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SGCI's Maximixer Project

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1. Introduction

SGC International Limited (SGCI), a holding company controlled by the Santhad Group of Companies, is engaged in international business operations. The latest project that SGCI has worked on is called MAXIMIXER (concrete mixer). After carefully analysing the project details SGCI set up a joint venture with Ingenieurkontor für Maschin Konstruktion GmbH (IMK) of Germany, which had developed a new technological process for the mixing and transporting of concrete.

In this case study, we cover the background history of the companies, how the negotiations proceeded, and what business arrangements were made with the venture partner, as well as the benefits that were derived from the deal.

Our purpose is to illustrate how joint ventures are planned and implemented including various stages of negotiations and how sticky points are smoothed out by the parties.

2. SGCI

The Santhad Group of Companies was established many years ago by a group of old school friends who had joined together for the purpose of exploring and conducting business opportunities and operations. Originally the main business of the group was in the mining and exporting of mineral products but subsequently it expanded into trading and shipping to cover all aspects of its business in minerals.

The group also has diversified into other fields since the shareholders saw high growth potential in other areas. The diversified lines include engineering, marine products, car/truck distribution and transportation, heavy equipment and machinery, polyurethane foam production and international consultancy services.

SGCI, a holding company and the international consultancy arm of the group, was established for the purpose of taking care of new projects and to expand business abroad. SGCI's main responsibilities are studying investment opportunities and finalising and concluding all new projects abroad. It also acts as a co-ordinator between all affiliated companies to ensure effective communication and information dissemination to facilitate formulation of management decisions.

3. Reasons to expand internationally

Mr. Sanond Thammarak, Managing Director of SGCI Ltd., said that the major business of the Santhad Group is mining and that the group has a large number of mines in the south of Thailand which can produce a variety of mineral products including over 2,500,000 tons of gypsum annually. The domestic consumers are mainly cement producers. Gypsum dominates 4% of the total ingredients required for cement production, so the balance of gypsum production is meant for export, and this is how the group first acquired the experience in export activities.

The Santhad Group and its holding firm, SGCI, focus on international business for several reasons. First of all, international businesses allow them to better integrate their business and thus give better service to overseas clients. Secondly, SGCI sees enormous growth potential abroad and directs itself in a twofold way. In developing countries for investment opportunities and in developed ones they rather look for trading opportunities and/or financing potential.

The latest undertaking that SGCI has taken up is the MAXIMIXER project (concrete mixing and transportation). The company has decided to work on this project since it expects high growth potential. With its unique features and new technology development, the products are very likely to be accepted world wide. The other reason that SGCI is interested in this project is that MAXIMIXER is related to the construction business, which is considered a high potential area by the group.

4. The Maximixer project

Mr. Sanond said that the group seeks opportunities to expand business both domestically and internationally. SGCI, who is responsible for analysing all new projects abroad, has a good relationship with many embassies.

Mr. Sanond also explained that this MAXIMIXER project was an accidental deal. A Mr. Laenen, who was an export manager of an important European trailer company, wanted to do business in Thailand, and asked his embassy, Belgium, to identify potential buyers for him.

The Belgian embassy introduced SGCI to Mr. Laenen as a possible buyer. This was the initial contact between SGCI and Mr. Laenen. Nothing materialised, however, because he left the company and set up his own business with his friend Mr. Alex Nedee, namely "Laenen Chaothai & Partners" (LC&P). It is an international consultancy and acts as liaison for any Thai companies that want to do business in Europe and the other way around. Mr. Laenen had been active for several years dealing with Eastern European as well as American companies on behalf of various Belgian counterparts.

Mr. Laenen and Mr. Nedee had maintained a good relationship with SGCI. There were always interesting topics for discussion among them. LC&P started to introduce the "MAXIMIXER PROJECT", a concrete mixing and transportation technology developed by Ingenieurkontor für Maschin Konstruktion GmbH (IMK), to SGCI. LC&P was aware of this interesting investment opportunity because of their staff's personal experience and good contacts in former East Germany.

IMK is a German company which specialises not only in engineering but also in mining. IMK would like to expand its business to other countries but did not have enough investment capital and marketing ideas. It explored for partners through LC&P. The reason that IMK was quite unfamiliar with marketing is that it is a former East German company. East Germany, before the Berlin Wall came down in 1990, had been one of the former communist bloc countries. The economy was in poor shape. All the economic activities were controlled by the state. The East German people did not have much of a chance to deal with other (democratic) countries and, in fact, had virtually limited or no experience in a market-

oriented business environment. In spite of the unification with Western Germany, it will take time for the people to adjust to the new democratic society and economic system.

