

Writing Samples: tips, tricks and helpful advice

Why are writing samples important?

Writing samples demonstrate how you communicate through your writing style and vocabulary use. They are an orientation to how you organize and structure your thoughts and sentences. This being said, it is imperative you submit a strong writing sample with your applications for internships, jobs, and graduate school programs.

Things to consider for strong writing samples

Match the sample with the internship, job, or graduate school program – match the style and topic

Take the time to read all of the requirements for the writing sample. Some applications require writing samples on a specific topic or may have 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.

Chose a writing sample – use an academic or published article review for content, spelling, and grammar

Spelling or grammatical mistakes can immediately disqualify you from being considered. Always revise and check your work before submitting. Having a mentor, professor, friend, or professional give you feedback on your work can help you with the revision

Follow the instructions – use the correct format and length, and bring a writing sample to an interview – print multiple copies just in case

Set aside time to thoroughly read the instructions you are given. Whether you are applying for an internship, job, or graduate school program, use the writing sample to demonstrate you can follow instructions and convey your knowledge of the industry the position or program is in. This means making sure the sample you select is appropriate and relevant. For example, if you're applying for a public relations position, you may want to send a sample press release. Be aware you may have to create a piece of writing just for the purpose of the writing sample.

Being aware of what to send and what to avoid

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 or program you are applying for? If you are not sure what to send, it is okay to reach out to the hiring organization or graduate program coordinator for more clarification of what they are expecting.

Don't forget

Students can take advantage of the writing center to stand out and double check their grammar. Visit them today at tutoring.asu.edu.

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.