



RESPONSIBLE LEADERS CHALLENGE:

GRIFFITH BUSINESS SCHOOL
CHALLENGE FOR
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

WORKBOOK

little •
cocoa

Business case study

Congratulations on registering a team for Griffith University’s Responsible Leaders Challenge. The Challenge aims to empower budding marketers and entrepreneurs to activate their inner creativity and potential to solve contemporary business and sustainability problems. It gives students the opportunity to work on an impactful business challenge facing an organisation. The Challenge inspires and invests in the next generation of responsible business leaders, ensuring a forward-focused and future-ready business mindset.

Participating in the Challenge enables team members to leverage your business knowledge skills, alongside enhancing key life skills, by applying what you have learnt in your business studies to practice. Importantly, you will be learning to solve a complex 21st business problem for an organisation.



Critical thinking

Analytical thinking;
Problem solving;
Conceptualise;
Knowledge synthesis.



Communication

Visual;
Written;
Argument development.



Creative thinking

Design thinking;
Generating ideas;
Lateral thinking;
Reflection.



Teamwork

Connection;
Collaboration.



Digital literacy

Improve confidence;
Leverage skills;
Solve social problems.

This workbook is designed to support teams participating in the Responsible Leaders Challenge and provides:

- Responsible Leaders Challenge key dates;
- detailed overview of the Responsible Leaders Challenge brief;
- additional Challenge information concerning the business partner, Little Cocoa and key trends influencing the business problem;
- information about ‘getting started’ and preparing the Challenge submission.

Key dates

23 May 2022	Registration opens
26 August 2022 by 12 noon	Written submission due
Early October	Finalists announced

The brief

Little Cocoa, an artisan chocolate business, located in Southport on Queensland's Gold Coast, has built a thriving online business customising handcrafted, bespoke chocolate offerings that exude premium luxury, sophistication and elegance. The signature product are pralines. To date, Little Cocoa's attention has centred on building strong brand identity and customer market share within the unique, niche gift event market. The key demographic is skewed towards the 35-45-year-old market.

The challenge for Little Cocoa in broadening its market share and brand identity is twofold:

- 1) capture a new source of market growth – young adults aged 18-25 years – with a sustainable, experience, novelty product that 'goes beyond its food value' whilst simultaneously leveraging Little Cocoa's brand value of premium luxury; and
- 2) define the brand's sustainability credentials.

Little Cocoa has hired you as their specialist marketing team to present an impactful, creative solution that will position Little Cocoa as a forward-focused business.

The report

More detailed requirements relating to the Responsible Leaders Challenge Report is presented below. Each team will submit prior to the due date a written report that will be no more than ten (10) pages in length; include the following headings and address the sub-heading content:

1. The Responsible Leaders Challenge Cover page (1 A4 page)
 - Team members
 - Team name
 - School name, address, phone
 - Teacher's name
 - Teacher email contact
2. Table of Contents (1 A4 page)
3. Executive Summary: (max 1 A4 page)
4. Critical analysis and research including:
 - 4.1 **Competitor analysis:**
 - identify and map key competitors Little Cocoa will face entering the 18-25 year-old market.
 - conduct a competitor analysis drawing conclusions about key Implications Little Cocoa will need to address entering the 18-25 year-old market.
 - 4.2 **New product line extension:**

- devise a new product line extension for the 18-25 year-old market that aligns with Little Cocoa’s brand positioning of premium luxury and meets the sustainable, experience, novelty ‘goes beyond its food value’ criterion. Present an image of the new product.
 - explain the novelty, experience, sustainability and premium luxury value of the new product offering.
 - present an image of the new product packaging and labelling.
- 4.3 **New market strategy:**
- identify and justify the new product line price, distribution and communications strategy in response to the challenge context.
- 4.4 **Webpage strategy:**
- Detail how Little Cocoa’s webpage can more effectively embed and promote sustainability.
5. List of References and sources (no page limit)

Note: The Responsible Leaders Challenge brief has been developed for the competition, and may not reflect the current business plans of the case company.

