**Comm 1100 Written Interview Assignment**

**Due Week 6 – Value 15% of final grade (20 marks)**

Introduction:

The purpose of this assignment is for you to gain a better understanding and perspective on the importance of communication skills in the workplace.

This assignment will provide you with an opportunity to strengthen your communication skills, gather and share information, reflect on the information given, and to gain a deeper appreciation for communications in a working environment.

For this assignment, you will be required to record (either audio or video) an interview with someone who is currently working full-time (35+ hours/week). For a good interview, it is recommended that your interviewee be at least 30 years of age and working full-time for at least 5 years (but do not ask your participant’s age).

If you do not know anyone suitable to assist with this assignment, please contact your professor (as soon as possible). Your professor will connect you with a willing and suitable volunteer.

You may submit this assignment as some combination of a document, and an auditory file or video file/url. You must have your interviewee sign the ‘Interview Consent Form’ giving his or her permission to be interviewed and their answers recorded. Failure to submit a recording of the interview and/or the interview consent form will result in an automatic mark of zero (0).

Successful interview tips:

For a successful personal interview assignment, you need to be well organized and have strong time management skills. When completing a personal interview assignment, here are some tips for you to follow:

1. Choose a suitable interviewee: Select someone who is at least 30 years of age and working full-time for at least 5 years. Be sure to explain the purpose of the interview assignment. Make sure that the person has given you documented permission to interview him or her. Finally, make sure you accommodate around his or her schedule to complete the interview.

2. Understand the questions: You will ask at least five of the listed questions. Provide the list of questions to the person you are going to interview ahead of the scheduled interview time so he or she can be prepared to provide his or her perspective on the topics.

3. Conduct the interview: Schedule a time and place for the interview and be punctual. Be extremely respectful and professional during the interview, and don't forget on the day of the interview to confirm permission and remind your interviewee that you will record the conversation (either using video or auditory) for transcription and reflection purposes.

4. Take notes: During the interview, take detailed notes on the interviewee's responses. This will help with your reflection.

5. Review the interview: Once the interview is complete, go back and review the interview. Listen or watch your interview and complete any notes that you might have missed. Look for patterns, themes, and ideas that stand out for the reflective piece of the assignment.

7. Write your reflection rough draft: Based on your interview, write your reflection. Use the template and rubric provided to make sure you have all of the important aspects of the assignment. Make sure to organize your thoughts in a clear and concise manner, and use quotes from the interview to support your points.

8. Edit and revise: Once you have written your reflection, read it over carefully and make any necessary edits or revisions. Pay attention to grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors.

9. Submit the assignment: You will need to submit the recorded interview (either an audio or video file/url), your written reflection document plus the signed consent form. Submit your completed assignment to the college’s learning management system before the due date and time. Be prepared to answer any questions your professor may have about your interview.

10. Write a thank you note: While writing a thank you note is not part of the assignment, a short note will certainly show appreciation to your interviewee for taking the time out of his or her schedule to help you with your assignment. You could even offer to show or share the final product with him or her.

Interview Template:

Use the following template to organize your assignment.

Part 1

Be sure to document the following information:

1. Your Name:
2. Interviewee Name:
3. Date and time of interview:
4. \*Recorded Interview format (audio or video - mandatory):
5. \*Reminder: submit signed consent form (mandatory)

Part 2

Select at least five questions of the following questions to ask the interviewee:

* How crucial is effective communication in the workplace, and how does it impact day-to-day operations?
* Could you share an example of a situation where poor communication had negative consequences for a project or team?
* In what ways does strong communication contribute to career growth and advancement within a company?
* What specific communication skills do employers value the most when hiring recent graduates?
* How do different communication styles, such as written, verbal, and nonverbal, come into play in various work scenarios?
* Can you highlight the role of communication in building and maintaining professional relationships with colleagues and clients?
* What strategies do successful professionals use to ensure clear and effective communication, especially in fast-paced environments?
* How does technology impact workplace communication, and what are the challenges associated with digital communication tools?
* What advice do you have for someone who wants to improve their public speaking and presentation skills for work-related purposes?
* How do cross-cultural communication skills play a role in today's diverse work environment?
* Could you share examples of how effective communication can enhance problem-solving and conflict resolution within a team?
* In what ways does good communication contribute to creating a positive work culture and boosting overall team morale?

Part 3

Reflection:

In approximately 600 – 800 words (4 to 5 paragraphs), reflect on what you learned from your interview. Drawing from, and using, answers to your interview questions, respond to the following questions in your reflection:

1. What are some of your thoughts on the importance of communication skills as compared to your ideas prior to taking this course?

Before this class, I only really had my own experience with communication to consider. But the class is giving me perspective on today’s current trends in communication, and the interview assignment is giving me a perspective on older trends in communication. Malcolm Park, my interview subject, had a career that involved a lot of communication spanning from the 1980s to the 2010s. My own experience spans from 2008 to 2024, and this course is teaching us about communication skills that are relevant in 2025. I’m noticing similarities between what I’m learning in the course, compared with what I’m learning from the interview. For example, from the interview, I am realizing that while technology itself may change, the communication strategies and reasons for using the communication technology doesn’t change. When we want to get a point across immediately, we will choose the tool and strategy that fits that goal best. Whether that’s by text, in person, or by phone, will depend on the workplace and industry norms and standards.

