Syllabus

Course Overview

In this course, you will learn to discover the writer in you. While this course is mainly focused on business and technical writing, you will learn how to use your voice to initiate action. You will also develop skills in the following areas to help you both within this course and within your discipline: communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.

Assignments

- **Week 3:** Create a 1–2 page writing plan for completing an informative report, a recommendation report, and an email correspondence – 15% of grade. *Scoring Guide*.
- **Week 6:** Write a 1–2 page informative report that discusses the risks and benefits of a selected innovation – 20% of grade. *Scoring Guide*.
- **Week 8:** Write a 2–3 page recommendation report that is based on criteria and a risk/benefit analysis – 20% of grade. *Scoring Guide*.
- **Week 9:** Write a 1-page email regarding recommendations for an innovation – 20% of grade. *Scoring Guide*.

Discussions

There will be a discussion that continues through each theme. Participation in discussions will count for 25% of your final grade.

- **Week 1:** Discuss the employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.
- **Week 2:** Discuss using the skill of innovation.
- **Week 3:** Discuss a current innovation and how it has impacted productivity.
- **Week 4:** Discuss the primary research skill of observation.
- **Week 5:** Post a draft of your Informative Report assignment for feedback.
- **Week 6:** Discuss the use of revision in improving your professional or personal life.
- **Week 7:** Describe the different audiences you work with and the consequences of not knowing an audience.
- **Week 8:** Discuss using the skills of communication and technology to enact change.
- **Week 9:** Discuss an implementation plan for a change in your life.
- **Week 10:** Discuss the impact taking this course has had on your employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.

Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes

All General Education courses reflect our [Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes](#) (EULOS). Review the Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcomes interactive media piece to learn more about these learning outcomes and how ENG1200 supports them.

Problem Solving: Learners will understand how to develop solutions to complex problems.

- Critical Thinking: Capella learners will develop the thinking skills necessary to critically evaluate information, integrate differing points of view, and develop a process of reasoning.
- Creative Thinking: Capella learners will develop the thinking skills necessary to analyze a problem from a new perspective to come to innovative solutions.
- Scientific and Evidence-Based Inquiry: Capella learners will use research and empirical evidence to further develop questions and propose explanations to problems or scenarios.
- Information Literacy: Capella learners will approach lifelong learning with the ability to locate, analyze, and use knowledge and resources appropriately.

Communications: Capella learners will develop the skills necessary to communicate ideas effectively in a variety of written, verbal, and visual formats using an appropriate tone for the intended audience.

Integrative Learning: Capella learners will make connections using multi-disciplinary and multi-contextual lenses to address complex ideas and questions.

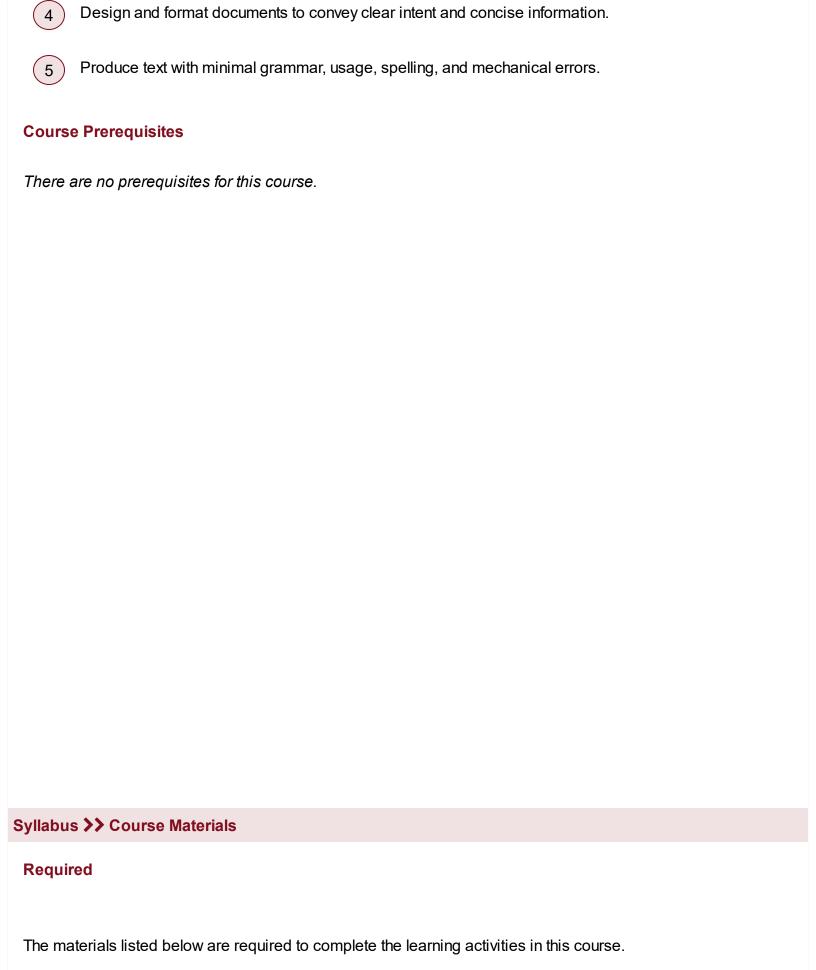# General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide

A Capella University library guide has been created for your use in General Education courses. The [General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide](#) contains tips on how to use the Capella University Library to find resources for your General Education courses. You are encouraged to refer to the resources in this library guide to direct your research in this course. **Note:** This program guide supports the Essential Undergraduate Learning Outcome of Information Literacy.

Course Competencies   **(Read Only)**

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

1.   Apply the stages of writing to produce effective professional communication.

2.   Define the appropriate audience and purpose for specific deliverables.

3.   Develop business and technical writing documents that convey essential information.

4) Design and format documents to convey clear intent and concise information.

5) Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Integrated Materials

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the Course Materials page on Campus for more information.

Book

Smith-Worthington, D., & Jefferson, S. (2019). *Technical writing for success* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 9781305948822

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool.

- Bliss, M. M., & Dalto, J. (2019). Technical communication: Key elements for the safety practitioner. *Professional Safety, 64*(9), 30–34.
- Gorman V. L. (2019). Future emergency nursing workforce: What the evidence Is telling us. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*, *45*(2), 132–136.
- Jonsen, K., Fendt, J., & Point, S. (2018). Convincing qualitative research: What constitutes persuasive writing? *Organizational Research Methods*, *21*(1), 30–67.
- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
- Talbot, F. (2019). *How to write effective business English: Your guide to excellent professional communication* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Kogan Page.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Bakken, R. (2019, April 12). Future-proof job skills: What employees need to know [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.extension.harvard.edu/inside-extension/future-proof-job-skills-what-employees-need-know
- Halabi, R. (2020). Productivity skills: Improve your time management and reduce your stress. Retrieved from https://www.potential.com/articles/productivity/
- Hale, J., & Maxfield, B. (2019). The productivity skills of high-performance teams. Retrieved from https://www.td.org/insights/the-productivity-skills-of-high-performance-teams
- Innovation Resource Consulting Group. (n.d.). Seven fundamental leadership and innovation skills. Retrieved from https://www.innovationresource.com/innovation-skills/

- Tucker, R. (2017, February 9). [Six innovation leadership skills everybody needs to master.](https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertbtucker/2017/02/09/six-innovation-leadership-skills-everybody-needs-to-master/#8f334ab5d461) *Forbes*. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertbtucker/2017/02/09/six-innovation-leadership-skills-everybody-needs-to-master/#8f334ab5d461

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

Unit 1 ≫ Discover the Writer in You

Introduction

Changes

Vanderbilt Industries is a small company that has recently merged with another area organization. It is a time of change at Vanderbilt Industries, and some team members are more comfortable with the new environment than others. One department in particular is leading the change management initiatives, and we will follow a team from this department throughout the course.

