

# POST-MORTEM INNOVATION

## LEARNING FROM FAILURE

### Week 2 Assignment Post-Mortem Innovation – Learning from Company Failure

**Points:** 20

**Format: Narrated PowerPoint** (voice-over with video recorded on slides)

#### Purpose

Learning from failure means analyzing what went wrong, identifying specific lessons, and applying those insights to improve decisions and performance in the future. In business, this matters because it reduces repeat mistakes, strengthens strategy, improves products and processes, and helps organizations adapt faster in changing markets.

In this assignment, you will **analyze a real company failure** using corporate entrepreneurship concepts and propose a **redesign** that would make the company more innovative and adaptable.

#### Assignment Requirements

##### 1) Choose a Company

Select **one** company failure to analyze (or use the one assigned):

- Blockbuster
- Borders
- Theranos
- BlackBerry
- Quibi
- WeWork (initial IPO flop)

##### 2) Analyze the Failure (Use bullets)

Include concise bullet points for each section below:

###### **A. Culture & Strategy**

- Was the company more **entrepreneurial** or **traditional** in orientation?
- How did leadership, structure, incentives, or decision-making hinder innovation?
- Did you see risk aversion, lack of innovation, or overconfidence?

###### **B. Dual Process Model of Learning from Failure**

- **Loss orientation:** Where did you see blame, denial, regret, defensiveness, or poor sense-making?
- **Restoration orientation:** Where could the company have adapted, pivoted, rebuilt, or experimented earlier?

### 3) Redesign Plan (Time-Machine View)

Propose **two** high-impact changes:

1. **One leadership move, policy, or culture shift** that would foster innovation.
2. **One strategic change** most likely to have altered the outcome (the single biggest pivot).

## Narrated PowerPoint Submission Rules

### Required Deliverable

Submit **one narrated PowerPoint** with your voice recorded.

### Suggested Slide Structure (6–8 slides)

1. **Title Slide** (Company + “Post-Mortem Innovation”)
2. **What Happened** (brief overview of the failure)
3. **Top 3 Failure Causes** (bullet list) ✨
4. **Orientation Diagnosis** (entrepreneurial vs. traditional) 🔄
5. **Dual Process Model** (loss orientation + restoration orientation)
6. **Redesign Plan** (one culture/leadership shift)
7. **One High-Impact Strategic Change** 💡
8. **Wrap-Up** (why your redesign would improve adaptability)

### Timing

- **Narration length: 2–3 minutes total**
- Keep slides clean and readable (use bullets; explain details in narration).

### File Naming

**LastName\_FirstName\_PostMortemInnovation.pptx** (or .mp4 if exported as video)

## Key Terms to Use (Quick Refresh)

- **Loss orientation:** Confronting and analyzing the failure (sense-making, diagnosis).
- **Restoration orientation:** Recovering and moving forward (pivoting, redesign, experimentation).
- **Entrepreneurial orientation:** Innovation, risk-taking, proactivity, experimentation, learning from failure.
- **Traditional orientation:** Stability, control, efficiency, risk minimization, slower to change.

## Submission

Upload your **narrated PowerPoint** by the end of class (Monday) (or by the deadline posted in the course site if submitting online).

## ✓ Grading Rubric (20 Points)

### **1) Diagnosis of Failure (Culture + Strategy) – 6 points**

- Clear, accurate explanation of what went wrong and why.

### **2) Dual Process Model Application (Loss + Restoration) – 4 points**

- Correctly applies both orientations with relevant examples.

### **3) Redesign Plan & Strategic Change (Clarity + Feasibility) – 6 points**

- One culture/leadership shift + one strategic change that are realistic and high impact.

### **4) Use of Course Terms / Evidence – 2 points**

- Uses key terms appropriately and supports claims with credible reasoning/examples.

### **5) Clarity & Time Management – 2 points**

- Professional narration, organized slides, stays within time.