Additional Challenge information

About Little Cocoa

[Little Cocoa](#), established in 2018 by Alicia Chapman, is an artisan chocolate business based in Southport on Queensland’s Gold Coast. Being an artisan chocolate business means Little Cocoa does not compete directly with larger mass-produced chocolate companies. Rather Little Cocoa is uniquely positioned within a niche, albeit growing, handcrafted and bespoke chocolate market producing authentic, unique and innovative chocolate offerings. Little Cocoa operates as an online store, with the occasional pop-up store located at their Southport base at high demand peaks (e.g. Valentine’s Day and Christmas).

Artisan chocolate is made by hand by experts who know their craft intimately and is produced in small batches meaning that the chocolates are carefully constructed and fresh. This results in unique chocolate offerings with atypical flavours that won’t be found in mass-produced chocolates. Artisan chocolate is becoming more and more popular with consumers representing a dynamic and innovative niche segment within the broader chocolate product category. The changing lifestyle and more developed taste preferences of millennials and generation Z consumers, alongside increasing awareness of food health benefits and demand for products to evidence sustainability criterion, have driven demand for premium, authentic and unique chocolate offerings. In this way, bespoke artisan chocolates offer consumers unique ‘morsels of goodness’ and ‘indulgent moments’ to escape the ordinary and to pamper in scrumptious delight.

Whilst the artisan (or craft) chocolate market remains relatively small in relation to its mass-produced competitors, Australia's artisan chocolate market is expected to follow global trends with significant growth in the period 2022 and 2027 (Express Wire, 2022). The increasing demand for premium bespoke chocolates is impacting the broader chocolate product category, with consumers exiting from traditional mass-produced chocolates as taste buds and preferences transition towards unique consumption indulgences (Allied Market Research, 2020).

Little Cocoa's products

Little Cocoa's classical signature products are pralines which are a fine shell of chocolate encasing soft and textured fillings of salted caramel, raspberry and white chocolate, blackcurrant gelee, milk hazelnut and dark LiChu ganache. The handcrafted pralines use high quality, rain forest certified Belgian couverture chocolate that is melted and tempered, then poured into moulds with soft textured fillings piped by hand and then covered with a chocolate base. Signature pralines are available in a range of gift boxes of 6, 12 or 36, with each gift box elegantly foil stamped. With increasing demand to cater for varying dietary requirements vegan gluten free and nut free praline options are also available. To spice up product offerings Little Cocoa periodically creates one-off additions for seasonal occasions, such as Easter, Mothers' Day and World Chocolate Day. Uniquely, Little Cocoa delivers chocolates Australia-wide in temperature-controlled packaging.

In addition to the signature pralines product line, Little Cocoa also handcrafts a vegan (dairy free) chocolate bar which can be purchased as a single bar or as a gift box of 8 chocolate bars. The chocolate bars exude the Little Cocoa's signature premium quality.

Little Cocoa is active in the special event market customising unique bespoke offerings for corporate gifts, weddings and other special events to celebrate occasions. Working closely with clients Little Cocoa will personalise offerings such as matching praline colours and flavours to event themes (e.g.: weddings, baby shower or reveals). Customising corporate gifts is Little Cocoa's speciality market whereby one-off creative innovations reflecting the company's uniqueness are crafted to impress business clients and leverage relationship building by saying 'thank you'. Special messages, personalised foil insignias and unique packaging are all part of Little Cocoa delivering a unique experience for their client, as well as those to whom the chocolates are gifted.

Little Cocoa's customer base is skewed towards an older demographic, predominantly aged between 35-45 years.