While there are many individuals on this team, we will mainly follow three individuals: Kate, a product manager; Rayensh, a project manager; and their supervisor, Leah, who is new to the company and to the position. Recently, Leah introduced a new initiative in which she is encouraging the individuals in the department to work on their soft skills as they also introduce new ideas for the organization. Kate is excited about the change, and Rayensh is fine, but wary. Other individuals on the team are not happy about the changes at all, so Leah has a difficult job ahead.

"A word after a word after a word is power."

– Margaret Atwood, Author

"I have a dream." "Tear down this wall." "Yes, we can!" Words have power. They help us connect with each other, share our thoughts, raise awareness, and solve problems. And throughout history, they've served as a catalyst to create change in the world. Understanding how to wield the power of your own words is critical to reaching your personal and professional dreams.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss the employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.
- **What You Need to Know:** Get an overview of business and technical writing, learn about the stages or writing, and find out more about the skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Explore the power of words and how experts use their words to reach success.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Consider the employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation and how you may have used them to communicate in the workplace.

u01s2 - What You Need to Know

All over the world, business leaders, politicians, and activists use the power of their writing to engage and inform those around them. And you can harness that power in your own life and career by learning how to use your words to WRITE the future you want.

Almost all professions require writing, but as you may know, not all writing is professional. In the modern workplace, having a command of the English language and being able to convey your thoughts appropriately— through emails, memos, reports, and more—can mean the difference between reaching your goals and falling behind. In fact, according to the National Writing Project, "Writing is essential to communication, learning, and citizenship. It is the currency of the new workplace and global economy" (para. 1).

Reference

National Writing Project. (n.d.). Why writing? Retrieved from https://www.nwp.org/why-writing

What Is Technical Writing?

You have already seen many technical writing documents, and you have likely written some yourself, even if you don't know it. Technical writing is used in professional fields to communicate specific ideas to a specific audience. Technical writing is functional and practical. There are many forms of technical writing, such as memos, emails, instructions, diagrams, and user manuals, to name a few.

For this course, you will create four technical writing documents. To learn more about technical writing in general, read the following:

- Smith-Worthington, D., & Jefferson, S. (2019). *Technical writing for success* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
  - Chapter 1, "What Is Technical Writing?," pages 2–25.
- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
  - Chapter 1, "Introduction," pages 1–14.

Identify the Stages of Writing

The Capella Writing Center has many excellent resources to guide you through the fundamentals of the writing process. As we progress through the writing process, we will look at the resources that are applicable to the activities and tasks for each week.

This week, we will look at the stages of writing. Writing a paper or project can feel overwhelming, so it is helpful to break it up into smaller, more manageable steps. You will do this throughout the course. Review the Writing Process and Stages of Writing to learn how to do this.

In The Writing Process [PDF] tip sheet, which you can download and print, explore an easy-to-follow process for harnessing the power of your own words.

Writing Standards

Throughout the course, you will be assessed on Capella's Writing Standards. Capella's Writing Standards are comprised of five writing skills that you should practice in your written assignments. Access the Writing Feedback Tool to understand the writing standards.

Essential Employability Skills

In this course, you will practice four essential employability skills to help you harness the power of your words. They are:

- **Innovation** to use strategies to develop your ideas and create change.
- **Communication** to effectively write about information, your ideas, and your perspective.
- **Productivity** to plan your time and your writing.
- **Technology** to use digital tools and devices to document your writing efficiently and effectively.

Together, these four skills will help you inform and persuade others and enact change in your life and career!

u01v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Story: Your Words, Your Power

In Capella Story: Your Words, Your Power, you will get a peek at the incendiary power of words throughout history and how you can wield them to create a lasting impact on your world. You'll also discover how experts are using the power of their words to practice excellent communication and reach personal and professional success.

Course Resources
[Capella Story: Your Words, Your Power](#)	Transcript

u01d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

Throughout the course, you will focus on communication, productivity, technology, and innovation skills, which are essential to employability. For this discussion, consider how these skills intersect in the field of technical and business communication. Then, think about a time you have had to use these four skills together in the workplace to communicate an important or challenging idea or change.

Response Guidelines

Read the Discussion Participation Scoring Guide to learn how your instructor will evaluate your discussion participation throughout this course. Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Introduction

<div style="border:1px solid #000;padding:1em;">

Innovation Initiative

Today, Leah called Rayensh and Kate into a quick meeting with this directive: the goal to innovate. The company is changing, and it is a good time to revisit old processes and innovate new ideas. Rayensh and Kate are tasked with leading this initiative for their department. Rayensh asks if there are specific innovations to focus on, but Leah was only told that the team should apply their own innovation skills to this initiative. She asks them to determine one innovation to present to her by early next week. Kate and Rayensh are glad they can be a part of the project but unclear of how to move forward. They decide to work together to make a plan.

</div>

"To fail to plan—is to plan to fail."

– Benjamin Franklin, Founding Father

When it comes to success, having a plan will help you identify how to reach your goals and ensure you accomplish them on time. The same is true when it comes to your writing. This week, you'll practice your productivity skill to begin creating a plan for your writing assignments in the course, and you'll also utilize your technology skill to ensure that plan stays on track. In addition, you will learn about the importance of audience and purpose in writing.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss a time that you had to be innovative to find a solution to a challenge.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about audience and purpose, productivity and technology, and the prewriting stage of writing.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover how to use planning to understand your audience.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Practice your planning techniques by planning family vacation.
- **Prepare:** Begin working on the Week 3 assignment, Writing Plan.

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Discuss a time that you had to be innovative to find a solution to a challenge.

Purpose and Audience

Technical writing is writing for a specific audience and with a clear purpose. As a technical writer, you can write for both an internal audience and an external audience. An internal audience would include individuals within your own organization, for example, while an external audience could include anyone outside of your department or organization. An audience can be a reader, but an audience can also be an observer or viewer. There are also different levels of audiences: lay, technician, expert, and manager. Understanding the knowledge and expertise of your audience will help you to organize your writing.

A clear purpose is also fundamental to the business and technical writer. Technical writing is purpose-driven writing. In technical writing, you are asking your audience to act. For the most part, the purpose is to inform or to persuade. To learn more perspectives on audience and purpose, review the following resources.

- The Capella Writing Center has resources on audience and purpose.
  - [Writing to Your Audience](#).
  - [Purpose](#).

- In your textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*, read:
  - Read Chapter 2, "Audience and Purpose," pages 26–47.

- Luck, S. L. (2016). *[Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.](#)* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
  - Chapter 3, "Honor Purpose and identity," pages 23–34.
  - Chapter 5, "Honor the Audience," pages 45–54.

- Talbot, F. (2019). *[How to write effective business English: Your guide to excellent professional communication](#)* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Kogan Page.
  - Chapter 2, "Business Writing for Today," pages 6–15.

- Bliss, M. M., & Dalto, J. (2019). [Technical communication: Key elements for the safety practitioner.](#) *Professional Safety, 64*(9), 30–34.
  - Read this article to learn how this particular field considers audience and purpose in technical writing.

Prewriting: Outlining an Essay

An outline is the skeleton of a good essay; therefore, it is important to think through your outline carefully. You will want to have enough information to help you formulate your plan.

The Capella Writing Center has several resources regarding the first stage of writing, Prewriting.

