Major Writing Assignment: Project #4

To: English 304 Students
From: Allison Hitt
Date: June 9, 2011
Subject: Formal Collaborative Report

Recommendation reports serve at least three functions in the workplace. First, they solve a problem by exploring the scope, causes and consequences of the problem, surveying the possible solutions, and recommending a course of action. Second, they document both the actions taken by the organization to solve a problem and the rationale for those actions. Third, they act as a blueprint for the people who have to implement the solution and fix the problem. Because of these multiple purposes, recommendation reports engage the problem and its solution(s) fully.

Readers of recommendation reports rarely read reports in their entirety. They frequently know one or more parts of the report already, and they often want quick explanations that can convince their superiors. Because of the way reports are read, they use standard sections, good document design, and concise introductory material to lead readers to relevant information quickly.

For this project, you will write a recommendation report to someone who has the direct power to implement your solutions and solve the problem you addressed in your proposal.

Formal Report Structure

You will use all of the conventional components needed to serve your audience and the message of your report. The report will be broken into three main parts as outlined in *Writing That Works*:

Front Matter
   • Title Page
   • Abstract/Executive Summary
   • Table of Contents

Body
   • Introduction/Background Information
   • Text (including headings, tables, illustrations, and references)
   • Conclusions and Recommendations
   • Works Cited/References

Back Matter
   • Bibliography

Though you may have additional sections, these components are definitive. In terms of solidifying your conclusions and recommendations, make sure to identify weaknesses and formulate strategies for overcoming them; try to anticipate counter-arguments; and avoid making over-simplified deductions that will not persuade your audience.

NOTE: Each group will produce one report.

Criteria

Your report should fulfill the following criteria:

- **Thoroughness**: The report should cover, in detail, all aspects of the problem and its solutions, regardless of whether they are known to the explicit audience.
- **Audience accommodation**: The report should use arguments and recommend solutions that are attentive to the needs, values, and standards of the person you are writing to.
- **Appropriate sections and formatting**: The report should be broken into logical, clear sections and use page numbering, front and back matter, section headings and other design features to cue the audience to the structure and argument of the report.
- **Visual aids**: The report should use at least one visual aid to help the audience understand some part of the argument.
- **Research:** Your report should be well researched, whether or not you are quoting frequently from outside sources. The Works Cited page should include 5 - 10 sources.

Group Progress Reports are due Friday, June 17, 2011.

Formal Collaborative Reports are due the last day of class: Friday, June 24, 2011.