



Using Twitter to Apply Concepts from a Strategy Course

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Abstract. Social media has become a mainstay for most of us. The Pew Research Center tracks social media usage in the US and found that sixty-nine percent of all US adults visit at least one social media site daily. This number increases to eighty-six percent of Americans between the ages of 18-29 (2016). As such, social media has changed the way we learn and gather information. These changes have in turn impacted higher education and the university classroom. Faculty are expected to stay on the cutting edge of pedagogy and incorporate new technologies—including social media—into their courses. In this article, we present a classroom assignment in which students use Twitter to apply course concepts to current events and describe the learning objectives of this assignment.

Keywords: Twitter, social media, social networking, pedagogy, experiential exercises.

Social media has become a mainstay in American culture, and sixty-nine percent of all US adults visit at least one social media site daily, a number that increases to eighty-six percent of Americans between the ages of 18-29 (Pew Research Center, 2016). As such, social media has changed the way we learn and gather information, which has, in turn, impacted higher education and the university classroom (Dahl, Gray, & Peltier, 2016). Increasingly, faculty are turning to new technologies such as Twitter and requisitioning social media platforms to stay on the cutting edge of pedagogy (Bartosik-Purgat, Filimon, & Calli, 2017; Hall, 2013; McLoughlin & Lee, 2010; Pearson Learning Solutions, 2013; Schmidt, 2016) and experience the documented benefits of social media in the classroom, which include increased participation among students, better communication with instructors, and a more robust understanding of the topic (Blankenship, 2010; Dayter, 2011; Hung & Yuen, 2010; Lockyer & Patterson, 2008). In addition, student performance increases in classrooms that incorporate social media (Okoro, 2012), and the use of social media in the classroom has been shown to be related to students' continuing interest in knowledge acquisition outside of the classroom (Giuseppe Rossi, Magnoler, & Giannandrea, 2008; O'Connor, 2016; Suskie, 2004; Young, 2002).

Despite these benefits, the use of social media in classrooms is idiosyncratic and the best methods for implementing effective assignments remain largely undocumented. Most literature primarily includes warnings about safely integrating social media while addressing concerns such as privacy, copyright,

data ownership, and literacy (Schmitt, Sims-Giddens, & Booth, 2012; Trinder et al., 2008). A few other articles are primarily focused on the impact of social media platforms such as Twitter on various outcomes such as collaborative learning (Fernández-Ferrer & Cano, 2016), creating a sense of community (Kassens, 2014), and increasing communication between instructors and students (Rinaldo et al., 2011). In all, there are few scholarly papers dedicated to guiding instructors through how to implement specific Twitter assignments, match Twitter assignments to learning objectives, or create clear grading criteria.

Inexperience with social media, such as Twitter, can be intimidating for students (Rinaldo et al., 2011). Wide variations in adoption rates can be challenging for faculty to address. Concurrently, Fortune 500 companies are increasingly choosing to use Twitter over other social media platforms such as Facebook as a means of communicating with customers (Slegg, 2013) and potential employees (Brown & Vaughn, 2011). Currently, Twitter has 328 million active monthly users, and their daily active users grew 14% over the last year (Twitter, 2017). As such, students, no matter what career field they chose, will need to demonstrate competency with Twitter in a professional capacity, and the more often they are able to practice those skills in a classroom setting, the more likely they are to use them appropriately in a business setting (West, Moore, & Berry, 2015).

To address this need, we present a classroom assignment in which students use Twitter to apply course concepts to current business news and events in a capstone Strategy course. Students demonstrate comprehension, application, and evaluation in their learning process (Anderson et al., 2000; Bloom, 1956) to find relevant news articles, summarize them, and create appropriate hashtags all within 140 characters. The objective is to communicate understanding of a course topic in a distilled form that highlights its most relevant points in relation to some current event. In addition, the assignment encourages students to begin using social media as a tool for gathering up-to-the-minute news and information relevant to their careers and interests. By asking them to share relevant articles and analysis of those articles, the assignment further helps students develop a professional online presence, which is a necessity in today's business world (Rosendo & Oliveira, 2017).

