

COMM308: Organizational Communication Theory

Experience: Volunteer or Job Shadow at an Organization. Minimum 8 hours over 4 days

Reflection Assignments:

Organizational Site Acquisition and Reflection: For this paper you will need to spend at least 8 hours observing or volunteering in a contemporary organization. Ultimately, you will select a course theory to connect to your observations (evidence). The evidence to support your paper will include: observations from your site visit(s), notes from conversations with employees or clients, and organizational documents or materials.

1. Site, contact name and number. Select a site and make contact. Get firm commitment from the organization that you may shadow or volunteer for at least 8 hours over the next couple of months.
2. Context. Describe the industry of the organization (use sources) and the space where the organization exists. What is the primary goal of the organization? Who works there? Who goes there and why?

Personal Reflection #1: During the process of working on this paper, you will write three personal reflections to discuss your journey of observation, synthesis, theory and application. For this first personal reflection paper, write a coherent essay that reflects your thinking about the following:

1. What is interesting about the site?
2. What is your personal connection to the site? For example, to what extent has your own environment (i.e. work experience, parents' experience, career goals, race, social class, political frame) influenced your impression of your selected site?
3. What is your learning goal for this site? For example, is it a personal/professional goal (I might want to work for an organization like this)? Is it a connecting with the community goal (I want to know more about this group or give back to the local community)?

Nuts and bolts: Your reflection should be at least one page long, typed and double-spaced with standard font and margins. You may wish to include material from course sources and if you do so use APA form.

Personal Reflection #2: During the process of working on this paper, you will write three personal reflections to discuss your journey of observation, synthesis, theory and application. For this second personal reflection paper, write a coherent essay that reflects your thinking about the following:

1. What is your current thinking about the mission and goal of this organization? Was it what you expected? More? Less?
2. What have you learned about the role of communication in this organization? Is it challenging to figure out? If so why? If not, what sense have you made about the way communication shapes your organization?
3. If you could ask anyone one question about this organization, what would it be and why?

Final Paper Spring 2016: Over the semester, we have focused attention on encountering the discourses that shape working lives and contemporary organizational communication theory. For example, consider how the Starbucks education initiative, as a social engineering act, may influence both the public (policy) and private (personal, organizational) discourse. Through this paper you will demonstrate your careful

understanding of organizational communication theory, its assumptions, and how discourse shapes a contemporary organization of your choice.

Excerpt from Final Paper Rubric: Reflection – Start with your written reflections to the questions posed for reflection in your first and second visits for which you have already written out responses. Select two of the issues that arose in response to those questions and reflect on them further in a paragraph or so each, going beyond what you originally wrote in your immediate reflections following the observation to make a point about yourself, your experience of being an observer or volunteer, the ethics of observation, your embodiment, or another issue that interests you. For example, perhaps what you thought would be interesting in the space, was a regular feature of communication in the site, however, you came to know something about the organization’s values by the way they practiced an “all hands on deck” approach to meeting deadlines. Or, perhaps you were really uncomfortable as an observer, but created strategies to help you feel like you were less obvious. In qualitative research it is never accepted that your unique self had nothing to do with what you found.