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Writing in the Workplace: Professional Writers' Self-Reports

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WRITING IN THE WORKPLACE:
PROFESSIONAL WRITERS' SELF-REPORTS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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A conflict exists between student desire for a pragmatic education leading to gainful employment and our desire to teach them to think critically about the world. This study argues the necessity of both and concludes—through the voices of three workplace writers—that students *must* become avid life-long learners and researchers in order to keep pace in an age of exponential information growth. This study presents three workplace writers' self-reports in the post process era.

Arguing the validity of writers' self-reports, this study moves research of workplace writers beyond process, which is typically considered invention, drafting, revising, and editing, by expanding the lens through which we consider workplace writers. Specifically, this study examines their history as writers, the preparation they received, their motivation to write on the job, their acquisition of job specific literacy, how they manage multiple audiences, the corporate identities and voices they must assume, the process they employ to accomplish their writing, their revision strategies, how they manage writer's block, and, finally, the survival skills they utilize in order to become proficient workplace writers. The addition of these facets to the standard process model seeks to push research beyond post process.

Bartholomae suggests students will “invent the university” in their writing. This study suggests that they will one day *invent the workplace* in much the same way. The three writers studied here describe steep learning curves before they felt adept at writing in their workplaces, highlighting the importance that students identify as life-long learners and researchers. They

privilege grammar and mechanics, yet they acknowledge the importance of collaboration, solid research skills, and audience. They offer survival strategies for getting their writing done amidst the chaos of workplace demands and occasional writer's block. Finally, this study suggests a pedagogy that seeks more intentionality in teaching students *about* writing while teaching them to write in order to provide them with a meta-awareness of the act of writing that will carry them successfully into the workplace.

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Finally, to my Dulcinea, imagination proved more powerful than reality.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The Problem

I teach technical writing at Salisbury University on Maryland's Eastern Shore. My students represent several majors, English, communications, business, marketing, and accounting. Occasionally I have representation of other majors. My students eventually work in very diverse careers, so my technical writing class must satisfy a broad range of workplace writing needs, needs that I cannot fully comprehend because I have not worked in those professions. I have a general knowledge of workplace writing, as I was employed in the corporate world before a career change brought me to teaching. Also, I can read technical writing texts to discover what the teachers of technical writing or business writing say about how to produce effective workplace writing. There are, however, two problems with technical writing texts: they are written by teachers and target a wide range of professional writing. While technical writing texts address specific genres of business writing like reports, memos, and letters, within these genres there is corporate specificity and subject literacy that cannot be taught. It is logical that technical writing teachers would write the textbooks, but this leaves us, then, to wonder what is going on out there in corporate America in terms of the kinds of writing required of our workforce, the conditions under which they are required to complete it, the writing preparation they received in college, and the strategies they employ to accomplish their writing tasks. There is a disconnect between what is sometimes called the "ivory tower" or academia and the working world or the "real world" causing me to wonder how well I am preparing my students. If I could know more about the writing challenges they will face, I could adjust my pedagogy accordingly.

My Connection to Workplace Writing and Teaching Composition

After graduating from the University of Massachusetts at Boston in 1981 with a degree in English, I found employment with Fidelity Investments in Boston, the largest privately held mutual fund company in the country. I began my tenure as an account manager in their institutional retirement services department managing corporate 401K accounts. I was hired because I had the basic qualifications for the job: I was a college graduate. I knew nothing about mutual funds, 401Ks, or 401K recordkeeping; however, they believed that information could be learned on the job.

Even though I was a good writer in college, I felt unprepared when faced with my first writing task, a report and cover letter for a client. I could not reconcile the fact that I possessed an English degree yet was dissatisfied with my feeble first attempt at workplace writing, which garnered this disdainful remark from my boss: “Perhaps you should take a writing class.” This left me embarrassed, angry, and quite confused. I was a very good writer; my professors said so. I wondered why I wrote poorly on the job. The answer, I would discover years later, is that I was inventing the workplace. David Bartholomae (1985) in his article “Inventing the University” posits that:

[e]very time a student sits down to write for us, he [sic] has to invent the university for the occasion—invent the university, that is, or a branch of it, like history or anthropology or economics or English. The student has to learn to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on the peculiar ways of knowing selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community. Or perhaps I should say the *various* discourses of our community, since it is in the nature of a liberal arts education that a student, after the first year or two, must learn to try on a variety of voices and

interpretive schemes—to write, for example as a literary critic one day and as an experimental psychologist the next; to work within fields where the rules governing the presentation of examples or the development of an argument are both distinct and, even to a professional, mysterious” (p. 623-24).

This, of course, is what I was now being asked to do in the workplace, to articulate a persona and a rhetoric for an audience all of which I was entirely unfamiliar with, and I was expected to do so immediately upon the commencement of my employment. Finally, Bartholomae concludes his piece allowing that “[i]t may very well be that some students will need to learn to crudely mimic the ‘distinctive register’ of academic discourse before they are prepared to actually and legitimately do the work of the discourse, and before they are sophisticated enough with the refinements of tone and gesture to do it with grace and elegance” (p. 650). Certainly, then, this is a consideration for neophyte workplace writers, one that has implications not only for university pedagogy but for writing education within individual workplaces.

To solve my workplace writing problem, I asked several of my more experienced co-workers if I could read their reports, and subsequently revised my report using theirs as models. From that point on, when confronted with a new writing situation at work, I scoured files for examples on which to model my own efforts. I learned how to structure content, how to design documents, how to sandwich bad news between good news, and became adept at employing job-specific vocabulary and syntax. I never asked my colleagues how they learned to write on the job because I did not want them to know that I, the English major, had initially struggled to accomplish my writing even though I suspect they acquired their skills in the same manner as I.

Years later and well into a second career as a technical writing and composition III instructor and PhD candidate in rhetoric and composition, I question what I teach in the

classroom and how it will affect, or *if* it will affect, my students in their future careers. In contemplating dissertation topics I want to offer something unique to the field, of course, and more specifically, something that will benefit students so that they might avoid the situation I faced as a neophyte workplace writer. Students should be prepared for the new writing challenges they will face, perhaps not in the sense that they will have experienced every genre of workplace writing at the university but that they will have survival strategies in place, or they will know of survival strategies used by others in their predicament that they can access to assist them in whatever writing that might be required of them. The disconnect between the writing we teach in college and workplace writing is intriguing and fertile ground for research.

Composing Processes of a Landscape Architect and an Accountant--In Brief

At a family dinner this past Christmas, I engaged my two nephews in conversation about writing on the job. The older of the two, Matt, has a degree in landscape architecture from Virginia Tech. The younger, David, has an accounting degree from Salisbury University. They have been out of school for a few years. Both informed me that much to their chagrin, they had no idea how much writing they would do in the workplace. David said he specifically chose accounting because he “hates to write and wanted a career in numbers,” but now as an accountant for the State of Maryland, he spends 70 to 75 percent of his work time writing procedural write-ups detailing agency internal controls as well as procedures for specific tasks such as the collection of cash receipts or the process of adding an employee to the payroll records. He documents all aspects of audits including explanations as to what and how [he] reviewed the accounts and how the review is relevant to [his] audit. Matt says that he spends about a third of his time writing “environmental assessments, forest stand delineation narratives, Chesapeake Bay Critical Area reports, permit narratives for the Maryland Department of the

Environment, the Army Corp of Engineers, Worcester, and Wicomico Counties, job proposals, project estimates, submittal letters to review agencies, letters of progress to clients, and all the usual business emails to clients, review agencies, and other consultants.” Matt and David agree that they learned their job-specific writing on the job, but that they learned the mechanics of writing, that is, grammar, punctuation, and syntax, in school.

Both avoided writing courses but, even so, the Writing Across the Curriculum project had them writing papers for almost every course. Matt offers, “[s]uddenly I was writing papers for classes I never thought writing had anything to do with, and all my professors had become writing critics. It made sense that the quality of writing I was doing stepped up because so many eyes were reviewing my work.” David adds that he “did everything possible to steer clear of writing courses in college. Again, that’s why [he] pursued business courses and ended up with an accounting major, [and] although we were required to write papers in every class according to the Writing Across the Curriculum program, I wasn’t prepared for the amount of writing that would be required in my job.”

When I asked them how they learned to write on the job, they provided different answers. Matt explains,

On the job writings always seem to have a format to follow and some kind of legal jargon, not to say there’s a fill-in-the-blank template, but there is a certain criteria to meet and usually questions that need to be answered. What I learned on the job is that you can usually keep all the boiler plate wording and legal mumbo jumbo from previous writings and change what information that makes that project unique.

David’s method for learning to write on the job involves his supervisor:

Much of my learning on the job is attributed to my supervisors. After we complete our section or task, our work is reviewed by a supervisor who will not only highlight certain mistakes, but s/he will write coaching notes, which I am required to answer. These notes can include anything from a simple question as to the procedures, or they can include ideas as to how to improve my writing or ways to better convey my findings and observations. In addition, the intended purpose of these coaching notes is to prevent the same mistakes from occurring over and over.

So while Matt is working independently and utilizes my method, following previously written examples, David is offered much the same method we use in the classroom; his supervisor acts as an accounting and a writing instructor. David's employer makes no assumption that new employees will know how to write for the State of Maryland accounting department.

Considering that both have learned to write on the job in different ways, I asked them what advice they would give a neophyte employee with regard to writing. Matt responded,

I always find that if you familiarize yourself with what others have done before you, you can understand what is expected out of you. I would tell a new employee to go through existing project files, both paper and digital and check out all writing performed in the past, even the bad examples. Most coworkers I've come across, architects and engineers are horrible technical writers, so I avoided their spelling, grammar, and composition and focused more on topic. For new employees, after looking at others' writing, they can begin to understand what writing level and style is expected on the job.

David adds,

First I would explain to the new employee how much writing is actually required. I don't think anyone comes into our job thinking that they will do as much writing as we do.

Then I would explain that they should just take notes and listen to their supervisor. Our office doesn't expect the new employee to know everything about auditing and definitely doesn't expect them to know how the office prefers the employee to write. Therefore, they want the new employee to learn on the job and learn quickly.

So Matt's landscape architect position and David's accounting job require 33 and 70 to 75 percent writing respectively. Matt was entirely on his own in learning to write for his job and had to employ survival skills, using previous writing as models, in order to perform the necessary writing tasks. David's employer understands that new employees will *not* come with the specific writing skills required, and therefore, they offer neophytes tutelage. However, both agree that the sheer volume of writing in college provided basic mechanical skills and eased the tension of having to learn to write specifically for their jobs. I wondered about other professions and how new employees learned to write for those jobs but more specifically how employees both new and experienced manage their writing tasks in the workplace, what survival skills they employ, what processes they utilize. Considering the traditional composing processes—*invention, arrangement, and revision*—that we once taught in first year composition and the expansion of process we now teach in the post process era, I wondered what research has focused on the composing processes of workplace writers. Jack Selzer wrote his seminal article about the composing processes of an engineer, and he did so in the process era.

Selzer's 1983 Study of the Processes of an Engineer

Jack Selzer (1983) in his *College Composition and Communication* article, "The Composing Processes of an Engineer," argues that "we know *what* scientists and engineers write at work, we know far less about *how* they plan, arrange, write, and rewrite on the job [and that] as a result, teachers of technical writing have been unable to teach students reliable ways to

succeed under the special and dynamic circumstances presented by on-the-job writing” (p. 178). Indeed, while my nephew, David, had his supervisor’s help, his brother, Matt, had to sink or swim in his workplace writing. It seems that we could and should better prepare them, and so it would seem to follow that we should know as much as we can about workplace writing situations, those writers’ processes and the constraints and the processes under which they write.

Selzer’s (1983) study of the composing processes of one engineer mirrors several of the same ideas my nephews purport, one especially being that the engineer, “re-uses some documents to shape others in the course of a project” (p. 179). This is important because, as we can see when comparing my nephews’ remarks about their workplace writing to the processes of Selzer’s engineer, previous writing is very often utilized as a model in the workplace, yet in the technical writing classroom, we do not offer our students previous examples to model their work after, or we don’t say, “here, look at this, and then write something like it with new information.” My technical writing students have asked for models, but, so far, I haven’t offered them. I think we don’t because, we fear they will just copy the model; they won’t do the work themselves, yet Selzer’s engineer reuses much of what he writes.

Nearly half of one proposal that I saw came directly from past documents: from a company brochure came part of the introduction; from several past proposals he lifted sections of justification; from files he got standard certification data, supporting documents, resumes, and several graphics. In addition he re-uses consecutively any documents related to the same project. (p. 181)

Replicating this in the classroom does pose a pedagogical problem: how to teach students to re-use when they haven’t written anything yet. It is a survival strategy utilized by workplace writers that is unlike anything we teach in a composition class. One must also consider whether

or not this is self-plagiarism, which is how academia would label it, but in the workplace, this activity is seen as employing a template.

This is just one strategy that workplace writers utilize, and it is important work to ferret out others, study them, and shift current technical writing pedagogies in order to present in the classroom more realistic workplace writing strategies and opportunities even if these strategies seem counterintuitive or violate our longstanding process theories. Another of Selzer's (1983) engineer's considerations is audience, on whom he places substantial importance when considering content: "he thinks about their needs at the very beginning of the writing process. He considers past associations with clients or telephone conversations with them to stimulate his thinking" (p. 180). My nephews did not mention audience, and this may be that they either do not consider audience, or they simply failed to mention audience because I did not specifically ask. In David's case, perhaps his boss is the only audience David considers because this boss is directing David's writing. Although Patrick Bizzaro suggests that there may be room to rethink audience in technical writing: "[t]he workplace writer thinks of the intended audience but between the author and that audience is the boss or a committee or whomever, and I call that a shadow audience" (2007). How might a workplace writers execute their writing effectively given that there may very well be an additional audience lodged between the author and whom the author perceives as his/her intended audience? My discussions with my nephews were held around the dinner table; they were informal, and we did not cover all the intricacies of the writing process, but that conversation and Selzer's (1983) study are intriguing because they make me wonder if what I do in the technical writing classroom could be much more effective and efficient. Classroom writing may feel artificial to students because the audience is ultimately the teacher. We can present students with suggestions of other audiences, but the *teacher* will assign

a grade, so students *are* ultimately writing primarily for the teacher. This, then, offers another pedagogical dilemma in that audience may shape much workplace writing. We may need new strategies for teaching audience in order to teach our students flexibility when considering audience.

Re-using previously written documents and the importance of audience are only two considerations requiring study, but this is the genesis of my study, a curiosity about how workplace writers manage their writing tasks. How do they plan, invent, arrange, draft, revise; what part audience plays in these segments of the process, if they even think of the process as stages, and how they complete writing tasks amidst the constraints of the workplace. Both of my nephews wanted to avoid careers that required writing, but both landed in careers that do, and both were surprised by this revelation. Neither of them felt especially prepared for workplace writing except that they had a fair grasp of grammar and punctuation, the mechanics, or nuts and bolts of writing, and they were not especially deterred because they had completed a plethora of writing tasks in college under Writing Across the Curriculum mandates at Salisbury University and Virginia Tech. Academic writing is its own genre, and our students come to us with twelve years of experience in academic writing, yet we send them out into the workforce without, I suspect, adequate preparation for the actual writing tasks they will encounter. Technical writing pedagogy could benefit from further study of workplace writers, specifically writers' self-reports. It is through their stories that we begin to distinguish the gap between academic and work place writing, and then we might be better prepared to prepare them. These questions and areas of research might extend into the Writing Across the Curriculum program as well.

Significance of the Study

Since Jack Selzer (1983) wrote his seminal article there has been little research on workplace writers studied in the same way that Selzer examined one engineer in particular. The reason for this may be James Berlin's (1988) devaluation of writers' self-reports in his article, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class" in which Berlin, through his Marxist lens, criticizes the cognitive research Flower and Hayes (1981) conducted using protocol analysis. Flower and Hayes' work with protocol analysis attempted to determine the hierarchy of cognitive processes writers utilized while composing. This was achieved by having writers think aloud as they composed. While Berlin's argument will be further explicated later in this chapter in the Operational Definition section and in Chapter Two, I would like to address a piece of Berlin's argument here, as it speaks to the significance of this study. As aforementioned, I teach Technical Writing and Composition III, and there is a canyon of difference between the two courses, as there should be. The former is a skills course meant to teach the nuts and bolts of workplace writing—memos, letters, and reports, all of which are making an argument and all of them admittedly sustaining corporate capitalism. The "real world" (e.g., capitalist) nature of this writing was both a foundation for Flower and Hayes' study and a springboard for Berlin's attack.

Berlin (1988) believed that education is meant to better the world, to make it more equitable for all. While I agree, I believe that we must also prepare them for the working world, the world of corporate capitalism because like it or not, that is the world in which we live. It may be disheartening to us romantics to hear our students say they are here "to get a good job," and, while we hope for more, technical writing is a skills course, one meant to prepare them for the workforce. In reviewing the rhetorics of the time, cognitive, expressivist, and social-epistemic, Berlin devalued cognitive rhetoric and subsequently writers' self-reports because he

took issue with the ideology of the participants in Flower and Hayes's (1981) study, all of them "real world" writers, writers Berlin considers "especially open to appropriation" by corporate capitalism (p. 482). Yet Flower and Hayes were specific in offering their study to the field as merely "a working hypothesis and springboard for further research" (p. 366). Moving away from this argument for a moment, consider the two courses I teach, Technical Writing and Composition III.

My Technical Writing course is meant to prepare students for writing in the workplace, but Composition III at my university has floundered over the years, no teacher ever really defining what it should be even though it is a required course for all English majors, including literature, film, linguistics, and rhetoric/composition. Once I became ABD, my department chair gave me carte blanche to design Composition III any way I pleased, so I designed a course that required one twenty page paper in which the students argued something about which they are passionate. Their arguments might emanate from the personal, but need not, and they write under pen names because we do whole class peer review of every paper twice during the course of the semester. Given that some students choose to write arguments that emanate from personal experience, the pen names offer them the safety of anonymity. You might wonder why I digress into details of my Composition III course, but it is because the work in this course stands at the opposite end of the spectrum from the work done in my technical writing course, and it relates to Berlin's (1988) argument. Invariably, *most* of my Composition III students write very passionate arguments in which they attempt to better the world, to make the world more equitable, which is the very heart of Berlin's argument against cognitive rhetoric and Flower and Hayes's (1981) study. Berlin contends that "[n]owhere, for example, do Flower and Hayes question the worth of the goals pursued by the manager, scientist, or writer. The business of cognitive psychology is to

enable us to learn to think in a way that will realize goals, not deliberate about their value” (p. 482). I agree with Berlin that the goals of corporate capitalism do not represent the goals in our hearts and souls, but earning income satisfies our physical needs and the business of daily living, and this has become *part* of what we do at the university level now, which is to prepare students for the workforce. We are all well aware of the problems caused by corporate capitalism unchecked. My point is, given the chance, students will not choose to write reports, memos, and letters, but they will choose to write twenty pages that argue for more stringent laws against perpetrators of hate crimes, or that we change our diets to vegetarian in order to save the planet, or that technology is fooling us into believing that we are closer to each other when in actuality our relationships are far more superficial than they once were.

