

Writing Samples: Tips and Tricks



Why do some employers require a writing sample?

Writing samples can show an employer a lot about how you communicate through your writing style, vocabulary use and how you structure sentences and thoughts.

Top tips for strong writing samples

1. Read the application requirements carefully

Take the time to read all of the requirements for the writing sample. Some positions require samples on a specific topic or may have a length requirements. To ensure you don't disqualify yourself before you get the chance to interview, submit all of the documents requested and in the format they have requested.

2. Make sure your sample contains no spelling or grammatical errors

Employers may immediately move onto another candidate if they see spelling or grammatical mistakes. Always revise and check your work before submitting. Having a friend or professor give you feedback on your work can help you with the revision process.

3. A writing sample request is a test of your attention to detail

Employers are trying to see if you can follow direction and can convey your knowledge of the industry or position to which you are applying. This means making sure the sample you select is appropriate for the position to which you're applying. For example, if you're applying for a public relations position, you may want to send a sample press release. If you're applying for a position in the legal field, they may want to see an excerpt of a legal brief. Sometimes you will have to create a piece of writing just for the purpose of the writing sample.

4. What not to send as writing samples

Avoid sending incomplete writings, poems, short stories, essays or research papers unless specifically requested. The key word for all writing is relevance. Is what you're sending relevant to the position you are applying for? If you are not sure what to send, it is okay to reach out to the hiring organization for more clarification of what they are expecting.

Career Tip:

Students can take advantage of the writing center to stand out and double check their grammar. Visit them today at: [/tutoring.asu.edu/student-services/writing-centers](https://tutoring.asu.edu/student-services/writing-centers).

Ensure your writing sample is the **best reflection of you and your writing style**. A solid writing sample can place you far ahead of other candidates who submitted equally strong applications.