

Examples Of Professional Writing Samples

WRITING SAMPLES GUIDE

Writing samples are required for entrance into many graduate programs, as well as for jobs and internships where writing is an integral part of the position. Often these positions are in research, media, advertising or public relations.

If a writing sample is requested as part of an application, it is required: don't skip it!

Written communication is one of the top skills valued by both graduate schools and employers. If they request a writing sample, they are committed to hiring students who can write well, and are looking for evidence of this skill.

Pay close attention to any instructions given regarding the writing sample.

If there is a length, word count or subject matter requirement, abide by it. If no instructions are given, and you cannot tell from the position description what type of sample would be most relevant, consider contacting the program or employer to ask about their preferences.

Selecting a Writing Sample

Select your writing sample based on two key factors: quality and relevance.

Quality

Above all else, select a piece that you and others whom you trust think is well-written. Have multiple audiences proofread your writing sample so that it is completely free of spelling and grammatical errors.

Relevance

If no specific instructions are given, make the sample as relevant to the position or program--and the writing you will do in that position or program--as possible. If you are applying for a job writing brief news stories for an online newspaper, send in clips from your time on the *Davidsonian*, not your ten-page analysis of a Russian novel. Similarly, if you are applying for a summer research position, you will want to submit a research-focused writing sample; if you are applying for a business analyst position, you could submit a case study that you wrote in an economics course.

There may be times when you will not be able to use a sample that you have already written. If you are applying for a position in PR, for example, but have never written press releases, you may have to create one from scratch.

If you have to submit a writing sample for a discipline-specific graduate program, then use a strong paper that you wrote in a course related to that discipline. Faculty often can assist you in selecting a sample for these applications.

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Examples of professional writing samples serve as a vital tool for individuals looking to showcase their writing skills and expertise in various fields. In the professional world, writing is an essential skill that transcends industries, making it crucial for job seekers, freelancers, and established professionals alike to present their work effectively. This article will explore different types of professional writing samples, how to create them, and best practices for presenting your work to potential employers or clients.

Understanding Professional Writing Samples

Professional writing samples are pieces of writing that demonstrate a person's ability to communicate effectively in a professional context. They can vary widely depending on the industry and the specific role one is applying for. The purpose of these samples is to

provide evidence of writing proficiency, style, tone, and the ability to convey information clearly and concisely.

Types of Professional Writing Samples

There are numerous types of professional writing samples, each suited to different roles and industries. Here are some common examples:

1. Business Writing:

- Emails
- Reports
- Proposals
- Meeting minutes

2. Creative Writing:

- Short stories
- Poetry
- Scripts (for film or theater)

3. Technical Writing:

- User manuals
- Process documentation
- Technical reports

4. Content Writing:

- Blog posts
- Web articles
- Social media content

5. Academic Writing:

- Research papers
- Theses
- Case studies

How to Create Professional Writing Samples

Creating effective professional writing samples requires careful consideration of several factors. Here are some steps to guide you in crafting compelling samples:

1. Know Your Audience

Understanding your target audience is crucial when creating writing samples. Different employers or clients may have specific preferences regarding style, tone, and content. Tailor your samples to meet these expectations.

2. Choose Relevant Topics

Select topics that are relevant to the roles you are applying for or the services you are offering. If you're applying for a marketing position, for instance, include samples that highlight your ability to create persuasive and engaging content.

3. Showcase Your Best Work

Select writing pieces that demonstrate your strongest skills. Quality is more important than quantity. Choose a few well-crafted samples rather than a larger collection of mediocre ones.

4. Follow Formatting Guidelines

When presenting your writing samples, pay attention to formatting. Use consistent fonts, headings, and spacing. If you're submitting samples in a digital format, ensure they are easy to read on various devices.

5. Edit and Proofread

Before finalizing your samples, thoroughly edit and proofread each piece. Check for grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. A polished sample reflects your attention to detail and professionalism.

6. Include Context

When presenting your samples, provide context for each piece. Briefly explain the purpose of the writing, your role in creating it, and any relevant outcomes. This information helps potential employers understand the significance of your work.

Best Practices for Presenting Professional Writing Samples

Once you have created your writing samples, how you present them can significantly impact the impression you make. Here are some best practices to consider:

1. Create a Portfolio

Assemble your best writing samples into a professional portfolio. This can be a physical binder or an online portfolio website. Organize your samples by type or industry to make it easy for viewers to navigate.