That said, let us consider the *writers* in both my technical writing and composition III classes and the cognitive processes that both sets of writers employ to accomplish their writing. Flower and Hayes’ cognitive process theory employs four points:

1. The process of writing is best understood as a set of distinctive thinking processes which writers orchestrate or organize during the act of composing.
2. These processes have a hierarchical, highly embedded organization in which any given process can be embedded within any other.
3. The act of composing itself is a goal-directed thinking process, guided by the writer’s own growing network of goals.
4. Writers create their own goals in two key ways: by generating both high-level goals and supporting sub-goals which embody the writer’s developing sense of purpose, and then at times, by changing major goals or even establishing entirely new ones based on what has been learned in the act of writing. (p. 366)

These premises are applicable to *all* writing, and therefore I would argue that making value judgments about the *kinds* of writing belong in a different arena than that of composition research. For how can we know what writers do when they write unless we ask them and listen carefully to what they say? Workplace writers are doing something very different than academic writers, and we need to know what that is. We must return to the work of gathering writers' self-reports.

Further, there is a disconnect between academic writing and workplace writing. Obviously the purposes, goals, and audiences of each are different. Less obviously, I suspect our students are more adept at giving us what we want than the neophyte workplace writers are at giving their bosses what they want. By the time our students arrive in our writing courses at the university, they have had twelve years to ferret out academic writing survival strategies, and then once in the workplace they must ferret out ways to fulfill new goals and purposes and reach new audiences. This study is significant, that listening to workplace writers is important work, work our field has long neglected and these are voices we should heed in order to more effectively prepare our students for the workplace.

Operational Definition

Writers' Self-Reports. The term writers' self-reports seems self-explanatory; writers describing what it is they do when they write. Stephen King (2000), an extraordinarily prolific creative writer, wrote an entire book about his development as a writer and his writing process. My favorite quote from his book is this:

You can approach the act of writing with nervousness, excitement, hopefulness, or even despair—the sense that you can never completely put on the page what's in your mind and heart. You can come to the act with your fists clenched and your eyes narrowed,

ready to kick ass and take down names. You can come to it because you want a girl to marry you or because you want to change the world. Come to it any way but lightly. Let me say it again: *you must not come lightly to the blank page.* (p. 106)

King's notion that "you can never completely put on the page what's in your mind and heart" speaks volumes about a writer's desire to tell and his/her anguish at not being able to do so adequately. It is my favorite because it resonates in me thus making me feel less alone in my despair at not being able to find the right words. King writes of other parts of his process such as letting the writing rest, "sort of like bread dough between kneadings" (p. 211); he addresses audience when he says "all novels are really letters aimed at one person"—his being his wife, Tabitha; and he addresses concision, "2nd Draft = 1st Draft – 10%" (p.222). Certainly King's effort is a self-report, a personal recollection of his own journey as a writer, and while it might seem odd to cite King in this study because he is a creative writer, I will clarify that I take exception to the disconnect between creative writing, scholarly writing, and/or professional writing as does Peter Elbow (1981) in *Writing with Power*: "I want to underline the fact that a good essay or biography requires just as much creativity as a good poem; and that a good poem requires just as much truth as a good essay It's not good giving creative writing a monopoly on the benefits of intuition or giving nonfiction writing a monopoly on the benefits of conscious awareness" (p. 11). All writing is creative because the writer is, indeed, creating a product, and I would further suggest that the cognitive processes writers employ have less to do with the actual product and more to do with the tremendous creativity and cognition necessary to create a piece of writing. Wendy Bishop (1990) connected creative and scholarly writing and focused on writers' self-reports to discover new things about what writers do when they write.

Bishop (1990), in *Released into Language: Options for Teaching Creative Writing*, looks at writers' self-reports to inform her writing pedagogy. Bishop admits the fallibility of writers' self-reports highlighting the contradictions and that "writers will tell the story of their composition habits *as they wish this story to appear*, and are liable for certain amounts of self-deception and mythmaking" (p. 16, emphasis in original). But she concludes "that each writer is telling us, primarily, about his or her own writing process as he or she understands it *at that moment* That process will change and those understandings will alter as the writer moves through a lifetime and a writing career" (p. 18, emphasis in original). Certainly Stephen King, then, is offering an important and accurate self-report because he is so prolific, has had such a long and successful career, and certainly knows his process well by now. Bishop argues for a merging: "[a]dditionally, these writers' insights can be joined to composition research and theory to further clarify what it means to be a writer and have a writing process" (p. 18). Twenty years later, the field still has not seen this merging, as Patrick Bizzaro (2009) laments and explains in his *College English* article "Reconsiderations: Writers Wanted: A Reconsideration of Wendy Bishop: "[p]erhaps because, by the time ["Places to Stand"] was published, Bishop herself had been dismissed, like the other writer-teachers she names, as a 'convenient straw man' and 'expressivist' who should not receive 'a full and useful' hearing" (p. 261). Our fields' predilection to pigeonhole composition theorists highlights the factions of composition researchers who either align themselves with or are misaligned with the cognitivists, the expressivists, or the social constructionists. These fissures were caused most destructively and profoundly by Berlin (1988) when he devalued writers' self-reports in his "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Classroom."

Berlin (1988) aligned the cognitivists, expressivists, and social-epistemics with his notions of which ideology each is most susceptible to or compatible with, and he did so through a Marxist lens ultimately valuing social-epistemicism above the others. Berlin posited that “[a] rhetoric can never be innocent, can never be a disinterested arbiter of the ideological claims of others because it is always already serving certain ideological claims” (p. 477). Therefore he had to align the three rhetorics with a particular ideology, and he did so placing the cognitivists with science and, in his opinion, a weakened position, because it is too easily appropriated by the “dominant economic, social, and political formations,” or the structures of power that serve to subjugate the lower classes for the benefit of the powerful elite. Berlin argues that cognitive rhetoric refuses the ideological question “thus [leaving] itself open to association with the reification of technocratic science characteristic of late capitalism [and that] the existent, the good, and the possible are inscribed in the very nature of things as indisputable scientific facts, rather than being seen as humanly devised social constructions always remaining open to discussion” (p. 484). Berlin specifically targets Flower and Hayes in his devaluation of cognitive rhetoric: “the rationalization of the writing process is specifically designated an extension of the rationalization of economic activity . . . the pursuit of self-evident and unquestioned profit-making goals in the corporate marketplace” (p. 483). It is easy to understand and, perhaps, share Berlin’s distaste for corporate capitalistic greed and unbridled consumerism, and I sympathize with him that our culture seems, then and now, asleep to the negative effects of “unquestioned profit-making.” In our current recession we see the tremendously difficult economic ramifications of backing away from excessive consumerism and for having relied on it for so long. Consumerism dangles progress before us with tantalizing science and technological advances that promise us a better life. However, science and technology have always been and

will always be a double edged sword giving us speedy transportation on the one hand and pollution on the other, giving us cures for diseases that once killed us in vast numbers on the one hand and turning us into a pill-popping, unhealthy society at the hands of big pharmaceuticals on the other. Berlin's admonition of Flower & Hayes' failing to question the goals of the writers they studied is misplaced. We should all question the goals of corporate consumerism.

However, at the heart of cognitive research as it relates to the writer, one could venture that in spite of the danger of appropriation, there is value in the writer's self-report. Bishop (1999) catalogues some of the advances made in composition theory and pedagogy as a result of cognitive research: for instance "Rhoman and Wlecke's 1964 model of writing, which includes three stages: prewriting, writing, and rewriting" (p. 18). Later Janet Emig expands upon this when she "further subdivid[ed] the rewriting stage into correcting, revising, and rewriting [and] one of [Emig's] most important discoveries involves the recursive nature of the composing activity—writers plan in the prewriting *and* the writing stages, and so on" (p. 18). Bishop (1999) recounts the realization that "the composing process is much more complex than originally thought" (p. 18). She discusses the research proving that the writing strategies and goals of basic writers are different from those of advanced writers. While not an exhaustive list, these are important advancements that today we take for granted, yet cognitive research and especially writers' self-reports provided us with this knowledge about what it is that writers do when they write. Yet, Bizzaro (2009) concludes that while Bishop "erred strategically when she tied her belief in the usefulness of writers' self-reports to the findings of cognitivists . . . she connected the two for good reason, in the absence of any other methodology for discovering what writers actually do when they write" (p. 262). Soon after, Bishop (1999) urges a consideration of ethnographic study and posit triangulation as an effective means of insuring that writers' stories

are scrutinized from several angles. Berlin (1988) singles out Flower and Hayes (1981) specifically to devalue cognitive rhetoric and to value social-epistemic rhetoric. Flower and Hayes' research was based on the think aloud protocol, but what other sorts of writers' self-reports might be considered in researching what it is that writers do when they write? Stephen King's book is one sort of self-report, yet I would argue that any thoughts that emanate from writers about their writing qualify as self-reports. These might include answers to researchers' survey questions, interviews, and written or spoken reflections, anything that offers writers' thoughts about their writing and their writing process. Bizzaro (2009) suggests "[w]e must develop methods that enable us to find out from an array of sources, including 'professional writers' stories, anecdotes, aphorisms, and other forms of self-report'—and we must include poems here—whatever we can about writers and writing and to use what we find in those sources to help our students become better writers" (p. 269). This study suggests that we once again value writers' self-reports, specifically workplace writers.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this study is to return to this work in earnest, the work of gathering writers' self-reports. I will argue this at greater length in chapter two, but here let me qualify that I believe this work is significant because we have for too long silenced writers' voices and stories. Lad Tobin (1994) argues that:

In spite of all the scholarly talk about protocol analyses, paradigm shifts, and the making of knowledge, the history of composition is still written primarily through the stories we tell. Stories about the dreadful ways writing was taught – or not taught – when 'we were in school'; stories about the miraculous changes brought about by the writing process

movement; and, lately, stories about how some of those changes may not have been so miraculous after all. (p. 1)

I would argue that *these* stories, stories told by us, the teachers of composition, are only half the story. The missing voices are those of our students, and here specifically, the virtually unheard voices are those of former students, who are now members of the workforce. They hold valuable information about writing in the workplace, the world beyond academia and academic writing. There is so much we need to know; however, we must be cautious to collect this data carefully.

Therefore, I study three workplace writers in order to gather rich descriptions of their processes, environments, purposes, goals, and texts. I offer these as a continuation of what Flower and Hayes began in the early 1980s, what Selzer offered in 1983 but with the added checks and balances of triangulation. Workplace writers, I suspect, are just as varied as our students, some, like my nephews, who eschewed writing at every turn yet found themselves in careers that demand they write and others who enjoy writing and found themselves in jobs that require writing skill. Selzer studied one engineer, and I study three workplace writers. I want to offer much detail about three writers rather than sparse details and broad conclusions about many workplace writers, so I have purposely limited my scope to three. I offer this, as a place to begin in listening to the voices of workplace writers and as an opportunity to discover even the questions we should be asking, for Selzer conducted his study in the process era, which provided a certain lens through which he studied the composing processes of an engineer. I am conducting this study during the post process era, which provides a different lens. The profession has evolved, not beyond process, but inclusive of process and extending beyond process. Employing triangulation provides a more complete picture of my participants workplace writing.

Organization of Chapters

Chapter One offers the problem and purpose of this study. It offers several overarching research questions, the significance of the study, its scope and limitations, and an operational definition of writers' self-reports. Chapter Two is a literature review of previous and current scholarship regarding post process theory, which devalues writers' self-reports and my argument that the field should reverse this trend and, specifically, listen to the voices of workplace writers which will inform composition pedagogy. My argument is supported by research both pre- and post- Berlin (1985) that supports the need to listen to writers. Chapter Three is a report on my methodology, my use of grounded theory, and an argument that I am uniquely qualified to conduct this research, as I was once employed as a workplace writer, and I now teach writing. Chapter Four is three ethnographies of the workplace writers studied. Chapter Five provides observations and questions for further research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Introduction

This literature review addresses three issues, each building upon the prior one to inform my vision for this study, which is to discover what workplace writers do to accomplish their writing tasks on the job. I will do so by developing a post process theory for studying workplace writers in order to inform our pedagogy for teaching professional writing. First I argue that while there once existed a disconnect between the “ivory tower,” or academia, and the “real world,” or the workplace. I contend that disconnect no longer exists, and therefore our goals at the university and in the writing classroom have expanded into something more complex than they once were. The complexity of current educational goals necessarily impacts our research. We *must* prepare our students to write in the workplace *and* to think critically about that workplace and the world in which it does business. Next I argue that as academia and the workplace merged, our theory of writing as a process also expanded exponentially into *post process*, a misnomer, because we should not discount product or process in our zeal for post process. Workplace writing has been studied through a process lens (Selzer), and we must now consider it through a post process lens. And finally I argue that with the changing goals of our students and the expanded vision of process, we must once again embrace the enormously fertile ground of writers’ self-reports *through* the expanded lens of post process in order to inform our writing pedagogy and provide our students with the necessary strategies to write in workplace contexts.

The Ivory Tower/Academia and the Real World/Workplace

Composition studies have focused on academic writers prolifically for decades, but we still know so very little about what our academic writers do once they leave the university and take “real” jobs in the “real” world. The value judgment implied by the word “real” denigrates what our students do and what we as teachers do for the four years they are with us in the “ivory tower,” another problematic moniker. The dichotomy implied by these terms presupposes that the work of the university is lofty, cerebral, and philosophical and indeed, ivory tower is defined as “a condition of seclusion or separation from the world; in general, protection or shelter from the harsh realities of life” (oed.com). I think our students and faculty alike would disagree with this view of the university as an ivory tower because current economic realities make an undergraduate degree as necessary now as a high school degree once was in the industrial era. Aside from economic necessity, the most important work of the university is to *expand* our students’ world, to cause students’ to question everything they *think* they know, to make them *life-long learners*. The OED says “lofty, cerebral, and philosophical” as if it is a bad thing!

No longer is higher education simply for the wealthy classes, but it is more nearly a necessity for all classes, and the debt load students will incur is staggering and sobering.¹ Add to this harsh economic reality an extremely competitive marketplace and a troubled economy and it is evident that college graduates today are faced with a more grim reality than earlier generations. Higher education means high cost and high stakes, and the desired result, a good-paying job in one’s chosen field, is not assured. Also, the shift to a technological—and service—oriented economy has altered higher education to become a service model of education—a training ground for jobs in the workforce. The service model of education should

¹ According to www.finaid.org/loans/ the average debt load for graduating college students in 2008 was \$24,651 for a BS or BA.

not replace what we used to offer, which was a cerebral liberal arts agenda, but the service model should be an *addition* to the cerebral liberal arts agenda. I argue that we *should* prepare students for jobs in the real world *and* teach them to think critically about that world. The pressure is on all of us, on students and faculty alike, and the parameters of that pressure for the writing teacher have increased exponentially, as writing skill has become a requirement for many jobs.

Therefore, it would be unconscionable of us *not* to prepare our students for the writing they will do in the workplace. As mentioned in Chapter One, my nephews had no idea their jobs would require writing, nor were they prepared to do so except in the sense that they were fairly accomplished at the mechanical aspects of writing and sentence level proficiency. The point is twofold: one, that there is a trend now in writing theory toward critical pedagogy, which isn't really a pedagogy so much as a political, social, economic, or environmental agenda on which to couch a syllabus, nor does it belong in a discussion of what writers do when they write, and two, that this introduction of ideology into the writing class has shifted our focus dramatically from the business of teaching writing, perhaps, to the detriment of our students.

James Berlin (1988) in his *College English* article, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," insinuates his Marxist political agenda in just this manner when he devalues writers' self-reports taking issue with Linda Flower and John Hayes's research of the writer's composing process. He attacks cognitive rhetoric.

the rhetoric of cognitive psychology [one that] refuses the ideological question resting secure instead in its scientific examination of the composing process [while] being eminently suited to appropriation by the proponents of a particular ideological stance, a stance consistent with the modern college's commitment to preparing students for the world of corporate capitalism. (Berlin p. 482)

Berlin (1988) takes issue especially with Flower and Hayes's (1981) think aloud protocol, doing so because their focus on "'real world'" writing, to him, brought visions of capitalist appropriation: "[n]o where, for example, do Flower and Hayes question the worth of the goals pursued by the manager, scientist, or writer . . . [t]he business of cognitive psychology is to enable us to learn to think in a way that will realize goals, not deliberate about their value" (p. 482). Berlin's predilection to make a value judgment about the writers and their writing in Flower and Hayes' study caused a shift in the field, a shift that devalued writers' self-reports, when it might have been more prudent to question Flower and Hayes's sample size and range. One could also argue that the writers and their topics are irrelevant to the purpose of Flower and Hayes' study. In effect, Berlin threw the baby out with the bath water. Flower and Hayes are quite clear that their protocol analysis "is a working hypothesis and springboard for further research, and we hope that insofar as it suggests a testable hypothesis it will be the same for others" (Flower and Hayes p. 366). Berlin concluded that capitalist goals are in direct opposition to social justice and equity, and, while it is difficult to argue against his point, there is something inherently troubling in his devaluation of writers' self reports. While *resisting* the capitalist machine that devalues the individual, *valuing* the individual, allowing the individual worker a voice regarding his/her work is a small resistance in itself. Although, Berlin rejects this as well because it is expressivist. Only workplace writers can illuminate their secrets and strategies for accomplishing their writing under the tremendous pressures of the capitalist machine. The contact zone here, Berlin's ideological stance and Flower and Hayes' cognitive research, mirror my aforementioned discussion of ivory tower and real world. One could argue that Berlin was privileged in being able to earn his keep with his theoretical and philosophical ponderings, but for the rest of us, for those of us who are, in Berlin's mind, victims and proponents of capitalist

ideology, the work of Flower and Hayes is an effort to discover writers' processes, strategies, and choices. They could have just as effectively used James Berlin in their study as the participants they did use because the goal was to discover writers' processes, strategies, and choices when they write, *not* to evaluate their purposes and goals for that writing. Additionally, though, triangulated data is more powerful, so much research is needed, and I argue that the genesis of this research should be workplace writers' self-reports. With their descriptions we give them voice, and we may, perhaps, discover universal strategies, but certainly we will ferret out further avenues for research.

The political, social, economic, and/or ideological leanings of the writer are irrelevant when determining what writers actually do when they write, but the internal and external processes, strategies, and choices writers employ to create their writing is extraordinarily fertile ground, even more so in the workplace because we have virtually ignored these writers. What we teach them in the writing classroom about how to write and what to expect when confronted with writing tasks in the workplace could be substantially more effective. The mythical disconnect between the ivory tower and the real world does not exist in the sense that there are substantial economic and career pressures present for our students and ourselves, which have brought the pressures of the real world right into the classroom. Yet the classroom can and should offer a safe haven in which we must prepare our students for the workplace and instill in them a desire to view the real world with a critical eye and a desire to improve it. It is a danger that mere survival in this stressful world might extinguish altruistic notions. It is this dichotomy that has caused a conflict of pedagogies in the writing classroom.

