

**FINAN 440 FINANCIAL MODELING
BOOK REPORT ASSIGNMENT
Spring 2010**

Your task is to craft a short book report on a business book shown on the list following these instructions or another book approved by the instructor. The general criteria for approved books are that they explore the links between business, mathematics, and technology--especially well-documented books that survey and sum up the above links. Books that are essentially directed at pure "management" issues, personal investing manuals, or that simply predict future business trends without documenting the past will probably not fit the requirements of this course. The book you chose to report on has to fit the content requirements detailed below or your grade will suffer. For example, a book that has no documentation for its conclusions will be unable to fulfill the charge that you discuss the documentation.

I assume that students will honor the spirit of the course by choosing books they have not previously read and cheerfully abide by the instructor's decision on the applicability of particular books for this assignment. The goal is to satisfy the diverse interests of the class yet maintain academic rigor. If I discover that is not the case we will probably revert to the one-book- fits-all book report assignment.

CONTENT: Your report should discuss the chosen book on three different levels. It should detail the main argument(s) of the book, carefully discuss the evidence or documentation supporting the arguments or conclusions the book draws, and demonstrate a current business situation(s) that supports the book's thesis. Note that you can demonstrate the last requirement (how the book applies to some real world situation) with some outside article if you so choose. Your grade will be influenced by how well you integrate the three levels discussed above.

FORMAT and DOCUMENTATION: Your report is limited to five typed, double spaced pages. The report should include a list of references (see COBE Writing Guide at <http://cobe.boisestate.edu/>) and correct use of footnotes will be rewarded. Make sure the reader understands when direct quotes are employed or where comments from other sources come from. You do not need a content page or a cover for the paper, simply a title page with your report's title and your name.

PRESENTATION: Grading will be heavily influenced by your presentation. Be sure to give the reader a roadmap of your paper early on (this particular point cannot be emphasized enough). You should employ solid sentences, well-constructed paragraphs, and possibly headings to lead the reader through your paper. Avoid the use of the first person (keep "I" out of your paper). Grammatical mistakes, spelling errors, penciled in corrections, illegible dot-matrix printers and the like are unacceptable and you will not be given a second chance for these types of problems. Don't forget to make the report interesting; flat, workmanlike efforts will not receive top grades. I will make an effort to give credit for "degrees of difficulty" in the book you chose for the report, but avoid writing about books you do not understand.

DUE DATE: Thursday, March 4 at the beginning of class (Late charge is 10% per day)

POINTS: 100

Pre-approved Books: (in random order)

Liar's Poker by Michael Lewis

Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game by Michael Lewis

Reminiscences of a Stock Operator (Wiley Investment Classics) by Edwin Lefèvre, Roger Lowenstein

Inside the House of Money: Top Hedge Fund Traders on Profiting in the Global Markets by Steven Drobny

The Intelligent Investor: The Classic Text on Value Investing by Benjamin Graham

Technical Analysis of the Financial Markets: A Comprehensive Guide to Trading Methods and Applications (New York Institute of Finance) by John J. Murphy

Barbarians at the Gate by Bryan Burrough and John Helyar

The Interpretation of Financial Statements by Benjamin Graham and Spencer B. Meredith

Value Investing: From Graham to Buffett and Beyond (Wiley Finance) by Bruce C. N. Greenwald, Judd Kahn, Paul D. Sonkin, and Michael van Biema

Evidence-Based Technical Analysis: Applying the Scientific Method and Statistical Inference to Trading Signals by David R Aronson

Valuation Workbook: Step-by-Step Exercises and Tests to Help You Master Valuation (Wiley Finance)

by Tim Koller, Marc Goedhart, David Wessels, Jeffrey P. Lessard, Inc. McKinsey & Company

The Essays of Warren Buffett: Lessons for Corporate America by Warren E. Buffett and Lawrence A. Cunningham

The Inefficient Stock Market by Robert Haugen (Prentice Hall)

Note: Haugen wrote the Finan 450 textbook, his other popular press efforts, including **The New Finance** and **The Beast on Wall Street**, are also acceptable for this assignment

A Random Walk Down Wall Street by Burton G. Malkiel (Norton) –make sure you get the latest edition.

Pioneering Portfolio Management: An Unconventional Approach to Institutional Investment by David F. Swensen

The Future for Investors : Why the Tried and the True Triumph Over the Bold and the New by Jeremy J. Siegel

Capital Ideas by Peter Bernstein (Free Press)

Den of Thieves by James B. Stewart (Simon and Shuster)

The Fortune Sellers: The Big Business of Buying and Selling Predictions by William Sherden

"When Genius Failed: the Rise and Fall of Long-term Capital Management by Roger Lowenstein.

Irrational Exuberance by Robert Schiller (2000) Princeton University Press

Bull! : A History of the Boom, 1982-1999: What drove the Breakneck Market--and What Every Investor Needs to Know About Financial Cycles by Maggie Mahar

A Mathematician Plays the Stock Market by John Allen Paulos

Inefficient Markets: An Introduction to Behavioral Finance by Andrei Shleifer

Stocks for the Long Run : The Definitive Guide to Financial Market Returns and Long-Term Investment Strategies by Jeremy J. Siegel

Beyond Greed and Fear: Understanding Behavioral Finance and the Psychology of Investing by Hersh Shefrin

Behavioural Finance: A User's Guide by James Montier