building and sustaining competitive advantages as an over-riding criterion in our analyses. Hopefully, this will discourage you from proposing service concepts that cannot yield sustainable advantages.

Throughout the course we consider issues with wide-ranging social, environmental and ethical impacts such as employee development, well-being and quality of life (beyond work-life balance), urban development initiatives, implications of the choice of services to offer such as an exclusive focus on lucrative medical services removed from more mainstream hospitals and the implications of potentially harmful services such as gambling, safety of air travelers and the responsibility of airlines towards their well-being, environmental benefits of more efficient resource utilization such as car-pooling and car-sharing services, and waste elimination through better process design and management.

COURSE STANDARDS

At the outset, it is important to understand that the greatest value from graduate education is seldom realized immediately upon graduation. Such value, which is typically realized over a lifetime, comes not from having a "bag of tricks" but from
developing analytical and executive skills. Also, the most valuable ability that you can
develop, and sharpen, in graduate school is the ability to think, to read, to write, to
speak, and to present your arguments logically.

Accordingly, this is not a lecture course but one in which you learn via
analysis and discussion. Please attend all classes. Carefully prepare for each class
and contribute actively to class discussion of the assignments for each session. Your
full participation in this learning endeavor will result in the greatest learning. The emphasis on case analysis makes it crucial that preparation for class is of
consistently high quality. See the section on Pedagogy below.

PEDAGOGY

I predominantly use the Socratic method. Wikipedia
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socratic_method) has a good summary of the approach.
Please review it so that you know what to expect and how to thrive in a Socratic
classroom. The University of Chicago Law School describes the method on its web site
http://www.law.uchicago.edu/socrates/method.html. Also, see
http://www.princetonreview.com/law/research/articles/life/socratic.asp. And, see for a
contrarian view http://www.abanet.org/lsd/studentlawyer/oct07/goldberg.shtml. There
are also several videos on YouTube (where else?) on the method.

EVALUATION

Points earned for each segment of the course will be summed to obtain a
total score for the course. Students will be rank-ordered based on the total score
to determine their course grade.

Course grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letter Writing Campaign</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Contribution</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project (3 students)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Letter Writing Campaign

To do our small bit to counter the phenomenon of declining service quality and
customer satisfaction, perhaps establish some life-long habit patterns, and most
important, put our analytical skills to work in a practical situation, part of our work this
term will involve a Letter Writing Campaign. As part of the written work for the term,
you are to write one professional letter sometime during the first six weeks of the
course. The letter could either congratulate someone or some organization for a
service done well or complain about a service failing to live up to your expectations.

The professional letter should be between 1 and 2 single-spaced pages long
(400 to 800 words). It should state the situation and events leading to the kudos or
complaint, including a comparison of the service you expected and what you actually
experienced, and where appropriate, offer suggestions for improvement. (Evaluation criteria and sample letters are available on NYU Classes. Most important is a demonstration of your mastery of service management.) A copy of your letter should be handed in at the time you send it. If you receive a response, it should be submitted when you receive it, along with any follow-up (i.e., response) you decide to make. All letters and any responses received until then must be submitted by 6:00 p.m. on October 20, 2014. Any further communications may be submitted later. You may email letters and submit any emails received and provide summaries of phone calls made or received, if appropriate.

Selected letters and responses will be read and discussed in class on December 8, 2014. A quantitative and qualitative summary of the results achieved by the class in its Letter Writing Campaign will be presented on that day. You must be present in class to have your letter discussed.

Class Contribution

Effective class contribution involves activities that:
1. Lead to a productive start to the discussion,
2. Affect the discussion positively by introducing or using concepts and frameworks
3. Include carefully considered quantitative or qualitative analyses based on data
4. Challenge what appears to be "accepted wisdom"
5. Do not repeat what has already been said.

I will maintain a class contribution (not participation) record for each student. At the end of each class I will record my perceptions of the quality of your comments and questions. Please note that quantity is not an overriding determinant in how your performance will be evaluated. Clearly, if you are not present in class, your class contribution performance will suffer. If you have concerns about your ability to contribute in class discussions, please contact me immediately.