2. Use a Professional Format

If you're submitting samples as part of a job application, follow the format outlined in the job posting. Include your contact information, a brief introduction, and a table of contents if necessary.

3. Tailor Your Samples for Each Application

Customize your portfolio for each job application by selecting samples that align with the specific requirements of the position. This demonstrates your understanding of the role and your dedication to tailoring your application.

4. Provide Links or Attachments

When submitting samples electronically, consider including links to online articles or attaching PDF documents. Ensure that links are functional and that attachments are appropriately labeled.

5. Seek Feedback

Before finalizing your portfolio, seek feedback from peers or mentors. They can provide valuable insights and suggestions for improvement. Constructive criticism can help you refine your samples.

Examples of Professional Writing Samples by Industry

To further illustrate the variety of professional writing samples, here are industry-specific examples:

1. Marketing and Advertising

- Social Media Campaigns: Samples showcasing posts, graphics, and engagement strategies.
- Marketing Proposals: Documents outlining marketing strategies for potential clients.
- Ad Copy: Creative writing for print or digital advertisements.

2. Journalism

- News Articles: Well-researched articles covering current events or in-depth features.
- Interviews: Transcripts or articles from interviews with notable figures.
- Editorials: Opinion pieces reflecting on social or political issues.

3. Education

- Lesson Plans: Detailed plans for classroom instruction.
- Research Papers: Academic papers demonstrating knowledge in a specific subject area.
- Grant Proposals: Proposals for funding educational programs or initiatives.

4. Information Technology

- User Guides: Comprehensive manuals for software or hardware.
- Technical Specifications: Documents outlining technical requirements for projects.
- Case Studies: Analyses of IT solutions implemented for specific challenges.

5. Nonprofit Sector

- Grant Applications: Proposals seeking funding for nonprofit initiatives.
- Impact Reports: Documents detailing the outcomes of nonprofit programs.
- Fundraising Campaign Materials: Content used to solicit donations or support.

Conclusion

In summary, **examples of professional writing samples** play a crucial role in showcasing your writing abilities to potential employers or clients. By understanding the various types of writing samples, knowing how to create them, and following best practices for presentation, you can effectively communicate your skills and expertise. Whether you are entering the job market, seeking freelance opportunities, or aiming for career advancement, having a strong collection of writing samples can significantly enhance your professional profile and open doors to new opportunities.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are some common types of professional writing samples?

Common types of professional writing samples include business reports, marketing materials, technical documentation, proposals, resumes, cover letters, blog posts, white papers, press releases, and social media content.

How can I showcase my writing skills in a professional sample?

To showcase your writing skills, choose a well-structured piece that highlights clarity, conciseness, and proper grammar. Include relevant examples of your work that demonstrate your ability to communicate effectively for your target audience.

What should I include in a writing sample for a job application?

Include a writing sample that is relevant to the job you're applying for, ideally 1-3 pages long. Ensure it demonstrates your writing style, understanding of the subject matter, and

ability to engage the reader.

Is it better to submit a published writing sample or an unpublished one?

It depends on the context. Published samples can lend credibility and show your work's reach, while unpublished samples may allow you to showcase your best writing without external modifications.

How do I choose the best writing sample for a specific industry?

Research the industry standards and preferences. Select a sample that aligns with the industry's tone and style, and demonstrates your familiarity with its terminology and audience expectations.

Can I include personal blog posts as professional writing samples?

Yes, personal blog posts can be included if they showcase relevant skills and expertise. Ensure the content is polished and reflects your professional writing abilities.

What format is best for submitting writing samples?

PDF format is typically preferred for submitting writing samples, as it preserves formatting and ensures consistency across different devices. Always follow the submission guidelines provided by the employer.

How long should a writing sample be?

Writing samples should generally be between 1-3 pages long. However, it's important to adhere to any specific guidelines provided by the employer.

Should I provide multiple writing samples or just one?

If the application allows, it's often beneficial to provide multiple samples that showcase a range of your skills and versatility. However, prioritize quality over quantity.

What makes a writing sample stand out?

A writing sample stands out when it is well-researched, clearly structured, engaging, and tailored to the audience. It should also reflect your unique voice and insights on the subject matter.

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