Skills

A master chef does not create an impressive meal without first making a plan for preparing the ingredients and estimating the amount of time until the meal is ready to serve. The same is true for writing. Even the most talented writer cannot "serve up" a masterpiece without having a plan in place. Having a plan before you start writing will ensure your writing is clear, concise, thoughtful, and logical. Planning will also save you embarrassment or misunderstandings, and it will keep you from scrambling at the last minute to meet deadlines.

You have learned how the skills of innovation, communication, productivity, and technology work together to make you a better writer. You also learned about the stages of writing. Now, you will hone your productivity skill by thinking about how to create a writing plan. You'll also hone your technology skill by using tools to ensure your writing stays on track! Planning will not only make you a more productive writer; it will actually improve your writing and help you communicate your best throughout this course and your career.

Review these resources to see how to apply productivity skills in your life:

- Halabi, R. (2020). Productivity skills: Improve your time management and reduce your stress. Retrieved from https://www.potential.com/articles/productivity/
- Hale, J., & Maxfield, B. (2019). The productivity skills of high-performance teams. Retrieved from https://www.td.org/insights/the-productivity-skills-of-high-performance-teams

We are currently in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. While this affects many fields, this article highlights a few areas that experts encourage up-skilling.

- Bakken, R. (2019, April 12). Future-proof job skills: What employees need to know [Blog post]. Retrieved from https://www.extension.harvard.edu/inside-extension/future-proof-job-skills-what-employees-need-know

u02v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Story: Writing is Everyone's Business

Having a plan in place is the first step to getting where you want to go in your life and career. In Capella Story: Writing is Everyone's Business, discover how President Bill Clinton's speechwriter, John Pollock, uses planning to understand his audience and goal so he can improve his writing and enact political change.

Course Resources

u02v2 - Interactive Learning Module: Planning for Paradise

Practice planning in your personal life in the Planning for Paradise interactive experience by using easy-to-follow planning techniques to book the family vacation of your dreams. But, you'll need to balance the needs of your family and yourself, so you have time to both relax and enjoy the sights. Understanding how to plan, both in your personal life and in your writing, will help you improve your productivity skill so you can perform your best at any task.

Course Resources
[Planning for Paradise](#) | Transcript

u02d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

In this week's story, the team was given the goal to innovate in their department. This is a popular concept these days, but it can mean many different things. It would be normal for Kate and Rayensh to feel overwhelmed by this directive.

For this discussion, discuss a time that you had to be innovative to find a solution to a challenge. This can be either in your personal life or in your professional life. Now, think about how the skills you used to innovate could be transferable to the situation at Vanderbilt Industries. What type of advice or direction could you communicate to the team to help them solve their own challenge?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u02s3 - Prepare: Writing Plan

For the first assignment, due next week, you will make a plan! You will do this by creating a writing plan to prepare for the following course assignments:

- **Informative Report:** Due in Week 6.
- **Recommendation Report:** Due in Week 8.
- **Email Correspondence:** Due in Week 9.

You will begin with the first stage of writing, the prewriting stage; you will also consider audience and purpose. You will find that you use all four skills discussed in this course—communication, productivity, technology, and innovation—as you complete this assignment.

To begin preparing, read through the description and instructions for the Writing Plan assignment in Week 3. In addition, review the scoring guide to see the criteria by which your assignment will be evaluated. Then, use the Prewriting techniques outlined in the Capella Writing Center to begin developing your plan.

Unit 3 ≫ Tuning in to Innovation

Introduction

Getting Started with a Plan

Kate and Rayensh are prepared to make a plan, but they don't know where to start. They begin to get nervous about the timeline and hope they can come up with at least one idea that will help their department. They ask Leah for her advice, and she suggests that they brainstorm different ideas, choose one, and make an outline. Rayensh remembers completing prewriting activities like this in his college English class and that it was helpful (even though he initially thought it would be extra work). Kate considers the word *innovation*. She plans to take notes in a technology tool, likely Word or Excel, and use this to move their plan forward.

They want their innovation to highlight a clear purpose and solve a problem; they don't want to innovate just for the sake of innovation. They start to brainstorm challenges in their department, as well as opportunities to try new things. They then think of the skill

of communication. They will need to communicate their ideas, and they will need to consider the best format for this.

"Your mind is your greatest power. Use it well."

– Aneta Cruz, Author

This week, you'll discover how you can tune into your innovation skill to harness the creative ideas inside you. You will complete your first assignment, a writing plan in which you select an innovation to write about for the rest of the course and apply the skill of communication as you do this. You will also learn some of the foundational concepts of research, which you will start to apply in the next week.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss a current innovation and how it has impacted productivity.
- **Assignment:** Create a 1–2 page writing plan.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about innovation, technical research, and communication.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover writing strategies from a writing pro.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Discuss a current innovation and how it has impacted productivity.

Assignment Overview

Select an innovation and create a 1–2 page writing plan for completing an informative report, a recommendation report, and a pitch email about the innovation.

u03s2 - What You Need to Know

Skills

Innovation

This week, you'll dive deeper into prewriting and planning strategies to practice your productivity skill and keep your writing on track. Make sure you plan ample time for thinking because this week you'll also explore your innovation skill.

Innovation is something you already do in your day-to-day life, like when you have to plan a meal out of what is left in the fridge or find part-time work to pay the bills. In the professional world, innovation can help you generate original ideas and explore new ways to look at old problems by thinking through different options. That might mean coming up with a unique way to approach a funding deficit for your department or rearranging work schedules to keep your team happy.

By using your innovation skill to harness the power of your creative brain, you'll spark a richer, more detailed, and productive vision for communicating with others through your writing in this course and beyond.

To learn more about innovation, review this resources:

- Innovation Resource Consulting Group. (n.d.). Seven fundamental leadership and innovation skills. Retrieved from https://www.innovationresource.com/innovation-skills/
- Tucker, R. (2017, February 9). Six innovation leadership skills everybody needs to master. *Forbes*. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/robertbtucker/2017/02/09/six-innovation-leadership-skills-everybody-needs-to-master/#8f334ab5d461

Explore the Idea Generator [PDF] tip sheet to discover how to use your innovation skill to generate ideas in this course and beyond.

Communication

While communication is important, communication only works if it is effective. Review these resources for some tips and tricks for effective communication:

- Communicating Effectively
- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
  - Chapter 2, "Honor Focus," pages 15–22.

- Talbot, F. (2019). *How to write effective business English: Your guide to excellent professional communication* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Kogan Page.
  - Chapter 2, "Business Writing for Today," pages 6–15.

u03v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting Started" w/Kim Coles

Getting Started

"Just start."

– Kim Coles

Author, comedian, and actress Kim Coles is a writing pro with two bestselling books to her name, and in Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting Started" w/Kim Coles, she'll share her writing process with you! You'll discover the writing strategies that keep Kim productive and help her communicate her best. By applying Kim's attitude and methods to your own work, you'll have what you need to start writing your future.

Course Resources

[Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting Started" w/Kim Coles](#) | Transcript

---

u03d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

For this discussion, consider the employability skills of innovation and productivity. Think about how these skills intersect. Then, select one innovation we all use today that has made life more productive. This can be a technology tool or really any invention. Explain why this innovation has made life more productive in general.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources

Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

---

u03a1 - Writing Plan

Overview

For the first assignment in this course, you will make a plan! You will do this by creating a writing plan to prepare for the Week 6 assignment, an informative report; the Week 8 assignment, a recommendation report; and the Week 9 assignment, a pitch email. You will begin the first stage of writing, the prewriting stage, and consider

audience and purpose. You will find that you use all four skills discussed in this course as you complete this assignment: communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.