In addition to my record of your class contribution, you are encouraged to maintain your own daily record in a form to be distributed later. This record will give you immediate feedback about your class contribution and help you maintain or improve it. Please contact me during the semester if you wish to discuss your class contributions at any time during the course. Please bring your class contribution record to the meeting. I may ask you to submit your form for review during the course.

Since I expect you to be fully prepared for each class, I may call upon you to start or manage the discussion or answer a specific question during the class on any day. If for some reason you are not fully prepared on a particular day, please let me know before class so that I do not embarrass you inadvertently. I urge you to attend all classes, even if you are not adequately prepared. Please inform me if you will be unable to attend class. Absence from classes will adversely affect your course grade.
Group Project

- **Note that brief, thoughtful, interesting, structured, comprehensive, professional, carefully written documents will earn greater appreciation.**

- The Group Project consists of the following to be completed by each study group:
  1. Pick a major competitor of one of the companies we will discuss in this course. See the syllabus for their names. Or, any other service company from an industry not explicitly covered by the companies listed in the syllabus. It is best, if possible, to pick a company that is focused in a single industry. **Do not select the current employer of any group member.** Submit the name to me by 6 p.m. on September 29, 2014. Let me know as soon as you have selected a company. This is a first-come-first-serve process.
  2. Using Figure 14-2 Detailed Service Profit Management Relationships on page 254 of the textbook, **analyze the service company you picked (company XYZ) and write an in-depth article of about 3 pages (1200 words not including graphics) entitled “Company XYZ Aims to Succeed by Excelling/Not Excelling on Service” that might appear in the Heard on the Street section or Corporate News section of the Wall Street Journal.** Submit the article by 6 p.m. on October 27, 2014. Include an annotated Figure 14-2 as it relates to the company you analyzed showing how the actions contemplated will impact the company qualitatively and quantitatively.
  3. **Construct and write two 1-page (400 words not including graphics) press releases from the company – the first one to highlight service improvements (that you suggest) and the second to announce service cuts (that you suggest). Submit the press releases by 6 p.m. on November 10, 2014.** (OK to edit for final report.) Include an annotated Figure 14-2 as it relates to the company you analyzed showing how the actions contemplated will impact the company qualitatively and quantitatively.
  4. **Estimate the likely qualitative and quantitative impact of each press release on the company and its two major competitors.** Explain your reasoning using the concepts, tools and techniques discussed in this course and, more broadly, in the MBA program. Submit the two press releases and your analysis of each by 6 p.m. on December 8, 2014.

- **Note: Always submit a complete file of your work including any documents you received with my comments.**

Final Exam

A final exam will be held on December 15, 2014. There will be no make-up exam offered.
Note on Grading

- Managerial problems seldom have unique solutions. But, some solutions are better than others. Accuracy and precision, when possible, will be rewarded.

- I will look for compelling logic and reasoning in the analysis, application of course concepts, tools and analytic techniques, practicality of recommended actions, "value added" of exhibits or analyses, and clear and concise writing.

- Since "cut and dried" solutions are not always possible, the grading process will be, in part, subjective but equitable.

- Any questions about your points or grades earned must be submitted in writing within 5 business days after you receive them.

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours will be held by appointment.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

I will be prepared for class; I expect you to be prepared too. Also, I welcome your comments and constructive criticisms during the course on any aspects of your learning experience. I will be willing to discuss these in class and take appropriate actions that will enhance the "value-added" from this course.
# CLASS SCHEDULE

Please prepare the assignments listed below for each session using the questions below as a guide.

## Session 1  Introduction to Service Operations and Strategy  Sep 22

In most industries, a few organizations develop truly innovative ways of serving their customers. This is true in both goods and service businesses. Such services are called "breakthrough services". In considering the firms discussed in this course ask 1) what makes it different from its competitors? 2) how successful is it? 3) How, if at all, does it achieve success? 4) How likely is it to be able to sustain its advantage?

Some of the most successful services are those that are focused on a single purpose or method or both. Such a focus may be achieved by targeting a particular type of customer or offering a clearly defined service extraordinarily well. Focus allows a service provider to concentrate on a highly valued set of customers as well as those things that are absolutely critical to achieving unmatched advantage in serving them.