The project that was introduced to SGCI is "MAXIMIXER", a concrete mixing and transportation system. MAXIMIXER is the latest project on which IMK has spent considerable time doing research and development. With its special characteristics, the product has many competitive advantages over others. However, IMK never got further than the research phase.

MAXIMIXER is a revolutionary truck mixer system, featuring a cylindrical drum and separate charging and discharging openings. The cylindrical drum is placed in an almost horizontal position on a sub-frame, which can be adjusted to suit any kind or brand of mixer truck. At the front the drum is connected to a reversible hydraulic drive by means of a gear box, while at the rear it rests on a pair of rollers keeping the drum precisely positioned. A bracket surrounding the drum accommodates the charging hopper and its opening mechanism.

The mixture, or substances to be mixed, is/are loaded into the drum through the charging hopper equipped with an electrical sensor and interlock to ensure that the charging opening opens only at the determined position. The hopper is hydraulically opened to the inside of the drum, and when closed, is precisely centred within the hopper casting. A seal fitted in a protected position ensures that the drum will never leak.

To discharge the contents a special but simple single or double discharging spiral is connected to the drum at its rear. This allows the drum to be filled up to 80% of its capacity or so far above the discharging opening, and at the same time makes it possible to discharge the contents fast and efficiently.

Mr. Veraphol, the Business Development Manager, of SGCI once told: "We do not worry about a full feasibility study. We are confident in the product's unique features compared to the conventional method of concrete mixing and transportation. The market research also seemed to be difficult since we market the product world wide. We were convinced we can solve all the problems by the use of a licensing system."

After analysing all the technical details as to whether MAXIMIXER works better compared with conventional methods, SGCI saw the competitive advantage and high growth potential of the product, so it decided to work closely with IMK through cooperation with LC&P on the development of a MAXIMIXER prototype.

In the second half of 1994 MAXIMIXER LIMITED was set up with equity participation by IMK, SGCI and LC&P. After hard experimental work, the first MAXIMIXER prototype was completed and ready for demonstration. Before the marketing of such unique technology could take place, Mr. Veraphol said that it was vitally important that MAXIMIXER's technology be patented to prevent any illegal duplication of the system.

After discussion with the shareholders, the company decided to sell the product through licensing since this did not require the company to invest a lot of money in producing a finished product. With the development of the prototype of the product by selling the technical know-how to its prospective customers, the risk to the company was reduced.

Shortly after the foundation of MAXIMIXER Ltd., the first full scale prototype was built at the IMK plant in Germany. Then for a period of approximately fifteen months it was tested thoroughly. During these tests, several ways to improve the product and its cost of production and operation were discovered, and the prototype has consequently been modified and improved almost continuously.

At the end of this test period (late 1995), SGCI was convinced that the product's present stage of technology featured sufficient benefits to prepare it for serial manufacturing and to start their world-wide commercial section.

The major benefits of MAXIMIXER are as follows:

1. It is a simple system, easy to operate, maintain and service as well as manufacture.
2. It allows one to increase the loading capacity, both by volume (for light-weight concrete) and by weight (for regular concrete).
3. It is a real mixer, able to produce a 100% homogeneous mixture, and can consequently be used as a "Mobile Batch Plant".
4. As loading of the ingredients occurs with a still-standing drum, the different aggregates can be loaded in layers so that the chemical reaction can be delayed until mixing is started at the job site.
5. Due to the drum's horizontal position, the point of gravity is significantly lowered, which has a very positive effect on safety and manoeuvrability.
6. By not turning during loading and transporting, fuel consumption is greatly reduced and system wear is remarkably minimised.

To start world-wide commercialisation, several production plants, at least one on every continent, would be required. This obviously would involve a lot of investment. To reduce the risk without losing a lot of time, MAXIMIXER Ltd. decided to focus on starting a licensee network in both Europe and America, but to concentrate at the same time on its own production plant in Southeast Asia.

To set up the licensee network, MAXIMIXER EUROPE and MAXIMIXER USA were founded, and LC&P, being quite familiar with the vehicle production and construction industry in both continents, was made responsible for promotion and sales.

Prototypes conforming with the specific market requirements and regulation were produced, and potential licensees were visited and invited to a demonstration. Almost immediately a lot of interest was created, and soon the first licensee was found.