For all the assignments in this course, consider this scenario:

> Your workplace has experienced significant change recently, and your department is expected to respond to change with innovation. Your direct leader has asked you to determine one specific innovation for your department; you will be responsible for the implementation of this innovation.
>
> Your direct leader has asked you to first create an informative report in which you present the benefits and risks around your suggested innovation. Once they approve or provide feedback on this, they would like you to create a recommendation report for you immediate manager. Finally, you will need to create a pitch email to communicate the final changes to your entire department.
>
> For these assignments, you should consider an innovation in a workplace within your discipline. You can consider your current job or a job you aspire to in the future.

Instructions

Decide what innovation you will use, and then select the technology tool that you will use to create your plan, such as Word, Excel, or another digital tool. Whatever you select, the output must be in a format that you are able to attach in the submission area for your instructor to access. Then, create a 1–2 page writing plan that addresses the following:

- Describe the selected audience.
    - Identify and explain who your audience is.
    - How will you address their needs in each writing project?
- Apply the prewriting stage of writing.
    - Do this as you outline your plans for each of the three writing projects—the informative report, the recommendation report, and the email correspondence, or pitch email.
    - For your writing plan, you can use one of the prewriting tools, such as brainstorming, suggested by the Writing Center. You can include this anywhere in the document.
- Explain the purpose.
    - The purpose will be to inform and recommend, but you should also cover the purpose of the innovation or change itself.
- Discuss the selected innovation.
- Write coherently with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Additional Requirements

Save your writing plan in an accessible format and submit to your instructor.

- **Written communication:** Written communication should be free of errors that detract from the overall message.

- **Formatting:** The writing plan is organized and formatted in a way that enhances comprehension and keeps the reader interested.
- **References:** Any references used should be clearly cited and credited.
- **Length:** 1–2 pages of text, in addition to the cover sheet.
  - The cover sheet should include your name, the course number, assignment title, and date. No other information is required on this page.

Review the Writing Plan Scoring Guide for details on how your paper will be graded.

Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assignment criteria:

- **Competency 1: Apply the stages of writing to produce effective professional communication.**
  - Apply the prewriting stage of writing.

- **Competency 2: Define the appropriate audience and purpose for specific deliverables.**
  - Describe the selected audience
  - Explain the purpose.

- **Competency 3: Develop business and technical writing documents that convey essential information.**
  - Discuss the selected innovation.

- **Competency 5: Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.**
  - Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.

Unit 4 ≫ Researching the Plan

Introduction

Researching Risks and Benefits

Kate and Rayensh think of an innovation, and Leah asks for an update for the plan. Kate and Rayensh decide they need to create an informative report so that they can organize their ideas. In order to inform Leah correctly, they will need to research the risks and benefits of their innovation. Rayensh decides to focus on primary research and interview team members and other stakeholders, and Kate decides to focus on secondary research, by researching the

risks and benefits of the innovation in other organizations. They only have a day to complete this, so they will need to use the skill of productivity to accomplish this goal.

This week, you will use your communication skill to start to research for your informative report. You'll discover how to utilize research from credible sources within your writing. You will begin to research your topic this week, so you can post a draft in Week 5 and submit your final assignment in Week 6.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss the primary research skill of observation.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about research and citations.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover how credible sources can help you build trust with your audience, so you can communicate your best.
- **Prepare:** Begin working on the Week 5 discussion and the Week 6 assignment, Informative Report.

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Practice the primary research skill of observation and discuss what you observed.

u04s2 - What You Need to Know

Research

We all have good ideas, but in the professional and academic environment, it is important to support the ideas with research. There are many ways to complete research, and there is an extensive amount of research available. In fact, the challenge is less that there isn't enough to research and more how to determine the best available for your purpose.

There are two main types of research: primary and secondary. Primary research is firsthand reports of the data, for example a journal or interview. Secondary research is research completed by someone else, and it is more likely to be used in a professional environment.

Your next assignment will be to write an informative report. In an informative report, the research and sources you find are like the raw materials you need to construct your writing. You'll continue to practice your innovation skill to consider these sources and decide which materials you want to use in your outline to reach your audience and purpose.

In business and technical writing, research can include the risks and benefits of a suggested idea or solution, or in the case of this course, a suggested innovation.

To learn more about research, read the following:

- In your textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*:
    - Chapter 3, "Technical Research," pages 48–87.

- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
    - Chapter 4, "Honor Your Goals," pages 35–44.

- Gorman V. L. (2019). Future emergency nursing workforce: What the evidence Is telling us. *Journal of Emergency Nursing*, *45*(2), 132–136.
    - For an example of evidence-based research, read this article.

References

Citations

When you complete research, it is important to cite your sources. This is called Academic Honesty.

When you use research, it is ethical and required to give credit to the original author. In this course, you will be developing the skills to do this. As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of it so you have the necessary foundation.

General Education Program Guide

The General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide is good place to start when you are ready to search for appropriate references to support your arguments or conclusions.

u04v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Respecting Your Reader" w/John Pollock

Presidential speechwriter John Pollock knows the value of credible sources. In Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Respecting Your Reader" w/John Pollock, Pollock recognizes that researching and evaluating his sources to make sure they were trustworthy was crucial to not only his professional reputation but his reputation with his audience as well. Discover how credible sources can help you build trust with your audience, so you can communicate your best.

Course Resources
[Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Respecting Your Reader" w/John Pollock](#) | Transcript

u04d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

One form of research introduced this week is primary research. Primary research is when the researcher uses firsthand information to support a goal. Some examples of primary research are interviews, observations, and journals.

For this discussion, practice observing as form of primary research. Observe communication styles between two or more people. You are welcome to choose who you observe. You may choose to observe individuals in your workplace, or you may choose to observe an interaction somewhere else. Take notes on your observation. Then, write a summary of your observation for this discussion.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u04s3 - Prepare: Informative Report

In Week 6, you will submit an informative report. As part of the writing process, you will complete a draft of the report and submit it as part of the Week 5 discussion, in order to get feedback from your peers.

To begin preparing for your informative report, read through the description and instructions for the Informative Report assignment in Week 6. In addition, review the scoring guide to see the criteria by which your assignment will be evaluated.

Then, use the Capella library and online resources to identify risks and benefits of the innovation you selected to write about. Locate at least two references you can use to support the information you will be presenting in your informative report. The General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide would be helpful for this research.

You will need to informally cite these resources, so make sure you take note of the following information so you can add it to a reference page:

- Name of the author(s).
- Date the reference was published.
- The full title of the reference.
- The source of the reference.
  - Was it from a book?
  - Was it an article in a magazine?
  - Did you find it on a website?

Note: You may use the Informative Report Template [DOCX] to complete this assignment.

Introduction

Peer Review

Rayensh and Kate are prepared to inform Leah about their innovation. They decide to create a first draft together so that they can receive feedback from a couple of trusted peers. They draft a brief informative report in which they include their ideas and their research. Their peers have some suggested changes. Rayensh and Kate are glad they asked for a peer review because it is hard to be objective about one's own work.

This week, you will learn about informative writing. The intent of informative writing is to objectively explain an issue or topic. As a writer, you do not present your opinion. Instead, you explain a concept objectively. You can use research to support your explanation. In order to be successful at informative writing, you will need to

determine your audience. This week, you will continue to apply the stages of writing and create a draft of your informative report, which you will post for a peer review in this week's discussion. The final draft will be due in Week 6.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Post a draft of your informative report for the Week 6 assignment for peer review.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about informative writing, writing drafts, and peer review.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Hear how a wrongly accused prisoner wrote his way to freedom.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Analyze real-world writing drafts to see if they stack up or fall short.
- **Prepare:** Incorporate feedback from the peer review discussion into your informative report for Week 6.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Post a draft of your informative report for the Week 6 assignment for peer review.

u05s2 - What You Need to Know

Writing to Inform

Writing to inform means providing additional information to the reader about a specific topic, subject matter, or theme. Examples of texts that are written to inform include expository essays or articles, instructions or directions, and encyclopedias or other reference texts.