1. Twitter

Twitter is sometimes used for one-sided communication to students (e.g. Blessing, Blessing, & Fleck, 2012; Lowe & Des Laffy, 2011), such as when faculty use it to send reminders regarding upcoming due dates or to emphasize important concepts and terms for students to remember. Some examples of graded assignments found in the literature include reading a current article or blog and then tweeting comments/reflections, tweeting comments or questions regarding a

televised event such as the State of the Union Address, and tweeting about economic forecasts (Kassens, 2014). For example, Fernandez-Ferrer and Cano (2016) required students to tweet about course concepts and then their peers provided feedback on the tweets. Gagnon (2005) and Rohr, Costello, and Hawkins (2015) also used a Twitter assignment where students were given topics ahead of time and asked to tweet something related to that topic. They were also required to reply to other tweets as part of the assignment. Few articles provide information about implementing assignments or grading criteria (a notable exception is Rohr et al., 2015). We address this gap by providing clear information about implementation for instructors hoping to create a learning exercise using Twitter in a strategy course.

The benefits of such an exercise include increased student engagement (Hall, 2013; Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2010) and satisfaction (Mork, 2013; Rinaldo et al., 2011). In one study, students using Twitter were more involved because they could network with industry professionals, keep up to date on news, and make connections between current events and course topics (Rinaldo et al., 2011). In addition, students reported that they felt better prepared for future careers because Twitter allowed them to develop networks with potential employers and provided them with valuable experience using a social networking platform. In all, research suggests that using Twitter in the class increases overall course satisfaction for students and educators: “A Twitter assignment pushes students to edit and develop concise arguments, and it does so in a manner that is easier and faster for the instructor to evaluate than a longer writing assignment” (Kassens, 2014; p. 102).

Moreover, Twitter reinforces fundamental skills for strategy students. The mandatory character requirements of a tweet echo business writing principles related to brevity, which is a highly sought-after skill in graduates (White, 2015). Because many businesses and consumers use the public platform for customer service, students can often view and voice many sides of a conversation in real-time (Mistry, 2011), and valuable lessons can be learned from how companies and customers respond to scandals on Twitter (e.g., Donnelly, 2018). The critical thinking skills forged by such efforts at multiple framing (Colby et al., 2011) are rarely achieved in static business texts written well after the fact.

Additionally, Twitter promotes in-class discussion of current events and news and allows students to see connections between class concepts, theories, and terms and these real-world situations (Blessing, Blessing, & Fleck, 2012). As such, tweeting by students reinforces concepts and improves student learning (Neier & Zayer, 2015). In addition, social media can be used to create experiential learning exercises in which students engage with the ideas and concepts being studied rather than simply thinking about the material (Kolb, 1984; Julien, Stratton, & Clayton, 2017; Mork, 2009). For example, one study found that when students followed industry professionals, leaders, or companies, they shared the information learned from those tweets with the class more readily (Rinaldo et al.,

2011). Thus, through analysis and synthesis, students can display the knowledge gained in their learning process (Bloom, 1956; Anderson et al., 2000).

2. Assignment Description and Learning Objectives

Appendix A includes the full assignment description used by multiple instructors over three years in twelve sections of the capstone undergraduate business strategy course. In tandem, Table 1 illustrates connections between strategy course learning objectives and the assignment.

Table 1

Strategy Course Learning Objectives	Key Assignment Elements
Application of a systematic approach to critical thinking in order to identify business problems/issues and evaluate potential solutions	Students must read various articles and identify a problem or issue as well as any discussed solution. They then provide a distilled discussion of the situation in their tweet. Through retweeting the students begin to discuss the issue and potential solutions from various standpoints. This conversation can also be carried over into the classroom with more detail.
Integration of the various business disciplines in decision making	Students must identify the related topic and use that in a hashtag. These topics can come from cases, textbook material, class discussion, etc. These topics can be related to any of the business disciplines including finance, accounting, marketing, operations, management, etc. In addition, they may analyze the issue or decision discussed in the article with their brief tweet.
Creation of quality written and oral analysis of strategic management topics	Twitter's brevity forces students to provide a succinct written analysis of the news article chosen.
Analysis of corporate strategy development and implementation	Students are encouraged to choose articles which allow them to provide a brief analysis of a strategic decision and implementation. Articles often involve mergers and acquisitions, vertical integration, entry into international markets, etc.

In brief, the assignment asks students to apply core course concepts to contemporary business events, and then discuss those events with other students in the class. To facilitate these conversations, each round of tweeting has three tweets: one with a link to an article from the business press and a tweet with some insight related to the application of course content in that article, and two reply tweets to classmates' articles that extend the conversation and application of the content. In addition, students are expected to use hashtags that help to aggregate

their tweets: one is the course hashtag, which allows them to view all the tweets produced for the course; and the others are content hashtags, which allow them to find other articles with related content. Also, the content hashtags encourage students to remember and note which concept from the course they see present in the article they chose.

