NBA 600 Strategic Role of Information Technology
Assignment 5

Handed out: Thursday April 3, 2003
Due: One printed copy and one electronic copy. Handed in before class Tuesday April 15, 2003 (electronic copy to dph2@cornell.edu; printed copy either at my office, 346 Sage, or the classroom).

As in the previous assignment, your write-up should:
1. Be 2-3 pages in length overall, not counting references or figures.
2. Be crisp and concise. Make sure that your main points are made in the first 2/3 of a page.
3. Make reference to any sources you have used. Note that in particular if you quote or paraphrase something, you must make an appropriate citation wherever you do so. Copying or paraphrasing other works without proper attribution is plagiarism and will not be tolerated.
4. Support your position(s) or argument(s) with facts or examples. Do not simply state something, back it up.
5. Assume that the audience is a businessperson to whom you are making a recommendation or for whom you are doing an analysis.

You are expected to work alone on this assignment. To the extent to which you discuss the assignment with others, and end up using ideas or points that they have raised, state so at the end of your write-up. Treat this as an assignment from your manager where your ability to synthesize and analyze, not just parrot what others have said, is highly important.

IBM has invested heavily in Linux, including in technology, marketing and partnerships. Using the Goldman Sachs Linux report as background for the server industry, do you believe that IBM’s investment in Linux is warranted and why? If not, should they take a more measured approach (e.g., like HP)? If their investment is warranted, is it big enough, and why? You should be sure to support your position with evidence such as information about IBM’s server related markets, their success so far with their Linux strategy, and the opportunity for them to capture market share from competitors such as Sun Microsystems.