

ENG3771, Unit 1: Getting a Job and Communicating in the Workplace



Introduction

In Unit 1: Getting a Job and Communicating in the Workplace, you will create a portfolio of job-search documents and experience a mock interview. We will use the revision process (drafting, reviewing, and revising) to improve your deliverables. For those students who engage in this process wholeheartedly, you will generate a portfolio of job-search documents that are ready for use with appropriate tailoring and revision for the specific jobs for which you apply.

Project Deliverables

- An experiential resume
- A skills resume
- A job ad research memo
- A job application letter
- A job application portfolio
- A mock interview reflection memo

Methods for Creating Your Deliverables

At the end of the project, you will create a job application portfolio blog post on our OpenLab website. On it, you will write a brief introduction and embed all of your draft and final deliverables in the page. To embed your files, you will host them on Google Drive, publish them, and embed them based on the link to each file. We will go over how to do this during class. As you are writing your documents, you may create them directly on Google Drive or you may use a word processor (e.g., OpenOffice, LibreOffice, or Microsoft Word) on your computer and then upload your files to Google Drive later. My recommendation would be to use Google Drive so that you can become more familiar with it (if you are not already so), but I will not enforce this as a part of the assignment as long as your files import into Google Drive and embed in your blog post successfully. One of the most important lessons from this unit is to be adaptable and

dynamic in your use of composition tools. If your knowledge and experience with these tools is robust, you will be ready to adapt to the tools required of your workplace. Regardless of your process, you should go ahead and sign up for a Google Drive account if you do not already have one. If you have a Gmail account, you already have access to Google Drive. If you do not have an account, you can create one by going to drive.google.com.

Step 1, Write two resumes: an experiential resume and a skills resume

Experiential draft due: 9/17

Skills draft due: 9/22

An experiential or experience-based resume is built around the workplace experiences that you have already had. A skills or skills-based resume is constructed around the specific skills needed for a given job that you have gained through your personal, academic, and professional experiences. Each resume should be no longer than one page except in circumstances where you have extensive, relevant experience and a long work history. Refer to Anderson's TC Chapter 2, "How to Write an Effective Resume" for a description of the two types of resumes. You will create one of each kind using your experiences and skills.

Step 2, Find a job ad, research the company, and write a research memo

Draft due: 10/6

Using a job search engine (e.g., monster.com, dice.com, usajobs.gov, <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/jobs/>, <http://www.labor.ny.gov/jobs/regional.shtm>, <http://www1.nyc.gov/jobs>) or networking/social media site (e.g., LinkedIn.com or [Twitter](http://Twitter.com)), find a job that you would like to apply for.

Begin a new memo with the subject, "Job Application Research, [name of position] at [company]." Organize your memo with these headings: Executive Summary, Job Listing, Company Background, Description of Position, and My Preparedness for This Position.

Your Executive Summary should be completed last even though it is at the beginning of your document. It should begin with a one-sentence summary of your memo. After that opening sentence, write two to four sentences describing the organization of your document and your major findings. Think of this part as a road map with summaries. It should be no longer than 150 words.

Copy-and-paste (use Word's plain text paste option or Mac's "Paste and Match Formatting") the job listing into the Job Listing section. Also, copy-and-paste a link to where you found the job listing beneath the text of the listing. There is no word count for this section, but you should clean up the text that you paste here to remove unnecessary text, links, and formatting from the original copy online to match the font, size, and color of your document's style.

Using the company's website, Google, and library database resources (these three are useful: Business & Company ProFile ASAP, Business & Company Resource Center, and Business

Source Complete. Find them here:

<http://library.citytech.cuny.edu/research/annotations/index2.php>), write 250 word summary about the company offering the job. In some cases, you might need to interview others to learn more about the company if it is a smaller firm. However, even in cases with larger firms, you should exhaust every available resource—friends, acquaintances, and the company itself with a telephone call—to learn as much as possible about the job and the company. Some questions that you should consider answering in this section include: What does this company do? How large is the company? Is it a local, national, or international company? What is the company’s culture like?

In the Description of Position section, you should describe what kind of job you are applying for in approximately 250 words. Do not copy-and-paste the original job ad as you did in the listing section. Instead, put into your own words the kind of job that you are applying for, what expectations the company would have for you based on the job ad and any other research that you have done, and what other types of work might be expected of someone performing this kind of job but might be implied or understood rather than stated in the job ad.

Finally, in the “My Preparedness for This Position” section, describe in 250 words how you are prepared to fill this position. What have you learned in college that has prepared you? What have you experienced in the workplace that has prepared you? What have you experienced in life that has prepared you?