Appendix B includes the rubric used to grade tweets during this course. Although we have not indicated specific point allowances, the categories are weighted in favor of the analysis portion of the assignment, which makes up a minority portion of the overall course grade. The assessed categories are divided across the tweet that includes an original article and the two responses to provide space to assess the quality of the original and conversational tweets. Additionally, the rubric assesses tweets across the required elements of the tweet and the level of the analysis. This allows the instructor to reinforce the necessity of the hashtags, links, and references to previous tweets, as well as the quality of the student's analysis of the strategy described in the original article and tweet. Providing the rubric before students complete the assignment helps to indicate expectations regarding the required and desired elements of their assignments (Kassens, 2014).

Learning objectives. The learning objectives for the assignment are as follows:

1. Apply course concepts to contemporary business events; and
2. Evaluate the strategy's potential for the success from a variety of viewpoints.

Demonstrate applicability. Fundamentally, the goal of this assignment is to ensure that students recognize that the principles of strategy are in use every day in many types of organizations. To do so, they must first understand the terminology and recognize it as described in the business press. Twitter can help with this, and research shows that students remember topics that were tweeted to them better in test situations than they did topics that were only covered in class and the textbook (Blessing et al., 2012).

Twitter's specific interface encourages the application of course content to up-to-the-minute news and information. Other writing assignments related to application often produce years-old articles garnered from Google searches, but a Twitter feed—once populated with reliable news sources that are motivated to provide breaking news before other sources—provides recent news articles by design. Although older articles can be found with clear enough search criteria, a student would have to scroll for hours through their feed to find even one-month-old articles because of the way Twitter features recent tweets.

Evaluate a strategy's potential for success. At a higher-order level, students use their tweets to showcase their evaluation skills related to the concept or initiative described in the article and its chances for success. Given the nuances of each article, company, and strategic action, this evaluation can take many forms.

Students judge the strategic action from a variety of stakeholder positions, each of which affects their assessment of the strategy's potential for positive or negative effects. The reply tweets aid in developing this stage of the learning process because students adopt different stances from one another, which produces a valuable conversation about how success is defined and achieved. Additionally, their evaluation relies on their synthesis of information within the article about the internal and external environments in which the firm operates. This is often the point at which opinions will begin to diverge as students step into each other's shoes and practice skills in multiple framing as encouraged by the Carnegie model (Colby, Ehrlich, Sullivan, & Dolle, 2011), and professors may find utility in developing these conversations through synchronous class time.

3. Assignment Outcomes

Student feedback echoes an appreciation for the assignment's innovativeness. Many note the creativeness of using Twitter for intellectual pursuit: "I enjoyed creating Twitter posts that had to do with the material we were learning in the class. I thought this was a very creative way to apply the concepts we learned." In addition, one student noted the assignment's ability to showcase inventively a connection between classroom and business contexts: "The Twitter assignments bridged the gap between classroom and the business world. These assignments are an example of effectively using social media in an educational environment." Further, several cited the benefits of using and discussing truly contemporary news: "[one of the best features of the class was] using current media to talk about business issues," saying also, "[I enjoyed] being able to discuss current events and analyze the strategies that have been implemented." Finally, several students noted a trepidation related to using Twitter followed by an appreciation for it after repeated use in the class: "I had never used Twitter until this course and [I was] glad to see ... different tools and methods for instruction." In addition, one student noted, "I actually liked using Twitter for the first time." In all, most students' feedback indicate an understanding of the benefits and intended outcomes of the assignment.

4. Considerations for Implementing a Twitter Assignment

Our experience implementing this assignment across twelve sections of a capstone business strategy course in the past three years has offered several moments of insight for other instructors to consider before incorporating this project into their class. First, participate actively in tweeted conversations throughout the semester by posting and commenting on articles of interest, especially before students' first tweets. The instructor's familiarity with the

format and ability to model appropriate tweets communicates the expectations of the assignment for students (Junco, Heiberger, & Loken, 2011). This helps to reinforce that quality analysis is possible and expected, even with a limited character count, which is a concern voiced by many colleagues and students alike (Hitchcock & Battista, 2013; Skiba, 2007). In addition, regular tweeting by the instructor allows communication with students outside of class, and we have found that many students remain engaged in the conversation on our hashtag even after the semester ends such that former students are commenting on current students' tweets.