Little Cocoa added value

Beyond simply selling bespoke chocolates Little Cocoa is positioned as a premium luxury, sophisticated and elegant brand centred on '*sweetening your relationships ... when you have lots to say but lost for words say it with Little Cocoa*'. Relationships are at the heart of Little Cocoa's business. Taking that extra step to assist clients to find that special gift, customising innovative

designs, finding the perfect colour foil for box packaging, alongside ensuring prompt delivery and customer service underpins the added value Little Cocoa provides for clients. In turn, the value is transferred to whom the bespoke chocolate offering is gifted.

After 4 years in business Little Cocoa has been rated one of three top chocolate shops on the Gold Coast in Best Business 2021 award.

Little Cocoa sustainability

From initiation, Alicia Chapman has considered the environmental impact of Little Cocoa's business operations aiming to reduce negative impact on the earth as much as possible. Such initiatives include:

- Sourcing of couverture chocolate from [Veliche Gourmet Belgian Chocolate supplier](#) which has Rainforest Alliance certification. The Rainforest Certification seal means that the certified product was produced using methods that support the three pillars of sustainability: social, economic and environmental. Independent third-party auditors evaluate farmers against requirements in all three areas awarding or renewing certification.
- Limiting the use of plastic. Where possible, biodegradable plastics or recycled plastic alternatives are sourced. For example, Alicia sources soft packets for sealing chocolate products that require air tight finishes (e.g. dragees, chocolate coated biscuits) from a material called NatureFlex™. [NatureFlex™](#) is a biodegradable and compostable cellophane film made from renewable cellulose fibre.
- Producing chocolates primarily to order, thus reducing product wastage.

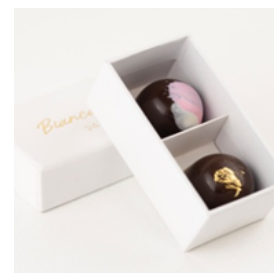
Below are images of Little Cocoa signature praline, corporate and wedding gift boxes and specially designed corporate gifts.



Praline boxed sets



Signature praline



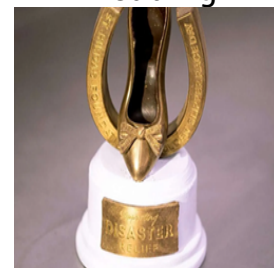
Wedding



Corporate gift –
smashable chocolate



Corporate gift



Corporate gift

The target audience – Generation Z

Generation Z includes children, teens and young adults born between 1996 and 2012 (10–26 years) (Parker and Igielnik, 2020)*. Social consciousness is the defining characteristic of Gen Z and they are most passionate about climate change, sustainability, environmental responsibility alongside gender and racial equity (Law, 2020). Zers are the first global generation to be shaped by 21st century issues. As digital integrators, born into a world of peak technological innovation, Zers are the first to seamlessly integrate technology into all areas of their lives. They are globally connected through digital devices and engaged through social media. They are extensively connected to and shaped by their peers (Gomez. n.d.).

Zers are acutely aware of environmental, political and socio-economic problems that face societies and are more serious about these issues than any other generation (Law, 2020). Whilst Zers are always looking for new experiences, they are drawn to brands that care for the planet and align with supply chain partners that authentically address issues of sustainability (Gomez, n.d.). Zers are attracted to companies that demonstrate commitment and evidence transparency in their ethics, practices and global impact to address societal challenges such as climate change. When purchasing brands, Zers view their purchase decision as an expression of their values and identity, thus brands must place sustainability action at the front and centre of their brand for Gen Z buyers to see (Gomez, n.d.)

Zers spend money pragmatically, yet are willing to pay more for products that enable identity and experience customisation aligned with their key values (Law, 2020). Young adult Zers, in particular, are social buyers relying on extensive social networks to make informed purchase decisions (Law, 2020). Importantly, they are more likely to be swayed by recommendations of real-life users than celebrity endorsements (Parker and Igielnik, 2020).

Although a large proportion of Gen Z are still teenagers, they show early signs of growing into engaged, conscientious stewards of the world – by being socially minded, independent thinkers who recognise their responsibility in shaping a more equitable future for all.

