

Assignment

ENGL 314: Technical Writing

Occupational Investigation Letter

Due: July 18, midnight

Save as: Lastname_OccupationalInvestigation.docx

Turn In: Under Content > Occupational Investigation Letter

Value: 100 points (10% of overall grade)

Description and Rationale

One of the more common ways in which professionals communicate on the job is by writing letters to others who know little about the field. And, one of the most important things you can do to prepare for going into the job market is to understand what your job requires, what the job outlook is, how much you can expect to be paid, what education and training you need, and so forth. Thus, as a follow-up to your Occupational Title Inquiry, and to begin practice in researching, interviewing, and writing to non-experts, you will conduct more in-depth research about your field and write a letter to someone looking to go into that field. Such consideration of your audience in letter-writing as well as the knowledge you gain from researching the content for your letter will prove invaluable as you search for a job and once you land the job.

Assignment

For this assignment, **you will write a 600 – 1000 word letter (1 – 2 pages)** to a high school senior going into your field. In the letter you will pretend as if this student requested from you a description of the field and respond by describing all the important information that he or she (a teenager looking to go to college) might need and want to know about the field before making that commitment. In this letter, you will want to explain *at least* the following information to the recipient about what he or she should know before choosing that as a career path:

1. the kinds of jobs that are possible in the field;
2. the overall job responsibilities and expectations for specific jobs;
3. the level of education and/or other training, certifications, and technical skills expected to get a job
4. common salaries that can be expected in the field
5. job outlook for the near and 5 – 10 year future
6. the role(s) of technical communication in the field;
7. technical communication skills professionals in your field use;
8. anything else you feel is important or relevant to someone entering this field.

Research Requirements

In order to obtain this information, you will need to consult at least 4 sources, two of which you already consulted for your Occupational Title Inquiry assignment:

- 1) **Dictionary of Occupational Titles** (<http://www.occupationalinfo.org/>). Here you can learn common job responsibilities and expectations for the field;
- 2) At least 3 job ads for a position in your field. You can do this by going to any job search site such as Monster.com, Dice.com, or CareerBuilder.com;
- 3) The Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010 – 2011 (http://www.bls.gov/oco/oooh_index.htm). This is a government-produced website where you can locate your job field, and learn about education and training, job outlook, salaries, job descriptions, and other important information;
- 4) One secondary source (such as a journal, newspaper, book, magazine, or website) about communication in your field;

****Because this is a letter, it is not expected that you have an official works cited page. However, to avoid plagiarism, you will want to, in-text, make mention of where your information came from. As you explain the information to the recipient of the letter, be sure to note from where your material surfaced.****

Scoring Standard

You will be graded on your ability to adhere to the following requirements:

1. **Format** (use the following guidelines to format your professional letter)
 - a. 750 – 1000 words
 - b. professional letter format (Chapter 17), including a heading, date, inside address, salutation, body text, complimentary closing, and signature
 - c. single-spaced, double-spaced between paragraphs with no indents
 - d. Serif font (such as Times New Roman, Garamond, Palatino, etc.)
 - e. 12-point font, 1-inch margins
 - f. headings, if necessary, in body of the text
2. **Content** (include the following information in your report)
 - a. Introductory statement(s) that lets the recipient of the letter know what the letter is about
 - b. Informative and specific content that covers each of the eight (8) items of importance listed above (under "Assignment")
 - c. Clear evidence of research in each of the 5 areas under "Research Requirements," giving in-text reference to your sources
 - d. An appropriate and professional closing