Second, reference students' tweets during class time regularly to reinforce their contributions to the class through Twitter. For face-to-face courses, a Twitter Wall—an online tool that aggregates and displays tweets that include a specific hashtag—is a nice way to incorporate tweets during classroom conversation. Scrolling Twitter banners can even be added directly into a Powerpoint slideshow to allow an instructor to discuss tweeted articles at specific points during class lectures (Stuurman, 2015). Third, use the same hashtag across semesters and sections of the course. We initially used separate hashtags for each class, which unnecessarily limited the conversation and forced us to use up valuable characters sending articles out to all of the classes offered in a semester. Additionally, maintaining the same hashtag across semesters allows students to preview older tweets before their first tweet, which helps to offset uncertainty about the assignment. Fourth, you will have difficulty accessing some students' tweets depending on their security settings. In our first semester using this assignment, we had to pivot to include a Blackboard component in the assignment because we were not always able to view everyone's tweets or identify who was tweeting because Twitter users are identified by handles or usernames rather than first and last names. To ensure that everyone received credit for their work and to ensure that we could more easily use our rubric to grade tweets, we began to require students to paste screenshots of each of their three tweets into a Word document and upload that document to a Blackboard assignment. We will also point out that the extra step of the Word document is necessary because Blackboard struggles with certain image attachments, which leaves the instructor unable to view the screenshots.

Third, be prepared for shifts in technology. During our time using this assignment, Twitter increased its character allowances and altered the retweet and reply functions (Glaser, 2018; Isaac, 2017; Reddy, 2017), each of which affected the assignment. When changes happen to social media platforms mid-semester, students learn valuable adaptation skills (Sobaih et al., 2016), as do instructors. Often, anxiety related to the impact of the platform's changes on the assignment could be assuaged with an announcement or even a tweet to draw students' attention to the change and what it means for them. We also found utility in creating documents with screenshots to display the old and new systems side by side. Whether changes happened mid-semester or in between semesters,

assignment descriptions, rubrics, and FAQ sheets have to be adapted. Although this creates extra work and introduces some risk to using social media in classrooms, a mounting body of evidence indicates that social media has benefits in higher education (Manca & Ranieri, 2016).

Finally, be ready for questions and concerns from students. Despite the increasing numbers of adults using Twitter, most research has found that students do not always have a working knowledge of the social networking site and many evidence anxiety about using it properly (Jacquemin, Smelser, & Bernot, 2014). Some students may have a Twitter account but they have never tweeted. Others have never used Twitter at all and do not have an account. Best practices to alleviate these concerns include posting a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page and devoting class time or resources to privacy issues, account creation, and tools for maximizing character count as well as letting students create a few “practice” tweets before going live with graded assignments (e.g., Lowe & Laffey, 2010; Wankel, 2009). In addition, students may struggle to select credible news articles (McGrew et al., 2017), as well as those that apply course concepts to the contemporary business news. Although the required course content hashtag helps students stay focused on the application, several other key interventions can address these concerns: 1) alongside the FAQ sheet, provide students with a clickable list of news accounts on Twitter that provide credible business news; 2) emphasize in class conversations on syllabus day—as well as in the assignment description—that the goal of the assignment is to find articles about a specific business action; and 3) instructors should actively tweet appropriate news articles, especially during the early days of the semester, and draw students’ attention to those tweets in the FAQ, classroom discussions, and rubric comments. Appendix C displays the FAQ sheet we have developed during our time using this assignment.

5. Summary

This assignment provides students with the opportunity to become more familiar with using Twitter in a professional capacity, as well as providing them with the opportunity to apply course materials in a meaningful way. Students must keep up to date with current events and select articles that are interesting and that relate to course content. Feedback from students indicate that this is an interesting and valuable assignment, and research increasingly suggests that social media is a tool many students will need in their future careers as businesses begin to rely on social media and Twitter particularly to reach wider audiences and engage them in active dialogues (Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011). In addition, they expect their employees and job applicants to have active and professional social media accounts as well, and many businesses report using social media accounts as a selection criteria in the hiring process (Van Iddekinge, Lanivich, Roth, & Junko,

2016). Consequently, this assignment provides benefits in the classroom and beyond as students gain confidence presenting themselves professionally and intelligently in a public forum.

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Appendix A: Twitter Assignment Description

Overview

The global economy is complex and rapidly-changing. Topics from previous semesters, such as the U.S. Department of Justice's potential blockade of a merger between American Airlines and United, have since been resolved, and new issues are on the horizon, such as the long-term implementation of the Affordable Care Act across a wide variety of industries. In a capstone seminar such as this one, it is impossible to know what we will be discussing by the end of the semester, so getting in the habit of scanning the environment for on-going strategic management issues that arise on a day-to-day basis is a key skill to develop. One of the best ways to do this is Twitter, which is the leading social media platform for news¹. Over the semester, we will cover many chapters from the textbook. Your task is to identify, summarize, evaluate, and tweet out current issues in the business press that relate to those chapters and strategic management principles in general.

Assignment Description

Over the course of the semester, each student will post one original tweet on Twitter and two replies to classmates' tweets per module. Each tweet should, at a minimum, include the follow information within the 140 characters permitted by the platform.

All original posts must contain:

1. The course hashtag, which will enable you to search for classmates' tweets when you draft replies. Posts without this hashtag will receive zero points, because I won't be able to find them to grade them;
2. At least one hashtag to indicate which course term from the current module you're relating your article to;
3. A link to the news article you refer to in your post. *Please remember that actual news, as opposed to articles filled with advice for practitioners, is preferred.* In other words, an article about competition in the electric car market will be a much better application of #compstrats (i.e., competitive strategies) than will a blog about how competition helps startups even though that's the first result that pops up in Google when you search "article on how to compete in business."²

All reply tweets must contain:

1. The course hashtag. Posts without this hashtag will receive zero points, because I won't be able to find them to grade them;
2. Your classmate's quoted tweet or RT @[classmate's username] to indicate which post you're responding to;

1. <http://pewrsr.ch/1gzCtmj> and <http://bit.ly/1LmNKUX>

2. Yes, I know when you do this.

3. A hashtag to indicate a class-specific topic that you saw in the article. This topic must be different than the hashtag in the original post and can come from any other module that you see a connection to. In other words, you should extend the conversation by pointing out that the article about competition in the electric car market shows #1stMoverRisks for Tesla or #2ndMoverPros for Apple (that's doubly good because Apple is a pro at being a second mover!).
4. *Please note that tweets that are simply complimentary without extending the conversation (i.e., RT @funnydude good one man! #strategy) will receive no points as it has no substantive analysis or class hashtag.* You're welcome to compliment each other, but ensure that you post an analytical response for points as well.

The rubric for tweets is posted in Blackboard. To reiterate, the three main aspects of each response will be:

- The course hashtag;
- Application to strategic management textbook content and a hashtag to indicate which topic; and
- Your analysis and extension of a contemporary news topic.

Submission Guidelines and Policies

- More information can be found in the Twitter Start-up Guide posted in Helpful Links in Blackboard.
- Please remember that Twitter is a public conversation accessible to any user, so post appropriately. Inappropriate posts will receive no points and may result in further action.
- Each selected article must be from the beginning of this year or later. Links to articles from prior to January 1st of this year will not be accepted, nor will they be easy to find on Twitter. The purpose of this assignment is to keep up with the daily flow of new and emerging issues, not to respond to articles that search engines retrieve from the past.
- Each response must relate the content of the article to textbook material. Please make it clear which topic your article relates to and why.
- To earn credit, each tweet must be posted by the due date specified in the syllabus.

- Sourcing information from professional news outlets such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *BusinessWeek*, the *Harvard Business Review*, *Wired*, *Inc.*, *Entrepreneur*, *The Atlantic*, *The Economist*, *Time*, *U.S. News and World Report*, *Forbes*, *Fortune*, *Reuters*, *CNN*, *The Globe and Mail*, *The Times of India*, *The Telegraph*, *Al Jazeera*, *Le Monde*, etc. is vastly preferable to blogs and personal websites. Their credibility adds to your credibility. Nearly all of these news sources can be followed for free on Twitter and may offer different perspectives on the same issue.
- To meet the strict 140-character requirement of a tweet, you'll need to get creative with your grammar and spelling. This is understood and expected.
- This website contains a list of the most influential news sources on Twitter with clickable links to follow each of them.

Appendix B: Rubric

	Insufficient	Sufficient
Original Tweet - Requirements	Original tweet was missing an article link or one or both of the required hashtags to indicate which class or course topic is being analyzed.	Original tweet contains an article link and both of the required hashtags that indicate which class and course topic is being analyzed.
Original Tweet - Analysis	Tweet does not indicate the author's position on the strategy topic described in the article.	Tweet provides clear analysis and extension of the strategy described in the article.
Reply Tweets - Requirements	One or both of the replies are missing hashtags to indicate which original tweet or classmate is being responded to in our class.	Both replies contain hashtags that clearly identify the class, original tweet, and topic of extension.
Reply Tweets - Analysis	Either one or both replies is missing any substantive analysis or extension.	One or both replies extend the conversation and analysis started in the original tweet.