Min-Zhan Lu and Bruce Horner (2009) discuss this conflict of pedagogies in their *College English* article, "Composing in a Global-Local Context: Careers, Mobility, Skills,"

They identify instrumentalist or pragmatic pedagogies as being in conflict with critical pedagogies, which are criticized because

they don't really teach writing, ignore the pragmatic needs and interests of the very students they claim to serve, and impose their own ideological agendas on students poorly positioned to counter them [while] those advocating critical pedagogies charge others with supporting status quo ideologies accommodating the demands of an unjust social order. (p. 113)

Carol Severino, (1997) put it in simple terms: "Is the purpose of a composition course to help students fit into society or to convince them to change it" (Lu and Horner p. 113)? I argue that the purpose of the composition course is to teach students to write first and foremost and then to help students fit into society *with* a keen and critical eye toward improving it where it needs improving because change is best effected from the inside. We as writing teachers should not dictate these changes but urge a critical consideration of the issues. Patricia Bizzell (2009) concurs but ventures that "our dilemma is that we want to empower students to succeed in the dominant culture so that they can transform it from within; but we fear that if they do succeed, their thinking will be changed in such a way that they will no longer want to transform it, but I would argue that if we inspire students to think critically, they will be incapable of ignoring their newfound power and their ability to effect change" (p. 7). Indeed, they will *want* to transform unjust power structures. I am suggesting a marriage of real world and ivory tower, which is exactly what Lu and Horner suggest: "we must find ways to respond to both . . . [s]pecifically, we argue that the two sets of concerns, immediate and global, may each be understood and addressed productively only by articulating the mutually constitutive relationship between them" (p. 114). Further, they argue that in current market and world conditions, it is imperative that

workers possess the flexibility to shift as the job market shifts, and this ability requires that they become lifelong learners (p. 123). This notion of flexibility is crucial, not only for our students who face a volatile job market and the ever changing need for different skill sets, but for us as their writing teachers for we must constantly shift and refocus our pedagogies to prepare our students as best we can with the skills they will need, both as writers and as thinkers.

If we consider critical pedagogies and the fervently altruistic notions these pedagogies present, it is somewhat concerning that we might be doing exactly what Paulo Freire (1972) cautioned us *against* in his article “The Banking Concept of Education.” He argues that “to resolve the teacher-student contradiction, to exchange the role of depositor, prescriber, domesticator, for the role of student among students would be to undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation” (p. 95). Pedagogy implies that the teacher has chosen the method by which students will learn, and critical pedagogy implies a political, social, economic, environmental, or some such specific platform by which we will teach writing. But Freire argues that,

the teacher cannot think for his students, nor can he impose his thought on them.

Authentic thinking, thinking that is concerned about *reality*, does not take place in ivory tower isolation, but only in communication. If it is true that thought has meaning only when generated by action upon the world, the subordination of students to teachers becomes impossible. (p. 96)

While one might argue that critical pedagogies offer subjects to ponder and write about, one could also argue that each of these pedagogies imposes an agenda upon students, students who come to us from varied socio economic, political, and spiritual backgrounds. There is a fine line between exposing students to new ideas and imposing an agenda that might be in opposition to

their current ideologies or too disparate from the ideological framework in which they were raised. So in Freire's mind, "liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not transferrals of information [and] problem-posing education, which breaks with the vertical patterns characteristic of banking education, can overcome the above contradiction" (p. 97-8). The difficulty with Freire's "problem-posing education" or critical pedagogy is that these problems may at the outset be beyond the scope of our students, which would necessitate employing the banking approach of education just to bring students up to the level at which lateral learning can occur, which returns us to Lu and Horner's (2009) notion of flexibility. For example, imagine introducing the concept of feminism to a class of conservative fundamentalist Christians or Muslims. Both groups typically place women lower than men in their power structure, so feminism would be a new and, perhaps, dangerous concept for conservative fundamentalists. Critical pedagogy should not cross the fine line of expanding students' current world view and indoctrinating them in a world view that opposes their own. As Freire argues, students must experience enlightenment for themselves; we cannot deposit it into them.

Gwen Gorzelsky (2009) in her *College Composition and Communication* article, "Working Boundaries: From Student Resistance to Student Agency," presents an ethnography of a classroom that employs both process and critical pedagogy. Gorzelsky notes:

the issue [of] student resistance to [critical pedagogy] is documented by scholars such as Jeff Smith, Russell K. Durst, David Seitz, Jennifer Trainor, and David L. Wallace and Helen Rothchild Ewald. [Gorzelsky] cites Smith specifically who argues that to teach ethically, compositionists must set aside our ideological agendas in favor of students' instrumentalist, professionalizing goals. He holds that because most students pursue, and pay for, higher education to gain the skills and credentials that will enable them to obtain

professional positions; writing instructors [and I would argue all teachers] are obligated to focus on helping students achieve these goals. (p. 64)

The teacher in Gorzelsky's study, Justin Vidovic, promotes a shared authority between himself and his students as a means of reducing student resistance and promoting student agency through a discussion of race and literacy. The contact zone between the privileged and the disadvantaged causes discomfort in both groups:

for the first-generation college students (a substantial percentage of [the] university's student body), the topic raised potentially painful, even threatening, awareness of the costs of their pursuit of higher education. For middle-class students whose parents had attended college, it raised potentially guilt-inducing awareness of their privilege. Either way the topic posed a possible threat to students' sense of their integrity. (p. 75)

There are two issues at play here—power and readiness. Students come to our classrooms from varying levels of socio-economic groups, and those who are first generation college students want to reap the rewards of capitalism. They are on the way up, and one could argue that until they have experienced social and economic power, they might be less inclined to consider the “evils” of capitalism. There is a continuum on which we experience readiness to deliberate foreign ideas and ideals, and given ever increasing classroom diversity, levels of readiness will be just as diverse as students' ethnicities, social, and economic backgrounds. Furthermore Carl G. Herndl (1993) cautioned the field seventeen years ago:

A pedagogy which sets up a stark confrontation between the repressive ideology of the dominant discourse and the teacher's emancipator ideology structures the classroom as an opposition between the teacher and the students. Not only does such an opposition ignore the struggles and the differences within the discourse, even within the dominant

professional discourse, it establishes a classroom politics that restricts the cooperation and dialogue so central to radical pedagogy [and] ironically students will become once again the objects of what Freire calls the banking model of education, the objects this time of the teacher's ideological enlightenment. (p. 359)

What students want is to “get a good job,” and what we want is to open their minds. Gorzelsky (2009) argues that “we should neither pursue critical pedagogy at the expense of promoting effective classrooms nor abandon it in favor of students’ pragmatic goals” (p. 82). She reasons that privileging one over the other radically upsets the balance of social, political, and economic structures already in place. Gorzelsky uses an important word, *balance*, concluding that we should “forego critical pedagogy’s emphasis on revolution, which is inevitably linear and focused on a single goal, in favor of the kind of change that ripples throughout systems while keeping them in the balance needed to support life and growth” (p. 82). This is a gentler and wiser way to effect change.

Lu and Horner (2009) argue that “given the scope and speed of changes and the degree of instability at all levels of life in recent years—environmental, geopolitical, social, cultural, and economic—it’s unclear what skills might and might not be marketable at any given time or place, nor is it certain that those that were would long remain so.” Furthermore they add that “literacy skills for studying global forces from ‘below’—in terms of inclusive distinctions and how they are charged and changed as they travel across differences—are the kind of *life* skills all (job) seeker-consumers do need to survive and thrive” (p. 126). Add to this the fact that most jobs require competent writing skill, and the writing classroom has become an overburdened place, indeed. The real world has collided with the ivory tower and while the lofty work of saving the world might be the subject matter, it is still incumbent upon us to teach them how to

write for themselves and for the world, yes, but also for the workplace. Patricia Bizzell's (2009) article "Composition Studies Saves the World!" appears in the same November issue of *College English* as Lu and Horner's, and in it she agrees that we can both save the world *and* teach them to write. Arguing against Stanley Fish (2008) and his book *Save the World on Your Own Time*, Bizzell observes that we cannot help but be political in the classroom because we are a compilation of our ideas and values and that:

we help students develop abilities that will help them succeed in and beyond college, especially valuable for purposes of social redress if the students come from marginalized groups [and that] while we are doing this teaching and to aid us in doing it, we can assign materials that raise issues of social justice and foster reflection on the rhetorical methods of engaging them. (p. 185)

We *want* our students to take what they learn and go out there and save the world, and writing offers a unique opportunity for students to think critically because the writing we require is generally argumentative rather than expository. Revisiting my Technical Writing and Composition III students, my Technical Writing students take that class because they want to prepare themselves to write on the job. The writing is not romantic or sexy; it's technical, letters, memos, reports, the sorts of writing that might be required in the workplace. But my Composition III students, given the freedom to choose their subjects, write to save the world. Students can and want to do both, and we *must* prepare them for *both*.

To do this, we *must* know what the workplace demands in terms of writing. We have Selzer's (1983) seminal study, "The Composing Processes of an Engineer," but this study was conducted in 1983 just before our field shifted from cognitivist to social epistemic and later process to post process, the latter of which occurred in the mid 1990s, as reported by Lee-Ann

Kastman-Breuch (2002). Selzer's study adheres very much to a linear process model, and so it is time to consider workplace writing through the lens of post process taking Selzer's study into the twenty-first century.

Process, Post Process, and Beyond

The theoretical pendulum swung quite dramatically in the early 70's when the process movement replaced current traditionalism's focus on product. In 1972 when Donald Murray declared that "when we teach composition we are not teaching a product, we are teaching a process," he heralded the beginning of a new era (p. 11). Joseph Petraglia (1999) concludes that "the process movement was an amalgam of theories, models, and pedagogies that were devised as an antidote to the current-traditional paradigm in writing that focused on the written product rather than on the means by which the product was produced" (p. 50). Petraglia continues that "as in so many other 'post' enterprises (e.g. post-modernism, post-colonialism, and post-feminism) the meaning of the prefix is often contested [and that] 'post process' signifies a rejection of the generally formulaic framework for understanding writing that process suggested" (p. 53). We didn't need an antidote, but we did need a broader spectrum of medicine. Writing *is* a process, a process which produces a product, and the point of that process *is* to create a product, which will either be judged by a teacher, purchased by the public, utilized to further a capitalist venture, or a plethora of other possibilities. It is always prudent to advance our theories of writing, but in our desire to grow, we should not discount our past, for there are truths there too. In Nancy Sommers' (1980) study on revision, one experienced writer, who may have been quoting Oscar Wilde suggests that "a piece of writing is never finished, just abandoned" (384). Indeed, at some point the process ends, and we have a created product. However, process as it

was typically presented—prewriting, writing, and rewriting—reflected what writers *do* while post process reflects what writers *see* and how they are placed in the world.

Lee-Ann M. Kastman Breuch's (2002) discussion of post process highlights this idea that post process "encourages us to reexamine our definition of writing as an activity rather than a body of knowledge, our methods of teaching as indeterminate activities rather than exercises of mastery, and our communicative interactions with students as dialogic rather than monologic" (p. 98). Post process opened the windows of the composition classroom to let the air in and some stuffiness out, as writing classrooms became places of pedagogical experimentation and theoretical considerations grew exponentially. But even Breuch "wonder[ed] if the purpose of post-process scholarship is to simply knock process off its pedestal" (p. 108). This notion that when a new theory develops, we must discard the old ones is counterproductive, and in actuality, process and post process offer very different considerations. We should instead merge and examine all theories because we still have not and never will perfect the teaching of writing. What we *can* do is make pedagogical adjustments trying new theories to glean what benefits they may offer our students. Breuch's assertion that post process "shifts us from writing as content to writing as activity" is actually what happened when process replaced product as theory du jour (p. 122). Writing *is* an activity, a process that creates content or a product, product that must be organized, coherent, and fairly clean mechanically so as not to inhibit meaning, so notions that the product is no longer important are misguided. Post process gave us *additional* perspectives for considering the writer rather than a *different* perspective of what the writer does. David Russell (1999) concurs and calls for a "progressively wider understanding of writing processes as they are played out in a range of activity systems in our culture(s)" (p. 88). This study

proposes to consider the activity system of workplace writing, which represents a wide gap in our research.

Writing is Public, Interpretive, and Situated.

Post Process in 1999. Thomas Kent (1999) edited a collection of essays devoted to the discussion of post process theory, and in his introduction Kent gives an overview of the prevailing thoughts of the time. While process was thought to be a linear and codifiable chain of events involving prewriting, writing, and revision, post process theories “hold three assumptions about the act of writing: (1) writing is public; (2) writing is interpretive; and (3) writing is situated” (p. 1). These speak to what writing is and what the writer’s relationship is to his/her writing and the world, but they do not explain what it is a writer does when he/she actually writes. The first assumption, that writing is public, denies the possibility of private writing, journaling for instance, of which Kent makes note. It is well-known that Emily Dickinson wanted her poetry burned after her death, so it would seem that she meant for her writing to be private. We can be sure that private writing happens, but we cannot study private writing, for then it becomes public. So Kent’s first post process assumption, that writing is public, requires a caveat, that writing is generally public, or that public writing is what writing theorists may study, and workplace writing is always public. Kent explains the post process theorists’ view of writing as a public act:

writing constitutes a specific communicative interaction occurring among individuals at specific historical moments and in specific relations with others and with the world and that because these moments and relations change, no process can capture what writers do during these changing moments and within these changing relations. (p. 2)

The assumption is that because of the many variables of writers, historical moments, and relational change, that there will be *no* quantitative or qualitative similarities in the writers' processes. This assumption seems to be problematic across the board, but for the purposes of this study, the umbrella of writing done in the workplace, I suspect, workplace writing would exhibit some similarities in process and, perhaps, survival strategies. It may be a misconception to conclude that because writers and their writing situations are all different, that we cannot learn from studying what it is they do when they write. It would be more prudent to study it and then determine whether or not we have learned something. Perhaps in the venue of workplace writing, it is possible that there are fewer variables—that the writers' similarities or differences, that their historical moments and relations are somewhat irrelevant to the writing they do. Studying workplace writers might necessitate a post process theory with which to study the writing they do on the job.

Kent (1999) deliberates the second post process assumption, that writing is interpretive, suggesting that writers are constantly negotiating between “both the reception and the production of discourse [and that] interpretation constitutes the uncodifiable moves we make when we attempt to align our utterances with the utterances of others” (p. 2-3). But then Kent seems to contradict his assertion that these negotiations are uncodifiable:

we can always distinguish some sort of process that we employed. However, if we try to employ this process again, we can never be sure that it will work the way we want it to work. Of course, we will be better guessers the next time we write something in a similar situation; we will know what went wrong or right, and we will know the process we employed to produce a successful written artifact; nevertheless . . . we still may miscommunicate; we may make wrong guesses about the rhetorical exigence, or we may

misunderstand our readers, or we may simply be unlucky and our readers may misunderstand us, or a thousand and one other things might occur that could make our written communications fail . . . writing requires interpretation, and interpretation cannot be reduced to a process (p. 3).

Kent's point is well-taken; writing is a messy process in that it is different each time, different either in subject or ease with which we say what we wish to say. If we glean any information that provides any semblance of process to expedite writing, then something of the process is, indeed, codifiable and therefore useful to other writers. This seems especially true for workplace writers, who work under time constraints, for time is, alas, money in the corporate world. However, academics write under time constraints as well. Also, the idea that writing is interpretive may prove less problematic in the corporate world where the writers and readers will be inculcated in that particular corporate culture necessitating less interpretation, so perhaps the process is even more codifiable. Our students must negotiate vocabulary and syntax across a broad spectrum of subjects and for a variety of professors. Once employed, that writer will learn a vocabulary and syntax for his/her job, which highlights the necessity for a process of immersion for the new employee, a time during which the neophyte corporate writer can learn the vocabulary and syntax of the corporate structure.

Kent's (1999) last post process assumption is that writing is a public act, which "requires interpretative interaction with others, writers always write from some position or some place; writers are never nowhere" (p. 3). Because of this publicness, he argues that a writer is always situated in some different place from another writer and cannot ever hold the same situatedness as that writer, so to communicate we create "passing theories" to negotiate a new situation. Kent argues that someone reading his book probably understands the writing process, but someone

who does not could understand it given enough information. He concludes that “generating passing theories using our prior theories, our situatedness, to create utterances—can never be reduced to a predictable process” (p. 4). However, considering his example of someone, who is not familiar with composition theory, reading his book, the process a writer would use to make that reader understand is a process that considers audience and how much background information the particular audience needs in order to understand the text. *Something* about this is predictable and generalizable, maybe especially in the workplace where purpose and audience are, perhaps, more fixed or repetitious. This is one element of workplace writing, if discovered to be true, that could help us better prepare our students: that fixed or repetitious rhetorical situations in the workplace might cause generalizable research results enormously affecting our pedagogy. That said, what is predictable and generalizable might only be a framework of what workplace writers—or any writers—experience when they are writing, but I argue that even a framework can provide valuable tools for writers and teachers of writing.

The point is that post process theory offers additional considerations, new ways of studying what writers do when they write. Researching workplace writers through a post process lens may give us pedagogical insights that will help us better prepare our students for workplace writing. While we cannot offer *one* process, we can offer survival strategies for the spectrum of writing processes and all of the many considerations about the writing and the writer that are necessary to the particular writing task. Paul Kei Matsuda (2003) concurs arguing that “on the one hand, these terms (current traditional, process, post-process) have helped to clarify changing currents in the intellectual practices of composition studies; on the other hand, they have oversimplified the multiplicity of perspectives within each ‘paradigm’ [and that these theories] also imposed discursively constructed boundaries on complex historical developments, as new

features while appropriating or ignoring other features” (p. 74). Kastman Breuch (2002), agreeing with Matsuda, bemoans that “the broader implications of postprocess theory have very little to do with process” (p. 120). So with broader horizons, or “less discursively constructed boundaries” we should consider how workplace writing is different from academic or other genres of public writing and we must develop a post process theory for teaching professional writing.

Relations, Locations, Positions.

Post Process 2006. Seven years and many post process considerations later Peter Vandenberg, Sue Hum, and Jennifer Clary-Lemon (2006) edited *Relations Locations Positions: Composition Theory for Writing Teachers*, which furthers Kent’s (1999) analysis of post process theory that writing is public, interpretive, and situated. In their introduction the authors hope readers “will come to see *postprocess* not as a term that signals a flashpoint between opposed scholarly camps, but rather as a sign of a healthy, evolving disciplinary discourse—one that is increasingly responsive to the world of symbolic representation it hopes to explain and influence” (p. 4). They further explain that they “have no interest in rejecting or overturning process pedagogy, but in continuing the inquiry *beyond process*” (p. 4). Their exploration of post process is situated in context, the relations, locations, and positions of writers. Petraglia (1999) argued the complexity of writing suggesting that “the ways in which writing gets produced are characterized by an almost impenetrable web of cultural practices, social interactions, power differentials, and discursive conventions governing the production of text making writing more of a phenomenon than a behavior” (p. 54). It is this notion of an expansive unlimited web that seems to overwhelm theorists, who throw up their hands and declare that

what writers do is indefinable. But it is not indefinable; it is more that it is difficult because it is so exponentially large.