Read:  This syllabus (yes, all of it, please)
Read:  Text Chapters 1 & 2.
Examine:  Examples of Strategic Service Visions (NYU Classes)
Prepare:  Shouldice Hospital Limited (Abridged)
1. Assess the performance of Shouldice Hospital Limited.
2. Explain the performance of Shouldice Hospital. Use the strategic service vision framework.
3. What would you do about the issues facing Shouldice Hospital?

## Session 2  Service Profit Chain  Sep 29

SUBMIT SERVICE COMPANY NAME FOR GROUP PROJECT

Read:  Text Chapter 3
Consider:  Southwest Airlines
1. Visit Southwest Airlines’ web site at [www.southwest.com](http://www.southwest.com) and learn about the company and the services it offers. You may also gather information about the company by conducting a search on the Internet using Google. For example, Google “Southwest’s Strategy.”
2. Apply the Strategic Service Vision Framework
   - What is Southwest Airlines’ target segment?
   - What is its service concept in terms of results produced for customers?
   - What is the firm’s operating strategy?
   - What are important features of the service delivery system?
3. Apply the Service-Profit Chain Framework
4. What actions should other airlines take to compete with Southwest Airlines?
Prepare: HCL Technologies (A)
1. Apply the Strategic Service Vision Framework (both external and internal)
2. Apply the Service-Profit Chain Framework
3. What were the challenges facing Vineet Nayar when he took over?
4. Evaluate “Employees First, Customers Second.”
5. What actions would you as CEOs of Booz & Company, The Boston Consulting Group or McKinsey & Company take after hearing Vineet Nayar’s ideas?

Session 3 Building Customer Loyalty Oct 6

Some service firms have recognized that current customers are valuable. They cost less to serve and are generally more profitable than acquiring new customers. However, most firms do not measure the value of satisfied customers. Ascertaining the value of satisfied customers requires asking what a targeted customer is worth over a relationship life cycle. Once the value of satisfied customers has been determined, firms can answer the following questions: Who are the most profitable customers? What do they value? What information do they use to evaluate competing services? Has the firm differentiated its service in ways important to valuable customers? How can the firm develop better customers? How is customer satisfaction being measured and managed?

Read: Text Chapter 4
Consider: The many services you buy
1. What does “good service” mean to you?
2. How valuable are you as a customer?
3. Estimate the lifetime value of a customer for Shouldice Hospital, Southwest Airlines, McKinsey & Company and HCL Technologies.

Consider the following data for Club Med:
1. Average revenues per GM (Gentil Membre or customer) are $1000.
2. Returning vacationers tell an average of ten others about their experiences - pro or con.
3. 65% of first time GMs decide to go primarily on recommendations from friends and acquaintances.
4. Current satisfaction rates are 80%.
5. First time GMs account for 60% of all GMs.
6. 30% of satisfied GMs become repeat customers.
7. Repeat GMs took an average of four additional Club Med vacations.
8. Contribution margin at Club Med is 60%.
9. Last year there were 200,000 first-time GMs.
10. Last year Club Med's net income was $18 million on revenues of $337 million.

What is the value of:
1. Increasing satisfaction rates for new GMs from 80% to 90%?
2. Increasing the proportion of satisfied new GMs becoming repeat visitors from 30% to 35%?
3. Increasing the average number of repeat visits from four to five?
4. All three of the above changes together?

Prepare: A Taste of Frankenmuth: A Town in Michigan Thinks About Word-of-Mouth Referral
Prepare: Learn about NYC & Company at www.nycgo.com
1. Calculate the value of word-of-mouth referrals for one of the businesses in Frankenmuth. What formula did you use? How is the value of word-of-mouth referral related to the lifetime value of an incremental customer?
2. How should Annette Rummel spend the Frankenmuth 2000 budget?
3. How would you respond to the questions posed by the business owners of Frankenmuth listed in the last exhibit of the case?
4. What would you recommend to NYC & Co.?

Session 4  Oct 13

Read: Text Chapter 5
Prepare: Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.: Customer Satisfaction Assurance Program (NYU Classes)
1. Evaluate Harrah’s efforts for improving customer satisfaction and loyalty.
2. Compute the value of a 1% shift of non-A to A customers.
3. How does Harrah’s business model differ from its competitors?
4. How should Bruns respond to Loveman’s email?
5. What can other service businesses learn from Harrah’s?

