

ENC 4260, ASSIGNMENT 4 (Two Options)

Samples of Outlines Submitted by Students

NOTE: Submit your outline within the body of an email message, not as a separate attachment. The subject line of the email should be: Lastname 4260 4 outline.

SAMPLE 1 [student name withheld]

Working Title

Option 1-A: Instruction Manual

Statement of Topic and Thesis

I am going to compare Coleco Industries' instructional manual for the Adam computer, which came out in 1983, with The Golf Instruction Manual, by Steve Newell. I have identified that the golf instruction manual is a well-written guide to proper grip, swing, stance, and form, while the Adam computers' poorly written instruction manual contributed to the company's \$35 million loss, and failure of the product itself. Coleco Industries ultimately blamed their \$35 million loss on manuals that were not user-friendly, because they didn't offer first-time users adequate assistance.

My thesis will be that instruction manuals are of crucial importance, not only to the success of a particular product, but also to the success of an entire company. Books and news articles discussing the failure of Coleco Industries' Adam computer, resulting from a poorly written instruction manual, will help support this thesis. I plan to compare and contrast the golf instruction manual with the Adam computer instruction manual. I will point out clear differences between the two and indicate why the golf manual is more reader-friendly and functional than the Coleco instruction manual. I will then revise the Adam computer instruction manual and give a detailed explanation of the reason for these changes, in the power point slides and in the website.

Research Sources

I intend to use several books that discuss Coleco Industries, as well as general guidelines on how to write well-written instruction manuals. I've already found several appropriate books, such as *Technical Editing; the Practical Guide for Editors and Writers*, written by Judith A. Tarutz in 1992, and the book *Design of Devices and Systems*, Third Edition, Revised and Expanded, by William H. Middendorf. I also intend to use numerous online articles, such as the downloadable instruction manual for the Adam computer and the golf instruction manual. I will also use news articles that I found in the New York *Times* that discuss the history of Coleco Industries and their loss.

SAMPLE 2 [student name withheld]

Working Title

My Career Portfolio (Option 2)

Statement of Topic and Thesis

I would like to explore career search strategies in technical writing/editing and communications management. I have worked in a management capacity for 20 years and am eager to change careers. I believe my business experience can help me make a successful transition to a career in the technical writing field.

Possible Interviews:

Kim Oriole, Freelance Writer
Nancy Whelan-Dickson, Editor and Communication Coordinator (non-profit)
Ann Driscoll, HR Director, FCCI Insurance
Lori Kagan, Marketing Director, Center for Sight

Portfolio will include:

- * Writing samples that I have used for several college courses
- * Leadership newsletter – I am currently on editorial board of company newsletter
- * Procedure Writing – I have written numerous procedures and policies for my current job
- * Layout and Design – As a technical manager for Kinko's, I have several samples of page layout and design and writing samples from policies and procedures
- * Webpage design – I have sole responsibility for writing, designing and maintaining the web page for my department at my current position.

Research Sources

<http://www.cudenver.edu/Student+Life/Career+Center/Students/Job+Search+Strategies.htm>: Job Search Strategies
<http://www.writejobs.com/cgi-bin/listjobs.pl>
<http://www.writerswrite.com/technical/>
<http://www.acinet.org/acinet/default.asp>
http://www.quintcareers.com/career_research_checklist.html
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