

English 420--Employment Project

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Maymester 2004

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Class Mailing List

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English Department

During the Employment Project, you will learn strategies for seeking and securing employment, with particular attention to the documents people normally use to represent themselves and their prospects to potential employers (see "[Deliverables](#)" below). This project asks you to work individually, but there will also be chances for you to work with your peers to exchange ideas and feedback.

project summary

You will be asked to locate a real and specific job for which you are qualified and prepare the application materials for it. If you already have a good job, you'll find one that would be an advance for you, then prepare application materials for that position. Step 1 of the project asks you to learn about and use various web-based resources for job seekers and ultimately to select one real job to pursue. Step 2 asks you to prepare the all-important cover letter (i.e., "Job Application Letter"). Step 3 asks you to prepare a print resume suitable for such a position. In Step 4, you will assess your experience in a "Project Assessment Document." In the process of completing each step, you will work closely with your peers and me to shape your writing so that it represents you and your experience fully and effectively.

project goals

This project emphasizes several important goals that all professional writers should bear in mind and that are consistent with those of the [Professional Writing Program](#) at Purdue. In the Employment Project, you will learn to shape your writing for very specific situations and purposes:

Writing in Context

Analyze professional cultures, social contexts, and audiences to determine how they shape the various purposes and forms of writing, such as persuasion, organizational communication, and public discourse.

Writing Process

Develop and understand various strategies for planning, researching, drafting, revising, and editing documents that respond effectively and ethically to professional situations and audiences.

Research

Understand and use various research methods to produce professional

documents, including analyzing professional contexts, assessing and using information resources, and determining how various media and technologies affect and are affected by users and readers.

Technology

Develop strategies for using and adapting various communication technologies to manage projects and produce informative and usable professional documents.

Document Design

Learn to argue with visual data, understanding and implementing various principles of format, layout, and design of professional documents that meet multiple user and reader needs.

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deliverables

Step 1: *Job Description and Rationale.* Produce an exact copy of the job announcement, a one-paragraph description of the position in your own words, and a two-paragraph discussion of why you have chosen this position and why you believe you are qualified for it. Not counting the actual job announcement, Step 1 should be approximately 300-500 words in length. **This step is due on Thursday, May 20 by the beginning of class.**

Step 2: *Job Application Letter.* The job application letter (or "cover letter") is critical to your efforts to secure a job, perhaps as critical as your resume itself. For Project 1, your letter should be no longer than one or two pages (one is preferable in most cases), following the suggestions and models discussed during class. (See below under resources for more information.) **Printed draft due for peer review: Thursday, May 20 for peer review.**

Step 3: *Print Resume.* Your print resume (one or more pages in length, depending upon the type of job and the depth of your experience) should adapt features drawn from the samples discussed in class or available for review at the [Online Writing Lab](#). It's critical that you shape your resume to the specific job you have chosen to apply for (that it's suited to the context), so be sure to include only the relevant aspects of your professional experience. As in the Job Application Letter, your writing needs to be error-free, concise, and presented in an easily readable format. **Printed draft due for peer review: Monday, May 24.**

Step 4: Project Assessment Document: As you near the end of your work on the Employment Project, prepare a *two-page* overview and analysis of your deliverables and the process you used to complete them. Your Project Assessment Document should answer most of the following questions, each of which is tied to the major goals of the assignment:

<i>Writing in Context:</i>	How did the particular job you applied for affect how you wrote your letter? Did it change or affect how you presented yourself? How did applying for this position help you understand aspects of your experience you might need to develop more?
<i>Process:</i>	What was the most challenging document to produce and why? Briefly describe and explain one of the significant revisions you made to this document after your initial draft.
<i>Research:</i>	Which research resource proved to be the most beneficial for you? The least? Explain.
<i>Collaboration:</i>	What was one way that peer feedback helped you improve your work? How did responding to the work of others help you improve your own work?
<i>Project Management:</i>	How well did you plan your work on this project? What might you have done differently?
<i>Document Design:</i>	What is the most effective aspect of your deliverables in terms of presentation or design? Have you deliberately adapted a standard form in an unusual or creative way? If so, why?

Your Project Assessment Document is due when you turn in your completed Employment Project on **Wednesday, May 26**.

All four deliverables should be fully revised and submitted to your Turn-In Folder in PDF format by the end of day on **Wednesday, May 26**. You should create one PDF file for all documents, and they should be ordered in sequence, Steps 1-4. Name the file as follows: lastname-employment.pdf and put it in the root directory of your Turn-In folder.

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resources

[Purdue's OWL](#)

[Purdue Center for Career Opportunities](#)

[The Riley Guide](#)

To prepare, review the OWL tutorials: [Resume Workshop](#) (Powerpoint) and the [Online Resume Tutorial](#)

grading

The Employment Project is worth 30% of your course grade. The breakdown for each of its components is as follows:

Step 1: Job Description and Rationale	20%
Step 2: Job Application Letter	30 %
Step 3: Print Resume	30%
Step 4: Project Assessment Document	20%
Total	100%

grading criteria

When I assign a grade to your project, I will pay particular attention to see whether you have effectively adapted your documents to the job for which you have applied. Your writing will need to be precise, accurate, and well-suited to the context (the job/field) and to the rhetorical occasion (in terms of tone, style, and content). In this case, a generic, catch-all resume and cover letter will not satisfy the requirements of the project.

revision

You will have opportunities to revise your work throughout the process and will be permitted to revise once again after receiving your grade on the project, subject to these restrictions: 1) You meet with me or a tutor in the Writing Lab to discuss revisions; 2) You turn in your completed revision within one week of the date it was returned to you

with a grade; 3) you include submission notes that specify precisely what you did to improve your work.

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