

Job market materials (J1)

ENG 381, Fall 2013, Bradley Dilger

Summary: find a job or internship advertisement which you would strongly consider. Create a résumé and cover letter tailored to the advertisement. Polish the documents and submit the advertisement, draft, and final materials in a folder. Submit electronic versions as well.

Objectives

Produce two documents which accomplish the following goals, and/or help you develop these skills. Correspondence with course objectives are noted in parentheses.

- Goal: Persuade the reader that you are worthy of an interview for the targeted position (2b);
- Goal: Present detailed information about your qualifications (4a) in a usable manner (2b), using subheads, lists, and/or tables (4b);
- Goal: Be honest about your abilities and qualifications (1b);
- Skill: Customize your work for the audience which will be evaluating your materials (1a);
- Skill: Work with two genres, the business letter and résumé, adapting common superstructures to meet your needs (6);
- Skill: Design documents in an effective, eye-pleasing style (5a).

For this assignment, all goals are primary objectives; the skills are secondary objectives.

Description and process

This assignment provides an introduction to the course by taking up documents which I hope are already familiar to you: job market materials. Without a doubt, these documents are some of the most critical you'll produce in your career at Western.

Begin by finding some advertisements for jobs which interests you. Look to big city newspapers, online sources such as Monster.com, or the job listings provided by Career Development. Narrow this field to one particular job which is especially attractive. Email me the advertisement in conjunction with your email introduction, and bring a hard copy to class if you like.

Create a résumé and cover letter *tailored to the job you've selected*, following the suggestions in our textbooks and based on our discussions in class. The materials you produce should be polished, attractive, reader-centered documents which follow conventions, create interest, provide detailed and organized information which can be used efficiently, but most of all show that you fit the job description you provide.

For the final draft, submit all relevant materials—the job advertisement, drafts, and final versions—in a folder or manila envelope clearly labeled with your name.

Also, please email me electronic versions of your documents—both draft and final.

Suggestions

- 1) We're moving quickly, so get started *immediately*. If you already have job materials (e.g. from BCOM 320 or GCOM 320), good; that's a starting point.
- 2) You can interpret "job" loosely—targeting an internship is quite appropriate.
- 3) Be bold. This "protected" environment is a good place to learn how to create materials which promote yourself effectively without stretching the truth.

- 4) Save all your drafts. What's not appropriate for one job might be for another.
- 5) Remember that the best documents are integrated; the cover letter gets readers interested, and the résumé reinforces the cover letter's opening, etc. Consider the purpose for each document; let each one do its work.
- 6) Need more help? Career Development provides assistance, job listings, models, and a million other things. Visit them in Memorial Hall 125 or:
http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/career_development_center/

Schedule

Given the tight turnaround, I don't expect to revise this schedule.

milestone	date	points
Assignment distributed	8/20	
Discuss assignment in class	8/22, 8/27	
Draft	8/29	25
Final	9/12	75
Total points		100

Assessment

A grade of "B" will be earned by materials which accomplish the goals laid out in Anderson's revision checklists (pp 44–45, 57), especially the following:

1. Contains complete contact information, relevant work history, and qualifications;
2. Present detailed, accurate information about qualifications which connects specific examples to general statements;
3. Speaks specifically and directly to the job advertisement, ideally in its language;
4. For résumés, uses an appropriate format (skills-based, scannable, chronological, etc.);
5. Uses design strategies to present information effectively;
6. Follows best practices for conventional formatting, as documented in our texts;
7. Has few or no mistakes.

Materials which excel in achievement of these goals will earn grades of A.

Materials which are weak in a few areas, but achieve most goals, will earn grades of C.

Materials which fail to accomplish a majority of these goals will earn grades of D or F.