MAXIMIXER Ltd. is also anxious to popularise the product. LC&P is responsible for promotion and sales. The reason that the company selected LC&P to commercialise the products is that it is located in Europe where it can easily reach foreign customers without incurring high marketing expenses.

Since the prospective customers are mostly in Europe, LC&P can work effectively. LC&P will select the company which it thinks is likely to be interested. LC&P uses "direct mail", "walk in" or "knock door" and some other techniques to reach the prospective customers. At the same time a name list of customers can be prepared. As a result, promotion and advertising expenses can be controlled effectively. Obviously, MAXIMIXER really stirs the market by word of mouth, which is the most successful way of advertising.

When a consumer is interested in obtaining a license for MAXIMIXER, LC&P will inform its partners, that is, SGCI and IMK, about the licensing fee. This licensing fee varies from country to country. The licensing fee usually depends on the market size and the territory for which that license is granted, since some licensees cover more than one country. The demand for the product in a given country with respect to a concrete mixing and transportation system also varies. If the market size is large and product demand is high, then the licensing fee will be high; on the other hand, if the market size is small and product demand is small, the licensing fee will be relatively low.

When both parties (licenser and licensee) agree on the licensing fees, an agreement will be signed. The license agreement usually contains:

- licenser and licensee's names
- the territory
- the rights and duties of the licensee
 - ◊ minimal sales performance
 - ◊ mandatory and normal royalties
 - ◊ etc....
- the rights and duties of the licenser
 - ◊ technical assistance
 - ◊ legal (patent) and promotional support
 - ◊ etc....

The licensee will pay the licensing fee in a lump sum or in instalments depending on the agreement. After the licensee makes the agreed payment, MAXIMIXER Ltd. will send all the technical details to the licensee. If the production system has problems, technicians from MAXIMIXER Ltd., that is IMK, will provide the necessary service.

The licensee will be responsible for MAXIMIXER promotion after receiving the license. The licensee usually promotes MAXIMIXER by participating in exhibition or trade shows, a very common promotion instrument in the European market.

The most important target market is in Europe since the demand for concrete is still attractively high; moreover, the market is more familiar with a licensing system. At present MAXIMIXER can cover approximately 80% of the European territory and is expected to reach to the entire European market by the end of 1996.

The company is also very interested in entering into Asian markets. This is a very important territory which cannot be ignored because of its high economic growth and industrial expansion. However, the company needs to adapt the product to different rules and regulations in different Asian countries.

Once the first licensee was founded in Europe, MAXIMIXER Ltd. started its commercial activities in Asia. An efficient supply system, using (and thereby supporting) its overseen licensees, as well as a local steel construction company for assembling and mounting, were developed. In Thailand the first prototypes built in accordance with local requirements and regulations have been prepared and are momentarily reaching completion. Soon demonstration and sales will be started.

In the future an efficient supply system will have to be improved continuously, decreasing the amount of import components and labour used. Some day a complete local manufacturing capability in Thailand should be attained but at that point in time an additional partner with sufficient manufacturing experience might become necessary.

From the manufacturing base in Thailand, MAXIMIXER Ltd. plans to operate throughout Southeast Asia. For the Far East and China, as of today no decision has yet been made whether to pursue with licensing or direct sales and production.

For some countries which are not familiar with licensing procedure, sales of the finished product will be easier. However, the product must be further developed, again to suit different local requirements and regulations varying from country to country. In such markets, substantial investments are required for production and inventory.

5. Evaluation

5.1 Marketing Mix of MAXIMIXER Ltd.

5.1.1 Promotion

LC&P is responsible for product commercialising because it is in Europe and it can easily contact the customer without incurring high marketing expenses.

MAXIMIXER is sold through direct mail, walk in or door to door canvassing because that is the easiest way to reach prospective customers.

5.1.2 Price

The licensing fees vary from country to country and depend on the market size and the territory. If the market size is large and product demand is high, the licensing fee will be high.

5.1.3 Place/distribution

A licensing procedure has been initiated with a view to allowing a fast market expansion. The most important market is in Europe, where the company covers approximately 80 %, and it is expected to become 100 % in the near future.

5.1.4 Product

It was invented by IMK but has been developed further by MAXIMIXER Ltd.

There is a need to adapt to local conditions with reference to the government rules and regulations obtaining in particular countries.