* Gen Z age range will vary slightly across different information sources.

Changing chocolate preferences

COVID-19 has increased the occurrence of planned indulgence snack food consumption, otherwise known as permissible indulgence consumption (Hogan, 2021). No longer are consumers depriving themselves of foods and snacks that they enjoy. Rather, consumers are giving themselves permission to eat indulgent, albeit healthy, snack foods in moderation (Romano, 2020). Permissible indulgence marries health lifestyle with snacks that bundle a 'treat' or 'reward' in a guilt free package (Perumbala, n.d.; Mondelez, 2021).

The trend of permissible indulgence is changing the snacking market segment, with consumers viewing snacking as just as important to their mental and emotional wellbeing, as their physical wellbeing (Romano, 2020). Consumers want a balance with product offerings that 1) are tasteful and indulgent, especially with flavour, 2) include 'better for me' nutritional value, 3) are in smaller 'bite size' portions and 4) include clean label content standards where people can see what is or isn't in what they want to eat (Callebaut, 2022). The permissible indulgence trend has created a market opportunity for 'premiumization' of product that extends food value into an experience or adventure. For example:

- [Beet pesto with goat cheese pizza or caramelised onions, apples and goat cheese pizza;](#)
- [ice-cream flavours like sweet orange or Barossa valley merlot, blackberry and cookie;](#)
- [maple glazed bacon and cheddar potato chips.](#)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, chocolate was one of the top indulgent snacks with demand remaining strong (Callebaut, 2022). The permissible indulgence trend is evidenced by drastic shifts in consumer expectations and taste towards premium chocolate. Consumers still want chocolate to be a comfort treat, but there is increasing demand for healthier options, such as dark chocolate with less sugar or higher percentages of high-quality cocoa (Chee, 2021). New combinations are creating consumer excitement – such as pairing raw chocolate with health-conscious and exotic ingredients – repositioning a favourite snack into an indulgent experience (Callebaut, 2021). Consumer demand for chocolate experiences that extend beyond typical 'food value' is challenging manufacturers to come up with multisensorial experiences involving unusual flavour combinations and textures that excite consumer's changing food palate (Chee, 2021).

Gen Z consumers are demanding more plant-based foods, specifically dairy free chocolate. A European study, revealed in 2020 just 25% of consumers consumed vegan chocolate, with this figure increasing to 64% in 2021 (Callebaut, 2022). Socially conscious consumption habits are influencing this trend, alongside health, taste and dietary preferences. More people than ever before are taking personal action to live sustainably and to buy more responsibly (Fairtrade international, 2021). Fairtrade or Rainforest Alliance certifications are an easy way for consumers to consume consciously. Consumer demand, particularly among Gen Zs, for sustainability driven purchasing will continue to shape the business of chocolate. The socially conscious chocolate consumer is generally, younger, and more driven by experimentation and trial, even if they already have a favourite chocolatier. They seek indulgences that reduce environmental and social impact preferring small batch chocolate that has superior taste and are willing to seek it out, visiting farmer markets, festivals, and specialty online channels more frequently than other chocolate consumers.

In summary, the biggest chocolate trends include creating consumption offerings that embody:

- health and consciousness (prioritizing treats aligning to health and wellness);
- comfort food (snacks supporting emotional well-being, celebrations or indulgences);

- trust and sustainability (value on origin and craftsmanship);
- new forms (textures, forms, unusual flavour combinations to be experienced that are beyond the norm).

The report

Getting started

Teams

To compete in the Griffith Business School Responsible Leaders Challenge you must be:

- in Year 10 or 11 and enrolled in a registered Queensland secondary school at the time of submission of the entry;
- given permission by your teacher;
- enthusiastic about business and entrepreneurial opportunities;
- inspirational in solving complex marketing problems that help to create the world a better place.

Your team must:

- consist of between two (2) and four (4) students in total;
- consist of any combination of students enrolled in Year 10 and 11 from the same school.