It follows that categories help to sort and codify, which is what Vandenberg, Hum, and Clary-Lemon (2006) have done in their collection, making context the overriding consideration. “We believe, as does Breuch, that more focused attention to contexts in which individuals’ writing processes function might reveal ‘philosophical principles’ capable of guiding teaching practice in increasingly complex times” (p. 5). This study considers the contexts in which workplace writers accomplish their writing, and while the editors of this collection argue that “no single unifying theory can provide teachers of writing with all they need to know; no generalized process can prepare students for the manifold writing contexts they will go on to occupy,” this study ventures that teachers should have some inkling about what their students will face in the workplace and what survival strategies they should have in their arsenal (p. 7). Difficult to define prior to conducting this research, survival strategies are any process or tactic workers utilize to accomplish their writing tasks. A workplace writer is writing under very different conditions than an academic writer who might be able to hide away to work exclusively on a piece of writing. Workplace writers might have noise, interruptions, unclear direction, and other responsibilities besides an enormous writing load, so survival strategies would include anything that helps get the workplace writer get the writing done amidst the chaos of the workplace.

So while Kent (1999) categorizes *writing* as public, interpretive, and situated, Vandenberg et al. (2006) suggest that *writers’* contexts, specifically relations, locations, and positions, are an enlightening post process lens through which to examine writers and their writing. They “hope [readers] will see **relations**, **locations**, and **positions** not as a set of containers for static concepts, but rather as evidence of three convictions:

- Writing occurs through conversations and negotiations with others (**relations**).
- Writing is shaped by material places and intellectual spaces (**locations**).
- Writing reflects the contingency of our beliefs and values, and in so doing composes identity (**positions**)” (p. 8-9).

In their introduction to theories of relation the editors suggest that our field is inculcated in the notion “that writing should be understood as an expression of individuality [and that this individuality] is one of the more durable claims even in composition scholarship” (p. 9). Yet they allow that post process has extended this idea of individuality to include the web of “other writers, readers, and social institutions in a complex web of *relations*” (p. 10). These theories of relation are based on three suppositions:

- Writing, like all language practices, is an invariably social activity.
- Writing, like all language practices, is ideological.
- Writing is constitutive. (p. 10)

If we consider the idea of *relations* in terms of workplace writing, the writer, an individual, is writing for a corporation and to that corporation’s audience, so there are three identities involved in the relationship. We must consider how the individual negotiates his/her identity and takes on the corporate identity in order to speak for the corporation to a particular audience. Then one must consider how these identities relate; what the power structures are, and how these power differentials will affect the writers and their writing. There are histories for both the writer and the corporation, language practices that must merge, ideologies that may or may not provide contact zones, and all of these considerations, one might suspect, occur without prior consideration by either the writer or the corporation; they happen on the job in the midst of the

writing. Relational considerations provide avenues for exploration of workplace writing in a post process era.

Vandenberg et al. (2006) next venture that “responsible discourse, theorists of location argue, depends on a self-conscious awareness of how one is **located**” (p. 12) or as Kent (1999) theorizes “writers are never nowhere”; they are always “situated” (p. 3). Location or situatedness may refer to actual or conceptual spaces. This begins with the writer’s body and all that the writer is and has been and extends to physical spaces and relationships within those spaces, indicating that locations are necessarily intertwined with theories of relations (p. 12). The workplace writer is located in two places, his/her individual location and his/her location within the corporate structure, so writers must negotiate at least two locations, several identities, and many corporate relationships, all of these evolving over time. The neophyte workplace writer’s sense of identity and location will be more tenuous than that of the expert or long term employee, and this sense of not quite belonging yet, not having command of the discourse, will affect the new employee’s writing. This study seeks to discover how neophyte writers negotiate their locations.

Vandenberg et al. reference Mary Louise Pratt’s (1991) notion of *contact zones* to flesh out the idea of location arguing that the contact zone acts as a “‘safehouse’ in which connections among participants could be reconstituted in terms of trust, understanding, and protection” (p. 13). For workplace writers grappling with multiple identities, relationships, and locations, their need for a safe house in the form of a mentor seems obvious, but one wonders how much of a reality such a concept is in the workplace.

Theories of *position* are defined as “those markers of identity—such as gender, race, class, ableness, sexual orientation, and so on—that are either physically apparent or culturally

constructed at a level so basic that they impact social relations in nearly every context we occupy” (p. 14). Vandenberg et al. note that markers place the individual in positions within society and argue that this is “primarily the product of language in action” (p. 14). They reason that status is predetermined, and differences place the individual higher or lower in the hierarchy, a hierarchy that is created and sustained by the dominant culture. These markers might be socio-economic or degree of education; they might be evident in speech and/or writing. Examining workplace writers, the individual comes to the corporation in a predetermined or presupposed position in society, and then the individual is given a position within that corporation that may be at odds with the individual’s position outside of the corporate structure. So the worker is negotiating two positions inside and outside the corporate structure, trying to fit into both, yet this fitting into the workplace, writing theorists argue, robs the worker of his/her individuality. The individual, theorists indicate, comes to the corporate world through a process that promotes sameness:

The teaching of “academic writing” in particular—through the eradication of emotion (West) and the imposition of standardized norms for grammar, organization, register, citation, etc.—reflects a history of improving writing by radically constraining the variety of acceptable conventions. By linking the acquisition of particular “writing skills” to utility, employability, and success in the dominant culture, alternate ways of creating knowledge, naming the world, and claiming a place in it can be displaced at the outset.

(Vandenberg, Hum, Clary-Lemon p. 16)

It seems that position, like relations and locations, rests on identity. One could argue, as the editors do above, that the individual’s identity is changed, making him/her better able to fit into the working world, yet one might consider this process differently. Instead of considering

education an eradication of difference, perhaps we are offering the skill of code switching. The individual sublimates his/her difference in order to fit into a larger structure with a particular purpose, one that provides a necessary income for the individual. Code switching is a valuable skill, and sublimating difference for a purpose is not selling out; it is instead identifying with a particular discourse community and claiming a place, or position, in that community. Displaying an affinity for the discourse of that community strengthens the individual's relations within the community. Some will argue that code-switching is selling out, and other will deem it necessary for the greater good. To what degree one chooses to adjust in order to minimize conflict will impact how well one exists within a particular work community.

Nonacademic Writing Research Pre and Post Berlin

Elizabeth Wardle (2009) suggests in her June *College Composition and Communication* article "Mutt Genres and the Goal of FYC: Can We Help Students Write the Genres of the University?" that "we might better serve first-year students by reframing the goals of FYC, such that the course does not promise to teach students *to write* in the university but rather teaches students *about writing* in the university" (p. 756). Wardle asks two important questions: "What general knowledge can we teach students about academic genres that will help them write in later courses? And how can we ensure that students will transfer that general knowledge—at all and in helpful ways" (p. 769). Wardle's focus is on academic writing, on improving pedagogy in order to help students write successfully throughout their college careers, but her questions can and should extend to what students will eventually write in the workplace. Research on workplace writing shows as much of a disconnect between college and workplace writing as the one that exists between FYC, subsequent coursework, and even in WAC programs.

Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami (1985) published their seminal work *Writing in Nonacademic Settings*, three years prior to James Berlin's (1988) condemnation of Flower and Hayes' (1981) cognitive research. The genesis for their work occurred in the summer of 1977 when Odell and Goswami were teaching a National Endowment for the Humanities seminar on Writing Across the Curriculum. It was during this time that they "quickly realized that we didn't know enough even to speculate about the writing people had to do in business, government, and industry . . . and we had no personal knowledge about the forms this writing took, about the diverse rhetorical and conceptual demands it entailed, or about the kinds of sophistication these writers possessed (or lacked)" (p. vii). Six years later Odell and Goswami published their edited collection, an expansive collection of workplace writing research. It begins with Paul V. Anderson's (1985) study "What Survey Research tells us about Writing at Work," and the author acknowledges that focus had recently shifted "away from an approach that focuses on the formal characteristics of good writing to one that focuses on the processes by which good writing is created" (p. 12). Anderson's purpose is "to review the entire corpus of published surveys of writing in the workplace and to summarize the general conclusions we may draw from those surveys" (p. 5). That corpus, *fifty* studies, is substantial in number and is a cumbersome undertaking for a reader, yet the sheer volume causes the researcher to feel comfortable in drawing conclusions and making generalizations. Anderson organizes his findings in the following categories:

- Time spent writing
- Importance of writing
- Composing processes used
- Writing skills needed

- Audiences addressed
- Kinds of written communications prepared
- Functions of writing
- Quality of writing
- Workers' perception of their own writing ability
- Workers' attitudes and beliefs concerning education about writing (p. 30).

While he doesn't consider bosses' perceptions of workers' writing, Anderson cautions that "although the results of these studies present only a sketchy account of composing on the job, they indicate that the survey can be a useful tool in investigating those aspects of the writing process about which people can report accurately. (On the other hand, the survey will not be useful in studying the details of the cognition of writing at work)" (p. 47). And it is this desire to understand the cognitive processes writers employ when they write that led Flower and Hayes' (1981) to their research that Berlin (1988) condemned, yet Anderson points to Flower and Hayes' work in his discussion of the limitations of survey methodology. Anderson suggests three things about survey research—that it depends largely on a representative sample size, that survey questions inhibit respondents from elaborating, and that:

the survey is suited only for studying phenomena about which people can report accurately. Thus, for example, the survey is not helpful in studying the details of the cognitive processes of writing. It appears that because of the nature of our short-term memory we cannot remember the small steps we perform when we write. Accordingly, other research methods (such as protocol analysis) must be employed to study this creative process (Hayes & Flower, 1980). (p. 494)

Ultimately Anderson concludes with the notion that all research is flawed but that each offers a different point of view of the area of research. In Anderson's estimation Flower and Hayes' work added a component that survey research could not provide, what writers are actually thinking as they write and what choices they are making.

In addition to Anderson's nearly exhaustive look at survey research, Odell and Goswami's collection offers thirteen more chapters that focus on some aspect of nonacademic writing. Including Anderson's work, six chapters rely on writers to report to researchers about writing on the job. This reporting is most often through interviews and surveys in conjunction with observation and a study of the writing itself. What follows is a list of only the studies included in Odell and Goswami's collection that look at writers and/or their writing for answers to questions about workplace writing:

- Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams (1985) from a linguistics perspective study the structure of professional writing in order to understand context and form.
- Jeanne W. Halpern (1985) studied nine companies focusing on the composing processes of recent college graduates utilizing technology to write on the job. Halpern cites Bridwell, Nancarrow, and Ross (1984) who showed "that it is possible to adapt the protocol analytic method to word processing without actually intervening in the composing process, [which she considers necessary because her own] research was based largely on self-reports and general observations, case studies or intensive interviews" (p. 182). It is interesting to note that Halpern separates protocol analysis from writers' self-reports as two distinct intake procedures.
- Denise E. Murray (1985), like Halpern, researches the effects of new technologies on workplace communication, but she does so by studying only one writer, a computer

scientist, who is a manager of a data center, and focuses entirely on communication through computers, e.g. email. Murray studied him for three weeks observing and interviewing him and paid particular attention to modes and use of computer communication, one important facet of that being voice and how humanity is infused into computer text.

- Lee Odell (1985) looks at writing and social context asking “does [organizational] context influence the writing people do as part of their job?” (p. 250). Odell observed, interviewed, and analyzed group discussions between a small group of workers in a state bureaucracy and “in proposing questions for [future] research in nonacademic settings, [is] guided by . . . writers’ justifications for choices, writers’ perceptions of audience, and means by which writers carry out the process of inquiry” (p. 269).
- David Dobrin and Richard Miller (1985) spent one week studying workplace writers at Exxon Corporation looking specifically at writing and job responsibility and productivity, and writing as information transfer and as a social activity. They conclude that “writing may be one of the least acknowledged, yet most significant modes of employee self-education [and ask if we can] establish one or more simple models—possibly through protocol analysis—for how writing obliges the author to construct new knowledge out of old” (p. 306). So they, like Halpern (1985), propose protocol analysis as a viable research method.
- Carolyn R. Miller and Jack Selzer (1985), following up on Selzer’s 1983 study, perform a rhetorical analysis of transportation engineering reports focusing on special topics in technical discourse and a topical analysis of engineering reports in order to “suggest both

the continuing relevance of classical rhetoric and the rhetorical interest of technical discourse” (p. 338).

In all of these studies the voices of workplace writers and/or their writing are the sources of information and the genesis of questions for further research. Odell and Goswami published their important work in 1985, three years before James Berlin (1988) devalued Flower and Hayes’ protocol analysis and writers’ self-reports. For the researchers in Odell and Goswami, the methods they used were consistently and exclusively surveys, interviews, observations, and writers’ writing.

In 1999 and again in 2006 Anne Beaufort produced exhaustive studies of workplace writing. Her first, *Writing in the Real World: Making the Transition from School to Work* (1999), is a year-long study of four writers working for the non-profit organization, JRC . Beaufort chose women who were good academic writers, so ultimately they adapted well to workplace writing. Beaufort, like the researchers in Odell and Goswami (1985), chose observation, interviews, and text analysis for her methodology, and because she did so eleven years after Berlin (1988) devalued writers’ self-reports, it is noteworthy that she does not defend her choices, but merely states:

Also at issue is a theoretical debate in anthropology and cultural studies on the nature of truth. In light of postmodern theory, can we approximate the truth of “the other”—in this case, the four writers at JRC? Can I, as ethnographer, as participant-observer, find ways to understand others’ experiences with writing, and in the telling accurately reflect that lived-through experience? And is ethnography a viable genre for the study of text production? Debates rage in composition research among cognitivists, social constructionists, and critical theorists on the appropriateness of widely varying

methodologies for understanding the composing processes of writers and the meanings of the written texts produced. (p. 11-12)

Beaufort, unlike Wendy Bishop (1990) who apologized for using writers' self-reports, felt no need to justify her methodology because she added triangulation to cross check what writers say they do and what they actually do.

Beaufort's subsequent book, *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction* (2007), is an even more in-depth study of academic and workplace writing. While her previous effort followed four workplace writers for one year, her subsequent book follows one writer throughout four years of college and two years into the workplace. Her main research focus is "why transfer of writing skills from one social context to another is a major issue as yet given too little attention in conceptions of writing curricula" and her methodology is "a blended genre of both ethnography and argument" (p. 6). Also of note is that in her second book Beaufort does not give any attention to the raging debates regarding writers' self-reports. Her choice to ignore the debate may be because we have quietly lain to rest Berlin's objections because, in fact, asking what writers do when they write is the cornerstone of our research.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Overview of the Study Design

This chapter describes the methodology utilized in planning, executing, and reporting on three ethnographies of workplace writers. Data collection occurred during winter break in January 2011. This study seeks to answer the following overarching questions:

- How do workplace writers accomplish the writing they must do on the job?
- What kind of writing preparation did each writer received in college?
- What, if any, of this writing knowledge transferred from academia to the workplace?
- What writing strategies were learned on the job?
- What advice, if any, would these writers give college writing professors in order to improve writing pedagogy both generally throughout the writing curriculum and specifically in technical writing.

In order to triangulate data, the study includes three data sources:

- observation of writers' workplaces
- interview of workplace writers
- document analysis of workplace writers' writing samples

In order to capture a naturalistic picture of each writer's writing situation, I first observed each writer's workplace to observe the conditions in which they write, as environment may affect certain aspects of writing. Next I interviewed the three writers and transcribed tape recordings of the interviews and follow-up interviews. Lastly, I collected writing samples representative of the genres each worker writes as part of his/her job. Data was coded and analyzed in order to draw on similarities and differences in the workplace writers' stories, points of contact where I

conduct cross-case analysis by comparing and contrasting their experiences in writing on the job. I provide rich description of their environments, the writing required of them, and how they accomplish this writing.

This chapter begins with a rationale for my qualitative research design, explains my decision to use Grounded Theory for my theoretical foundation, and justifies my choice of research sites. Finally, I describe my procedures for collecting and analyzing various data sources.

My Identity as a Researcher

I am eminently qualified to conduct this research project, yet it is so oddly ironic given that I began my career thirty years ago as a workplace writer for a large mutual fund company in Boston. To find myself all these years later researching workplace writers is an interesting turn of events. I have first-hand knowledge of the difficulties of writing in the workplace even though I was an English major and have an affinity for words and how they best belong on the page. As a teacher of technical writing now, I am concerned that pedagogy is disconnected from the realities of workplace writing because we prepare students for one or two kinds of writing, mostly academic and sometimes technical. But academic writing is only done in college, and the technical writing we teach, I suspect, does not prepare them for the variety of writing they may do in the workplace. My nephews, mentioned in Chapter One, had no inkling that their future careers would involve so much writing. So I feel an urgency to discover what I can to inform the field of changes we might make to better prepare our students. Together my experience as a workplace writer and as a writing teacher will inform my research in ways that researchers, who have experience in only one of these, might not possess.

Rationale for Grounded Theory Ethnography

E. M. Forster said, “How do I know what I think until I see what I say?” Certainly this has implications for writing and how we think through writing, but it is also apt for this research study. One could ask, “How do I know what I will find until I seek, or how do I know what I will ask until I listen?” Grounded theory, developed in the mid 1960s by sociologists Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, was a reaction to positivist research methods and a privileging of quantitative research, which seeks generalizable results and objectivity. Anselm and Strauss argued in their seminal book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* (1967) that “the basic theme of the book is the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research” (p. 2). They were sociologists and created their research theory in order to study terminally ill patients, a subject previously unresearched and, in their view, not quantifiable.

Grounded theory is an appropriate foundation for a study of workplace writers because the activities of the workplace and the employees carrying out these activities are not generalizable or quantifiable. Each workplace, each writer, and each writing task is nuanced with differences that belie the positivist notion that these events can be pinned down and scrutinized for sameness. Furthermore, writing is recursive, which mirrors the emergent nature of grounded theory because just as writers re-envision and revise their writing, grounded theory requires the researcher to re-envision and revise research to seek new information. Lincoln and Guba (1985) reason that grounded theory is a preferable methodology when “no priori theory could possibly encompass the multiple realities that are likely to be encountered,” which I argue *is* the case in a three different workplace settings with three different workplace writers (p. 41). Wendy Bishop (1999) suggests that “an ethnography becomes a representation of the lived experience of a convened culture [and that] by the time the researcher is writing up the report,

the culture has gone elsewhere, continued on without the researcher” (p. 3). It is impossible to begin a study such as this with definitive notions of precisely what one seeks or might find.

Charmaz (2006) describes grounded theory methods “like a camera with many lenses, first you view a broad sweep of the landscape [and] subsequently, you change your lens several times to bring scenes closer and closer into view” (Charmaz p. 14). Charmaz elaborates on the methods of grounded theory:

grounded theory methods consist of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves. The guidelines offer a set of general principles and heuristic devices rather than formulaic rules. Thus data form the foundation of our theory and our analysis of these data generate the concepts we construct. Grounded theorists collect data to develop theoretical analyses from the beginning of a project. We try to learn what occurs in the research setting we join and what our research participants’ lives are like. We study how they explain their statements and actions, and ask what analytic sense we can make of them. (Charmaz pgs. 2-3)

Therefore throughout my study I reevaluated my methods based on the data I gathered and made adjustments in lines of questioning as needed. It was a study that was recursive, much like writing itself. I had to be ever vigilant to be aware of new paths opening up, which sometimes causes concern because I could not know how fruitful these new paths would be or whether or not I should pursue them. I was constantly in danger of my study exploding exponentially out of control, so I had to constantly reevaluate and make decisions to control my study. I discovered that research, again much like writing, can never be perfected. We can always make it better.

