

Notes Concerning the Labor Market Analysis Report

The purpose of the labor market analysis report is to expose you to a reliable source of information that describes the training, potential pay, and job growth projections of your targeted job for the next decade of your expected employment. Many students have not previously considered this information when deciding their major. The goal is that you will develop a better understanding of the labor market into which you will enter following your graduation from SDSU. Also important is that you are aware of your strengths and weaknesses and can discuss both confidently in writing and orally when asked by a potential employer. To that end, the latter part of the assignment, the conclusion, specifically, asks you to evaluate your strengths and weaknesses. This is something that many people find difficult to do, so using this assignment as a first step in the process of discovering what you have to offer a potential employer, we have embedded this task in the labor market analysis report assignment.

Citing Information from the Bureau of Labor Market Database

A concern that many have as they work through this project is how they can cite the data they collect without outright plagiarizing the Bureau of Labor Market database. Here is an idea that may help you avoid this problem: as you read each of the sections in the database that pertain to the questions you are answering (e.g., “Nature of the Work”), cover up the text you have just read and imagine that you are explaining that same information to someone who knows nothing of your career field. Write that information in your own words, and you will be able to avoid plagiarizing the information in the database.

Formatting/Style

Writing conventions govern the appropriate ways that documents should be designed and formatted. These conventions, or rules, improve communication by ensuring consistency both within a document, and across multiple documents. As you enter your professional career, you will need to play by these rules, which sometimes differ depending on the genre. When paraphrasing, the citation goes at the end of the borrowed clause. For example, I might say:

The BLS indicates favorable growth in demand for aspiring Blackjack dealers, particularly in California, which is expected to be the third largest state for new dealers, just below Florida and New York respectively (OOH).

(You can also use footnotes. See [here](#) for an excellent example.)

If I want to use a direct quote, however, I'd format it like this:

The BLS suggests favorable job market for dealers due in large to the aging workforce. More specifically, the BLS states, "Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or exit the labor force, such as to retire" (OOH).

Labeling and Discussing Graphs, Charts, and Tables

As indicated in the assignment description, you need to include at least two graphs, charts, and/or tables to represent quantitative information in your report. Each graph, chart, and table must be labeled with a title using this format: "Figure 1: title." Use the word "figure" with graphs and charts and "table" with tables of numeric information. Below the graph, chart, or table, list the source for the information you have used. In the text before or after your graph, chart, or table, describe the contents of that element. In other words, what is the reader looking at? After you describe the contents of each graph, chart, or table, you need to interpret that information. For example, why is the salary for one profession higher than another?

You may be wondering why you're being asked to write a report instead of an essay. One of the most common forms of organizational communication is the short report. Reports are a genre unto themselves. They tend to be concise and highly structured, with specific constraints concerning the format. I have mentioned the constraints for the report you will be writing in the prompt. Note the requirements for line spacing, text alignment, and use of graphs, charts and tables, among other features.

Discussing Your Strengths and Weaknesses

The prompt asks you to describe and discuss your strengths and weaknesses as part of your conclusion. For many people, this can be difficult to do, yet you are very likely to be asked to discuss your strengths and weaknesses during an interview, particularly as you are vying for a competitive position.

Successful candidates should know the answers to these questions going into an interview. To help you adequately answer these questions, below I list a number of questions that will help you provide insightful answers:

- Why did you choose your career field?
- What is its appeal to you? Why did you not major in something else?
- What skills do you possess that have equipped you for your career field?
- What have people said you are good at?
- In what subjects have you succeeded?
- What courses have you liked the most?
- What are your deficits? In what areas do you need to develop?
- What do you need to do to strengthen the areas that are currently weaknesses?
- What have you done or will do to increase your knowledge and skills in your career field? What is your growth plan?

You do not need to answer these questions in the order they are listed here. In fact, it could feel awkward and out of place if you did it absent context. Remember, your audience is laypeople, and they will not have any idea that this report is attached to a prompt from a writing class at SDSU.

Finally, I recommend that you review the sample papers I've uploaded on Canvas. These examples illustrate how you might approach the assignment, but they are by no means the definitive or only way to tackle it. Indeed, these samples have their **own shortcomings**, including unnecessary repetition and superficial analysis, among others. I encourage you to strive for more. Use these examples as a starting point but aim to surpass them. The materials provided in this module are designed to empower you to do just that.