Technicians from MAXIMIXER Ltd. (IMK staff) will help to solve production problems if any are encountered by licensees.

5.2 Marketing Policy of the Licensor

5.2.1 Promotion

- To have enough promotion for the product; i.e., the licensee needs to promote the product through exhibitions, trade shows or advertising in special construction magazines.
- To discuss and evaluate the whole marketing policy with the licensee.

5.2.2 Price

To look at reasonableness and flexibility of price and whether it is competitive compared to other local brands and technologies and whether it is mutually acceptable.

5.2.3 Place / distribution

- To control and restrict the licensee to his market territory.
- To motivate, train and communicate with the licensee on a regular basis.

5.2.4 Product

- To support the licensee technically.
- To invest in further product improvements.
- To have technicians evaluate and control product quality.
- To monitor illegal copying of the product.

5.3 SWOT Analysis

5.3.1 Strengths

The factors that make MAXIMIXER successful are as follows:-

1. Each partner specialises in different fields; that is, SGCI specialises in marketing and has capital investment. IMK has all the technical skills and can develop a unique product (concrete mixing and transportation), while LC&P works as consultant and knows how to direct and approach foreign customers. When they join together, all the ideas and expertise are shared. The important details as well as the problems are evaluated and implemented quickly.
2. There is no government interference in setting up the joint venture, which will help the company and its partners to get work done easily and fast.
3. The product MAXIMIXER is unique. It combines the business of concrete mixing and transportation; there is high demand for this new high quality technology.
4. SGCI and its partners understood very well the necessity for legal protection of its patent, although world-wide protection does not come cheap.
5. The existing production facilities of IMK in former East Germany are technically up to standard. Therefore rather limited extra investments are required.
6. A production unit within the EU leads to various fiscal and logistic advantages.
7. The incorporation of LC&P in the final project results in a low-cost sales office within the target member countries of the EU.
8. The licensing system allows for a rapid international expansion of the MAXIMIXER concept without huge investments.

5.3.2 Weaknesses

1. Even though the cost of expanding business through licensing is low, it has some disadvantages, such as difficulty in the controlling of production management; e.g., if the product manufactured by the licensee is defective or is not up to standard, the brand image will be destroyed; or the licensee might divulge precious technical know-how. MAXIMIXER Ltd. should fear future competition from its licensees. MAXIMIXER Ltd. seems to have limited experience in licensing management.
2. MAXIMIXER lacks a coherent international expansion strategy mainly due to its lack of expertise and its limited application of management decision models such as feasibility studies or comparative market analyses.
3. SGCI has little control over its investment both in terms of production and commercialisation.

5.3.3 Opportunities

- The fast-developing Asian market and its construction boom offer good opportunities for further expansion.
- Thai companies may exploit their strongly developed entrepreneurial skills and their strong financial investment capacities by teaming up with technology-oriented foreign companies. SGCI's MAXIMIXER experience may be repeated for other business opportunities.

- Formerly communist Europe offers enormous opportunities for Thai companies wishing to have partners who are technologically and technically strong, or to find economical investment opportunities.
- Thai companies may venture into high potential but high risk markets, such as Eastern Europe, by teaming up with more experienced partners (like LC&P).

5.3.4 Threats

- Setting up a joint venture is a difficult task. However, managing joint ventures seems to be an even tougher task, as conflicts tend to split the company along ownership lines. In the case of MAXIMIXER the joint venture will be tripartite, and as a consequence will be even more vulnerable to potential instability.
- As long as Thai companies give the commercialisation of their products out of hand, as in this case to LC&P, they will not only lose a potentially big part of the profit but precious market knowledge and an international relations network as well. On a macroeconomic level it will contribute to a further assessing of Thailand's current account deficit.
- Thai companies remain vulnerable on the world market because of their lack of internal R & D. For their future development this will impose serious constraints sooner or later. Therefore, they should anticipate this by investing in local R & D and human resources development rather than to keep on looking abroad for technological input.

6. Conclusions

Setting up a joint venture is difficult, especially with an international partner from a different culture. It is necessary to manage professionally in order to make the company successful.

SGCI, a holding company of the group, has good vision in seeking new business. It is willing to take the risk of working with MAXIMIXER since it sees high growth opportunities from such a unique product with new technology. It has an effective communication network with which to deal with its foreign joint partners, and the analytical skill to measure and evaluate a successful business.