The opinions of the author are not included in informative writing. The goal is to objectively explain a concept so that the audience receives the information that they need. Read these resources to learn more about informative writing.

- Learn more about the difference between informative and persuasive writing from the Capella Writing Center: Q: What is the difference between informative and persuasive writing?
- In your textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*:
    - Chapter 8, "Informative Reports," pages 214–239. This will help you gather the information necessary to write your assignment.

- Luck, S. L. (2016). _Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills._ New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
  - Chapter 12, "Honor the Definite," pages 127–138.
- Talbot, F. (2019). _How to write effective business English: Your guide to excellent professional communication_ (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Kogan Page.
  - Chapter 3, "Quality Matters," pages 16–23.

Writing a Draft

"Every minute you spend in planning saves 10 minutes in execution."

– Brian Tracy, Author and Motivational Speaker

Writing is a lot like sports—it requires intense preparation over time to be successful. Basketball players, for instance, put in a lot of practice hours, take feedback from their coach, and have a game plan in place to win. Strong writing also requires a plan of action, incorporating feedback, and lots of practice to reach your goals. Now, with your writing plan in place, you're ready to start putting your hard work into play.

This week, you'll discover how to use your communication skill to write a draft that will be a slam dunk with your audience. Remember, practicing the skills you're learning in this course is a lifelong process that will help you stay at the top of your professional game. When you write a draft, your goal is to put your ideas on paper. You goal is not perfection.

- Review the Drafting process.

The writing process may use different concepts, but the goals are always the same. Read the following to learn more about the writing process:

- In your textbook, _Technical Writing for Success_:
  - Chapter 4, "Writing Process," pages 88–115. This will help you gather the information necessary to write your assignment.
- Luck, S. L. (2016). _Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills._ New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
  - Chapter 6, "Honor the Structure," pages 55–70.

Peer Review

A good habit to get into is that of peer review. Having someone else read your work and provide informal feedback can really help you improve your writing. You can ask another learner or a colleague from work, or even form a group of interested writers who want to help each other improve. To learn more about this stage of writing, review the resource from the Capella Writing Center on Peer Review.

u05v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Story: The Power of Writing

"When I wrote, I was free."

– Derrick Hamilton

Imagine serving 20 years in prison for a crime you didn't commit. That's exactly what happened to Derrick Hamilton. Life looked grim until Hamilton decided to put the power of his words into play. In Capella Story: The Power of Writing, you'll hear how Hamilton used his communication skill to write his way to freedom.

Course Resources
[Capella Story: The Power of Writing](#)	Transcript

u05v2 - Interactive Learning Module: Drafting: You Be the Judge

Here's a chance to put everything you've learned into practice. In this interactive experience, Drafting: You Be the Judge, you'll analyze real-world writing drafts to see if they stack up or fall short.

Course Resources
[Drafting: You Be the Judge](#)	Transcript

u05d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

For this week, post a draft of your informative report for peer review in the discussion area.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least two individuals and answer these questions:

1. What are the strengths of the informative report?
2. Are there any areas where the reader would want to know more?

u05s3 - Prepare: Informative Report

Next week, you will submit the informative report that you drafted for this week's discussion. This week, review the feedback you received from your peers, and make the any appropriate updates. Begin working on your final draft of the assignment. Remember, you can use the Informative Report Template [DOCX] to complete this assignment.

Unit 6 ≫ Starting and Finishing Strong

Introduction

Taking it to the Next Step

Leah calls Kate and Rayensh into her office, as stakeholders have been wondering about ideas for all of the changes. Kate and Rayensh bring in the final draft of their informative proposal. They have applied four of the skills detailed as part of this new initiative—communication, productivity, technology, and innovation—to complete the informative report. They feel confident that they started strong and are finishing strong. Leah is thrilled with the idea and encourages the team to take the innovation to the next step of implementation.

Look at how much progress you have made so far by writing! You've brainstormed, developed your ideas, and used the techniques you're learning in this course to begin working on your draft. This week, you'll learn how to revise your draft so you can communicate your best ideas.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss the use of revision in improving your professional or personal life.
- **Assignment:** Write a 1–2 page informative report.

- **What You Need to Know:** Explore the stages of writing: revising and proofreading.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover tips for revising your writing.

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Consider something you've redone in your professional or personal life and discuss the process you used for this revision.

Assignment Overview

Research the risks and benefits of the innovation you selected for the Week 3 Assignment, select one risk and one benefit on which to focus, and write a 1–2 page informative report.

u06s2 - What You Need to Know

Revising and Proofreading

Revising is one of the most important stages of writing. At this point, you can review your hard work and good ideas and revise until you are ready to submit. You can consider this step as you write your next two assignments.

Review this resource from the Capella Writing Center: Revising.

The final stage of writing is proofreading. This includes sentence structure, grammar, and language. Review the resources on proofreading from the Capella Writing Center: Proofreading.

Review these resources for more tips on sentence-level revision.

- In your textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*:
    - Chapter 16, "Technical Reading," pages 430–470.

- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
    - Chapter 11, "Honor the Concrete," pages 117–126.
    - Chapter 12, "Honor the Definite," pages 127–138.

- From the Writing Center:
    - [Active and Passive Voice](#).
    - [Sentence Structure](#).

u06v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Being Your Own Editor" w/Derrick Hamilton

"Editing to me is just fine-tuning. Kind of like putting the antenna on a radio to make sure the sound comes out right."

– Derrick Hamilton

Like an antenna helps you tune into the music coming through your radio, the revision process can also help your audience tune in to the message you're trying to send through your writing. That's why it's an essential part of your success in this course and beyond. Just ask wrongly accused prisoner Derrick Hamilton.

In Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Being Your Own Editor" w/Derrick Hamilton, Derrick shares how teaching himself the revision process not only improved his writing, it ensured that his appeals for freedom didn't end up in a prosecutor's trash can. So tune in as Derrick shares his personal tips for revising your writing wherever life takes you.

Course Resources
[Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Being Your Own Editor" w/Derrick Hamilton](#) | Transcript

u06d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

In this week's story, the team is preparing to implement their innovation. Before they do this, they will use the review from their peers to ensure their final report is in good shape. In life, as in our writing, it is normal to redo or fix something, as the first draft is rarely perfect.

For this discussion, consider the topic of revision: What have you redone to improve in your personal and professional life? This could be anything from decorating a room to revising a worldview. Provide some context as to your own revision process with your selected idea.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u06a1 - Informative Report

Overview

For this assignment, you will create an informative report. The purpose of informative writing is to convey information. Informative writing is unbiased, and the goal is to present concepts and research objectively.

For this assignment, you will research risks and benefits of your selected innovation and then select one risk and one benefit on which to focus. Your audience for this assignment is your supervisor.

Preparation

Use the Capella library and online resources to identify risks and benefits of the innovation you selected to write about. Then, locate at least two references you can use to support the information you will be presenting in your informative report. The General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide would be helpful for this research.

Instructions

For this assignment, write a 1–2 page informative report in which you complete the following. **Note:** You may use the Informative Report Template [DOCX] to complete this assignment.