Each team is to appoint a team leader who acts as the key communication contact. Each team should determine member's roles and how the team will function.

Registration process

1. Teams will register online.
2. All registered teams, via their nominated teacher, will receive the Responsible Leaders Challenge workbook by email.

Challenge submission process

1. Teams will submit their written report in response to the business challenge prior to midday **(12 noon) on 26 August 2022** to Griffith Business School by email, at rlchallenge@griffith.edu.au.
2. All written submissions will be assessed by a panel of Griffith Business academics, with a selection proceeding to the Finals round. The Finals Round will be assessed by a panel of Griffith Business academics and the Responsible Leaders Challenge business partner.
3. No responsibility will be taken for late submissions, documents that cannot be opened or any other malfunction.
4. Any submission received after the deadline will not be considered.

5. All sections of the Challenge report must be completed in order for the submission to be deemed eligible for the competition.

Teamwork

Working in teams is a critical part of business, whereby teamwork – that is, when individual skills and strengths are combined in the pursuit of a specific task – produces meaningful results. As such, the combination of individual strengths with shared commitment to performance is oil that makes teams work. Teamwork is important for the ability to:

- Create synergy – where the sum is greater than parts;
- Supports an empowered way of thinking and new idea generation beyond bounded constraints;
- Fosters creativity, flexibility and responsiveness with team members bringing unique distinct perspectives to the table;
- Provides opportunities for personal growth and acts as a support mechanism.

Design thinking – a teamwork methodology

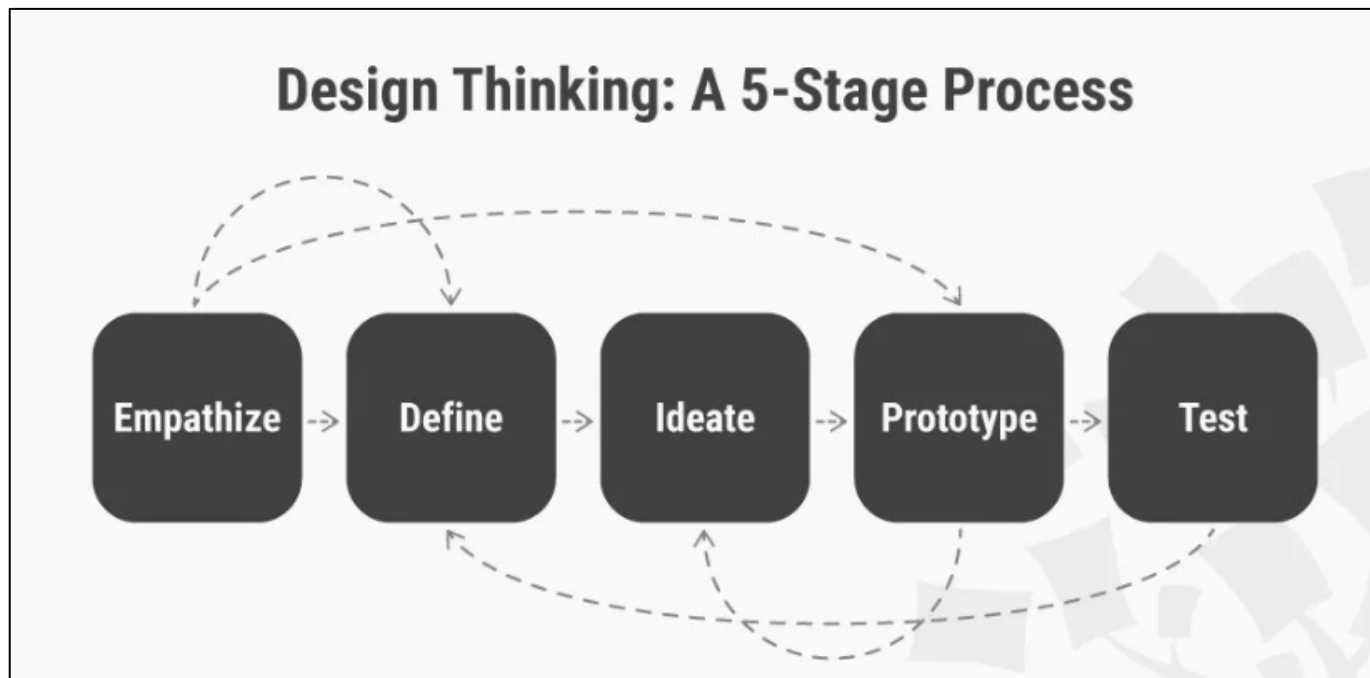
Design thinking is a methodology that encourages team collaboration, flexibility, curiosity aiming to positively influence outcomes. In design thinking, teamwork is established from the very beginning of a project. The team first considers their strengths determining capabilities to contribute to determining the project's direction and objectives and to brainstorm ideas. Team members ask questions ensuring a well-rounded view of the project and create a project roadmap for everyone to reference to.

