ESTABLISHING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SELF:
RHETORICALLY READING A JOB AD

The first step in getting a job is finding the one you want. This workshop will provide strategies for scanning job ads for key words and using these key words and phrases to tailor descriptions of relevant experiences for your resume and cover letter.

WHERE TO FIND A JOB AD

When looking for a job ad, it is important to consider reputable job-searching sites, as well as the websites for particular companies for which you might like to work. Here are some links for reputable job-searching sites:

- http://www.monster.com/
- http://www.indeed.com/
- http://www.careerbuilder.com/
- http://www.glassdoor.com/index.htm
- Employ-A-Bull

For information about these and other, industry specific job search sites, please visit this gallery of Job Search Websites.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A JOB AD

A job ad is the way companies let potential employees know what they need and what they want in an applicant. The job ad also provides important clues regarding how to talk about your experiences in a way that makes your experiences attractive to the employer. Your job as an applicant is to critically read the job ad, and to develop a list of key words, phrases, and information related to the position.

Questions to Ask Yourself about Key Information

- Is there an application deadline?
- What is the title of the position?
- Who should the application materials be addressed to?
- Is this position specific to a particular department within the company?
- What are the requirements necessary to fill this position? (e.g., educational requirements, years of experience, particular knowledge, etc.)
- What are the responsibilities for this position? In other words, what will you, as an employee, do on a daily basis?
- Does the position require teamwork?
- Is this a management position?
- Does the job ad mention writing or communication skills as a part of the position?
- Are there any technical proficiencies required for this position?
- What adjectives does the job ad use to describe their ideal employee?

To answer the remaining questions, you will need to do some external research, such as visiting the company's website.

- How long has the company been operating?
- What is the company's mission statement?
- What types of clients does the company serve?

MATCHING QUALIFICATIONS TO JOBS ADS GRID

After analyzing your job ad for key words, use this grid to organize these key words in the "What they want" column according to categories—skills, experiences, education, and qualities and values. Then reflect on your own skills, experiences, education, and qualities and values. How do they match up with the key words you've identified? You may not be able to fill in all the blanks in the "What I've got" column, but that's okay.

What they want as outlined in the job ad. List from most important to least important.	What I've got
SKILLS (i.e., hardware/software skills, writing skills, building skills, etc.)	
Example: *Java and database administration*	*X class at RHIT that covered Java and X class at RHIT that covered database administration*
EXPERIENCES (i.e., jobs, internships, volunteering, co-ops, etc.)	
Example: *0-2 years of experience in Civil Engineering*	*A co-op at Nederveld Associates, Inc.*
EDUCATION (i.e., college, high school, certificates, seminars, workshops, etc.)	
Example: *College education*	*B.S. from RHIT*
QUALITIES & VALUES (i.e., hard-working, effective communicator, etc.)	
Example: *Someone who is responsible*	*Worked as a certified lifeguard*