

Industry Analysis Assignment

For this assignment, you will research a facet of the field of professional/technical communication to examine how the industry works.

If you are **new to the field of technical/professional writing**, have minimal experience in the field, or do not currently hold a job in professional/technical writing, you will use this assignment to research a particular job, company, or skill set and how it operates.

If you identify as this type of worker, you will:

- Interview a professional or technical writer with more experience than you. You may conduct the interview in person, over the phone/Skype, or at the person's workplace (if possible).
- Research three jobs currently available that you would be interested in applying to when you are finished with or once you have finished the PWR program.

If you are **experienced within the field of technical/professional writing**, then you will use this assignment to research either another facet of the field or how you might advance within it.

If you identify as this type of worker, you will:

- Interview someone who currently holds a position of interest for you, such as someone who manages professional/technical writers or someone who occupies a different part of the field than you do. You may conduct the interview in person, over the phone/Skype, or at the person's workplace (if possible).
- Research three jobs currently available that you would be interested in applying to when you are finished with the PWR program OR that represent a different facet of the field than the one you currently occupy.

Everyone will turn in following items:

- 1. Profile (2-3 single-spaced pages).** Write a profile of the professional writer, based on the interview you conduct. Consider questions about educational background, training, career arc, current/past job duties and responsibilities, and future goals and objectives when planning your interview. Reflect on the interview experience and what you learned.
- 2. Job Analysis (1-2 single-spaced pages).** Write an analysis of the three jobs you have identified. Research the companies within which those jobs are available and analyze the kind of work they do, the kind of products or outcomes they create, and the role they play overall in their industry. Provide the job descriptions as an attachment, and cite paraphrased or quoted material in-text where appropriate (including a Works Cited page). Focus on analysis as well as reporting—extensive direct quotations from website research is not expected. (Works Cited page and job descriptions do not count toward the page requirement.)
- 3. A Reflective Memo, to Professor Lawrence (1-2 single-spaced pages).** Analyze what you learned and offer some conclusions about your interests at this juncture. Does the job/field interest you? Why or why not? How might you gain the skills/capabilities you would want to have to either obtain or advance/change your employment? How long would that take? What other directions/interests might you want to explore?

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Due Date: Final Profile, Job Analysis, and Reflective Memo due 11/6, by the beginning of class. One hard copy; electronic copy to Blackboard. Be prepared to share your findings with the class.

Criteria for Evaluation

This assignment will be evaluated on:

1. Adherence to the due dates and requirements.
2. Thoughtfulness and completeness of the profile, the questions you ask during the interview, and your reflection on the experience.
3. Combination of reporting and analysis in the job analysis and reflective memo.

This assignment is meant to be useful to you and to connect you to the wider community of technical/professional writers and careers in this area. So, your meaningful engagement with that goal is the most important aspect of this assignment.

Please remember to represent our program and George Mason University professionally when working with members of the community.