Step 3, Write a job application letter

Draft due: 10/8

Your job application letter is an opportunity to craft a persuasive argument why you are the ideal candidate for a job. In most cases, you will not receive a job offer on the basis of your CV and job application letter. Instead, these documents are meant to persuade the employer to give you an opportunity for an interview. In order to be maximally effective, your letter should specifically address the needs of the job ad and make a strong argument based on supporting examples why you are the right candidate for a job. Refer to Anderson’s TC Chapter 2, “A Reader-Centered Approach to Writing Your Job Application Letter” for a description of the job application letter.

Step 4, Submit your project deliverables as a blog post on our OpenLab Site

Due: 10/15

On Google Drive, you should organize your files and name them according to this format to help you keep track of each document and its version:

lastname-firstname-jobreport

lastname-firstname-jobletter-draft

lastname-firstname-jobletter-final

lastname-firstname-resume-experience-draft

lastname-firstname-resume-experience-final
lastname-firstname-resume-skills-draft
lastname-firstname-resume-skills-final

Navigate to our OpenLab site (<https://openlab.citytech.cuny.edu/elliseng1101d377fa2014/>), mouse over the “+” in the menu bar, and click “Post.” This creates a new post to the blog. Your job application portfolio will be a post (as opposed to the comments that you leave on the blog posts that I create for the beginning of each class).

Title your blog post in this manner: Job Application Portfolio for [Your first and last name], Fall 2014. This identifies your application materials as your own and it dates them.

Write a one-paragraph introduction that contains these components: a statement that this is your job application portfolio, a statement of your career objective, and a one or two sentence biography of yourself.

After your paragraph, embed your job application portfolio files. Instructions for embedding documents in a blog post are available here: <https://github.com/cuny-academic-commons/google-docs-shortcode#google-docs-shortcode>. Essentially, you type: [gdoc link="THE LINK YOU COPIED FROM THE DOCUMENT LINK FIELD"] for each document. Above each document, you should label what the document is. For example, write “Skills-Based Resume Draft” or “Job Application Letter Final.” Embed your documents in this order: your research report, your job application letter draft and final, your skills-based resume draft and final, and your experience-based resume draft and final.

Your portfolio blog post can be multimodal, so please feel free to embed an image of yourself or other representative photo(s) in the introduction. However, you should only use photos for which you have permission to use or those you made yourself. Have your words wrap around your photos to improve your post’s multimodal synergy.

Step 5, Mock interview

Takes place in class on 10/15

Embed reflection memo by midnight, Friday 10/17

On this day, come to class prepared to interview and be interviewed. You will each take turns serving as the interviewer and interviewee. This means that you need to review your own job application portfolio and the portfolio of your team members. You will also want to make some notes or print out sample questions (for example, <http://career-advice.monster.com/job-interview/interview-questions/100-potential-interview-questions/article.aspx> and <http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/outside-voices-careers/2011/01/24/the-10-most-common-job-interview-questions>).

After being interviewed, write a 250-word memo describing your experience and making plans for being prepared for future interview situations. Embed your memo at the end of your job

application portfolio blog post (return to the site, find your post and click on it, click on it, and then, click on Edit Post at the top of the page.

Useful Resources

City Tech Library Research Databases

<http://library.citytech.cuny.edu/research/annotations/index2.php>

City Tech Career Services

<http://www.citytech.cuny.edu/students/counseling/careers.shtml>

Virtual Career Library

<http://www.virtualcareerlibrary.com/citytech/network.html>

Updated Class Schedule With Due Dates for Project 1

2	M	9/8	<p><i>Technical Communication (TC)</i> Chapter 1: Communication, Your Career, and This Book</p> <p>Introduce Unit 1 Project: Workplace Communication and Getting a Job</p>	<p>Foundational notes for the course.</p> <p>Discussion: What is complexity and (perceived) simplicity?</p> <p>Discussion: Why should we follow a user-centric/reader-centric focus?</p>	<p>Beginning of class writing: write 125-250 word summary of today's reading in a comment to today's blog post. Discuss important points and what you found most interesting. Format each comment as a memo (see page 480 in TC for general structure).</p>
	W	9/10	<p><i>TC</i> Chapter 20: Creating and Delivering Listener-Centered Oral Presentations</p> <p>Signup for reading presentations.</p>	<p>Discussion about the upcoming presentations that will take place each class after the beginning of class writing assignment.</p>	<p>Beginning of class writing.</p>
3	M	9/15	<p><i>TC</i> Chapter 2: Overview of the Reader-Centered Communication Process: Obtaining a Job</p>	<p>Discussion about online presence and your digital identity.</p> <p>Discussion about the differences between skills-based and experience-based resumes.</p>	<p>Beginning of class writing.</p> <p>Signup for LinkedIn account and add professor as</p>