Grounded theory is ethnographic in nature, but it “gives priority to the studied phenomenon or process—rather than the setting itself” (Charmaz p. 22). Lauer and Asher (1988) suggest that “descriptive studies entail observation of phenomena and analysis of data with as little restructuring of the situation or environment under scrutiny as possible” (p. 15). I, therefore, visited the research sites to gather data through observation of the writers’ processes in their natural environment and by interviewing each of the three writers about their workplace writing experiences. Lincoln and Guba (1985) “suggest that inquiry must be carried out in a ‘natural’ setting because phenomena of study, whatever they may be—physical, chemical, biological, social, psychological—*take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves*” (p. 189, their emphasis). The survival strategies of workplace writers would naturally be affected by environment.

Survival strategies might be anything that helps workplace writers accomplish their writing against whatever obstacles they might face. Obstacles might range from something minor, such as workplace noise and distractions, to more difficult problems, such as successfully accessing company diction. Every context will have vocabulary specific to its context.

Bishop, however, warns of the unreliability in writers’ self-reports allowing “that authors often edit their composing memories to present a more interesting self” (p. 7). However, Bishop was referring to examples of well-known creative writers, and this is a distinction worth making because I suspect that workplace writers do not self-identify as writers but as workers who write. That said, my participants may not have presented themselves entirely as they are, but their representation of themselves as workplace writers was out of my control. It did occur to me that my identities as both a doctoral candidate in rhetoric and composition and a teacher of writing at the local university might be intimidating to my participants, so I was deliberate in explaining

that I had *no* interest in critiquing their writing, but that I was very interested in their processes. Again, though, in the same vein as not wanting to intimidate them with my position as a writing instructor, I had to specifically ask them to compare and contrast the processes they were taught and the process they have come to develop as a workplace writer. I worked hard to express my interest in *how* they accomplished their writing given the constraints of time and workplace atmosphere. In addition, I told my participants that my current career is actually a second career, and that I once wrote in the workplace in Boston for a large mutual fund company. Self-identifying as a former workplace writer created a better rapport with my participants because they felt that I understood and have shared their experience in the workplace. I hope that these assurances helped my participants to feel comfortable in sharing the truth of their experiences.

Research Site Selection

I live and teach in a small city of 23,743 at the time of the 2000 census. My city is in one of the Mid-Atlantic States on the East Coast and is over 100 miles from Baltimore and Washington DC. The surrounding area is rural farmland with only very small towns occasionally dotting the map, small towns with only Mom and Pop-type businesses. I teach full-time at the local university, and, because of my schedule and limited funds, my city offers the only business hub within a reasonable distance for my study.

I searched for workplace writers who were not English majors in college and for whom writing represented a 30 to 80 percent portion of their workdays. I sought three entirely different workplace environments in order to determine whether there are threads of similarity in survival strategies, strategies workplace writers employ to get the writing done. I initially determined that I wanted one workplace writer from a non-profit business and one from a for profit corporation because I was looking for diversity in working environments and writing purposes. I had not

considered a self-employed consultant, who writes for a living, but when met with the possibility of including such a writer, I was intrigued by the juxtaposition that a self-employed writer creates with writers who work for large businesses. My thinking was that if I were to find significant similarities in the self-reports of my participants, the diversity of their working environments, writing, and survival strategies would be noteworthy enough to suggest further research.

Research Participants, Their Writing and Their Environments

The first participant is a fifty-year-old male, who wishes to be called Giorgio for the purpose of this study. He completed his undergraduate work at Columbia University and received a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Literature. Giorgio earned an MBA at New York University's Stearn School of Business. He is a freelance writer, who writes for scientific publications. He works out of his home, and spends 65 percent of his time writing the following genres listed in no particular order:

- Book covers
- Websites
- Email campaigns
- Catalogs, brochures
- Space ads
- Marketing plans
- Slogans and headlines

The other 35 percent of his time is spent researching topics in science, medicine, and engineering for background information; gathering information about the particular publication or organization that he is writing about and/or for; gathering information about competitive

products and services; evaluating the feasibility of marketing plans; developing new business; billing and administration. His clients are either commercial publishers or professional associations in some area of science, medicine, and/or engineering. His work environment, which is in his home, has very different distractions than the typical workplace away from home. He lives with his partner, who works outside the home, and their cat, so his distractions are house projects and/or the cat. His solitary status as a consultant makes him an interesting juxtaposition to my other participants, who work in large offices.

The second participant is a twenty-four year old woman, Jennifer. She is a resource coordinator for developmental disabilities at XYZ Health Department, and she has worked there since January of 2009. As the Coordinator of Special Programs in Health Services, she provides resource coordination services to eligible individuals with developmental disabilities who reside in XYZ County. She determines eligibility for Developmental Disabilities Administration Services, provides referrals for services, accesses day/residential/support services, facilitates the annual Individual Plan meetings and assists the individuals and their families to develop an annual Individual Plan, which is a plan to improve clients' lives, to help them make progress toward living more independent and healthy lives. These efforts work to maintain the individuals in the community and to promote their overall quality of life.

About thirty percent of her workday is spent writing the following:

- Contact notes
- Meeting notes
- Reports for eligibility determination
- Client-centered plans, which represent the client's needs and desires
- Forms that include short narratives

- Emails

Her work environment is busy and sometimes chaotic with many distractions and interruptions.

The third participant is a fifty-five year old male, who works at a nationally known corporation, which is the largest for profit corporation in my town, hereinafter called ABC Corporation. About 25 percent of his workday is spent writing, and the genres include:

- Letters
- Emails
- Presentations to the capital committee, the chairman's strategic planning committee, and to the board of directors
- Basis of interest documents—which are written for the large projects for which he is requesting substantial financial expenditure from the above-mentioned committees

Gaining Access to the Sites

To find participants and gain access to each of the three sites, I faced different problems. When I began to formulate my study, I discussed it with colleagues and friends in order to find potential writers. I was concerned with finding rich subjects to study because of the size of my town and the lack of medium to large businesses where writing would be substantial and diverse. Most of the businesses in my town employ blue collar workers, who do not write in the workplace. For example, they work in the chicken plants preparing chickens for market, or they are in the service industry such as wait staff, or they are in construction or maintenance.

First, gaining access to Giorgio, who works at home, was fairly simple. A colleague mentioned him and his work and agreed to tell Giorgio about my project and ask if he would be interested in participating. I gave my colleague a copy of my proposal and IRB approval to give to Giorgio for his consideration, and he, having completed a thesis in graduate school,

enthusiastically agreed to be one of my three participants. As Giorgio is a self-employed consultant, no special company/corporate permission was required.

My second participant, Jennifer, took longer to find because at that point I was looking for a workplace writer, who worked in a non-profit business, and most of these in my area are terribly small operations of only a few people with perhaps only one administrator, and these people said they did not have the time or inclination to participate. I had a difficult time finding anyone interested in participating because many of them indicated that they simply do not do much writing, but I suspect it was really that they did not wish to be bothered. Then I had the notion that the local health department would be considered non-profit, so I made contact with a friend, whose company services their phone system. My friend knows everyone in management there and was able to discuss my study with a few key people, who agreed to find me a subject. Within three weeks I was in contact with Jennifer, who is working on her masters' degree in social work, so she was very excited to participate in my study because of her ongoing education and future thesis work. She indicated that she was interested in my study design, and that taking part in my study would help her with her own study when the time came. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that "meaningful human research is impossible without the full understanding and cooperation of the respondents" and that reciprocity is always present in human relationships inside and outside of research. They further argue that "if the reciprocal relationship of investigator and respondents is ignored, the data that emerge are partial and distorted, their meaning largely destroyed [and] of course the very existence of this reciprocal relationship depends on the willingness of the respondents to participate in it and support it" (p. 105). I was pleased to welcome Jennifer to my study in the hopes of such a reciprocal relationship, which would strengthen the validity of my study.

My third participant was somewhat more difficult to acquire because there is only one large for profit corporation in my town, and I had no friends or colleagues with direct ties to the company. Yet I had no choice but to spread the word through friends and colleagues that I was looking specifically at finding my third participant at this company in the hopes that the web of inquiry would spread beyond them, and I would eventually find a participant. I even posted my interest on Facebook so that my Facebook friends would know of my desire to find an employee at this corporation to work with. Finally after weeks of seeking, I was chatting with two friends at the gym, who suggested my third participant because he is a senior vice president at this particular corporation. One of my gym friends approached the man, and urged him to consider helping me. A few days later we all walked into the gym early one morning, and my friends introduced me to the man, who would become my third participant. Mr. Green Jeans. We discussed my study, and he asked me to send him my proposal, which I did. He agreed to participate.

Ethical Protection of the Study Participants

Before conducting my study, I sought and received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects from my degree-granting institution, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), on 8 January 2010. Before observing and interviewing my participants, I met individually with them to explain the project in more detail. At that time I had them read and sign the consent forms. I made it clear that I would use pseudonyms to protect their identities and that they could drop out of the study at any time. I also indicated that they could black out any names and/or sensitive information in any of the writing samples I requested to protect clients' and/or company privacy.

Methods of Data Collection

Data sources for this study are three-fold in keeping with the ethnographer's need to triangulate for the most accurate picture of the culture being studied. Joseph A. Maxwell (2005) argues that triangulation “reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific source or method, and allows you to gain a broader and more secure understanding of the issues you are investigating” (p. 94). This study includes:

- field notes generated from observation of workplace environments
- interviews transcribed from audio tapes
- writing samples of each my participants' genres
- one piece from each participant that shows a progression of revisions
- follow-up questions posed subsequent to the initial interview
- member checking transcribed interviews with each participant for accuracy

Maxwell also reasons that “while interviewing is often an efficient and valid way of understanding someone's perspective, observation can enable you to draw inferences about this perspective that you couldn't obtain by relying exclusively on interview data” (p. 94).

Observation of the workplace provides the context in which the workplace writer accomplishes his/her writing and deepens the worker's identity as an employee as well as a writer. Maxwell further offers: “conversely, although observation often provides a direct and powerful way of learning about people's behavior and the context in which this occurs, interviewing can also be a valuable way of gaining a description of actions and events—often the *only* way, for events that took place in the past or ones to which you cannot gain observational access” (p. 94). In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that “inquiry must be carried out in the ‘natural’ setting because phenomena of study, whatever they may be—physical, chemical, biological, social,

psychological—*take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves*” [emphasis theirs] (189). So the two methods—observation and interview—combined with document analysis complemented each other, providing a more complete picture of the convened culture.

Document Analysis

In addition to observation and interview, the third leg of my triangulated study design included the collection of documents written by my participants. These documents provided the genres listed in the participant section of this chapter. The examples of participant writings gave me further insight regarding the complexity of expository and narrative writing required by my participants in their particular jobs. I repeatedly assured my participants that I was not collecting their writing to critique mechanics but to give me as complete a picture of their overall writing tasks as possible. These documents provided further insight into audiences and processes that observation and interview did not, or, in some cases, the documents affirmed or contradicted my own observation and the participants’ assertions. Additionally, these documents provided alternate voices, which contrasted and/or complemented the writer’s own voices. Each writer must access the accepted professional voice of his/her employer, and the writing was further evidence of the context in which they must write.

Emergent Nature of Grounded Theory—Pilot Interview

The emergent nature of grounded theory gave me pause when I considered the interview portion of my proposed data triangulation. I was concerned about interviewing my participants, especially the first participant, without having had any interviewing experience. Robert Atkinson (1998) in his book, *The Life Story Interview*, which is part of the Qualitative Research Methods Series #44, argues that “the most effective interview . . . will be the one in which the

interviewer can step back, observe the process that is occurring as it is happening, see which direction it might best go in, and know what question to ask next, all before it happens . . . being a good guide that can anticipate exactly what needs to happen next” (p. 40). Because I am imposing on my participants to give me their time in this endeavor, I did not want to waste their time by asking questions that would not provide fruitful data. I began with a basic set of questions that I asked each of my three participants, but, depending upon answers, I sometimes added or deleted questions from the original list. I preferred to have an idea of how my questions would lead the participants, so that I might plan accordingly—deleting questions and adding others in order to get as much quality data as possible thereby ensuring that my follow-up interviews would be brief. I wanted experience in interviewing before I did my actual participant interviews, so I decided to implement a pilot interview. Of course, given that each of my participants writes different genres in different contexts, I understood that I could never be fully prepared and that I had to manage my desire to elicit the perfect interview with the reality that this task is impossible. Lincoln and Guba (1985) allow that there are two kinds of interviews: structured, which occurs “when the interviewer knows what he or she does not know” and can ask appropriate questions to elicit answers and the unstructured interview; which occurs “when the interviewer does not know what he or she doesn’t know,” this making an appropriate line of questioning more difficult (269). My interviews fell into the unstructured category, thus prompting me to prepare a pilot interview to give me experience in the process.

Joseph A. Maxwell (2005) argues that researchers “can design pilot studies specifically to test [their] ideas or methods and explore their implications, or to inductively develop grounded theory” (p. 57). Light, Singer, and Willet (1990) agree, postulating that “no design is ever so complete that it cannot be improved by a prior, small-scale exploratory study. Pilot studies are

almost always worth the time and effort. Carry out a pilot study if *any* facet of your design needs clarification” (p. 213). While I did not think that the observation and document analysis portions of my data triangulation required piloting, I believed that interviewing did, so to that end I searched for a fourth workplace writer to interview. I chose Megan, a thirty year old woman who works for an international hotel chain and writes employee training programs, which she administers in a classroom setting. She also provides written training manuals after face to face training. Sometimes the face to face training is administered by someone other than her, so it is imperative that her written manuals be clear. Through the process of interviewing Megan, I determined which of my initial questions provided fruitful data and which I could eliminate, thus saving time. While each workplace writer, what they write, and the conditions in which they write are different, this pilot interview was enormously helpful in refining my interview skills.

Transcription

After each interview I personally transcribed each tape. I considered paying a service to do this work, but decided that transcribing myself would offer me an additional look at my data. While interviewing, I listened to my participants, but I was also thinking of my next question or the direction I wanted to take the interview. Hearing my participants’ voices, their inflections, added meaning to their words. Transcribing the tapes myself offered a new perspective on what they said. Additionally, it is quite true that there is a vast difference between oral and written words, the latter of which might lack tone or emphasis. I knew that once I started reading their words, I would formulate opinions that did not occur to me during the interview, so *hearing* their words twice, first during the interview and second during transcription, offered me balance between oral and written meaning. For this reason I kept a researcher’s notebook to record general thoughts directly after the interviews. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) agree that transcription

“involve[s] close, repeated listening to recordings that often reveal previously unnoted recurring features of the organization of talk” (p. 830). Robert Atkinson (1998) suggests that “the only editing would be for ease in readability, such as adding a word or phrase if an answer to a question is incomplete [or] deleting extraneous or unnecessary words or phrases (the ‘um’s’ and ‘uh’s’ [sic] used only as fillers, false starts, backing-and filling, and most tag questions: ‘y’know?’) (p. 55-6). Because I was not interviewing for linguistic reasons but for general meaning, I chose to ignore such words. After transcribing the interview sessions, I gave a copy of the transcript to the participant for member checking. Lincoln and Guba (1985) caution that member checking is “not only to test for factual and interpretive accuracy but also to provide evidence of credibility—the trustworthiness criterion analogous to internal validity in conventional studies” (p. 374). It was imperative to me that my study have an appropriate audit trail and be valued as trustworthy.

Coding of Data

Miles and Huberman (1984) indicate that a *code* is “an abbreviation or symbol applied to a segment of words . . . in order to classify the words” (p. 56). *Coding* is a means of categorizing and condensing a large amount of information into a more manageable amount. This process was achieved through trial and error, finding codes that worked and eliminating those that were not productive. Miles and Huberman (1984) also caution the researcher to expedite coding while the research is fresh because “coding is not just something one does to ‘get the data ready’ for analysis, but something that drives ongoing data collection” (p. 63). Ongoing data collection is especially salient in my study because of the emergent nature of my theoretical foundation, grounded theory. Lauer and Asher (1988) indicate that coding, which they also call content analysis, is “the most crucial task of a case study” (26). It was incumbent upon me to find

patterns of meaning in and amongst my three data sources, observation field notes, participant interviews, and participants' writing samples. Glaser and Strauss (1967) propose the constant comparative method, which requires that the researcher "while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category" (p. 106). Glaser and Strauss working prior to the advent of personal computers made marginal notes and used index cards. Using Word 2007 I inserted comments in the margins of my typed field notes and interview transcriptions. I made handwritten marginal notes on participants' writing samples that represented a progression of revision—notes that indicate what the revision does for the document e.g., concision or clarification.

Audit Trail

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that an audit trail not only provides trustworthiness to a research study but that "the discipline imposed on them by the need to provide an audit trail [has] innumerable payoffs in helping to systematize, relate, cross-reference, and attach priorities to data that might otherwise have remained undifferentiated until the writing task was undertaken" (p. 319). Citing Edward Halpern's unpublished dissertation, which he defended at Indiana University in 1983, Lincoln and Guba list Halpern's six categories for a suitable audit trail. Utilizing Halpern's six basic categories, I list my data sources as follows:

1. *raw data*—audio tapes, field notes, participants' written documents, which are in electronic form and hardcopy
2. *data reduction and analysis products*—transcripts, coding grids, and lists of emergent conclusions and further questions generated through the coding process
3. *data reconstruction and synthesis products*—drafts of my dissertation with comments from my committee, my final dissertation

4. *process notes*—methodological notes, hardcopies of all emails sent to and received from my participants and dissertation committee, member checking notes
5. *materials relating to intentions and disposition*—dissertation proposal, IRB approval letter, signed consent forms, personal notes
6. *instrument development information*—notes and hardcopy emails regarding the development of this study

Presentation of Results

The ongoing debate between researchers who utilize quantitative methods and those who employ qualitative methods as a path to truth and certainty is a curious one, for I do not believe that either is a sure means. I chose a qualitative method, ethnography, because it suits my purposes and nature. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) argue:

- It is an illusion to believe that research methods and techniques provide secure paths to truth and certainty.
- One tradition sees practice in terms of behavior, another sees it in terms of participants' values and interest, and another sees it in terms of discursive formation.
- The question is whether this plurality can be understood as suggesting a higher-order perspective in which we can triangulate these different perspectives against one another to arrive at a more multifaceted perspective that, even if it does not promise completeness, wholeness, or a high-level unification of the perspectives it gathers together, at least poses a problem of how the different perspectives can be interrelated. (p. 580)

My purpose was to examine a small sample in great detail in order to search for different perspectives that I might interrelate to pose further questions and effect pedagogical discussion; however, I wanted to be as unbiased and fair in my reporting as possible. Wendy Bishop (1999) offers Bonnie Sunstein's (1996) list of questions that provided this researcher with some appropriate soul-searching and more certain footing that I was accurately reporting my results.

