

PROFESSIONALIZATION REPORT

Overview

Prepare a short report (of at least 4-5 pages, with an additional title page and supporting material as necessary) on an available position within the profession you plan to enter, focusing on the position itself, the major that (typically) leads to that profession, and expectations of your field and how they have developed historically. Your report will be necessarily partial, as you can only cover some of the elements in play; however, you must make educated and clear decisions about how you approach the range of topics and how you structure/present those selections. This report and its components will be research-based, so I expect you to cite sources and explore each topic as fully as you can in the time and space you have. Each piece will vary in length and depth from student to student, but should in the end be as *complete* as possible.

Components

Below are some necessary components/topics:

Job description: Find a job opening in the field/profession you plan to enter. This should be a job that you could actually apply for once you leave college, and you should be able to document it by providing a link to an online posting, etc. (Some of you may be entering professions that have a required step after your undergraduate work—let me know if this is the case, and we'll decide how to approach this task.) Once you have a job opening to work with, you will need to research/explore the job itself. There are a few main things to try to determine:

- factual: what are the job details (salary, hours, location, who is the primary contact, requirements for employment, unusual factors, etc.)?
- contextual: what does the employer say about this position (find out on its hiring/HR page); what are the average statistics for this type of job (check <http://www.bls.gov> or a page related to your profession for statistics); what are the current hiring trends for this type of job, etc.?
- expectations: what kind of presentation is this employer looking for? What are the things that they will expect in a résumé and cover letter, in an interview, etc.? Are there specific types of questions that often come up in your field that you will need to be able to address?

You may not be able to complete all of this material, depending on the position you look at. List any information that seems hard to find and any open questions about the job or further information that would help to know.

Educational trends: What major(s) typically lead to the field or profession in question? Has this always been the case? What kind of education do these majors provide and how does their course-work relate to workplace practices? What kinds of educational experiences are expected or suggested outside of coursework? How prevalent are independent research, internships, job shadows, etc.? Are there historical trends that have effected how these majors are taught? Are there post-undergraduate versions of the field that you plan to enter (graduate school, professional school, etc.); are there major academic journals that publish analytic work about your field? How do these relate to your field or profession?

Expectations of your field/profession: You will need research and present relevant trends, events, and changes in your profession (going back at least through the mid-20th century). You might want to address the most relevant of the following:

- historical shifts: how does your chosen profession fit with the models of the shifting business world we have seen in our various readings (cite specific trends)?
- events: have there been major events/cases that have affected the direction of your profession—why did they have an impact?
- profession affiliation: how is your profession organized—what are the major organizations and what are their functions (setting standards, holding national conferences, publishing news and analysis, etc.)?
- work: how have the following changed—number of workers, salaries, markets, new types of jobs/jobs that have disappeared, etc.?
- work environment—how is a typical work environment in your profession structured, work distributed, hierarchy organized, salaries distributed, etc.? If there are many types of work environment, is there one type in particular that seems typical or one that will allow you to explain other topics?

Report completion: You should present as much information and analysis about the above topics as you can, but recognize that you will have to be selective from these categories. You *must* choose some structure that connects these elements and guides your readers through this material, integrating these components in a meaningful way and present a cohesive, coherent report with a logical structure and interesting presentation.

You may need to include or substitute additional elements to clarify and connect the other parts of your report. We will address some of these topics as we proceed through the individual project, but be creative about what you think would be characterize your major/profession/field.

Additional topics that you might address or consider:

- Are there standard topics that your profession discusses (or does not address)?
- How does one recognize good writing within your field?
- What are the main professional documents in your field?
- Who writes which documents, and who receives them?
- Are there codified writing standards somewhere?
- What governs or systematizes your field? Are the codified gates (tests, etc.) through which one must pass to move forward?
- Does your field have a unified statement of ethics/principles? What is its function?
- Have there been recent news items about your field which would help explain the systems you are trying to describe?

Considerations and drafts

By the end of this report, you will be at a stage where you should be able to complete a well-

formatted business report with a title page, with attention to coherence and a clear structure. For your draft, you must have at least 2/3 (at least 3 full pages, with at least two of the main components in place) of the content present and should have a clear structure present (though your format will not matter). For the final draft, you must think about all of the elements that we have covered thus far and make sure that your content and presentation are aligned.

You will have to make a number of decisions to tailor this assignment to your professional interests/needs. Remember to stay field-specific, and to find *sources* for your claims (including our course's reading and professional documents from within your field). The Internet will be your friend here—look at field-specific websites, try to find specific writing guidelines (from organizations, companies, etc.). As this is a report, you can quote liberally, paraphrase, or reference, but it must be clear where your information comes from (footnote or use parenthetical citation for sources). You may have to be creative for this assignment; I believe the information is out there for just about every professional...so be diligent about finding what you can, and report honestly about what you find.

Finally, part of the presentation here will be making your final report well-structured and well-presented. Choose a structure that allows you to include all of the relevant information that you can, and for the final product, remember that a real human being (me) will be reading your work. You can use formatting, fonts, visual elements, white space, etc. to help present your work in the best possible form.

Professionalization report:

Category	Points	Optional Comments					
<p>Job Description (10) Is a concrete position clearly defined and described, with attention the relevant factual, contextual, and rhetorical categories?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Educational Trends (10) Is the relationship between education and practice clear? Are there clear descriptions of educational systems and types?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Expectations of Field (10) Are the expectations of the field—and how they developed—clear? Are there enough connections made between the historical material and developments within the profession?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Work Environment (5) Is the contemporary work environment made clear? Specifically, are work hierarchies, distribution, and production described?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Sources/Connections (5) Is the project well documented? Are there a variety of sources and are they well implemented?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Overall Package (10) Does the overall document present its content well? Specifically, do the structure and presentation fit the material and its context? Are the boundaries of the report clear and does it contain enough information to flesh out the topic(s) fully?</p>		Exc	VG	Good	Okay	NSG	NoGo
<p>Totals</p>	/50	Letter:					