- Summarize the goal of the report.
  - Are you asking the reader to do anything?
  - Does the reader need this information to make a decision?
  - Make sure to include a brief description of the innovation being recommended.
- Discuss risks and benefits of the innovation.
  - Provide brief descriptions of 2–3 benefits and 2–3 risks associated with the identified innovation.
  - Support your information with a minimum of 2 references.
- Explain one risk in detail.
- Explain one benefit in detail.

- Provide a citation page.
    - The intent of this page is to provide credit to the original author.
    - Note that you are not expected to formally use APA or another citation method.

Additional Requirements

Save your informative report in an accessible format and submit.

- **Written communication:** Written communication should be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Formatting:** The informative report is organized and formatted in a way that enhances comprehension and keeps the reader interested. You may use the Informative Report Template [DOCX] if desired.
- **References:** Include a minimum of 2 references that are clearly cited and credited on a citation page.
- **Citations:** As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of it so you have the necessary foundation.
    - For this assignment, provide the author's last name and the year of the publication in the body of the paper. If there is a direct quote, use quotation marks and provide the page number, too.
    - Also, provide a separate reference page that includes a list of the research you used for the assignment.
- **Length:** 1–2 pages of text, in addition to the cover sheet and citation pages.
    - The cover sheet should include your name, the course number, assignment title, and date. No other information is required on this page.
    - On the citation page, you are not expected to formally use APA or another citation method; the goal is to provide credit to the original author.

Review the Informative Report Scoring Guide for details on how your paper will be graded.

Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assignment criteria:

- **Competency 3: Develop business and technical writing documents that convey essential information.**
    - Discuss risks and benefits of the innovation.
    - Explain one risk in detail.
    - Explain one benefit in detail.
- **Competency 4: Design and format documents to convey clear intent and concise information.**
    - Summarize the goal of the report.
- **Competency 5: Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.**
    - Provide a citation page.

Introduction

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

Persuading the Team

After Leah approved the innovation idea, she asked Rayensh and Kate to create a recommendation report for all stakeholders. Leah and Rayensh know that part of their job now is to persuade the team to move forward with the innovation. They know that their audience is their team and other department leadership. What they don't know is whether their audience will be receptive or unreceptive. Some will fear change while others will embrace it. Because the audience may vary in their emotional response, the team decides it is important to provide clear reasons and support for their recommendation.

</div>

This week, you will learn about writing to recommend. In technical writing, a recommendation report provides a solution to a problem. The problem can be a true problem, or the problem can also be an opportunity for change or to improve a current process. Of course, most problems have more than one solution. This means that part of recommendation writing is helping the audience make the best choice.

Recommendation reports are a form of persuasive writing. Over the next few weeks, you'll discover how you can use your communication skill to summon the passion and power of your words to persuade others to believe your point of view.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Describe the different audiences you work with and the consequences of not knowing an audience.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about recommendation reports and the writing process.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover tips for crafting and finishing your first draft.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Learn why checking the details in your writing can mean the difference between success and failure.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover the very different ways others are using their communication skill to practice successful prewriting.
- **Prepare:** Begin working on the Week 8 assignment by researching and selecting criteria (such as cost, safety, or efficiency) to help clarify and define the scope of your recommendation report.

u07s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Describe the different audiences you work with. Then discuss a time you (or someone you know) did not know an audience and what resulted.

u07s2 - What You Need to Know

Writing to Recommend

Every day you make choices. You may research these choices extensively when you make big decisions, like what kind of car to buy. You may also make choices every day without a lot of research, such as what to make for dinner. However, all of the choices are influenced by external persuasion. If a salesperson tries to sell you a specific car, you are their audience. You are the decision maker.

When writing recommendations in the professional environment, it is important to provide clear reasons and support for your recommendations. The most important consideration when starting to write a recommendation report is to know your audience. Sometimes your audience will be open to the ideas, while others will not want to hear the information that is being recommended. Knowing whether or not your audience is receptive will help you organize your communication accordingly.

To learn more about recommendation reports, read:

- In your textbook, Technical Writing for Success:
    - Chapter 13, "Recommendation Reports," pages 342–365.

- Luck, S. L. (2016). *Zen and the art of business communication: A step-by-step guide to improving your business writing skills.* New York, NY: Business Expert Press.
    - Chapter 14, "Honor Truths," pages 151–162.

Stages of Writing

You have applied the stages of writing throughout the course. Review the Writing Process to prepare for your recommendation report.

u07v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Finding What Works for You" w/Kim Coles

"My advice is to trust the process."

– Kim Coles

Writing a first draft can take a leap of faith, but author and actress Kim Coles is back to help you make the plunge. In Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Finding What Works for You" w/Kim Coles, Kim will share her personal tips for crafting and finishing your first draft, including her secrets for creating powerful conclusions. Kim's insight will help make you a true believer in your own power as a writer.

Course Resources
[Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Finding What Works for You" w/Kim Coles](#) | Transcript

u07v2 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting It Right" w/Derrick Hamilton

"If you don't have an eye for detail, you'll miss something."

– Derrick Hamilton

If you've ever had to bring proof to apply for a driver's license or show your work in a math class, you understand why details matter. They not only confirm the information we present, they also give others confidence in us. The same is true when it comes to our persuasive writing. In Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting It Right" w/Derrick Hamilton, wrongfully convicted prisoner Derrick Hamilton is back to explain why checking the details in your writing can mean the difference between success and failure.

Course Resources
[Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Getting It Right" w/Derrick Hamilton](#) | Transcript

u07v3 - Interactive Learning Module: Prewriting Your Way

See why prewriting isn't one-size-fits-all. In Prewriting Your Way, you'll discover the very different ways others are using their communication skill to practice successful prewriting.

Course Resources
[Prewriting Your Way](#)	Transcript

u07d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

This week, the team is moving forward with the innovation idea to the recommendation phase for all stakeholders. Part of their job is to persuade the stakeholders that their analysis is correct. One aspect of doing this successfully is knowing their audience.

For this discussion, think of your current workplace or of a previous workplace. How would you describe the different audiences that you interact with? For example, how is an external stakeholder different than an internal stakeholder? Can you think of a time when you or someone you know didn't know their audience? What was the result?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u07s3 - Prepare: Recommendation Report

Next week, you will submit a recommendation report based on the benefit and risk highlighted in the informative report you submitted in Week 6. The goal of writing a recommendation report is to provide a solution to a problem or challenge in the workplace. In this situation, the problem/challenge is the need for innovation; the solution is determined by you.

To begin preparing, read through the assignment description and instructions for the Recommendation Report assignment in Week 8. In addition, review the scoring guide to see the criteria by which your assignment will be evaluated.

Review the innovation risks and benefits you defined in the informational report from the Week 6 assignment. Identify possible innovation recommendations based on the risks and benefits. Use the Capella library and online resources to help you determine the 2–3 criteria (such as cost, safety, or efficiency) you can use to help clarify and define the scope of your final recommendation. Identify a minimum of two references that support your conclusions. The General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide would be helpful for this research.

Note: You may use the Recommendation Report Template [DOCX] to complete this assignment.

Introduction

Hoping for the Best

The department is called together into a meeting so that Leah, Rayensh, and Kate can pitch the plan and provide their recommendation. They know that they have accurately researched the innovation, considered their audience and purpose, and provided a strong recommendation. However, they don't know if the team will be amenable to the changes. They realize that they have done their part, so they hope for the best outcome.