1. Whose views of reality are these? Mine, my informants', someone else's inside my informants' culture?
2. How do I know what I know? Who constructs this knowledge—my informant, my informant-as-persona?
3. Do I organize data my informants' way, my way, or some way they or I see it because of someone else's theoretical construct?
4. Am I representing a character, creating, or re-creating a person? What histories, context, frames, or screens constitute that person?
5. What is the sense of place I am building? What details of setting do I use to organize and locate what I see?
6. What is my evidence? What values and assumptions do I already bring to my interpretation of it? How did I collect this evidence? Where? Under what conditions?
7. What does my evidence show? About me? About my informants? About the others around them? What other ways might I represent this evidence?
8. What is the foreground? Who describes it? I or the people I portray? What other foregrounds are there? What backgrounds might there be? Described in whose voices?
9. Might I shift point of view to tell a similar story? (p. 198)

Bishop (1999) argues that Sunstein's list provides an ethical framework for the researcher to question his or her own positioning, context, and politics. While it is impossible to completely eradicate one's self from one's research, it is, nonetheless, incumbent upon us to recognize our own situatedness and allow for the ways in which our situatedness will affect our reporting. Utilizing Sunstein's list, I made every effort to report my findings fairly. It was difficult to begin because the discomfort that I might misrepresent the voices of my participants or myself weighed heavily, but as Bishop (1999) reasons "you have to speak—draft—to understand: an unwritten masterpiece is an unread masterpiece as surely as a problematically written one will be" (149). This is not to say that my dissertation is a masterpiece but that it is an attempt to present a narrative that describes what I saw, what my participants said, and how their writing speaks for them within the corporate structure. This is done in order to further the discussion of how workplace writers accomplish their writing and the pedagogies that prepare our students for the workplace.

Chapter Four

Report of Results

Introduction to Three Participants

This chapter reports the stories of three workplace writers, who chose the following pseudonyms, Giorgio, Jennifer, and Mr. Green Jeans. All three participants live and work in a college town in the mid-Atlantic region on the East Coast. The following table explicates basic information about each participant regarding age, job title, education, percentage of work time spent writing, and the genres they write. This information is in Chapter Three; the table condenses what was presented there in the interest of easy reference throughout this chapter.

Table 1—Basic Participant Information

Giorgio	Jennifer	Mr. Green Jeans
50	24	55
Independent Writing Consultant for Scientific Publications	Resource Coordinator for Developmental Disabilities @ Health Department	Senior Vice President of Agribusiness Division of National Poultry Corporation
BA in Spanish Literature @ NYU	BS in Family Science @ U of Maryland	BS in Biology @ McDaniel College
MBA @ Stearn School of Business	Currently working on MS in Social Work @ Salisbury U	MS in Poultry Nutrition @ U of Maryland
		MBA @ Harvard
65 % of job spent writing	50% of job spent writing	25% of job spent writing
GENRES:	GENRES:	GENRES:
Book covers Websites Email campaigns Catalogs Brochures Space ads Marketing plans Slogans & headlines	Contact notes Meeting notes Reports for eligibility Determination Client-centered plans Short narratives for forms Emails	Letters Emails Presentations to: Capital Committee Chairman's Strategic Planning Committee Board of Directors Basis for Interest Documents

Table 1

Workplace Descriptions

Giorgio works at home or on the road when he travels for pleasure, so he does not experience the normal office interruptions. His home is a cheerful beach home, painted turquoise and sporting a very sunny front porch that makes one long for lemonade and a good book. It is beautifully decorated and comfortably inviting. Giorgio can choose where and when he wishes to write, and he has quiet and solitude as he wishes. The only interruption might be from his cat, Ike, who saunters in occasionally for some attention.

In stark contrast to Giorgio's lovely beach home, Jennifer works in a non-descript, three-story 1960s style brick office building. Upon entry visitors must check in with a receptionist ensconced behind a glass partition, who calls Jennifer down from the third floor to collect her client. The floors are old industrial green linoleum tile, and the offices have the usual gray carpeting. It is the typical non-profit public workplace; there simply isn't money in the budget for more attractive office space. Jennifer's office has two desks, and her officemate is quite often present when Jennifer is writing.

Mr. Green Jeans' workplace belies the image one might imagine for the multi-billion dollar corporation with a global presence he works for. The agribusiness building sits on the far side of a small parking lot and in front of the rendering plant with its conveyor belts, silos, and other unidentified tall structures. The building is one story, and, after a short walk down a dimly lit hallway, there is a very large open room with a sea of desks. I felt I had gone back in time, before cubicles, when everyone worked together in an open space with absolutely no privacy. Computer monitors flashed market reports and personal photo albums on screen savers. Some desks sported personal items meant to improve the workspace. I sensed they didn't get many visitors and that I was a curiosity; I felt like an intruder in their own private world, for they all

turned to look at me as I walked in. These are the commodity traders, who will buy and trade 300 million bushels of corn this year. It reminded me of my Fidelity Investment days, the traders, sometimes calm and then suddenly frenzied. Mr. Green Jeans' office is just off the trading floor, and it, too, is old, undecorated, and not what one would expect for the office of a senior vice president of such a corporation. He confides in me that they have been successfully wooed by a neighboring state and will be moving to new offices soon; that state offers significant tax breaks for corporations that the present state does not. He comments with quiet affection that his workers deserve better space.

Interview Lengths and Length of Time in the Workplace

Although I asked each participant the same series of questions, there was a significant difference in the length of each interview. My first interview, Jennifer, had the shortest interview at thirty-three minutes; she has been in the workforce for three years. Giorgio's interview lasted 44 minutes, and he has been in the workforce for over 25 years. Mr. Green Jeans has worked at his corporation for 31 years and had the longest interview at 77 minutes. Jennifer's answers were very short with little elaboration, and while Giorgio's were fairly succinct, Giorgio elaborated slightly more than Jennifer. Mr. Green Jeans was much more loquacious than either Jennifer or Giorgio, elaborating with stories of particular pieces he has written and how he accomplished that writing. Interestingly, Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans showed the most enthusiasm for their jobs and the writing they must do to accomplish particular tasks. Giorgio showed no such enthusiasm for his job or the writing. Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans acknowledged the personal satisfaction they derive from their work. Giorgio admits to appreciating the lifestyle his work provides but does not derive the same personal satisfaction that Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans enjoy.

Participants' Graduate Degrees

Also of significance is the fact that all three participants have completed or are in the process of completing graduate degrees—Jennifer is working on her Masters in social work while Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans both hold MBAs and Mr. Green Jeans also holds an MS. I did not purposefully seek participants who had graduate degrees; these are simply the participants, who agreed to be part of my study.

Categorization of Interview Questions

The interview questions (see Appendix A on page 139 for a complete list of questions) are categorized as follows:

- HISTORY— employment history
- PREPARATION—and writing preparation both in college and on the job
- MOTIVATION—how important writing is to their jobs
- AUDIENCE—who and how/if audience affects their writing
- IDENTITY/VOICE—how/if they access corporate voice and/or personal voice
- PROCESS—how they compose on the job
- REVISION—what their revision process is
- WRITER'S BLOCK—how they manage it

The three ethnographies will be organized around these categories. For instance, I will first report on the history of each of the three participants and then move on to report the writing preparation each participant received and so on. This format will make it easier for the reader to compare and contrast the workplace writers' experiences within each subcategory. Chapter Five will provide cross case analysis.

I have, as much as possible, allowed my participants to speak for themselves. I argue in Chapter Two that we must listen carefully to workplace writers' stories to hear what they have to say about the writing they do and how they accomplish that writing. So, much of what follows is in their words.

History and Preparation

Giorgio. Giorgio began his career in New York City working in legal and tax publishing at Matthew Bender & Company from 1986 to 1992. From there he moved to John Wiley & Sons, where he worked in scientific/technical/medical (STM) publishing from 1993 to 2003 becoming the director of marketing of the STM division. At both Bender and Wiley, he wrote copy for promotional materials until he became director at Wiley. He has very little training as a writer and only took one required composition course at Columbia. At Bender he participated in two one-day promotional writing seminars. He smiles when he recalls, "I can honestly say there was only one person who helped me with my writing: the VP of Sales and Marketing at Bender. A bigger, nastier bitch you couldn't meet, but she got that the object of good market communications wasn't to describe something, but rather to sell it based on addressing the customer's needs." He continues: "other than that, I've not taken any courses, nor read any books with the specific purpose of improving my writing. Whatever writing I do is basically instinctual—when I have grammar or word usage questions, a quick Google search usually solves the problem. Writing is what I do for a living, but I can't say that it's a great personal interest of mine. I don't write as a hobby."

He and his partner left New York City to escape the proverbial "rat race" and moved to a quiet village on the East Coast, and Giorgio became a freelance copy writer and consultant, though he says that most of his work is basic copy writing, which he prefers because it's simpler,

and he makes just as much money doing it. He chose to make this career change because he has many contacts in the field and his background makes him appear highly qualified to prospective clients. He wanted to work independently and, as he says, “the beauty of my job is that it’s completely portable: as long as I’ve got an internet connection, I can work. Almost all my work is done via computer—I rarely speak to clients.” Giorgio frequently travels the globe and works from his hotel room wherever he happens to be. He currently has six clients:

- John Wiley & Sons—commercial publisher
- Lippincott Williams & Williams—commercial publisher
- American Society for Microbiology—professional association
- American Society for Nutrition—professional association
- American Physiological Society—professional association
- American Chemical Society—professional association

Giorgio considers himself to be a good writer, but he did not pursue writing coursework in college, nor did he plan to be a writer given his BA in Spanish Literature and his MBA. He sometimes writes Spanish copy for clients but indicates that they would probably be better off with a native Spanish speaker. His writing is extraordinarily scientific and technical, so I asked him why his clients do not have scientists write for them. He paused, thought about it, and said, “to be honest, they’d probably be better off in many instances; however, there are a few reasons:

- Most scientists are probably more interested in doing science than writing.
- They’d charge more than I do, I suspect.
- Many of the scientists that I deal with are not native English speakers. The quality of their English writing is often poor.

- Even the native English speaking scientists are often not good writers: the quality of the final manuscripts that I read is often appalling. I often find sentences that are unintelligible. In general, there is an inverse relationship between quality of writing in science publishing and the sophistication of the material. The most sophisticated material tends to have the worst writing. Writing in allied health (e.g., nursing, massage therapy) is also generally pretty crappy.
- While the reader of the material that I market is generally a scientist, the buyer is often a librarian. In fact, these days the buyer is more and more likely to be a librarian, as scientific publishers are more and more dependent on major site licenses rather than individual book or subscription sales. Even librarians who are specifically in charge of developing scientific collections rarely have a degree in science. I often need to translate the science into language that they understand to help them see how a particular publication fits in their collection and serves their readers.
- Many of the areas of research that I deal with are progressing rapidly. Some of the fields are just emerging and didn't exist ten to twenty years ago (e.g. proteomics, metabolomics, genetic medicine, etc.). Unless you're actively involved in current research, having a twenty year old degree in molecular biology, for example, is rather meaningless.
- Many of the areas of research I deal with are highly specialized. Rather than have a group of writers with various specialties, my clients can come to me for all of their copy needs. While I don't misrepresent myself, clients tend to think I have a much

deeper understanding of the material than I do. As I mentioned, my background research rarely extends beyond spending a few minutes in Wikipedia.

- Surprisingly, there are not that many scientists who work in scientific publishing. They submit the manuscripts, but editorial, sales, and marketing are generally run by non-scientists. I suspect no one in the industry wants to admit that we're probably not the best people for the job."

So Giorgio did not plan to become a writer, nor did he study writing in college or graduate school, nor did he study the subject matter about which he writes, yet this is how he earns his living. He works either in his study, which is decorated in Zen fashion, as he calls it, or in his dining room, kitchen, or in nice weather on his patio, or in whatever hotel he happens to find himself in Europe or in Asia. Writing affords him autonomy and mobility.

Jennifer. Jennifer planned to be an architect, but after one year at the University of Maryland and despite excellent math skills, she was not accepted into the architecture program. Jennifer had to regroup and choose another direction and having a heart for sexually abused/assaulted women, she changed her major to Family Science. After graduation she worked in several human services organizations such as Life Crisis, a local homeless shelter, and a neighboring county's developmental center. The first two positions provided her with human services experience, and the third gave her experience working with the population she now works with in a full time position for a different county's health department. She is also currently working on her master's degree in social work and hopes to work with sexually abused/assaulted women in the future.

Jennifer's writing experience is also minimal, as she says:

In college in my freshman and sophomore years I didn't like writing because it seemed the writing was forced, and they would give you a prompt, and you would have to write within these guidelines. They forced you to write what they wanted. But as I got more into my major and now in grad school, I am able to write more about what I'm interested in doing, so it makes the writing more enjoyable. I could write a ten page paper in ten hours as opposed to a two page paper that would take me ten hours because I wasn't at all interested in it. And I've always journaled; journaling has always been a fun thing for me to do. It allows me to relieve stress.

Jennifer considers herself a good writer and claims that she enjoys her workplace writing because, as she acknowledges: "It's just more satisfying than academic writing because I'm helping people." She was surprised at how much writing her job requires and observes that college did not prepare her for the kind of writing that is required of her. In college she took only 101 and 102 and a required grant writing class for social work majors, but she argues that this was not adequate preparation. She recounts that she received no training on the job either: "it was a learn-as-you-go sort of method. I read a lot of what previous and current case managers wrote . . . to develop the knowledge and understanding of what needs to go into the documents that we write." Jennifer elaborates that her writing helps her clients get the services they need, which places enormous importance on her writing.

Mr. Green Jeans. Mr. Green Jeans chose his name, after pausing to think for a minute, because he is very interested in green initiatives, and, in fact, that is not just a personal interest but an avid pursuit in his job. He has been at his company for thirty-one years and has had a variety of positions in logistics and sales on the poultry side of the business for the first twenty-eight years. He moved to the agribusiness side two and a half years ago at the request of the

president of the agribusiness division. Mr. Green Jeans has a strong interest in renewable fuels and has an entrepreneurial spirit. The president was looking for someone to help him structure, manage and execute the growth of the agribusiness side of the corporation. Mr. Green Jeans enthusiastically claims, “*best* career choice I ever made!”

He assesses his writing both in college and now:

I would say I was a mediocre writer in college, but, as I’ve gotten older, I would consider myself a very effective communicator both orally and in writing. I have developed a knack for understanding my audience’s thoughts, questions, concerns, and am able to anticipate and confront those and try to answer them. So I feel positive about my ability to get a message across.

He further indicates that he has written more Basis for Interest (BFI) documents than everybody else in the company combined. Mr. Green Jeans defines a Basis for Interest document as writing having a prescribed format within his company, and it is always the precursor to a new initiative or significant project. It is used to communicate to and educate their shareholder audience in order to acquire their blessing and financial backing, and it is part of their strategic planning process. Asked how his workplace writing differs from academic writing, Mr. Green Jeans speaks with great enthusiasm in providing an example:

It’s very real. I wrote a BFI for bio mass boilers, to get into the bio mass boiler business, so we signed two deals. We use a lot of steam in our industry, to process soybeans in our rendering plants. We use a LOT of steam. I’ll give you a number. It probably won’t be meaningful, but typically 50,000 lbs an hour of steam to run the processing plants. So in North Carolina we’ve come up with a couple of deals where we’ll be producing that steam with bio mass boilers instead of fossil fuels, so we had to draft a BFI. Now what

makes the writing different? When I'm done, and I sell this? We're putting in multi-million dollar operations as a result of the sales pitch. (His written document.)

Giorgio, Jennifer, and Mr. Green Jeans all self-identify as having been “mediocre” writers in college, yet they unanimously concur that the single most important factor in their workplace writing success is that they learned the basics of writing—grammar and mechanics. Giorgio bemoans the fact that he once managed people who were terrible writers, and he was at a loss as to how to help them. Jennifer attributes her learning curve to her grasp of grammar and mechanics and to her scouring the files for examples on which to model her writing. Mr. Green Jeans, who writes the lengthiest documents of the three, acknowledges:

I would say that the education from elementary, high school, through college, all of it put together did prepare me adequately because you learn about sentence structure and paragraphs and how to organize your thoughts and you know the premise of a paragraph needs to be in the first sentence. And all those kinds of basic things, yeah, you learn, yeah, I think it was adequate. I'm 55, and I was taught that. Kids today should be taught that as well. It's like math and algebra I learned, I use on a small scale every day, but the calculus and integrated equations I learned, I'm not using that. But the basics, adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, the geometry, the basics, I'm using. It's the same with writing, you need the basics, grammar, sentences, paragraphs, the basics; you've got to have them.

Giorgio concurs that the basics are key, and expresses shock and dismay at the writing he finds on clients' websites, which is sometimes but not always written by non-native speakers:

The stuff I'm working on today, the stuff posted on their website is virtually senseless, but nonetheless, it's reviewed by people whose first language *is* English, who either don't have time to rewrite it or don't think it's that bad, or couldn't do much better.

Non-native speaker writing is a subject, which will not be explored in this dissertation, but one that is germane to rhetoric and composition and affects Giorgio's job. Regardless, doing business in this country requires an expertise in English grammar and mechanics, and the less expertise a workplace writer has, whether s/he be a non-native or native speaker/writer, the less effective s/he can be in his/her workplace. Giorgio, Jennifer, and Mr. Green Jeans are unanimous in this assertion, that grammar and mechanics are the foundation for effective writing.

Motivation

All three participants agree that writing is extremely important to maintaining employment and that each is writing in order to persuade someone to part with their money. Giorgio experiences a sense of job security in the fact that his writing is of a much higher quality than either the scientists, whose research/discoveries he writes about, or the publishers, who disseminate the information to the scientific community. He elaborates:

I think, I mean, I'm very fortunate; I get good feedback. I think they can see the difference when they see it, but they cannot produce it themselves, nor do they often have the internal resources to get better quality. And in many cases, you know, it doesn't always matter that much. I mean most of the stuff I'm dealing with are things that are being sold to a small and rarified market and simply the fact that people are aware it exists, people will buy it. I think better persuasive copy helps to a certain degree, but the industry I work in, which is mostly scholarly publishing, no matter what you say about

the *Journal of New England Medicine* (sic), it's like major medical institutions around the world will continue to subscribe to it, so people don't have to be as scrupulous as they need to be. Yeah, by and large anything I do I want someone to buy a book, subscribe to a journal, sometimes to sign up for some type of alerting service or newsletter, once in a while to answer a survey, occasionally just to remind them about all the wonderful things that such and such a publisher does for them, but I mean 95 percent of the time I in some way want people to part with their money.

Giorgio's writing might be considered lower-stakes than that of Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans because Giorgio has a select and rapt audience.

Jennifer initially says that her writing is not important to her job, but she recants when she realizes that if she were a poor writer, her clients would suffer, and Jennifer would lose her job. She pauses to think and then admits that there is a CYA "cover your ass" element to her writing; everything must be documented. However, Jennifer is also writing arguments for her clients in order to procure services for them, for which the county and/or the state must pay, so her writing affects people on a personal level.

Mr. Green Jeans assesses that his writing is also of primary importance to his job. He is arguing for initiatives that will drive and reshape the agribusiness division of the corporation, and his writing will result in his board of directors spending millions of dollars. His writing is high-stakes financially and, in his mind, ecologically as well.

Audience/s

All three writers consciously consider audience when they write. Giorgio observes that he will shift his rhetoric in one of two directions. If he is writing to a scholarly audience—scientists, physicians, engineers, or instructors—he assumes they know what he is writing about,

so he maintains a vocabulary that he knows they will understand. His other audience is librarians, so for them he must explain things he wouldn't have to explain to his scientifically adept audiences. For instance, "if I'm writing about a journal in polymer science, the librarian might not know that is an important thing in the pharmaceutical industry, and that's a reason why they (the librarians) might want to subscribe to it . . . on the other hand, a pharmacist would know that, and I wouldn't have to explain." Giorgio's clients clarify the audience when hiring him, so he knows how to pitch the piece.

