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305W MODULE 2: CAREER OR ACADEMIC FIELD RESEARCH REPORT

Landing a job in a chosen career or being accepted into a graduate program is a process that begins with knowledge of the field on your part gained through research, and ends with well-written application documents that demonstrate your insights and present you in a professional, persuasive way, with the goal of convincing your readers that you are the one they want to hire or admit.

Assessing the Rhetorical Situation:

- For this research assignment, you will be curating information for your own future use; therefore, your audience for this is you.
- In addition, you must write up this information in report form, to succinctly show key information gained from this research. Your audience for the written report is your instructor.
- Your overall goal is to gather relevant information to assist you in crafting your future resume and cover letter or statement of intent (future Module 3 assignment).

Learning Outcomes for this project:

- Obtain relevant information through effective research for future use in resume, cover letter or personal statement.
- Demonstrate abilities in synthesizing information and documenting sources.
- Demonstrate the ability to write up an impartial summary of relevant information in the form of a concise, 3-4 pg. (double-spaced) professional report, using a straightforward, non-conversational and nonacademic style.

STEP 1: RESEARCH

The first step in the process is to conduct research to find out as much specific information as you can about your career or academic field, as well as about the organization to which you want to submit an application. Your research goals should be as specific and directed as possible. Look for the following information:

1. Required qualifications that must be met in order to be considered for the position or program.
2. Requirements of doing the job or completing the grad program.
3. Salary, benefits, advancement opportunities (job); costs, financial aid, student employment opportunities (grad school).
4. Relevant general facts & info: location, mission statement, outreach, reputation, etc.
5. Specific focuses within your career path or academic field: research, individuals of importance, newsworthy achievements, etc.

Use the links posted in the Research Resources folder on Blackboard to get started, and then perform a focused internet search to dig deeper. You are *required* to use sources both from the company's or university's own website AND from sources outside their own material. This ensures a thorough and unbiased mix of sources.

STEP 2: WRITE THE REPORT:

1. The content of this report is based solely on the research you do. It must include specific information about the career or academic field you are pursuing, as well as relevant details about the *specific* company, organization or university you will apply to.

2. Document your sources in a detailed sources listing at the end, and also attribute all quotes and references made to those sources within your text. This attribution should be complete and integrated into your writing; for example, you will incorporate phrases such as, “According to the company’s website,” or, “In an article by X in the *New York Times* Business Section,” etc. Do not use academic style citations or footnotes. The style is more businesslike than academic here.
3. Do not simply cut and paste information from sources; you are to compose this write-up, showing an ability to synthesize information, paraphrase and quote directly when appropriate (such as including key wording from a mission statement), while taking care to attribute information properly to their original sources (see #2 above).
4. Do not include descriptions about yourself—This report is all about the facts, and not about how you feel about those facts, your process of discovery, your goals, or your interests. Keep your focus solely on the career or graduate program, and the company, organization or school you will be applying to (or might be applying to in the future).

HOW IT WILL BE GRADED:

Your report’s grade will be based on the following criteria:

- **The quality of your research:** Sources must be of high quality, reflecting a thorough and thoughtful research process, including an adequate mix of sources from both within and outside the company or school.
- **The relevancy of the information** in terms of helping you to specifically target your future resume and letter or statement of intent.
- **The accuracy of quote and reference attribution,** both within your text (see above details in #2 of How to Write the Paper) and in a sources listing at the end (this list can be in any style you wish—MLA, Chicago, APA, or even your own clearly organized & presented listing style). Be sure to list names of authors, articles and websites, not just the URLs.
- **The quality of your writing:** Well written sentences and paragraphs, no typos or writing errors, successful synthesis of researched information, no personal opinion, and easy-to-follow structure.



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