Session 5  Building Employee Loyalty & Satisfaction  Oct 20

SUBMIT LETTERS

Service providers and customers often interact directly. Such interactions influence customers' perceptions of service quality. Thus, front-line service workers can be a source of differentiation and competitive advantage. Most successful service firms try to attract the best employees who, in turn, are given discretion to satisfy customers. A lack of good managers and employees often constrains growth. Human resource issues can be examined using the employee life cycle of recruitment, selection, development, and reward. The type of service being offered and the role of people in its service delivery system will affect the way a firm deals with its human resource issues at each stage of the employee life cycle.

Given a service concept, what is the required mix of interpersonal and technical skills? Which activities, if any, should be organized into "front office" and "back office" functions? How should marketing and operations be coordinated? How can outstanding service performers be kept organizationally close to customers?

Read: Text Chapters 6 & 7
Prepare: The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company
1. “Service” can be an elusive concept. What is the essence of the Ritz-Carlton experience? What is the Ritz-Carlton selling?
2. How does the Ritz-Carlton create “ladies and gentlemen” in only 7 days?
3. In what may be a first for any industry, Brian Collins asked James McBride, Ritz-Carlton General Manager, to lengthen the employee training time prior to opening a hotel. Should McBride change the 7 Day Countdown?

Prepare: Cirque du Soleil
1. What mix of human and technical skills is needed to succeed in this business?
2. How does Cirque support its employees to deliver superior performances?
3. How should Cirque deal with its growth challenges?
4. What can an investment bank learn from The Ritz-Carlton and Cirque du Soleil?
5. Disney is considering acquiring Cirque du Soleil. What do you think of this idea?
6. Brian Collins (See The Ritz case) suggested to James McBride that he should study Cirque du Soleil to glean some lessons. What could The Ritz-Carlton learn from Cirque du Soleil?

Session 6 Developing Processes & Service Delivery Systems Oct 27
SUBMIT “HEARD ON THE STREET” ARTICLE

Processes and service delivery systems determine what the customer receives both in terms of results achieved as well as during the service process. Achieving high levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty via high service quality requires a complete reevaluation of processes and service delivery systems including facilities, technology, information systems, people, and incentives and controls.

Service quality improvement initiatives require understanding how work is done given an operating strategy. Our study of Bugs Burger Bug Killers and Federal Express introduces generally applicable concepts of service process design, improvement and implementation.

Some say that attaining total customer satisfaction is impossible. This is akin to arguing that zero defects in manufacturing are impossible. However, total customer satisfaction is synonymous with effective competition in services. Leading manufacturers and service providers alike are identifying total customer satisfaction not just as a goal, but as an imperative. In this section we examine several approaches to achieving total customer satisfaction.

Read: Text Chapters 8 (skim only), 9 & 10
Prepare: Getting the Bugs Out available at:
http://www.inc.com/magazine/19840601/7020.html
1. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of BBBK’s strategy.
2. How does this company make money?
3. What role does the service guarantee play in the company?
4. What affect does the service guarantee have on the company's operations?
5. How applicable might this concept be to other businesses? For example, a movie theater, healthcare, higher education?

**Prepare:** Examples of Guarantees (NYU Classes)
1. What are the elements of a good service guarantee?
2. What impact does a service guarantee have on a firm?
3. Evaluate the Lufthansa guarantee. Would you recommend any changes? Why or why not?
4. Evaluate the other guarantees.

**Read:** About FedEx [http://about.van.fedex.com/company-information](http://about.van.fedex.com/company-information)

**Prepare:** Federal Express: The Money Back Guarantee (A)
1. Based on your understanding of the process that may be employed by Federal Express, construct a process flow diagram beginning with a customer's need for appropriate packaging material and ending with the receipt of a package by the addressee.
2. Consider the questions at the end of the case.
3. What can Federal Express do to improve its quality and customer satisfaction?

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**Session 7 Service Recovery**

**Skim Read:** Stock Market Reactions to Customer Service Changes. (NYU Classes)

**Prepare:** Chantale and Clinton Call for Service
1. Use the assigned article to evaluate (and estimate) the impact on Shareholder Value of this service failure.
2. Which processes at The Canadian were involved in creating and reacting to what happened?
3. What would you recommend to The Canadian after this event?

