

Antara Gupta

Mr. Speice

Independent Study & Mentorship

December 8, 2017

**The Beginning of Something New**

**Mentor Visit Assessment #1**

**Mentor:** Regina Borda

**Profession:** Chief Brand Officer- Latin American and Caribbean Regions

**Location:** 7100 Corporate Drive, Plano TX, 75024

**Date:** December 1, 2017

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**Assessment:**

Commencing my mentor-mentee relationship with Ms. Regina Borda, the Chief Brand Officer of the Latin American and Caribbean regions, the main purpose of this meeting was to establish the precedents of the mentor program and also explain the Independent Study and Mentorship program more in depth. However, knowing that I also need to work on my original work, I decided to also get Ms. Borda's feedback on my idea and what I could do to improve it at this meeting.

Prior to this visit, I had been in Ms. Borda's office once before when we had met for my informational interview with her. As a result, I was once again reminded me of the informal atmosphere of the office, as there was an open layout plan which allowed employees to casually share ideas with one another and even yoga balls that were used for chairs. Noting that this type of setting is quite different from a traditional office space, I asked Ms. Borda why Pizza Hut had chosen such a design. She answered by saying that Pizza Hut wanted to reinforce their brand by showing how creative and modern the company was, even to their employees. Upon hearing this, I truly came to see how brand management is quite important to large international companies because it affects even the most miniscule parts of the business. Furthermore, being in an open work space also allows one's creativity to flourish, and since Pizza Hut's brand allows for innovation within the local franchises, the employees are able to come up with good ideas.

After discussing the intimate relationship that brand management had with all parts of the company, I explained the mentorship program to Ms. Borda and the basic requirements. Ms. Borda told me that Friday's at 1:00 pm work the best for her, and since I have ISM during that time on A days, it is convenient. However, upon informing her of the dates of our Research Showcase and Final Presentation Night, Ms. Borda said she would not be able to come to the latter event due to an international conference that she has to go to. As a result, I will have to have a fill-in who can be anyone ranging from my parents to my DECA advisor. Over the course of the year, I hope to narrow down the search for my mentor's substitute. I also asked Ms. Borda at this time for the names of any articles or books that would be beneficial for me to read and broaden my knowledge on the topic of brand management. Ms. Borda told me to read *The Advertising Effect* by Adam Ferrier and *The Anatomy of Humbug* by Paul Feldwick, for they do

an excellent job of summarizing brand management in an interesting manner. I hope to read these books over winter break, and hopefully they can give me some more insight and guidance in terms of original work.

The final part of our the mentor visit was discussing my original work proposal and how it could be further refined and/or improved. My primary idea for this work was to conduct a survey in which I would test how consumers in different countries perceive around 10-12 global brands and then write a report over the data. Ms. Borda really liked my idea and she said that it would really give me insight on how and why different brands are successful. However, she suggested that I take into account how I would compare the different brands with each other. We later came up with an idea to have about four different categories of brands based on the type of good or service sold. For example, there could be a pizza category in which Pizza Hut and Domino's were compared. We agreed that by having a certain category of the brands, it would be much easier to make conclusions about the marketing strategies without having outside factors play a major influence.

In addition, Ms. Borda also told me that in terms of the countries that I would be testing, I should aim for nations that I have contacts in and have a developed market with many global brands. I had originally picked the countries in which I would conduct the survey using my friend and family contacts, but I realized that I also need to consider the market of the country as well. After talking with Ms. Borda, we decided on the following four countries: United States, India, Brazil, and Taiwan. I have contacts in India and the United States so getting the survey out would not be a difficult process. Ms. Borda said that she can help me get the survey out to people in Brazil because she knows many people there. She also said she can get me in contact with

people at Pizza Hut who work in the Taiwan region, which will also be beneficial. Through my meeting with Ms. Borda, I also realized that I would need to translate the surveys into the native languages of the country so that more of the common population could participate. Ms. Borda also agreed that I should use Google Forms as my survey platform because Google is available around the world and the information is directly inputted into a spreadsheet so it is hassle free.

While discussing some of the actual questions that could be on the survey, Ms. Borda shared numerous documents that she had used in the past to formulate questions, and this really gave me an idea of what to do. Upon conducting more analyzation and research, I hope to finalize the questions for the survey by our next mentor visit. In addition, while in the brainstorming process of my original work, I had considered interviewing professionals from each of the different companies over which I would conduct the research, and I was wondering whether this would be viable. Ms. Borda told me that talking to professionals would be an excellent way to learn more about the company brand, but given the time constraints, she said I should also look into the annual reports of each brand and find their marketing plan. Using this, I can formulate how the perceived perception is similar to or different from the company's intended goal in terms of branding.

My first mentor visit with Ms. Borda was quite successful, and I was able to address all of the potential problem spots in my original work. Talking about brand management and how it applies to all aspects of the company showed me how relevant the field is to a company, further bolstering my interest in brand management. Furthermore, I now feel more confident in

conducting not only my original work study, but also all other future endeavors because I know that my mentor is there to guide me along the way.