

ENGLISH 3774: ASSIGNMENT SHEET

POPULAR PRESS BUSINESS RHETORIC REPORT

ENGL 3774: 92852
Pamplin Hall 2001, 9:30-10:45
Fall Semester 2010
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Popular Press Business Rhetoric Report

Due: 12/16

Purpose

- To provide you with an opportunity for independent inquiry into specific rhetorics.
- To familiarize yourself with popular press business literature.
- To cultivate a humanistic frame for a common professional development practice.
- To provide you with practice writing feasibility reports.
- To allow you to give a formal large-group presentation.

Description

In *The Rhetoric of RHETORIC*, Wayne C. Booth defines rhetoric as “[t]he whole range of arts not only of persuasion but also of producing or reducing misunderstanding” (10). This assignment takes Booth’s definition as its starting point and asks: How do particular popular press business books recommend that we (ie. business writers or business communicators) produce or reduce misunderstanding? In other words, this assignment asks: What rhetoric is recommended by a specific popular press business book?

In order to suggest an answer to this question you will select a popular press business book, read that book, write a rhetorical feasibility report, and informally present that report to your classmates.

Your Book

(Selections Due: 9/09)

You will choose your own popular press business book and read this book independently. No duplicates will be allowed, so first come, first serve.

Loosely defined, a popular press business book is an easily accessible book that considers some aspect of business and appeals to a wide audience. You may choose a book that is more narrowly directed towards your professional field. You may already be familiar with some popular press business book titles, but here are some methods to help you with your selection:

- **Browse the Shelves:** You can often find these books on the shelves of your local bookstore or even on the first floor of Virginia Tech’s Newman Library.
- **Read Reviews:** Professional organizations will often publish reviews of these books either in a journal or on a website. These reviews will provide you with a synopsis of the book which can assist you in your decision.
- **Consult Periodical Lists:** Periodicals that circulate regionally and nationally will often print annual “best-sellers” lists. Popular press business books are books that could appear on “best-sellers” list.
- **Ask a Professional:** You might consider asking a professional in your field: What’s the title of a book that you feel has helped you in your business?
- **Refer to the Suggested Reading List on Scholar:** I have assembled a short, initial, and insufficient list of books that would work for this assignment and posted this list on our scholar site.

Note: When choosing your book, you should ask yourself: Does this book recommended a way of communicating in business? Does this book recommend avoiding a way of communicating in business? If your answer to either of these questions is: "Yes," then you probably have a viable book. Additionally, you might want to consider the applicability of this book to your chosen employment field.

Your Feasibility Report

(Due: 12/16)

This 2 page single-spaced rhetorical feasibility report will structure your presentation and constitute a handout for your classmates. The report will consist of four sections: (1) a one- or two-sentence explanation of why you choose this book; (2) a one-paragraph summary of the book; (3) a detailed, point-by-point description of the book's rhetoric; and, (4) your assessment of this rhetoric in terms of your chosen career: Would you recommend using the rhetoric outlined in the book on the job? Why or why not?

Your report will draw upon our in-class discussion of rhetoric on September 7th, as well as Chapter 25 "Writing Reader-Centered Feasibility Reports" in *Technical Communication*. Detailed examples, including quotes and/or graphics, should be included in your report.

Note: Your rhetorical feasibility report will depart the more extensive reports detailed by Anderson. Be sure to follow the four-part structure above and the grading criteria below.

Grading Criteria

1. How effectively did the report detail the rhetoric(s) forwarded by the book?
2. How clear was the writer's recommendation of this book's rhetoric?
3. How well did the report adhere to the four-part structure?
4. How well does the report convey the ethos of a young professional?
5. How effective are the choices about punctuation, grammar, and usage?

Your Presentation

(Due: 12/16)

You will share your report of your selected book's rhetoric with our class in a 5- to 7-minute informal presentation. This presentation will enable you to expand upon the points outlined in your report.

Audience

- Your classmates
- Your teacher

Format

- 5-7 minute presentation
- 2 page feasibility report, including a brief rationale for selection, a one-paragraph summary of the book, a detailed elaboration of the rhetoric forwarded by the book, and your professional assessment of this rhetoric.