The negotiations between the partners proceeded as expected since SGCI wanted to expand its business but did not have technical expertise while IMK had technical expertise and wanted to enter into the business of joint venture. LC&P, the initiator and match-maker, wanted to join since it saw high growth opportunities if it entered into this business.

MAXIMIXER Ltd., a joint venture company, is successful due to the fact that the partners act in a complementary manner. They help one another in making decisions and solving problems.

Thai companies may apply their marketing skills and their strong financial means by teaming up with strong technical partners and by acting fast on specific opportunities. Foreign business opportunities sometimes arise in a coincidental and unforeseen way indeed. It speaks for the business acumen of SGCI that they were not only able to recognise a good opportunity, but also to seize it promptly and successfully.

Tutorial Notes

I. CARRYING OUT STUDENT PROJECTS

Objectives and Companies Involved

The present case study was originally an assignment for MBA students in Thailand. The goal of student projects was to carry out a research on expansion strategies of individual Thai companies. Particular about this task was that the students had to analyse the overall expansion strategy of their selected company and next had to relate this strategy to a very specific case or deal.

Objectives of the assignment were several. First of all, students had to prove that they could master the general theory of international marketing and business. Secondly, they had to apply this knowledge to a real-life Thai case. Next, they were to collect both primary and secondary data by interacting with the managers who actually carried out the project as well as by consulting various general and specific background publications. After that they had to evaluate the performance of their chosen company and its project and had to make recommendations how to improve it. Also they had to report to and interact with their tutors on a regular basis, and thus could be guided in the right direction. Finally, they also had to focus on a professional presentation of their ideas.

Very important was the participation of the people involved in international expansion projects within the company, as desk research or secondary published data research would have been quite insufficient for fulfilling the research objectives. This turned out to be one of the major challenges for the fulfilment of this research. Thai companies remain quite wary of sharing their experiences with outsiders and even if they had agreed to share them, managers were mostly busy or frequently abroad.

The students and their tutors tackled this problem by applying to as many companies as possible, many declined to participate or referred the researcher to a competitor, claiming it had more experience abroad. Finally the tutors and the students together selected the companies and their specific projects by concentrating on a good mix of investment projects versus direct exports and on an appropriate regional mix reflecting more or less Thai interests, and lastly by incorporating both large and small companies in the project. They managed to extract success stories, but, as feared, companies were even more reluctant to share their negative experiences.

For the final revision of or improvements to the student projects, we received, contrary to their initial hesitation, full cooperation from the companies and top management.

During the research work, it turned out that the major difficulty next to mustering enough support from the respective companies was the students's inexperience in structuring presentations or research work. Many among them collected a huge amount of information and came up with very interesting ideas, but often repeated themselves or lacked a logical structure and appropriate English skills to express their concepts.

Practical Time-Frame of the Elaboration of the Cases

- Step 1** Announcement of the course was made, stating that it was open to MBA students with International Business or Marketing knowledge or experience.
- Step 2** The first month included a six-hours theoretical introductory course in order to fresh up the students's background knowledge.
- Step 3** The first month also included several guest speakers who shared their company's experiences in international expansion.
- Step 4** During the second month, assignments were initiated and consequently all specific companies and projects were selected. Students received instructions (see Appendix) and received a letter of introduction to the companies stating the objectives of the assignment.
- Step 5** During the second, third and fourth month all students worked in groups of two on their assignment. They presented their progress to their assigned tutors on a monthly basis. Tutorial sessions lasted on the average about one hour per session per group.
- Step 6** Final projects were presented personally to the tutor and an oral examination was given regard to the cases.
- Step 7** The tutors revised or rewrote the case.
- Step 8** The cases were presented to the companies for their approval and/or remarks.
- Step 9** Company remarks were incorporated in the cases by the tutors and a proof-reader finalised them.

II. SGCI's MAXIMIXER DEAL

Potential points of discussion:

Diversification Strategies

SGCI's case offers a good opportunity to enter a discussion on diversification strategies for Thai companies, as for several years diversification has become popular. However, some critics and experts point out that some Thai companies have neglected their core business because of focusing too much on diversification, and thus are putting their long-term profitability in jeopardy. The case allows discussions on theories of diversification by applying different strategies, such as backward or forward integration and others, and allows judgement on SGCI's strategy and on the strategies of Thai companies in general.

