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Subject: Performance Review of Technical Communication

Technical Communication Performance Review

Technical communication (ENG 3050) at Wayne State University is geared to develop a student's writing and designing, analyzing, researching, and technological skills. In the last four months, the three main projects in technical communication has helped me develop these skills. I created a resume, cover letter, and an instruction set on WikiHow for projects one and two. These projects helped me improve my technical writing and designing skills in terms of mechanics, style, and document design. These projects also taught me essential reading and analyzing skills that allowed me to evaluate my audience and purpose in order to create relevant technical documents. The collaborative feasibility report, in project three, forced me to advance my skills that I have developed in projects one and two, in addition to developing new research and technological skills. With the help of new research and documentation skills, the team and I composed a feasibility report by conducting and utilizing primary and secondary research. We also utilized new technological and media skills that allowed us to efficiently read, research, write, and design our feasibility report.

Individual Performance Review

I have successfully enhanced my resume and cover letter, in project one, by applying new writing, designing, reading, and analyzing skills. Creating a general resume/cover letter wasn't effective because it didn't emphasize that I met specific job requirements and it didn't address my specific purposes for applying for the job. In order to create an outstanding resume and cover letter, it was essential for me to understand the basic components of these technical documents. After reading and analyzing Anderson's text, I have learned the importance of tailoring my document for my audience and necessity to meet their job requirements and company mission. After analyzing my audience and their goals, I have created a document that uses a standard technical writing genre, revised grammar, mechanics, and style. More importantly, this document meets my audience's job requirements and company goals. However, employers may spend less than a minute viewing these documents. This has forced me to adapt my writing style and document design to enable employers to quickly scan for key qualifications, in addition to finding thorough technical, social, and intellectual qualities when needed.

In addition to creating an outstanding resume and cover letter, I have also created a functional and effective set of instructions on WikiHow on "How to create a microbiology lab report". Compared to my previous project, in this project my writing process needed to reflect the change in my audience, genre, and purpose. The purpose of this project was to enable microbiology students to create an effective lab report. In order to enhance the effectiveness of my purpose,

I needed to analyze my audience and genre. I conducted user tests that identified my audience's reactions and thought process to each step on the instruction set, and I discovered how to utilize WikiHow's genre to strengthen my instruction set. The results helped me adapt my writing and WikiHow design to help enhance my purpose to reach out to my audience.

If I could change how I approached these projects, I wouldn't. I am satisfied with the progress that I made during the course of project one and project two. These projects has helped me successfully fulfill these class learning objectives. They helped me learn the basics which is essential to learning and perfecting my current writing, designing, reading, and analyzing skills. In addition project two introduced me to basic researching and documenting skills which was an essential skill for project three.

Collaborative Performance Review

My team and I created a collaborative research plan and a feasibility report that tackles the parking meter problem surrounding Wayne State University. This project has helped us improve our researching and documenting skills by forcing us to evaluate the sources of support that was used to compose these documents. It forced us to select worthy and relevant secondary research sources. Other researching methods taught us how to conduct primary research that was unbiased and produced reliable and trustworthy results. Each team member held the other to high standards which forced the team to improve upon our reading, analyzing, designing, and writing skills. In addition we were able to assess each other's work, which helped us learn new methods and provide feedback regarding which methods worked and which didn't. Lastly, this project has helped us learn and perfect the use of technological and media skills that made reading, researching, writing, and designing more productive. We used GroupMe, a collaborative group chat, which enabled us stay in contact and updated with the team. We used our class Wiki site to store all of the documents that we've created. Most importantly we used Google Docs to write and design all of our documents. This helped us give feedback to each other about our writing, designing, and analyzing skills, which ultimately furthered the team's success on these projects. As a team we have fulfilled all of the learning objectives for the course in this project.

Personally, I have helped further the team's success on these projects by creating and noting detailed meeting minutes. These meeting minutes outlined team discussions, individual tasks and responsibilities, and in class assignments/work. This helped organize our ideas, or our "in-progress" ideas, and it enabled the team to recall discussed information and tasks. In addition to creating the meeting minutes, I conducted and analyzed the survey that we used to support our feasibility report. Lastly, I have helped the team with research, writing, revising, and designing the feasibility report and the research plan. All of these responsibilities has helped me further the team's success on project three.

My writing process needed to adapt to the genre, usability, collaboration, and audience of this project. For starters, my writing process needed to reflect the skill set of our selected audiences. The terminology that used in the project needed to be simple enough for the audience, yet complex enough so that it didn't offend or bore our audience. Secondly my writing needed to

reflect the writing styles of my team, it needed to blend in so that it doesn't seem as if we created separate reports and glued it together. This meant that our goals and audience needed to be concrete and uniform, this issue was addressed during revision and the editing stages of the project. Lastly, my writing process needed to enhance the usability of the report. In order to do this, the team and I analyzed our genre and came up with a superstructure that allowed our audience to quickly find relevant information, in addition to finding thorough explanations of each section. This increased the usability of the documents and allowed us to focus on the usability of each section of the superstructure. Compared to projects one and two, in project three my writing process shifted and improved dramatically.

Working Towards Perfection After Technical Communication

Based on projects one, two, and three I have both individually and collaboratively met the learning objectives for technical communication. I have established writing, designing, reading, and analyzing skills in projects one and two that has helped me create a cover letter, resume, and an instruction set on WikiHow. I have improved upon these skills and learned new researching, documenting, and technological skills in project three by creating a research plan and a feasibility report.

I've already incorporated lessons from this class into other classes and I have incorporated it into my job as a peer mentor. I have set up collaborative documents/teams using the same resources that I've used in technical communication (GroupMe and Google Docs) in my communication and cell biology class. This has enabled me and my team to work more efficiently towards our goals and it has kept us updated on the work progress. I've also started to use the memo format to provide feedback to my supervisors about problems or events that could've been addressed and executed more effectively. With the help of this class, I've been more aware about my audience, my supervisors, and their reaction to my memos. With this consideration, I've been able to compose more memos that are well received which increases its usability. However, there is still more room for improvement and as time continues I will continue to improve and perfect these skills and new skills. Technical communication has enabled me, as a writer and researcher, to expand my horizon in terms of efficiently creating effective technical documents.