What were the times in your life when you took a stand for what you believe in? Maybe you tried to convince a parent to let you do something they thought you shouldn't, or to get a friend to consider a different political view. We've all had conversations where we try to change someone's mind. And, when it comes to our professional lives, the ability to persuade others to enact change will be crucial to our career success. This week, you will complete your third assignment, a recommendation report. You will use your innovation skill alongside your communication skill to practice writing persuasively. This will help you enact real change—now and in your future.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss using communication and technology skills to enact change.
- **Assignment:** Write a 2–3 page recommendation report.
- **What You Need to Know:** Learn about persuasive writing and ethics in writing and the workplace.

- **Interactive Learning Module:** Discover how persuasive writing can make a difference.
- **Prepare:** Begin working on the Week 9 assignment, Email Correspondence.

Discussion Overview

Discuss using the skills of communication and technology to enact change.

Assignment Overview

Write a 2–3 page recommendation report based on the benefits and risks highlighted in the informative report from the Week 6 assignment.

Persuasive Writing

You probably already recognize the importance of how you present yourself to others. It's the reason you dress up for a job interview. But presentation also matters when it comes to your writing. A good argument alone is not enough. In your personal and professional life, how you present that argument can mean the difference between success and failure.

There is a difference between informative and persuasive writing. Persuasive writing makes an argument and tries to convince the reader to take a certain action or think a certain way. In persuasive writing, your words have to challenge pre-existing conceptions, offer alternative beliefs, and ultimately get your audience to do something different.

In the professional world, persuasive writing could look like a request for time off, a proposal to work on a project you're passionate about, a social media post from your marketing team, or even a company newsletter endorsing a new mandate. It's something you'll want to use time and time again to reach your personal and professional goals.

One form of research often used for persuasive writing is data, either qualitative or quantitative. Read this article to learn more:

- Jonsen, K., Fendt, J., & Point, S. (2018). [Convincing qualitative research: What constitutes persuasive writing?](#) *Organizational Research Methods*, *21*(1), 30–67.

Ethics

What are ethics? We all have our own definitions of ethics, although they are likely similar. One final takeaway from this course is that no writing matters if it isn't based in ethics. Not all ethical challenges are reflective of the writer. When providing a recommendation, it must be based on ethics.

Learn more about some of the ethical considerations in technical writing from the textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*:

- Chapter 15, "Ethics in the Workplace," pages 404–429.

u08v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Story: Making the Case

"This could be my opportunity to make a change."

– Shelby Warlick

Need to feel persuaded that persuasive writing can make a difference? In this week's Capella Story: Making the Case, graduate student Shelby Warlick delivers hard-earned proof. Shelby saw her persuasive writing assignment in class as an opportunity to change an unfair employee evaluation policy at her job. Not only did Shelby use the same writing process you're learning to set things right, but she also discovered firsthand why solid sources help you stand taller when you're taking a stance.

Course Resources
[Capella Story: Making the Case](#) | Transcript

u08a1 - Recommendation Report

Overview

For this assignment, you will write a recommendation report based on the benefits and risks highlighted in the informative report you completed for the Week 6 assignment. The goal of writing a recommendation report is to

provide a solution to a problem or challenge in the workplace. In this situation, the problem/challenge is the need for innovation; the solution is determined by you.

You can choose whether the benefits outweigh the risks, or vice versa. In you choose the benefits, your recommendation report should focus on the recommendation of the innovation. If the risks outweigh the benefits, your recommendation report should focus on not implementing the innovation at this time and suggesting an alternative.

In order to write a detailed recommendation, you will need to consider 2–3 criteria that are influencing your recommendation. Common criteria include cost, safety, or efficiency, but you can choose any criteria that best support your recommendation.

Preparation

Review the innovation risks and benefits you defined in the informational report. Identify possible innovation recommendations based on the risks and benefits. Use the Capella library and online resources to help you determine criteria you can use to help clarify and define the scope of your final recommendation. Identify a minimum of two references that support your conclusions. The General Education Information Research Skills Library Guide is helpful for this research.

Instructions

For this assignment, write a 2–3 page recommendation report in which you complete the following. You may use the Recommendation Report Template [DOCX] to complete this assignment. Note that the template is structured in the order that is typical of these kinds of reports, but it is not necessarily the order in which you would complete the work.

- Create an introduction that clarifies purpose and audience.
    - Who is this report for?
    - Are they likely to be receptive to your recommendation?
    - What outcome are you looking for once you've presented the report?
- Select criteria to determine the scope of the recommendation.
    - Select 2–3 criteria to help you analyze the risks and benefits against the possible recommendations.
    - Rank the criteria in order of importance.
    - Explain why each criteria was chosen and ranked as selected.
- Analyze each criteria.
    - Analysis should be brief.
    - Analysis should clearly show how each criteria supports your final recommendation.
- Provide a recommendation based on the criteria and risk/benefit analysis.

Additional Requirements

Save your recommendation report in an accessible format and submit.

- **Written communication:** Written communication should be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Formatting:** The recommendation report is organized and formatted in a way that enhances comprehension and keeps the reader interested. You may use the [Recommendation Report Template [DOCX]](#) if desired.
- **References:** Include a minimum of 2 references that are clearly cited and credited on a citation page.
- **Length:** 2–3 pages of text, in addition to the cover sheet and citation page. The cover sheet should include your name, the course number, assignment title, and date.
- **Citations:** As you complete research, it is important to cite your sources so that you can provide the original author with credit for their work. There are different citation formats. As you move forward, you will use APA in your coursework. You do not need to use APA formatting in this course, but it is important to learn the intent of it so you have the necessary foundation.
  - For this assignment, provide the author's last name and the year of the publication in the body of the paper. If there is a direct quote, use quotation marks and provide the page number, too.
  - Also, provide a separate reference page that includes a list of the research you used for the assignment.

Review the Recommendation Report Scoring Guide for details on how your paper will be graded.

Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assignment criteria:

- **Competency 2: Define the appropriate audience and purpose for specific deliverables**.
  - Create an introduction that clarifies purpose and audience.

- **Competency 3: Develop business and technical writing documents that convey essential information.**
  - Select criteria to explain the scope of the recommendation.
  - Analyze each criteria.
  - Provide recommendation based on the criteria and risk/benefit analysis.

- **Competency 5: Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.**
  - Address assignment purpose in a well-organized text, incorporating appropriate evidence and tone in grammatically sound sentences.

u08d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

As the team prepares to pitch their plan, they are also preparing to convince someone to see their point of view. In your professional life, the ability to persuade others to enact change will be crucial to your career success.

For this discussion, let's revisit two of the skills in this course: communication and technology. Consider a time that you have enacted change using these two skills or a time that you could have enacted change using these two skills. How would you combine them? How did/would you approach convincing others to see your point of view, implementing these two skills?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u08s3 - Prepare: Email Correspondence

For your final assignment, due next week, you will write an email to your department in which you will summarize the final decision regarding your suggested innovation. Your audience for this assignment is your department.

To begin preparing, read through the description and instructions for the Email Correspondence assignment in Week 9. In addition, review the scoring guide to see the criteria by which your assignment will be evaluated.

Unit 9 ▶▶ Writing to Correspond

Introduction

Initiating a Positive Implementation

Exciting news! The team was happy with the suggested innovation, and all stakeholders decide to move ahead. Rayensh, Kate, and Leah decide to craft an email that provides a summary of the

innovation and next steps. Leah volunteers to send the email because Kate and Rayensh did so much work on the project. Because this is a time of change, Leah knows that a positive tone and expression of goodwill will go a long way to initiating a positive implementation for the new innovation. She keeps the email brief, positive, and action-oriented.