Design thinking is an iterative process in which assumptions are challenged, problems interrogated in an attempt to identify alternate strategies and solutions that might not be instantly apparent at initial level understanding. Design thinking is extremely useful in tackling problems that are ill-defined by creating many ideas in brainstorming sessions, adopting a hands-on approach fostering user-centricity, creativity, innovation and out-of-the-box thinking.

The ideology behind design thinking states that in order to come up with innovative solutions a designer's mindset and approach must be adopted. At the same time, design thinking is all about getting hands-on, with the aim to turn your ideas into tangible, testable products. The uniqueness of design thinking lies in the kinds of problems it addresses. Typically, design thinking is applied to solving wicked problems – the kind that refuse to be solved using standard methods and approaches. Wicked problems are everywhere – climate change and poverty, to challenges that affect most businesses such as achieving sustainable growth or maintaining competitive edge.

Whilst the Responsible Leaders Challenge does not ask teams to actually produce a product – it is essential that teams consider the solution from a consumer's perspective

Design thinking to create innovative solutions involves five phases: empathize, define, ideate, prototype, test.



Source: interaction-design.org/literature/topics/design-thinking

Step 1: Empathise (research user's needs)

- Engage/research the target audience to paint a clear picture of who the end users are, what challenges they face and what needs/expectations must be met.
- Importantly set aside personal/team assumptions to harness insight into users and their needs.

Step 2: Define (state user's needs and problems)

- Based on what you have learnt in Step 1 define a clear problem statement addressing the business challenge alongside end user needs, characteristics.
- Organise observations and research synthesising them to define the core problem.
- Write a problem statement or create a persona of the end-user to help keep the solution ideation process human centric.

Step 3: Ideate (challenge assumptions and create ideas)

- Now that you have a solid understanding user needs and want in relation to the business challenge you are ready to generate ideas – to think out-side-the-box and explore new angles to identifying innovative solutions to the business solution.
- Use techniques of brainstorming, reverse thinking and worst possible idea

Step 4: Prototype (create solutions)

- This is the experimental phase testing out the best possible solution for the problem.
- Typically requires the team to produce an inexpensive, scale-downed version of the product. Provides something tangible that can be tested for market readiness.
- For the *Responsible Leaders Challenge* teams are required to articulate this phase providing image concepts of the innovative solution.

Step 5: Test (try your solutions out)

- Testing enables capability to 'see' how the prototype work and where it needs improving ensuring market readiness.
- For the *Responsible Leaders Challenge* this phase is not required, however will need to be considered when presenting the image concepts of the innovative solution.

Design Thinking resources

There are many design thinking resources available online. Standard University has the Institute of Design, which is an eminent design thinking lab:

[Plattner, H \(n.d.\), An introduction to Design Thinking PROCESS GUIDE, Institute of Design at Stanford;](#)

[Design Thinking models. Stanford d.school;](#)

[Stanford Webinar – Design Thinking = Method, not magic.](#)

Writing the submission

The first stage of the Responsible Leaders Challenge requires each team to prepare a written submission addressing the nominated business challenge.