Jennifer has two audiences—herself and state agencies. She expresses a mix of boredom and frustration at having to write contact notes, which, as she has said, are motivated by the need to "CYA—cover your ass . . . occasionally OHCQ (Office of Health Care Quality—a state agency) will come in on that level" to audit cases. A contact note must be written for every contact she has with a client, be it by phone or in person. Writing contact notes is tedious, but it is a necessary function of Jennifer's job; she finds it tedious because she is the audience. Jennifer recognizes "a difference in my writing if I'm writing emails that go interoffice, or if I'm writing something that goes out of the office, like formal documents or even email that goes out of the office like to the regional office or another agency." She admits that she takes more care in her writing depending on her audience and the purpose of the writing.

Mr. Green Jeans' audiences are primarily internal; they are senior management and board members. His writing is most often related to a high stakes proposal, which will cost the company millions of dollars in the hopes of making many more millions of dollars. Occasionally, however, he is asked to communicate with the salespeople on the food side, and he "would tend to offer more background to get them up to speed, to help them understand a point

or an issue.” This audience shift correlates with the adjustments Giorgio makes when writing to librarians.

Identity/Voice

All three participants agree that they came to their jobs with the basic writing skill sets in place—proper grammar and mechanics—and they also agree that they experienced steep learning curves before they felt adept at their workplace writing. None of them mention the writing process—pre-writing, writing, and revision per se, but they do discuss revision, which is covered in a subsequent section. Giorgio came to his job with a degree in Spanish Literature and an MBA, so he had to learn an entirely new vocabulary, a highly technical and scientific vocabulary. He had to learn what it is the publications he writes for are trying to accomplish and what the people reading them are trying to ascertain. His tone is always formal. The science he deals with is changing at lightning speed, so he must keep abreast of new discoveries and vocabulary; he elaborates: “like the last couple of years I have written about nano-technology because that’s all a new and growing discipline of science, but other than reading a quick Wikipedia article, it doesn’t feel that different to me.”

Jennifer affirms that her learning curve was steep:

It took me several months to feel comfortable. I had to learn a whole new vocabulary. I would take notes at every meeting. I would write down new acronyms and keep a list of those. I would keep copies of every form and report and refer to them. It took several months to feel like I had a good base of knowledge. I wasn’t allowed to release my own information without it being reviewed (by her supervisor) for three or four months. It always had to go through my supervisor or someone else the office first.

Jennifer has a list of over thirty acronyms she had to learn, and she has created a list that she gives to her clients, so they can understand the bureaucratic-speak that so affects their lives.

Mr. Green Jeans concurs: “I felt adept at writing. I felt like a rookie on the subject matters. So I had a lot of learning to do on the content, but in terms of the writing and communicating, I came to the job with that skill set.” On one recent occasion he enlisted outside help in making an argument that composting is a green or eco-friendly operation. He was trying to write a Basis for Interest document proposing they enter the composting business, but he couldn’t seem to write the argument that satisfactorily proves composting is eco-friendly. So he enlisted the help of a composting company to craft this part of the argument, and they—having the experience and knowledge Mr. Green Jeans lacks—wrote a suitable argument.

Process

When asked to describe their writing process, none of the participants missed a beat. I did not specify what, in particular, I wanted to know; I simply asked them to describe their process. What they chose to reveal is unique, so I prefer to allow them to describe their writing process in their own words.

Giorgio. Giorgio describes his writing process:

Let’s see, I have the attention span of a four year old child. I interrupt myself constantly when I work. I rarely work for more than—I kid you not—I work in two minute spurts. I have no attention span whatsoever. I go two minutes writing, and then I go online and do something else for two minutes. And I do a constant two minute back and forth all day long. That’s how I work. That said, all of my things are small. I like to start and by the time I walk away from my computer, I like to have a first draft of whatever I’m doing, if it’s short enough, and most of what I do is short. Or at least I

want to finish a whole page of something or a whole section of something. I can't get up in the middle of writing a book cover because to me it kind of takes just as long to get back to where I was.

Q: Do you have difficulty returning to where you left off:

No, it's easier because each two minute spurt, at the end of each spurt I kind of hit this roadblock, and I don't know what the hell to say, and somehow or other, when I do the two minutes somewhere else, when I come back, I instantly start writing. Yeah, the idea comes to me when I step away from it.

Giorgio describes himself as a very fast writer, writing a book cover or a space ad in a couple of hours, a four page brochure in a day. When asked to place his attitude toward tackling his writing tasks on a continuum between dread and anticipation he responds: "I don't dread it, but I don't like doing it by and large. I mean there are a few interesting things here and there, but by and large I'd rather be doing something else. It's not dread because it's not unpleasant to do, but on the other hand I can certainly think of more pleasant things to do." He conveys that he does not have the option of choosing simple or complex writing tasks first: "I don't really have that option. I mean it's whatever comes, and I'm generally not juggling a lot of jobs. I've never taken a vacation when I haven't worked since I've been freelance. I mean, fortunately, I've always got work, but technically I'm never on vacation as far as my clients are concerned."

Jennifer.

I write everything down by hand as soon as it happens at work, and then towards the end of the day I put it into the computer because our entire chart is now electronic, so everything needs to go into the computer. Interruptions happen quite often, but they don't—when an interruption happens, I have to address whatever, phone ringing or

knocking on the door, but it doesn't take me too far off task where I forget what I was writing. I easily jump back into whatever I was writing. I always write at work.

I dread doing my contact notes because it's kind of a necessary evil. I know I'm the only person most of the time who's reading them, so I feel like why does this note have to go in there, but it's really cover your ass mentality, where you need to make sure it's documented. I enjoy, however, writing the eligibility determination letters because just the results are something that I can see; the family's always so grateful that I could help them out. And they're fun to write because it's talking about this client that I like and how their disability affects their daily living. Sometimes they can be a little sad when they have an ugly history or when they are profoundly mentally retarded, but again, it's to help them live independently or getting some goal met or something.

I prefer to do the complex [writing] first because usually the complex stuff requires more time, so throughout my day, I'll write a to-do list, and if it's something I know is going to be a large portion of my time because of the complexity, I'll do that first and deal with the smaller tasks as the day progresses. Interruptions, of course . . . are a challenge. Another challenge is when I'm interviewing a family, and they don't think anything is wrong with their child. It's hard getting the information out of them because they [the parents] don't want to admit, [that there is anything wrong with their child] because they've told the kid their whole life that they [the child] are ok. And then another challenge is integrating the information that you collect from doctors' offices, or schools, or hospitals, to integrate that to make a cohesive narrative.

Mr. Green Jeans.

I prefer simple writing tasks first. I use them to formulate my position and thought process. It eventually becomes an outline for the more complex work. I like to start with an outline. I like to give myself some deliverables. [By this Mr. Green Jeans means an outline of the main sections of his document.] You know, what's the message I'm trying to get across? You know, I try to build a framework and then fill in around it. I write both hardcopy and on the computer. That's a mood thing, just depends on what I feel like doing. And it depends on where I am. If I'm traveling, lot of times, it's just easier to write it on a pad of paper. So I do it both ways, but it always ends up on the computer eventually. I have an administrative assistant, but I do it myself. I'd rather.

Generally I write anticipation because there's a—I'm trying to get something done, and this is a means to an end, and so I need this to get something done. You know, out of this—Mr. Green Jeans points to a stack of six revisions of a basis of interest document that he is giving me for my study—this is about changing a manufacturing process in one of the businesses. And there's going to be a capital investment to change that, and there's going to be an arguably a significant risk factor, so in order to get that done, I have to convince people that this is the right thing. I have to help them understand why. I have to demonstrate that I have a command of the situation and information, so I approach it with anticipation because this is an important means to an end.

I always have new opportunities, new subject matters. This—pointing again to the stack of six revisions—was a brand new subject matter, and I had never even heard of this technology. [The document he refers to makes an argument to move from the current

pellet mill and cracking rolls to a process called pan granulation, which produces a finished product referred to as prills. It is a process that turns chicken manure into fertilizer which is further explicated in his document at the end of this chapter.] It is a very common technology in other industries. Not ours. I'd never been exposed to it, so this was brand new, so I had to learn about it—in order to write about it. So part of the learning process was that I went to Green Bay Wisconsin to the leading manufacturer of this kind of equipment, and I got an education about it, and I watched it work. I saw it work, so I understand how it works, what it does, you know what the critical control points are, so that now when I'm writing this, I have an image of the manufacturing process. It helps.

My primary challenge is time. I have several areas of responsibility and rarely have a block of time to just write. So weekends, I write on the weekends.

Revision

All three participants discuss revision as an important part of the process, but while Giorgio is reacting to his own writing in order to revise, Jennifer revises out of necessity when the state agency kicks her request for service back to her, while Mr. Green Jeans seeks outside help out of a desire to improve his writing.

Giorgio.

My big thing is to get a first draft very quickly, and the first draft is always horrible. I mean, well, my clients only see one draft. I write something generally as quickly as I can, so I have something to react to, and once I have something to react to, I can very quickly reassemble it into something I think is good. But I generally don't

know what I want until I put something down on paper, and I can say, no it's no good, or it should move in this direction or that direction. I like to have something to react to.

I mean relatively speaking the first draft does not take that long. I mean, the people I work for are quite surprised at how quickly I can do things. Yeah, the rewriting I find very much easier. I find it much easier to see something and figure out what's wrong with it than to know without reacting to it what should be there in the first place. It really depends because a lot depends on how much time I have. If I'm not that busy, I will fiddle with the second half of it more, so I can't say that the first draft always takes less time than the second draft. The first draft always seems more arduous. The second part is just kind of playing around, and it's often a question of how much time I'm willing to play around.

Jennifer.

I would say I revise more for mechanics because whenever I read my own paper, I think I've already written the content well. But even that can be trial and error because I have to figure out what they—whatever state agency the report is aimed at—want. So you write something, and they come back and tell you they want this. So it's trial and error until you learn what it is they want. Because they're not being clear about the expectations. They'll give you a new report to do; you'll do it, and they say no we want this. They don't even know when they send you this new form what they really want. Until they see what you give them, and they decide they want something else. I have to go back and forth on some of these new reports before they are satisfied. At least twice.

Um, I learn and adapt pretty fast. And I talk to them. If I get something shot back to me, I'm not afraid to call them up and say, if they weren't explicitly clear as to what

was missing, I'll easily call them up and ask them what I can do better, or what needs to be included, or what do they want. So it's at least twice and sometimes three or four times per client, and with each client it always changes, what they need. It's incredibly frustrating with this new form they've spit out at us. Because the disability is different, so they want something different. Because the need is different. Some client might be requesting a residential placement, or another client might be requesting one on one, or another client might be requesting mentoring, so with each need, you need to present a different argument for why they need it [the service her document is requesting].

Mr. Green Jeans.

I always ask my peers that are affected by the work to participate in editing the work. It makes a better product. That's what happens when you get to be 55, you realize, it doesn't matter, make it better! What I'm giving you here, is six iterations, and they're in order, of the same document, because you said you wanted to see the progression. And there are some where from one version to the other, it's pretty subtle. The red and blue represent the changes that were made. I can tell you, um, there were five people, myself plus four, that tweaked this document. It's probably 75% content and then 25% style. Somebody will say, that's really a run-on sentence. Or, you know, if you said it this way, it would make your point better.

But this is not a democracy. It's a business, so in the end, if it's my project, I have to make a decision. Um, but you *like* to have consensus. We were in a meeting this morning with a team, and we're working on a new business venture, an environmental business, and we're going to partner with somebody, and we had to choose between two partners, and I had a sense of who I wanted to choose. It's my call, but I wanted the

people around the table to come to the same conclusion, so we had a good discussion where I made sure everyone around the table had to speak. You know, what are you thinking, and why do you think/feel that way? And we went around the table, and by the time we were done, we were all on the same page, which is good. It's the same with revision; I like to have a consensus because these proposals represent millions of dollars.

Writer's Block

Giorgio.

In any event, writer's block is generally not a problem for me. If it is, it's often because the information I've been given is so poorly written that I can't understand it (either because the writer of the information is not a native speaker or they are a native speaker, but they can't write well). In general though, I find what works for me is to just write any garbage that comes to mind. Once I have something to react to, I find I can usually figure out what's wrong with it and then improve it so that I can submit it to a client. The key thing for me is not to worry about what the final product needs to be at the beginning of the writing process.

Jennifer.

With regards to writer's block, I sometimes struggle with coming up with the right way to say something. When that is the case, I consult my office mates or my supervisor.

Mr. Green Jeans.

The question about writer's block is not one I have consciously thought about in terms of how I solve it. As I think about it now, there are two techniques I tend to employ. The first is simply time. Put it down and pick it up later. The second is to talk with people about the issue. The conversation tends to generate ideas.

The Participants' Writing

All three participants provided samples of their workplace writing. Giorgio provided samples of website copy, catalogue and brochure copy, email campaigns, space advertisements, slogans and headlines, and his comments on the market planning documents others have written. His writing has a sales pitch tone targeted at particular audiences. Sometimes copy is written several different ways for several different audiences. The length of his documents is usually about one to two pages. (Giorgio's samples are in Appendix B on page 141.)

Jennifer's writing is vastly different in content and style. Her contact notes are usually one to two sentences, and she lists these by date, most recent date first, so that one can follow the progression of contacts she has with her clients. The Essential Lifestyle plans are the longest documents she writes, usually totaling three to four pages. (Jennifer's samples are in Appendix C on page 151.)

Mr. Green Jeans' writing, aside from routine letters and emails, is longer. Most of his writing is in report form and is at least eight or more pages. His writing includes tables, charts, and photographs. (Mr. Green Jeans' sample is in Appendix D on page 161.)

Revision—An Examination of Document Evolution

Giorgio. Giorgio offers three iterations of a document marketing “Essential Evidence Plus,” an online medical reference database targeting doctors. The first draft is a one page document, and the final draft is a one and one quarter page document. (See Appendix B, page 141.) Aside from the addition of **Welcome to Essential Evidence Plus!** to the first header, **CONGRATULATIONS!**, the document's framework changes once throughout several revisions. “**Tested and Proven!**” is deleted and replaced with the personal Testimony of an

MD, MS, Professor at the University of Georgia. The original but subsequently deleted text is effective:

The effectiveness of **Essential Evidence Plus** has been proven in a randomized controlled trial conducted by the University of Hong Kong. This study, published in the *British Medical Journal*, demonstrated that the use of **Essential Evidence Plus** resulted in greater confidence in clinical decision-making, greater use of the best available evidence in making decisions, and great confidence in applying evidence.

The revision providing personal testimony follows:

*“Wiley-Blackwell developed **Essential Evidence Plus** to support clinicians on the frontlines of patient care. It gives practitioners a reliable resource that filters the thousands of articles published every month in order to provide the most useful information about diagnosis and treatment. Moreover, it gives them interactive tools and calculators that bring this data to life and help them apply it to their patients.”*

The personal testimony says essentially the same thing, but, because it is personal testimony, Giorgio and the client think it is a great deal more effective than citing a randomized trial.

In the second iteration Giorgio revises diction in the opening sentence changing it from: “Now you’ve to the power to jump to the bottom line, answering point-of-care questions with the best medical evidence in just seconds” to “Now you’ve got the power to access the *Bottom Line* first, answering point-of-care questions with the best medical evidence in just seconds.” In the third and final revision Giorgio offers the client a choice of opening sentence. The change from “jump to” to “access” is evidence of Giorgio employing a more professional diction.

Options for First Sentence:

1. Now you've got the power to answer point-of-care questions with the best medical evidence in just seconds.
2. Now you've got the power to jump to the best medical evidence and answer point-of-care questions in just seconds.
3. Now you can jump to the best medical evidence and answer point-of-care questions wherever you are and whenever you need it.

In the second revision Giorgio adds the acronym EE+ for Essential Evidence Plus, and he uses it one more time in that first paragraph. He does not use the acronym again in subsequent sections of the second revision, but he does insert it into the second and third sections in the third and final revision.

Giorgio edits for concision between the first and second drafts. In the first section he deletes an entire sentence that states the obvious: "Most importantly, now you don't have to rely on hunches or anecdotal information." In the third section, he deletes "all you need to do is complete" replacing it with "just complete."

The final revision Giorgio employs is to add some specificity to the first section. Here is the evolution of the final sentence of the first section throughout the three drafts:

"Moreover, our experts have selected a broad assortment of practice tools to help you perform your duties as efficiently as possible."

"Moreover, EE+ provides a broad assortment of practice tools, daily email updates, calculators, and guidelines to help you perform your duties as efficiently as possible and improve patient care."

Moreover, **EE+** provides a broad assortment of practice tools, daily email updates, calculators, and guidelines to help you both improve patient care and perform your duties as efficiently as possible.”

In summary the revision strategies Giorgio uses to revise this particular document are:

- Exchanged impersonal sales pitch for personal testimony
- Added three options for opening sentence
- Added an acronym
- Deleted for concision
- Added specificity
- Edited for more professional diction

Jennifer. Jennifer provided three iterations of A Critical Needs List Recommendation Form, which makes an argument for her client to receive placement in a day program or a supported employment program. It is a one and one quarter page document. (See Appendix C, page 151.) The first iteration shows the bulk of the document’s text as one long paragraph. In draft two Jennifer has separated the text of the first section into four subsections including Eligibility Information, Personal Management, Household Management, and Using Community Resources. These provide a much needed organization and roadmap for the reader. In the third and final draft Jennifer adds quotation marks around “sometime last year” to indicate the fact that this information came from the client. This indicates that XXX’s exact seizure date is unknown to both Jennifer and her client. Jennifer revises XXX’s educational status and goals in the three drafts as follows:

She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but due to her family circumstances, she was forced to drop out.

She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but [sic] due to her family circumstances, she was forced to drop out. XXX has a goal of getting her GED.

She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but due to her family circumstances, she was forced to drop out. XXX has a goal of getting her GED so that she will have more vocational opportunities.

The additions in the second and third drafts help Jennifer's argument because they illustrate the client's desire to improve her life. Jennifer makes one further addition to section one in the final draft: "XXX is a very mature woman that understands her limitations and does not exhibit any maladaptive behaviors." Although not technically an error, the use of "that" instead of "who" goes unnoticed by Jennifer's supervisor. The addition further explicates XXX's good points improving her chances to receive placement.

Section two shows no changes throughout the three drafts. The error in sentence two: "She is a short-statured person (roughly 3' tall) that relies on her walker for moving around her home and her wheelchair for long-distances" go unnoticed and unedited. In section three Jennifer edited one long sentence fraught with comma splices by breaking it up into two sentences, but in the second sentence of the revision, the comma before "and" is missing.

She is able to grocery shop for small items, she can make simple purchases, she understands currency, and she is able to make change.

She is able to grocery shop for small items and can make simple purchases. She understands currency and she is able to make change.

Through all three drafts Jennifer expands one sentence in the final paragraph of the document and changes it from third person to first person:

She will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating.

