# COMS 361
## BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
## OUR THING 01: "I'm your huckleberry."

Doc Holiday (Val Kilmer), *Tombstone*

For your first **individual/group project**, I want you to construct an **imaginary identity**, a manifestation of an **alternate self** to function in the **business world**, which will function as **your avatar** throughout the semester. Your avatar will take a **role** in an **imaginary unit** of an **imaginary commercial organization** (all of which will be **created by you**, together with the other members of your **team**). There are basically **two steps** to this process of **self-definition**.

1. *An Alternate Individual Identity*. Compose a **document** telling everyone about your **created identity**, including anything informing the **other members** of your team and **outsiders** about **who you are**, **where** you came from and what you hope to **accomplish in your life**. Besides your "**cool character name**" :-) create the following to be **reflective** of your avatar's identity: (1) a graphic **logo**; (2) a **slogan**; and (3) a **theme song** (either **self-composed or performed** or performed by **another**). This document, with **supporting items**, becomes a permanent part of your group's archives.

2. *An Imaginary Unit in an Imaginary Commercial Organization*. Working with the members of your team, compose a **second document**, describing a **work unit** in an organization, both of which are to be **created** by the team. Give your company (and your unit) a **commercially viable name**, **product line**, and other **facts** or **data** that show its **position vis-à-vis the commercial domain**. Include other items **normally used** to describe commercial organizations (there are literally **tens of thousands** of such systems on the World Wide Web).

For the remaining assignments, you will function **as your avatar** in your unit/organization. You will no doubt develop a **distinctive "voice"** in expressing yourself, as well as distinctive **mannerisms** in interpersonal interaction, but as your character "**grows**," I expect to see the effects of what **we are doing** in class at that time work to **modify** your avatar's **"behavior."** For example, as we go through the **first unit** on **etiquette**, I would expect your avatar to become **more refined**, **polite**, and **considerate**. As we move through the **second** unit (on **"reading" the organization**), I'd look for your avatar to become **more aware of**, and to **incorporate**, some **nuances** of organizational process in your presentations. From the **third** unit (which covers **"cooperating"** through **group communication**) I'd like your avatar and team (also a **bunch of avatars**!) to dig out points which show how to get people to do a **better job** of working **with each other**. Moving through **fourth** unit, I would anticipate seeing your avatar manifest **awareness** of **ethical issues**, especially as these **apply to leaders**. In other words, even though your avatar is **to some extent imaginary**, there should be a **"real" line of development** you can take with you for **insight** to **better perform** in the actual world.

For this and **subsequent** OUR THING assignments, there'll be sessions **set aside** where your group can prepare (and reasonably expect your team will be **present**!). Should my lectures run **short** (**usually the case**) you can employ the **remaining time** for group work while I'm on hand to **help**. Hand in a **hard copy** of your documents (with **attachments**) **prior to presenting** (this is primarily to aid me in **taking notes** during your performance), as well as an **electronic version** via email attachment (an **attachment** to an **Outlook email**, no **third-party** stuff like Google Docs!). **Results** of your individual/group portraits will be presented on the **day indicated** in the syllabus. Everything will be graded on the basis of **completeness**, use of **reading material**, **originality**, and **coherence**.