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Professor Brown

Writing for Engineers

## Self-Assessment Essay

Throughout this semester in Writing for Engineering (ENGL 21007), I've made decent progress in both my technical writing and rhetorical understanding. By looking back on my major assignments, the Lab Report, Technical Description, and Engineering Proposal, I can reflect on my development with several of the course's learning outcomes. For example, things I've noticed improvement on things like drafting and revising, working together as a team, citing sources, writing for certain audiences and many others.

### **Enhancing Strategies for Reading, Drafting, Revising, Editing, and Self-Assessment**

At the start of the semester, I would tend to rush my writing to finish it quickly and I didn't bother revising much. However, as we progressed more into the semester, I became more engaged with my drafting and revision process. For instance, in the Lab Report, I began with a rough draft that lacked a clear explanation of the purpose of the experiment. Through revision and feedback, I improved the clarity of my analysis.

Furthermore, this is especially clear in my technical description writing. As I originally lacked a lot of material to make it more specific and catered towards an exact item. Through the feedback given by my professor, I went back and made changes by talking more specifically about an exact hole puncher model rather than just writing vaguely about all hole descriptions. This turned out to be incorrect since a lot of hole punchers have varying models and extra parts that others don't, so it's crucial to identify that and make a note of it.

Throughout these revisions, I also paid closer attention to sentence structure and transitions between ideas. One habit I had to break was writing run on sentences and paragraphs that just kept going on. I would keep this in mind while revising, and I was able to cut down on each section while holding the same impact. Peer reviews also helped me in seeing exactly which

parts needed improvement and how I can go about it. Over time, I learned how to self assess my work by reading it from the perspective of my intended audience and evaluating whether my message was being communicated effectively.

### **Negotiating Writing Goals and Audience Expectations**

Each assignment this semester had a completely different situation, which required me to adjust my writing so that it could be more presentable for certain audiences. For example, the Lab Report was written with a scientific audience in mind, so I made sure to be clear and objective. However, the Engineering Proposal was designed for stakeholders and policymakers. This required being persuasive as well as having a compelling call to action. Additionally, it was more important to seem confident in our work so that the budget could be passed. In the Engineering Proposal, I made sure to clearly define the problem, which is particulate matter in subway stations, and present a feasible solution supported by case studies from cities like Seoul and Madrid. This showed my understanding of how to write for a nontechnical but informed audience.

### **Engaging in Collaborative and Social Aspects of Writing**

The Engineering Proposal was a team project that required a lot of collaboration. We divided tasks based on what each person felt more comfortable doing, which allowed us to complete each aspect of the assignment. The process taught me how to give and receive feedback as well as learning how to collaborate effectively as a team while being completely remote. Through this experience, I learned how important being able to work as a team is in technical writing and how shared responsibility can produce a more thorough and polished final product.

One of the most important lessons I learned from group work was the importance of compromise. There were times when we had different ideas about how to approach certain sections, and learning to listen to others and add their perspectives made the final project much stronger. It also in a way showed how writing can be seen as a social activity, where the best results come from open communication and mutual respect. I now feel more prepared to participate in a professional environment when it comes to collaborating on the same work as a team.

## **Formulating and Articulating a Stance in Writing**

Articulating a clear stance was particularly important in the Engineering Proposal. In the call to action section, I urged decision makers to prioritize air quality improvements in the subway system. I used evidence from scientific studies and real-world examples to support this stance. This approach demonstrated my ability to craft persuasive writing while maintaining a formal and credible tone. Similarly, in the Technical Description, while the assignment was largely explanatory, I still emphasized the importance and continued relevance of the hole puncher in modern settings. I concluded by asserting that even simple tools, when thoughtfully engineered, can have a lasting impact.

## **Strengthening Source Use Practices**

Throughout the semester, I also improved in evaluating and integrating sources into my work. In my Lab Report, I referenced external videos and experiments to support my findings. In the Engineering Proposal, I used data from academic journals and government reports to justify our budget and project goals. Another important development was learning how to identify the reliability and relevance of sources. In the past, I would always just use the first source I saw, thinking it would be the most beneficial towards my cause, without knowing if the information within the source was even credible. Later on, especially during the Engineering Proposal, I made an effort to find peer reviewed articles and government data to make our argument stronger and more trust worthy. I now understand that strong sources can significantly elevate the quality of technical writing and make arguments more persuasive.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, this course has helped me grow a lot as a technical writer. I have become more strategic in how I plan and revise my writing, and I'm more aware of why it's so important to write for a specific audience and how to tailor my work for such audiences. Most importantly, I understand how to use writing as a tool to explain complex ideas clearly and persuasively.