This week, you will learn about writing to correspond. Correspondence is one of the most common types of technical writing and one you likely already do every day in your personal and professional life. Correspondence includes emails, memos, letters, and instant messages, for example. The goal of technical communication is to act, and one of the main reasons that people correspond is to encourage the audience to act on an idea. As you consider the concepts addressed this week, you should apply them in your final assignment for the course.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss an implementation plan for a change in your life.
- **Assignment:** Write a 1-page email regarding your recommendations for your innovation.
- **What You Need to Know:** Read about correspondence writing and tone.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Learn about the revision process from a veteran author.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Think of a change in your professional or personal life, and discuss an implementation plan for this change.

Assignment Overview

Write a 1-page email that summarizes your recommendations for your innovation, highlights the risks and benefits, and explains why this innovation is the best option.

u09s2 - What You Need to Know

Writing an Email

Think about an email you received that elicited emotion. Was the emotion negative? Was it positive? And how did you know what to do with the information? For professional correspondence, tone is very important. To learn more about writing for correspondence, read the following:

- In your textbook, *Technical Writing for Success*, read:
  - Read Chapter 5, "Correspondence," pages 118–153.

- Talbot, F. (2019). *How to write effective business English: Your guide to excellent professional communication* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Kogan Page.
  - Chapter 8, "E-Mail and Instant Messaging," pages 32–39.
  - Chapter 9, "Punctuation and Grammar Tips," pages 40–48.

Tone

When considering correspondence, it is necessary to focus on tone. The tone of an email is likely to influence the action taken by the audience. However, the goal is a tone of "goodwill" rather than an aggressive tone. Are you more likely to act on a request when the tone is professional and respectful or when it is disrespectful, or even vague?

For a deeper dive into tone, review this resource from the Capella Writing Center: Tone.

u09v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Using Feedback" w/John Pollock

"Don't get discouraged when you need to work on something over and over and over again."

– John Pollock

When the pros talk about writing, they're often speaking of the revision process—the work they put into editing their words to make them shine. In Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Using Feedback" w/John Pollock, veteran author John Pollock reveals why he backs up his words with a healthy dose of feedback and a lot of attention to detail. Though revising your work may feel challenging, Pollock's tips will help you step up your game, so your argument can have maximum impact.

Course Resources
Capella Talk: "In Their Words: Using Feedback" w/John Pollock	Transcript

u09d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

One obvious outcome of convincing change is to create a way to implement the change. A change can't be solely ideological. Think about a change you have had to make at work or in another area of your life. Or, think of a change you are about to make. For this discussion, write a brief implementation plan for this change and discuss why this plan would be successful.

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u09a1 - Email Correspondence

Overview

For your final assignment, you will again use all four employability skills introduced in the course to write an email to your department. This email will provide a summary of the final decision regarding your suggested innovation. An email is a form of correspondence that should be concise and contain only pertinent information. Your audience for this assignment is your department. While there were many conversations to reach this decision, this audience just needs a high-level overview of the final decision. The tone of your email should be positive and apply the concept of goodwill: "Goodwill is the value of doing things that create mutual admiration and respect" (Smith-Worthington & Jefferson, 2019, pg. 123).

Preparation

Even though this assignment is only one page long, that doesn't mean it is easy. In fact, many professional writers will tell you that the shorter the requirement, the harder it is. Going through the Writing Process—Prewriting, Drafting, Peer Review, Revising, and Proofreading—may be even more important as you work to effectively get your message across while working within the constraints of an email.

Instructions

For this assignment, write a 1-page email in which you complete the following:

- Summarize the final decision about the innovation.
- Provide a brief overview of risks and benefits assessed.
- Provide a brief overview of the criteria that supported the decision-making.
- Explain why the decision is the best decision for the department.
- Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.

Additional Requirements

Save your email in an accessible format and submit.

- **Written communication:** Written communication should be free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **Formatting:** The email is organized and formatted in a way that enhances comprehension and keeps the reader interested.
- **References:** Any references used should be clearly cited and credited on a citation page.
- **Length:** 1–2 paragraphs.

Review the Email Correspondence Scoring Guide for details on how your paper will be graded.

Competencies Measured

By successfully completing this assignment, you will demonstrate your proficiency in the following course competencies and assignment criteria:

- **Competency 3: Develop business and technical writing documents that convey essential information.**
  - Explain why the decision is the best decision for the department.

- **Competency 4: Design and format documents to convey clear intent and concise information.**
  - Summarize the final decision about the innovation.
  - Provide a brief overview of risks and benefits assessed.
  - Provide a brief overview of the criteria that supported the decision-making.

- **Competency 5: Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.**
  - Produce text with minimal grammar, usage, spelling, and mechanical errors.

Unit 10 ≫ Planning for the Future

Introduction

Skills for the Future

Now that the team has decided to move forward with the innovation, Leah, Kate, and Rayensh are asked to reflect on the skills they learned in the project: communication, productivity, technology, and innovation. They agree communication was key, both with each other and in the development of the written communications; productivity was necessary to deliver in a short timeline; technology was necessary to organize the communications; and innovation was key to showing that they can adjust to change and growth. As the team plans for the future, they realize the necessity of these skills for their own professional success.

Over the past 10 weeks, you've discovered the writer in you by honing the skills you've learned throughout this course. And, you've explored how writing can help you stand out to potential employers and reach your personal and professional dreams.

Writing is consistently one of the top talents that employers look for on the resumes of prospective hires. Good writers not only help others understand ideas, but they can also convince clients and peers to take action, when needed, to get the job done. In this course, you've practiced a writing process you can use to communicate your ideas in any situation.

This week, we'll take a look back at how far you've come and how you can continue applying the skills of innovation, communication, productivity, and technology to harness the power of your words now and in your future. After all—it's yours to write.

To-Do List:

- **Discussion:** Discuss the impact that taking this course has had on your employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation.
- **What You Need to Know:** Review the skills covered in this course.
- **Interactive Learning Module:** Learn from experts why writing is a uniquely personal and powerful part of how they communicate with the world.

Learning Activities

u10s1 - Activity Overview

Discussion Overview

Discuss the impact taking this course has had on your employability skills of communication, productivity, technology, and innovation, and how you might use them in your professional life.

Employability Skills

As you've learned throughout this course, the modern workplace requires employees who can communicate in the language of business. That means sharing their thoughts and ideas with others in written form—whether that's a resume, a business proposal, a company memo, a press release, or an email.

Over the past 10 weeks, you've worked hard to hone four essential employability skills that will help you embrace the power of your words and write for any purpose and audience. You've practiced:

- **Innovation** to use strategies to develop your ideas and create change
- **Communication** to effectively write about information, your ideas, and your perspective
- **Productivity** to plan your time and your writing.
- **Technology** to use digital tools and devices to document your writing efficiently and effectively.

Honing these four skills will help you to keep on developing the writer in you. Continuing to practice these skills outside of this course will also allow you to strengthen your resume, apply for jobs, maximize your professional performance, and reach your academic and professional goals. And, of course, you can use these same skills to help you achieve your personal goals too.

u10v1 - Interactive Learning Module: Capella Story: Making Sense of it All

"We're all writers… It belongs to all of us."

– Kim Coles

In this week's final Capella Story: Making Sense of it All, our experts share why writing is a uniquely personal and powerful part of how they communicate with the world. It's about practice. It's about connection. It's about understanding ourselves and how we can change others through our words.

Course Resources

[Capella Story: Making Sense of it All](#) | Transcript

u10d1 - Write Your Discussion Post

Throughout this course, you discussed different skills essential to employability, specifically communication, productivity, technology, and innovation. Consider these skills in your personal and professional life and as they relate to technical and business writing. How have you improved with these skills? How can you use your learning about these skills moving forward in your professional life?

Response Guidelines

Respond to at least one other learner.

Course Resources
Undergraduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide