



TECHNICAL  
COMMUNICATION

NINTH EDITION

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LANNON

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## Projects and Case Studies

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### Projects and Case Studies

## Conduct an Analysis of Your Professional Language and Culture

Take any combination of the projects below and use them to generate data for a comprehensive report on the Language and Culture of your field. You will find one sample of such a document in the **Models and Templates** section of the web site. Study it closely, as it is a strong example of how such a report can be written.

### Observation of Workplace Cultures

In teams of two, select a company in a field related to your majors from which to conduct workplace observations and interview two co-workers. Make sure that the same company is not chosen more than once by different teams. Ask permission to quietly observe the workplace culture and communication practices for at least a half an hour. If the work being done is proprietary, assure them that you will respect the confidentiality of the workplace. Each of you should conduct your observations and take notes separately to compare later. In your interviews, ask what types of workplace writing each co-worker has done in the past six months. Collect samples if possible. Based on these findings, write a group report detailing the various types of writing taking place in today's workplace. Include a special section on all the different audiences being addressed in that writing. Submit the report to your instructor.

### Analyze Professional Documents

As a group, each bring to class two technical documents you encountered in past internships, co-ops, or summer jobs, or perhaps make a request of a local business for sample documents. Using Lannon's lists for inefficient and efficient documents (pages 4-5), discuss which of the two documents is better. Write a one-page group essay defending your choice.

### Find Your Professional Organizations

Locate a trade or professional association magazine for your field, major, or subspecialty (DO NOT merely pick up a magazine written for a popular audience. Read <http://manta.library.colostate.edu/howto/poplr.html> to learn to tell the difference). Go through and list specialized terms or jargon specific to that field. What kind of professional culture or attitude is being conveyed in the tone of the writing? What words might you use to describe the communication style of insiders in your field as evidenced in their informal writing to each other? Report on your findings to the class.

### Interview Insiders in Your Professional Culture

Interview two people who are well established in your field, major, or subspecialty. Ask them to evaluate the role of technical communication skills in the field (paying particular attention to the various forms of information technology Lannon lists on page 6), how often they write, and what aspects of workplace cultures and writing practices are most important. Report your findings to the class and type up interview transcripts.

### Morale in Your Professional Culture

In teams grouped by majors, you have been assigned the task of surveying morale in your chosen field and/or workplace. Devise a series of questions that will adequately address the classroom culture in your major and the workplace environment. Conduct research using qualitative, observational research methods and examine interaction, cooperation, trust levels between classmates/coworkers,