

ASSIGNMENT #5: Job Application Materials, including a resume and cover letter

COMPLETION POINTS (10) will be assigned based on the rubric on page 2 below.

DUE: Midnight Sunday of Week #7 in Assignments Folder, D2L

FORMAT:

- Use workplace format for the one-page letter.
- Use an appropriate professional resume format based on suggestions made in both textbooks and/or using effective templates from credible sources. Limit the resume to one page; this forces concision and efficient use of design features. You will have to balance these needs with including concrete details.

STEP #1: Find an advertisement for a job in your field for which you are currently qualified or for which you will be qualified upon graduation from MSU. Please visit MSU Career Services website, but I also encourage you to look elsewhere as needed, including local and regional newspapers; LinkedIn; Craigslist; etc.

STTP #2: Research the organization that posted the job, finding out as much as possible about who they are, what they value, and what the job entails. *Don't skip this step: it is essential in crafting an effective letter based on sound rhetorical thinking.*

STEP #3: Draft a cover letter and a resume in response to the advertisement. Highlight your strengths as a candidate for that particular position and use key words from the job advertisement and/or organization's written material to demonstrate an understanding of their mission and philosophy. Use the guidelines in Williams and Gurak and Lannon for developing and designing each document. Be sure to address your letter to a specific reader(s).

For the cover letter's paragraphs, consider the following:

- **INTRO:** Aim for a 2-3 sentence paragraph that establishes a connection to readers and names the specific position as well as any a contact people.
- **BODY:** Use one paragraph to explain your education and how it specifically relates to the position. Reference job requirements listed. Draw out one of your examples (from the resume) to illustrate (bring to life) your qualifications. Use a second body paragraph to highlight and explain relevant job experiences. Be specific; paint a picture of yourself as a confident, capable candidate who has skills as listed on the job advertisement.
- **CONCLUSION:** Thank the reader for his or her time and consideration and offer to contact them within a week to follow-up. If you didn't have space to include references on the resume, you can offer to provide them here, too.

STEP #4: Take a break. Once you've worked hard on a writing project, it is important to step away from it. Then, when you return, you will have a fresh perspective and will detect errors in language, content and rationale you might otherwise miss.

STEP #5: Return to your documents to revise and edit.

Regarding the letter: Does it address its readers specifically (with a name) and appropriately with word choice and detail? Is the tone formal? Are the writer's

qualifications detailed in a way that readers understand how, specifically, the writer is qualified for the job? Are key terms used?

Regarding the resume: Is it clear? Professional? Is the writing correct, concise and parallel? Are design principles used effectively to create a credible, professional and accessible document?

STEP #6: Polish your documents and submit as a Teacher Draft to the Assignments Folder in D2L. You will also be required to revise these documents and include them in your final portfolio.

GRADING RUBRIC for Assignment #6

Cover Letter (5)

- ☐ **Format:** one-page full block that meets readers' expectations
- ☐ **Content**
 - Introduction establishes connection and specifies job title and any connections
 - Body paragraphs detail skills, knowledge and related experience
 - Conclusion specifically states follow-up communication
 - Tone is formal and confident
- ☐ **Technical Writing**
 - Sentences are written correctly
 - Language is concise and clear
 - Document contains strong, active verbs

Resume (5)

- ☐ **Design elements** (consider proximity, alignment, contrast, repetition)
 - Limited to one page
 - Design meets genre expectations and boosts readability through the use of William's four principles
- ☐ **Technical Language**
 - Sentences are clear and mechanically correct
 - Word choice demonstrates knowledge of conciseness, specificity and exact meaning
 - Document strikes an appropriate tone for reader and is accessible.