Research and Development in Thailand

Thailand is used to importing its technology, and as a consequence technology fees, capital goods and the like contribute to the country's worsening current account deficit. Next, Thailand also suffers in some cases from outdated technology as new technologies are not always freely available on the market. This case may inspire students to brainstorm on why and how Thai companies should start up their own R&D activities.

Eastern Europe a Complementary Market for Thailand

Thai companies have had historically little or no interaction with Eastern Europe. Eastern Europe could become in the future not only an interesting market for Thai products, but also a source of cheap technology, highly skilled labour and production capacity. Recent activities of Korean companies in the automotive field in Romania and Russia show clearly the potential for Asian investors. Students can take this opportunity to get to know more about Eastern Europe and its traditional industrial strengths like construction materials, chemicals, fertilisers or heavy industries.

Market Expansion Through Licensing

Licensing has not been very popular in Thailand and other Asian countries. It remains, however, an interesting strategy for international expansion. As has been pointed out in the SGCI case, there are many advantages and drawbacks at the same time. The case could allow students to assess why licensing has not been really popular up to now in Thailand and they could also consider the opportunities and ways for Thai companies to license products or technology abroad.

APPENDIX 1:

Possible Structures for Case Studies on International Expansion Projects

Introduction

Explain briefly what the case study is about and focus on the objective of the study; namely, what do you want the reader to learn from it?

Elaborate on the need for Thai companies to expand internationally

Introduce in general the reasons for Thai companies to expand internationally. Apply this to the sector to which your selected company belongs.

Introduce the company you have selected

Give an introduction to the company. Use as few statistics as possible; focus more on activities and philosophy.

Elaborate on the reasons and the way your company opted to expand internationally

Apply here the general theory of international marketing; namely, explain the company's international management style (focusing on the 4 P's) and on the structures they have implemented in order to be able to expand internationally.

Introduce the market your company opted for

First introduce the specific market chosen and again use as little statistical material as possible (however, some major indications like population or GDP/cap are advisable). Focus more on market potential and its political, economic or trade particularities.

Next explain why your company chose this market.

Explain the deal (specific case) chronologically from here on

For example:

- Introduce the key persons in your company who have implemented this deal (who, achievements etc...).
- Exactly how did your company select this market?
- What were the first steps that they implemented in that market?
- Elaborate the process of selecting a local partner.
- Pay good attention to the reasons why this partner was chosen and others not.
- Offer a brief introduction to this partner (in a similar way as to your chosen company; if possible, compare both).
- Elaborate extensively on the negotiation process (obstacles, resolution of problems, help, frustrations, steps taken in this process etc.).
- Elaborate on the results of the negotiation process.

- Explain the deal if possible in basic financial terms (cost/benefit analysis, investment plans, feasibility studies, simulation models etc.). If the company does not wish to disclose its financial data, then request it to provide some rough indications.
- Explain how the financing of the deal was set up.
- Evaluate the deal in marketing terms (strengths/weaknesses); relate to international marketing theory as well as to common sense.
- Elaborate the potential future of the deal and/or the market and go into detail on the intentions of both partners.

Evaluation

Evaluate the importance of this deal for both partners (strategically as well as financially).

Evaluate all processes and choices (e.g. choice of market and partner, negotiation process, the outcome of the deal etc.). Be critical and point out clearly the reasons for success and for failure.

Make recommendations (for improvement); first concerning this specific case (deal), next concerning your company's international expansion strategy. Focus on alternative approaches, procedures or choices.

You may use a SWOT analysis, (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) for this purpose.

Draw your conclusions

Focus extensively on what can be learned by other Thai companies from this deal.

General remarks and recommendations

- Structure your ideas, e.g. elaborate a step-by-step approach; if necessary use a time-frame, finalise all details on a specific part of your research, and so on.
- Be narrative in your style (so as to evoke the interest of your readers).
- Be scientific in your approach, but do not become too theoretical.
- Remain practical.
- Use interviews as much as possible and refer to them in your final report (quote the main participants).
- Point it out clearly when you express your own opinion and be ready if necessary/possible to back this opinion scientifically.
- Put statistics and financial models in an annex as much as possible, in order not to lessen the interest of your reader.
- Limit your presentation to twelve pages maximum for text and eight pages maximum for annexes.
- Mind your language, style and your presentation (if possible use special soft-ware, graphs etc.).
- Use Microsoft WORD 6 software and supply us with a copy of your diskette.
- Follow this structure and the above-mentioned advice as much as possible.
- Each group should present monthly to its appointed tutor, in person, the progress of its research work.