**Prepare:** JetBlue Airways: Valentine’s Day 2007
1. What is JetBlue Airways’ strategy?
2. Use the assigned article to evaluate (and estimate) the impact on Shareholder Value of JetBlue Airways’ actions.
3. Which processes at JetBlue Airways were involved in creating and reacting to what happened on Valentine’s Day 2007?
4. What should JetBlue Airways do after this event?

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**Session 8 Managing Growth**

**SUBMIT PRESS RELEASES**

Service firms face limitations in simply increasing volume in existing locations due to the need for interpersonal interaction between service provider and service consumer. After decades of a largely domestic focus, service firms have now turned their attention to international markets for further growth opportunities. Such growth poses challenges for
firms due to differences across service industries and across nations in culture, language, and labor market institutions.

Skim Read: Stock Market Reactions to Related Diversification Moves. (NYU Classes)

Prepare: Leerink Swann & Co.: Creating Comparative Advantage
1. Evaluate Leerink Swann’s performance to date.
2. Use the assigned article to evaluate Leerink Swann’s handling of the many growth challenges it faced. Is it well-positioned to face continuing and future challenges?
3. How would you compete with Leerink Swann & Co.?
4. What can be done to accelerate Leerink Swann’s success, if any, in the USA?

Prepare: eHarmony
1. How does eHarmony create value, if any?
2. What, if anything, is the basis of a sustainable competitive advantage for eHarmony? How can these factors be best protected and leveraged?
3. Are there unexploited market segments, service concepts or geographic expansion opportunities available to eHarmony? Use the assigned article to evaluate which of these the company should pursue. Which of the four (or other) growth options should eHarmony pursue? Why?
4. What lessons can be drawn from eHarmony for establishing long term competitive advantages through the international expansion of service businesses?

Session 9 Creating Breakthrough Services Nov 17

Prepare: List the criteria you would use to identify a Breakthrough Service.

Skim Read: Seller Beware. (NYU Classes.)

Prepare: Cleveland Clinic
1. Use Seller Beware to evaluate the Cleveland Clinic. www.clevelandclinic.org. Recently The Cleveland Clinic has been held up as an exemplar for reforming the US healthcare system. What is so great about it?
2. What are the key success factors for The Cleveland Clinic?
3. How should The Cleveland Clinic think about which initiatives to pursue? Should it offer to teach the entire country how to run healthcare?

Prepare: ZipCar: Influencing Customer Behavior
1. Visit ZipCar’s web site at www.zipcar.com and learn about the company and the services it offers. Gather information about the company by conducting a search on the Internet. For example, Google “ZipCar’s Strategy.”
2. Use Seller Beware to evaluate the ZipCar idea.
3. What role do customers play in ZipCar’s business model?
4. How well does ZipCar “manage” its customers? Can it do better?
5. Using Seller Beware how could other organizations compete against ZipCar?
6. How would you improve upon ZipCar’s business model?
7. How should ZipCar address the challenges it faces?
Session 10  Dec 1

**Prepare:** IKEA Invades America
1. Visit IKEA’s web site at [www.ikea.com](http://www.ikea.com) and learn about the company and the services it offers. You may also gather information about the company by conducting a search on the Internet using Google.
2. Evaluate IKEA’s growth plans.
3. Is there a way to grow even faster?
4. What should its competitors do?
5. What lies ahead for IKEA? How should it prepare for the future?

**Identify:** Three Breakthrough Service providers
1. Find three or more Breakthrough Service providers not discussed in this course and in your project and be prepared to describe, discuss and debate your selections.
2. **Send me your list by midnight on November 24, 2014.**

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Session 11  Dec 8

**SUBMIT GROUP PROJECT**

**Prepare:** andBeyond
1. Visit [www.andbeyond.com](http://www.andbeyond.com). Is this company offering a breakthrough service?

**De-Brief Letter Writing Campaign**
I will ask a selected few of you to summarize your experience with the letter writing campaign and we will discuss any responses received from firms.

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Session 12 Final Exam  Dec 15

More information later

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**KEY DEADLINES FOR THIS COURSE**

**EVERY SESSION:**

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