Plan before you write: Writing the Challenge submission is akin to building a house – you don't start laying bricks at random! Commence with a blueprint of content for each section of the submission and make decisions about the content that is relevant to develop the argument that you are putting forward. Students who prepare detailed outlines produce higher quality output and importantly reduces the amount of time spent staring blankly at a screen thinking about what to write next. During the planning stage you might use mind maps which are helpful for creating connections between concepts, improving creativity, enhancing critical thinking and memory retention, as well as fostering greater collaboration within a team.

Check out these YouTube **mind map** videos:

[The Perfect Mindmap: 6 Step Checklist](#)

[What is Mind Mapping? \(and How to Get Started Immediately\)](#)

[How to Make a Mind Map – The Basics](#)

[How to Mindmap: Going deeper into the 5 Basics](#)

Writing the report: After you have planned the content information that will be written in each section of the Challenge submission it is important that you take note as to how you communicate your ideas clearly and succinctly. Importantly, allow time for editing and proofreading to ensure your writing is clear and concise. Key features of academic writing which distinguish it from other forms of writing are that it is:

- Structured
- Evidenced
- Critical
- Balanced
- Precise
- Formal

[\(EAP Foundation Academic Writing\)](#)

Structure: Key headings have been provided however it is important that within each Challenge report section the writing is coherent, with logical progression using paragraphs that are clearly connected and cohesive.

Evidenced: The argument within the Challenge report supporting each section should be supported by evidence which may take the form of secondary sources (e.g.: journal articles, government or business reports and so on) or primary research undertaken by yourselves. It is critical that information is referenced appropriately, via in-text citations and a end of report reference section.

Critical: A key feature of academic writing is the ability to analyse and evaluate information as opposed to accepting everything as fact. Information can be challenged, yet robustly written content ensures that judgements are critically analysed and supported with evidence. In other words, it is important that you make judgements about available information prior to integrating it into your own writing.

Balanced: Ensuring that your writing is balanced means giving consideration to all sides of the issue and avoiding bias, but simultaneously showing your stance on a particular topic. Some phrases to use include 'the evidence suggests...', 'this could be caused by....', 'the research indicates...'.

Precise: Academic writing should use clear and precise language ensuring the reader understands the meaning. This includes using discipline-specific language to demonstrate your understanding of the content area and to support your argument. To make your writing clear and concise, ensure you:

- eliminate the repetition of points—say it once effectively;
- identify redundant words and phrases;
- remove extraneous words and phrases;
- replace wordy phrases with a single word;
- choose suitable verbs.

Formal: Academic writing is more formal than everyday writing, being more formal in tone, structure and style. Avoid using:

- colloquial language;
- slang, jargon or idioms;
- contractions—for example 'don't' or;
- rhetorical questions;
- remove emotive words and phrases;
- remove pronouns like *I* and *you*.

Tips and formatting requirements for the written submission

The Responsible Leaders Challenge written submission must clearly address the task outlined in the Responsible Leaders Challenge Brief provided by Griffith Business School.

Written submission requirements:

- no longer than 10 pages in length;
- to be emailed in Microsoft word with .docx file extension or as a PDF file to rlchallenge@griffith.edu.au by 12 noon on the closing date of the Challenge;
- File formats to include minimum 1.5cm margins, minimum 10 point with double spacing and use Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri font. All other file formats will not be considered;
- Use a clear structure with headings and subheadings;
- Present content clearly and succinctly;
- Acknowledge sources by in-text referencing. Include a reference list;
- The submission may include tables, text, images, figures;
- When addressing the Challenge solution be creative and original, as well as practical;
- Ensure a persuasive case is made justifying the Challenge solution.

Reference list

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