				Form yourselves into teams of four students each.	a contact.
	W	9/17	<i>TC</i> Chapter 23: Writing Reader-Centered Letters, Memos, E-mails, and Digital Exchanges	Discussion.	Beginning of class writing. Bring three copies of your experience-based resume to class for peer review.
4	M	9/22	<i>TC</i> Chapter 3: Defining Your Communication's Goals	Discussion.	Beginning of class writing. Bring three copies of your skills-based resume to class for peer review.
	W	9/24	No class.		
5	M	9/29	<i>TC</i> Chapter 4: Planning for Usefulness	Discuss finding job advertisements and company research.	Beginning of class writing.
	W	10/1	<i>TC</i> Chapter 5: Planning Your Persuasive Strategies	Work on your research report during class.	Beginning of class writing.
6	M	10/6	<i>TC</i> Chapter 8: Drafting Reader-Centered Paragraphs, Sections, and Chapters	Discussion.	Beginning of class writing. Bring three copies of your job research report to class for peer review.
	W	10/8	<i>TC</i> Chapter 17: Revising Your Drafts		Beginning of class writing. Bring three copies of your job application letter to class for peer review.
7	M	10/13	No class.		
	W	10/15	<i>TC</i> Chapter 11: Beginning a Communication	Mock interviews.	Beginning of class writing. Unit 1 Deliverables due as a Blog Post on our OpenLab site.

					Mock interview reflection memo due by midnight on Friday, October 17.
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Holistic Grading

I grade your work holistically using the following grading rubric developed by the Georgia Tech Writing and Communication Program. The rubric should not be interpreted as “Basic” equals an F and “Exemplary” equals an A. I take into consideration all of the files that you complete in the project and how well each of those map on the rubric. Your work might be exemplary in some categories and not in others. Use the rubric to think about your work while you are doing it. Ask yourself, is my work on this deliverable meeting the requirements of “Rhetorical Awareness,” “Stance and Support,” etc.?

Grading Rubric

Scale	Basic	Beginning	Developing	Competent	Mature	Exemplary
Rhetorical Awareness Response to the situation/assignment, considering elements such as purpose, audience, register, and context	Ignores two or more aspects of the situation and thus does not fulfill the task	Ignores at least one aspect of the situation and thus compromises effectiveness	Attempts to respond to all aspects of the situation, but the attempt is insufficient or inappropriate	Addresses the situation in a complete but perfunctory or predictable way	Addresses the situation completely, with unexpected insight	Addresses the situation in a complete, sophisticated manner that could advance professional discourse on the topic
Stance and Support Argument, evidence, and analysis	Involves an unspecified or confusing argument; lacks appropriate evidence	Makes an overly general argument; has weak or contradictory evidence	Lacks a unified argument; lacks significance (“so what?”); lacks sufficient analysis	Offers a unified, significant, and common position with predictable evidence and analysis	Offers a unified, distinct position with compelling evidence and analysis	Offers an inventive, expert-like position with precise and convincing evidence and analysis
Organization Structure and coherence, including elements such as introductions and conclusions as well as logical connections within and among paragraphs (or other	Lacks unity in constituent parts (such as paragraphs); fails to create coherence among constituent parts	Uses insufficient unifying statements (e.g., thesis statements, topic sentences, headings, or forecasting statements);	Uses some effective unifying claims, but a few are unclear; makes connections weakly or inconsistently, as when claims	States unifying claims with supporting points that relate clearly to the overall argument and employs	Asserts and sustains a claim that develops progressively and adapts typical organizational schemes for the context,	Asserts a sophisticated claim by incorporating diverse perspectives that are organized to achieve maximum

meaningful chunks)		uses few effective connections (e.g., transitions, match cuts, and hyperlinks)	appear as random lists or when paragraphs' topics lack explicit ties to the thesis	an effective but mechanical scheme	achieving substantive coherence	coherence and momentum
Conventions Expectations for grammar, mechanics, style, citation, and genre	Involves errors that risk making the overall message distorted or incomprehensible	Involves a major pattern of errors	Involves some distracting errors	Meets expectations, with minor errors	Exceeds expectations in a virtually flawless manner	Manipulates expectations in ways that advance the argument
Design for Medium Features that use affordances to enhance factors such as comprehensibility and usability	Lacks the features necessary for the genre; neglects significant affordances, such as linking on the web; uses features that conflict with or ignore the argument	Omits some important features; involves distracting inconsistencies in features (e.g., type and headings); uses features that don't support argument	Uses features that support with argument, but some match imprecisely with content; involves minor omissions or inconsistencies	Supports the argument with features that are generally suited to genre and content	Promotes engagement and supports the argument with features that efficiently use affordances	Persuades with careful, seamless integration of features and content and with innovative use of affordances