

MODULE FOUR: INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW WEBSITE

Final Website Due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, 4/10 • 15% of final grade



OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES

What type of reading and writing do you expect to do in your future job? Maybe you'll examine and compose in a lot of technical genres, such as documentation or specifications. You might read and write annual reviews and reports, creating many different types of data displays for internal and external stakeholders within a company. You could create documents such as proposals and memos for clients that you design websites, software, or strategies for. Or perhaps you'll serve as a liaison between different departments of a large company, translating ideas into formats that are understandable by a variety of audiences, including executives, managers, employees, and shareholders.

No matter which career (or careers!) you take on after your bachelor's degree, it's likely that you'll engage in a variety of literacy practices. These are "disciplinary literacies:" the types of reading and writing that belong to a specific subject or profession. There are many different disciplinary literacies even within professional writing: think of the different day-to-day tasks of a digital marketing manager, a technical writer, a social media strategist, an acquisitions editor, an instructional designer, or a nonprofit communicator. **To explore the different forms of writing in an area that interests you, you will connect with a working professional in and conduct an interview about their professional writing practices. You will then write up the results of your interview and publish them as a webpage.**

GETTING STARTED

Your first step will be to identify and network with a professional to interview and learn from. There are many different ways that you can find a professional to interview for this project. You could...

- **Connect with groups in your college or major.** Many academic programs have student chapters of national professional organizations, or other groups with connections to working professionals. For example, the Professional Writing Association (PWA) and College of Liberal Arts (CLA) both have opportunities for networking.
- **Leverage connections to Purdue's alumni network through the CCO (Center for Career Opportunities).** Checking out CCO's online resources or stopping by their drop-in hours can help you learn more about networking. Their ["Build Your Network" page](#) is a good place to start.

- **Use your second- or third-level connections** to find someone in your network with a career that you aspire to. Think about the people you know who know other people in the discipline that you want to enter after you graduate. These could be family members, friends, neighbors, teachers, people from religious or community organizations, etc. Who might you be able to reach out to who's connected with a practitioner in the field that interests you?
- **Try out LinkedIn or look at corporate websites and directories.** You can use LinkedIn, a social media website for working professionals, to connect with employees in industries or companies that interest you. You could even look at the websites of companies or organizations that you'd like to work for and seek out professionals whose jobs interest you, emailing them directly using the information available online.

The key here is to find someone who can provide insight on the types of writing and communicating that you might do in the workforce after you graduate.

Once you've identified an individual whom you'd like to interview, you will compose a professional email to them to reach out and request a time to meet (either in person, on the phone, or through a web-conferencing platform like Skype or Google Hangouts) and conduct an informational interview with them. You will prepare questions for the interview ahead of time—and we'll discuss how to generate good questions later on in class. After you have conducted your interview, you will write and design a website of at least 1000–1500 words (using a free editor like Weebly, Wix, or Wordpress) to teach other students about the writing work of a professional in your field.

WHAT WILL I TURN IN?

The deliverables and deadlines for Module 4 are...

Week 11	Weds 3/20	Professional email exercise due by class time (10:30am)
Week 12	Sun 3/24	Proposal memo due by 11:59pm
Week 13	Fri 4/5	Completed website draft due by class time (10:30am) for peer review
Week 14	Weds 4/10	Final website link due with reflective memo by 11:59pm

We'll collaboratively generate grading criteria for this module in class, but you should expect to at least be graded on...

- How well you satisfy the **goals and purposes** identified in the assignment description, as well as your proposal and reflective memo.
- Appropriate use of **evidence** to substantiate your claims, through both paraphrases and direct quotations of your interview
- How well the website responds to the needs and expectations of your **audience** (through tone, voice, visual design, etc.)
- The **organization, arrangement, and structure** of the work, with smooth transitions between ideas
- Your explanation of your writing process and rhetorical choices in the **reflective memo**
- Proper **formatting and proofreading** of your work to meet audience expectations (including division of information into sections)