1. Were there any answers that surprised you or did not surprise you? Why or why not?

One answer that stood out to me as surprising was when Malcolm brought up the fact that in his role, he had legal requirements and contracted agreements about how communication was to be done with the bank’s clients. After signing a contract, it’s easy to forget that you signed it and become comfortable, focusing only on efficiency and how exciting it is when new technology, new ways to communicate, emerge. In a pro-technology and innovation business like the software companies where I worked, we didn’t have to comply with any regulations that governed the format of our communications with clients, like Malcolm did. Breaking those agreements, even unintentionally, would expose the individual and the bank to a lot of risk. What surprised me most about his answer to this question was that the clients themselves would often be pushing to adopt a new way of communicating via technology, one that would be more convenient for them but may not follow the agreements and regulations that govern the banks. It was interesting to reflect on the tension between pressure from the client to communicate a certain way, while knowing you’re supposed to make them happy, but you can’t break the agreements, even though it might be convenient to do so.

1. Discuss something new that you learned about communications in the work environment that you were not familiar with before the interview?

Something that I learned was that even in the 1990s and 2000s, technology was roaring forward. Malcolm mentioned that in his workplace, they had frequent training sessions on new communications technology, and there was always something new they were feeling pressured to learn. This reminded me of the training I received for apps like Zoom, DC Connect, Slack, and ChatGPT. There’s always something new to learn, but what struck me was that the process of learning new communication tools is not new. People have always had to contend with “new stuff”, so learning how to learn the “new stuff” seems like an important durable skill to me. That is my main, overall takeaway this interview assignment.

1. How could you adapt some of the skills required in conducting an interview into your program of study?

I think giving out thank-you notes is an underrated tip. Any time I’ve received a thank you note myself, I feel very positively towards that person. It is even more notable in this digital age, because having a little (emphasis on small) reminder of that person on their desk or corkboard makes a difference. Even if the thank you is just a follow-up on linked-in after a job interview, it makes the person more memorable and increases the chances of a follow-up. I don’t think it costs us anything to be kind and acknowledge the human we are communicating with, even while we respect their time by keeping it brief.

Rubric:

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|  | **A (4 points)** | **B (3 points)** | **C (2 points)** | **D (1 point)** | **E (0 points)** |
| **Part 1: Information** | All components of part one documented. | One component of part one missing. | Two components of part one missing. | Three components of part one missing. | Part one is missing. \* Automatic zero (0) for missing signed consent form. |
| **Part 2: Documented interview answers** | At least five questions have documented answers (audio or video). | Four questions have documented answers (audio or video). | Three questions have documented answers (audio or video). | Two questions have documented answers (audio or video). | One or no questions have documented answers (audio or video). \* Automatic zero (0) for assignment. |
| **Part 3: Self-reflection** | The entries demonstrate the ability of the student to engage in genuine and appreciable self-reflection. Reflection is between 600 – 800 words (4-5 paragraphs). | The entries demonstrate the willingness of the student to engage in self-reflection, but the insights could be more thorough. Reflection is 1-5 percent off from word count range. | The entries demonstrate little willingness on the part of the student to engage in self-reflection. Reflection is between 6-10 percent off word count range. | Exhibits a poor level of insight and little wherewithal for self-reflection. Reflection is between 11-15 percent off word count range. | Reflection is greater than 15 percent off word count range. |
| **Part 3: Specificity** | Supports observations with well-detailed, specific, and relevant examples drawn from the interview. Links examples of learning to all four reflection questions. | Supports observations with relevant examples drawn from the interview. Links examples of learning to three reflection questions. | Observations are only satisfactorily supported with examples drawn from the interview, some of which may not be wholly relevant. Links examples of learning to two reflection questions. | Observations are not supported with relevant examples from class. A lack of specificity overall; too general. Links examples of learning to one reflection question. | Does not link any examples of learning in any of the reflection questions. |
| **Part 3:**  **Spelling, grammar, sentence structure** | Reflection has no spelling, grammar or sentence structure errors. | Reflection has one spelling, grammar or sentence structure errors. | Reflection has two spelling, grammar or sentence errors. | Reflection has three spelling, grammar, or sentence structure errors. | Reflection has more than three spelling, grammar or sentence structure errors. |

**INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM**

**Comm 1100 Written Interview Assignment – Durham College**

**Purpose of this assignment**: The purpose of this assignment is to provide the interviewer, a student of Durham College’s *Communications Foundations* (COMM 1100), with the opportunity to gain insights and perspectives on the importance of communications in the workplace. This assignment will provide the student with an opportunity to strengthen his or her communication skills, gather and share information, reflect on the information given, and gain a deeper appreciation for communication in the workplace.

**Procedures**: You will be asked to participate in either a face-to-face, phone, or video interview. The interview should last approximately 10-15 minutes. During the interview, you will be asked questions about communications in your workplace. The interview will be recorded by some means (video or audio) for the purposes of transcription, reflection and evaluation.

**Risks and benefits**: There are minimal risks associated with this assignment. However, you may experience some discomfort or embarrassment if you are asked sensitive questions. You are free to decline to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this assignment. Your answers to the interview questions will not be part of the student’s evaluation. The results of this assignment may contribute to the improvement of the student’s communication and critical thinking skills.

**Confidentiality**: Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your name will not appear in any publications resulting from this assignment.

**Voluntary participation**: Your participation in this assignment is completely voluntary. You may decline to participate or withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

**Contact information**: If you have any questions about this course assignment, please contact Clayton Rhodes, professor, Faculty of Liberal Studies (clayton.rhodes@durhamcollege.ca).

**Consent**: By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read this form, and I understand the nature and purpose of this interview. I have had the opportunity to ask questions, and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this assignment.

Participant’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_