Appendix C: Frequently Asked Questions

I get a lot of questions about Twitter every semester, so I've made a Frequently Asked Questions page in case it helps. Feel free to post questions if they aren't answered below.

Q: What am I supposed to do?

A: For this assignment, you have three responsibilities: 1. Post an original tweet with the class hashtag, a link to an article, and a course concept hashtag; 2. Post two reply tweets several days later (so that you have many original tweets to reply to) that contain a reference to the original tweet, the class hashtag, and a course concept hashtag (you can include article links in your replies too - use <http://bit.ly> to shorten links if you can't fit everything in 140 characters); and 3. Compose a Word Document with three screenshots of your tweets and submit it through the links provided in each Module.

Q: What does a good original Tweet look like?

A: Not to tweet my own horn, but my posts are pretty good exemplars. Check out my feed or the class hashtag for examples. One tweet on Uber gets at the heart of their problems managing people - their human resources strategy (a concept we talk about alongside Corporate Strategies about 2/3 of the way through the course) has been to pretend they don't have any employees. Then they don't have to pay taxes or provide benefits or generally engage in the social contract at all. The US Government hasn't liked that much, and many cities and states have fined Uber. Consequently, they're working hard to find a workaround, but as this article shows, their solution isn't to pay people a decent wage, take out taxes, give them benefits, or manage or protect the vast amount of human labor that it really does take to run Uber. Instead, their answer is to do away with the humans entirely! If you had sent that tweet, in 140 characters or less, I'd understand that you grasp what human resource functional strategies are at Uber. I'd also know that you're reading really current news, that you basically understand why this is good for Uber (if not its "independent contractors"). All in just a few words!

Q: What does a good response tweet look like?

A: The goal of a response tweet is to extend the conversation and speculate on what the implications of a company's strategic action will be for them or any other stakeholder. You don't have to be an expert to speculate on what the future holds; if you had asked me five years ago, I'd have told you that Apple would never build a car. Now Project Titan is go! A good response to my Uber tweet (yes, you can respond to me if you want) could include comments about how they shouldn't fire their legal team just yet (and you could include an article about Tesla or Google's autonomous car crashes) or about how this threatens the future viability of public transit (for which I'd link to an article from our local paper about how much money we're spending on a parking garage to solve a problem we won't have soon or even just say "Hey Parking Services, how's the garage project going? #imissmyApass" - Note: please don't actually call the University or anyone else out on their building projects unless you know what you're doing and mean to do it. Sometimes

they tweet back). Any of those responses would show me that you understand the future implications and extensions of the strategy Uber is planning to implement.

Q: Do I have to use my personal Twitter account?

A: Nope. Twitter lets you manage multiple accounts, and it's pretty easy from the app. Just create a new account for the class if you don't want me or your classmates to know about your Justin Bieber fan page. You can even lock it down so that none of your Bieleber pals know that you have an academic side - just be sure to give me permission to view so that I can grade your tweets.

Q: I'm three characters shy of the Best. Tweet. Ever! What do I do?

A: Remember that <https://bitly.com/> or <http://ow.ly/> will shorten links for you, and don't be afraid to relax traditional grammar rules. "LOL TBT 2 @***'s gr8 RT" is perfectly acceptable on Twitter.

Q: How do I find good articles for my original tweets?

A: Start by following news sources. @WSJ, @BreakingNews, @BBCBreaking, @ReutersLive, @NYTBusiness, and @JimCramer all have great information and frequent tweets. You can quote any of their tweets to make your own original tweet with embedded article link. Also, it can't hurt to follow me @*** as you figure out how this assignment works. You can share other good pages with your classmates in responses to this post if you want to.

Q: What if someone else in the class tweets the same article I used in my original tweet?

A: Because the goal of this assignment is to provide analysis of the strategic initiative described in your article, every single person in the class could tweet the same article and still have different opinions on the outcome. In fact, Twitter thrives on the retweeting that happens instantaneously when news breaks, so it will not impact your score if someone else uses or has used the same article you did.

***note: this information has been removed to ensure author anonymity.