I have assisted her in applying for personal care and AMDC through AERS, but if she is denied, or the personal care hours that she is allotted aren't enough, then she will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating.

I have assisted her in applying for personal care and Adult Medical Day Care through the AERS program. If she is denied, or the personal care hours that she is allotted are not enough, then she will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating.

The diction error, "deprecating," goes unnoticed through each revision as do the spelling of sclerosis and the grammar error in this sentence: "her father is who she considered her primary care giver, but he only manages the household finances, and deals nothing with XXX's disability." The spelling of "parapalegic" also goes unnoticed.

In summary the revision strategies employed by Jennifer are as follows:

- Broke up section one into four sections
- Added subheadings
- Expanded information in two sections
- Edited four independent clauses joined by comma splices into two independent clauses
- Changed one sentence from third person to first person

These revisions make the document appear more organized and they highlight particular facets of the client's life that must be addressed specifically in order to procure services for the client.

Mr. Green Jeans. Mr. Green Jeans provided six iterations of a Basis For Interest Document: Production and Sale of Prilled Poultry Litter. The first draft is seven and one quarter pages long, and the final draft is ten and two thirds pages long. (See Appendix D, page 161.) The document is framed with eight headings and an appendix, which remain the same throughout six iterations with the exception of three subheadings under “Rationale, Trends, and Driving Factors.” The frame is as follows:

- The Strategy
- Rationale, Trends and Driving Factors
 - Changing Regulatory Environment
 - Business Improvements
 - Quality Improvements
 - Growth Opportunity
- Market
- Competition
- Profitability of the Opportunity
- Investment and Resources Needed
- Risk
- Recommendation
- Appendix

Because of the length and complexity of the document, I will not analyze every revision, but I will highlight several types of revisions. (The first draft is in Appendix C on page 161. The final draft appears on page 168.)

The first draft has one paragraph explicating “The Strategy,” and, as you can see, Mr. Green Jeans was already editing in his first draft. In the second draft, the paragraph is revised for concision, and the deleted information is expanded in outline form. In the final draft Mr. Green Jeans edits the outline format to make it appear cleaner.

The Strategy

Our strategy is to ~~expand~~ **convert** Perdue-AgriRecycle’s product line with a prilled poultry litter by upgrading processing equipment and installing further processing capability (blending and bagging) at Perdue-AgriRecycle enabling us to compete, not just in garden and golf markets, but also in commercial lawn fertilizer and other markets.

The Strategy

~~Our strategy is to expand Perdue-AgriRecycle’s product line with a prilled poultry litter by upgrading processing equipment and installing further processing capability (blending and bagging) at Perdue-AgriRecycle enabling us to compete, not just in garden and golf markets, but also in commercial lawn fertilizer and other markets.~~

Our strategy is to convert Perdue-AgriRecycle’s manufacturing process from the current pellet mill and “cracking” rolls to a process called pan granulation. This process will produce a finished product referred to as “prills”, thus the phrase “prilled poultry litter”.

This process will provide us three important benefits:

- It will significantly reduce the production of fines which currently represents 20% of our production volume. Fines sell for about \$130 / ton less than our number one product.
- It will improve the quality of our product by providing a more consistent particle size, reducing dust and odor, solving three primary customer concerns with the existing product.
- It will give us a product which is well suited for lawn fertilizer application. Lawn fertilizer is substantially larger than the garden market. The physical characteristics of our current product do not lend themselves to lawn application.

Our strategy will consist of four phases each of which will be presented and justified independently:

- Phase I
 - Construction of a building addition and installation of a pan granulation line which will produce a volume 20-25% greater than our current capacity.
- Phase II
 - Removal of the existing equipment and installation of a second pan granulation line.
- Phase III
 - Installation of blending equipment.
- Phase IV
 - Installation of bagging equipment.

The Strategy

Our strategy is to convert Perdue-AgriRecycle's manufacturing process from the current pellet mill and "cracking" rolls to a process called pan granulation. This process will produce a finished product referred to as "prills", thus the phrase "prilled poultry litter".

This process will provide us three important benefits:

- It will significantly reduce the production of fines which currently represents 20% of our production volume. Fines sell for about \$130 / ton less than our number one product.
- It will improve the quality of our product by providing a more consistent particle size, reducing dust and minimizing odor, solving three primary customer concerns with the existing product.
- It will give us a product which is well suited for lawn fertilizer application. Lawn fertilizer is a substantially larger market than the garden market. The physical characteristics of our current product do not lend themselves to lawn application.

Our strategy will consist of four phases each of which will be presented and justified independently:

- Phase I - Construction of a building addition and installation of a pan granulation line which will enable us to convert all of our production to prilled product.
- Phase II - Removal of the existing equipment and installation of a second pan granulation line.
- Phase III - Installation of blending equipment.
- Phase IV - Installation of bagging equipment.

After the significant change from the first draft to the second draft, the only change made to the text of the first section is the addition of the word "minimizing," which is added to the second bullet in the first bulleted section. So the bullet reads: "It will improve the quality of our product by providing a more consistent particle size, reducing dust, and minimizing odor, solving three primary customer concerns with the existing product."

Subsequent drafts show the following revisions:

- ❖ Clarifying words added
- ❖ Questions posed in text for collaborators to ponder, research, and answer
- ❖ Word highlighting feature utilized to point out needed research
- ❖ Footnotes added and/or revised
- ❖ Photos of the product and its spread pattern added in Draft 3
- ❖ Table added in Draft 3

❖ Recommendation section expanded in Draft 3

All three participants revised for clarity and concision. Their revisions reflect obvious grammatical and mechanical changes and less obvious re-thinking of content.

Summary of Results

These are three workplace writers' self-reports. While the workplace writing that is required of them is very different, there are threads of sameness in their stories, threads that will be explicated in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five

Cross Case Analysis

Summary of the Findings

We have for decades listened to the many voices in our field who theorize the teaching of writing. We were once current traditionalists or positivists for whom product was most important, and this was a time when instruction was mostly limited to style, organization, grammar, mechanics, and the correctness of the writing. Writing was formulaic and rigid; we taught the five paragraph essay, and truth had to be proved. Then the pendulum swung the other way, and some in the field became expressivists or neo-Romantics. Truth was within the student, and the student's voice moved to the forefront of teaching writing. We emphasized process—working through invention, drafting, revision, and editing. Fluency took precedence over correctness. Next we moved to post process, which offered many approaches—collaborative, critical, and feminist are some among many others. We sought a balance between product and process, and truth was determined by social construction of knowledge. In one hundred years we evolved from valuing product correctness, to privileging the writer's voice and his/her process, to valuing the effectiveness of writing.

We did a lot of theorizing, and we tried a lot of different approaches in the classroom. We listened to each other, and sometimes we listened to our students, who moved on from our writing classes to write in other classes. Then they left the university and moved out into the world to find employment. A few in our field started to wonder if what we taught them stayed with them or if it helped them write on the job, so some in our field began to study workplace writers. This particular study looks at only three, and what I have discovered is that my participants operate in the realms of current traditionalism and post process. Expressivism has

little bearing on the writing these workplace writers do because individual voice—at least for my three participants—is less important because their goal is to try to appropriate the corporate voice. While Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans experience personal satisfaction in their jobs and their writing, they are still speaking for their employers. For them, product, and its effectiveness, is of prime importance because workplace writing must produce a desired result. They indicate that their workplace writing—in contrast to academic writing—*matters* in a very *real* way, in a way that academic writing seemingly cannot. In fact, two of my three participants—Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans—stressed that the difference between their college and workplace writing is that their workplace writing is “real.” Both used this word. I do not believe they mean to imply that their college writing or any other writing is not real, but my informants see very real results from their workplace writing—results that affect people’s lives. Each writer employs whatever *process* works to create the product.

Long ago, at the genesis of our discipline and continuing through the 1970s, we considered writing to be a linear process that begins with pre-writing, writing, and revising. My participants reflected on their evolutions from college writers to workplace writers, and they shared their thoughts on their writing processes, which reflect the field’s shift to post process. Two of the three express their satisfaction in seeing the results of their writing. All three agree that job literacy must be learned over time and in the context of the particular workplace. All three highlight the importance of grammar and mechanics. All three maintain that they privilege audience. Two of the three report that their workplace writing is collaborative. The following discussion is based on cross-case analysis of my three participants’ self-reports.

Mediocre College Writers → Good Workplace Writers: Meaning Matters

Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans describe themselves as having been “mediocre” college writers, while Giorgio says he was “competent.” Caring very little about what they wrote in their required composition courses, all three now self-identify as good writers. It might be that they are, indeed, better writers, but it is unclear how they assess their improvement. Jennifer is the youngest and has the clearest memories of college composition courses. She maintains that in college she was forced to write about things she did not care about. Now she writes to get much-needed services for her clients, which she says provides her with a great sense of satisfaction. We cannot know if she really was a mediocre writer in college. She might have considered herself to be a great writer in college if she had cared more about what she wrote or if her college writing had provided a similar sense of satisfaction because it *was* meaningful. Perhaps she might have worked harder on her writing if that writing had a purpose *other* than a grade. She compares the time it took her to compose in college and how long it takes her now and expresses that her college writing took a great deal longer because she simply was not interested in the topics she had to write about. She claims that if she had had the freedom to write about subjects that she was curious about or interested in, her writing would have been more enjoyable and subsequently more effortless. She makes this claim because the writing she does for her master’s program in social work *is* more enjoyable and requires *less* effort. Perhaps, because it takes her less time to compose her workplace writing, she thinks she is a better writer. She had difficulty mustering the motivation to complete her college writing, but she has no problem completing her workplace or graduate writing. Perhaps, because she is motivated by altruistic goals and expends more effort, she really is a better writer, or perhaps she has evolved into a better writer over time and with more experience. Jennifer chose a career in social work, which provides her with

opportunities for meaningful writing that results in positive action for needy clients. This is very different from the writing that Giorgio does.

Giorgio says he was a “competent” writer in college but that writing was not—and is not now—a primary interest of his. He is now an independent consultant writing for scientific and medical scholarly publications. Majoring in Spanish Literature did not land him a job, but an MBA in marketing did. Beginning in tax and legal publishing, he eventually moved into scientific/technical/medical publishing. Giorgio indicates that while his writing is not unpleasant work, he does not find it meaningful in the same way Jennifer finds her workplace writing meaningful. Giorgio finds meaning in his writing only because it is how he earns his living. What is most important to Giorgio is remaining autonomous, having the freedom to work unencumbered by corporate structure. Conversely, Mr. Green Jeans—who works within a for-profit corporate structure—describes his writing as very “real” and meaningful. It is, in part, the profit that makes his writing meaningful, but more so he asserts that his personal interest in the green initiatives he proposes provides motivation to write well. Like Jennifer, Mr. Green Jeans equates real with action; his writing results in a new business venture, one that requires creativity in its initiation. He derives great satisfaction from taking an idea through the process of conception, proposal—which is the written part—and implementation. He defines workplace writing as real in a way his academic writing was not. Mr. Green Jeans’ motivation—aside from making a living—is twofold; to make his company profitable and to do so in a way that improves the environment.

Certainly each participant has financial motivation to write well because their writing is of vital importance in fulfilling their job requirements. Giorgio is arguably the least enthusiastic about his writing, and he is the most removed from seeing any altruistic benefit of his writing.

Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans see immediate results of their writing; both used the word “real” to describe their writing. The pedagogical question, then, is to what degree do the results of a piece of writing matter to the effort expended upon that writing? Have Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans really improved as writers, or are they just trying harder because their writing matters? Or is it because they are being paid to do it? It may be a combination of all of these. If we could replicate the realness of their writing in the classroom, would students perform better? Or would students learn more *about* writing—specifically things about writing that would become real to them earlier in their writing careers so that they would be better writers before entering the workforce? Mike Rose (2004) acknowledges:

There is an extensive philosophical and sociological literature on the meaning of work, and running through much of it is the notion that work provides human beings with a means of engaging the environment, putting their impress on the world. If we accept this notion—and it seems to resonate within a Western cultural context—then we have to acknowledge the everpresence of mind in the work people do, at the least, the monitoring and directing of one’s behavior that enables even the simplest of tasks, and the motives one brings to a task, the reasons for doing it—from economic to social to aesthetic—that affect the execution of it. (p. 198)

Jennifer’s assertion that she just didn’t care that much about her college writing illustrates Rose’s point. We are hard-pressed to offer students the sort of meaning we and they hope they will find in the workplace. While it may be impossible to provide “real” writing experiences—in the sense that these workplace writers experience and define real writing—it *is* possible for us to share actual workplace writing with our students. An understanding of what may one day be expected of our students could provide motivation that standard academic assignments cannot.

Further, making the connection for students that the critical thinking skills developed through the act of composing will benefit them enormously throughout their careers, both academic and workplace. Additionally, some experience with actual workplace writing will illustrate for students that each job requires a particular literacy—a literacy we cannot teach them.

Workplace Literacy—Expect a Steep and Never-ending Learning Curve

All three participants indicate they had to learn new vocabularies to write for their jobs. They had to learn basic information about their employers, the companies, and the agencies with which they do business. Jennifer made lists of the kinds of reports she would have to write and scoured files looking for examples of each. She read reports and made notes in meetings to learn new vocabulary and syntax. Employing a workplace writer’s survival strategy, every time she heard a new acronym, she added it to her list, which now numbers thirty-one acronyms. Jennifer describes her writing as “descriptive, explanatory, and persuasive,” which the field would translate as narrative and argumentative. She describes the client’s abilities and disabilities and then argues that a specific need be met by a particular agency. She soon realized that procedures change rapidly, and she is constantly learning how to write new reports because state agencies often change their requirements. She learns to write new reports by trial and error. The agencies, when issuing a new writing requirement, are not clear in stating their expectations, so when they deny Jennifer’s request, she rewrites and resubmits. Sometimes she calls them and asks them for specifics. She says that she wonders if they know what they want in the first place or if they know it when they see it.

Giorgio has worked in scientific publishing for eighteen years, yet he shares that while he is adept at syntax, he is constantly learning new vocabulary, which he does through Google invariably leading him to Wikipedia. Oddly, as this is a source we discourage our students from

using. He elaborates: “many of the areas of research I deal with are progressing rapidly. Some of the fields are just emerging and didn’t exist ten to twenty years ago—e.g. proteomics, metabolomics, genetic medicine etc.—so unless you’re actively involved in current research, having a twenty year old degree in molecular biology, for example, is rather meaningless.” Giorgio clarifies that he does not need to understand the science the way the scientists do, and a quick Google search gives him enough information for him to refine his copy. His observation regarding the speed at which science is changing is relevant to most fields, and this speed of change is vitally important for our students to realize. His assertion that he need not understand it to write effectively about it differs from Mr. Green Jeans’ experience writing in his workplace.

Mr. Green Jeans worked at his company for twenty-eight years before he was tapped for his current job. He learned the business well, yet he, too, talks about learning new vocabulary and technical processes as two of the many concerns in learning to write for his job; “I felt adept at writing [but] I felt like a rookie on the subject matters . . . so I had a lot of learning to do on the content, but in terms of the writing and communicating, I came into the job with that skill set.” He recently found himself trying to write a proposal to his board about a technology he knew nothing about. Therefore, he “went to Green Bay, Wisconsin [to visit] the leading manufacturer of this kind of equipment . . . and got an education about it and watched it work.” He says that he needed to have an image of it in his head before he could adequately write about it—an expensive survival strategy but an effective one.

Indeed, each position within each workplace will have its own particular literacy and until an adequate literacy is achieved, workplace writers will have difficulty. We can teach basic job literacies—for example business students learn basic vocabulary particular to business practices, and medical students learn biological and chemical vocabulary. However, even these

jobs will require specialized literacies once students enter the field, and every job is becoming more specialized. Beaufort (1999) observed one of her workplace writers “with excellent general linguistic abilities, unable to edit the organization’s PR materials effectively until she had been at the site for almost a year, by which time she had a deep enough understanding of the agency’s programs to bring her editing skills to bear on the institution’s texts.” Further Beaufort argues that “the school writing samples of [her three informants] showed a noticeable relationship between the knowledge base of the writer and overall fluency in the writing” (p. 174).

It is incumbent upon us to enlighten students that they will face a steep literacy learning curve in the workplace, that lack of job-specific literacy will affect writing fluency, and that they will be learning and researching for the rest of their careers. Their job in college is to learn *how* to learn and to *enjoy* learning because if they do not, they will struggle to keep pace in the workplace. Beaufort’s (2007) subsequent project—a six year study following a student through college and two years into his engineering career—supports this notion:

It is clear that acquisition of subject matter knowledge doesn’t stop at the end of school; in fact, probably learning never stops if one is geared to continual learning and increasing of skills. School set Tim on a path of thinking like an engineer and understanding the broad principles in a number of subject areas; in the workplace, that knowledge became more specialized and attached to authentic tasks. (p. 122)

I wonder if students are aware of this fact—that they will be researching and learning throughout their careers, for a clear understanding of this would heighten their appreciation for researching, critical thinking skills, and writing. What they learn about research, critical thinking, and writing is vital to their future careers even though the subjects, syntax, and vocabularies are as yet

somewhat hidden. Also, my three informants agree with Beaufort's claim that time is a key factor in literacy acquisition, time and experience in the specific context.

Grammar and Mechanics

Both Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans are over fifty and were taught grammar and mechanics in elementary and middle school. Giorgio feels he had an adequate foundational knowledge upon entering the workplace but still uses Google occasionally to answer grammar and mechanics questions. He does not consider himself an expert and admits that he sometimes still needs help. He is adept enough to recognize the serious problems he sees in text written by non-native speakers in scientific publishing and says that it is "quite shocking some of the stuff . . . that is disseminated to the public that is barely intelligible." For example, twice a year The American Chemical Society has a big conference, and they produce forty thousand copies of a newsletter called *Excellence*. Someone else writes it, but it is very poorly written with regard to grammar and mechanics, so Giorgio rewrites it for them.

Mr. Green Jeans concurs that writing begins with a solid understanding of grammar and mechanics, but, like Giorgio, Mr. Green Jeans was taught grammar and mechanics in elementary and middle school, so grammar and mechanics have never been a problem for him. Jennifer, however, is half as old as Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans. She attended school after the grammar pendulum had swung the other way, and traditional grammar instruction was replaced with whole language instruction. I will not debate the teaching of grammar and mechanics here. The point is that all three participants *are* adept at grammar and mechanics, and they cite the importance of it as a basis for what they do. They admit that were they *not* adept, they would have serious problems composing in the workplace. Giorgio admits, even, to negatively judging the writing of others when it is fraught with error that makes it unintelligible. A question for

further research is to discover how error affects outcome. Two instances of diction error in Jennifer's writing went unnoticed by her superiors and had no effect on outcome. In one piece Jennifer used the word "acquisitions" instead of "accusations," and in another she misspelled sclerosis typing instead "schelorisis." She also misspelled paraplegic, "parapalegic."

It is not evident the effect poor grammar and mechanics might have on the outcome of my participants' writing. One could assume that Giorgio would not be in business very long if he were not writing effective copy. He theorizes that while the scientists in his field cannot produce good writing, they *can* recognize it when they see it, and, perhaps, the librarians to whom Giorgio targets much of his writing would be influenced by grammatical and mechanical errors to the point of questioning the value of whatever journal or book he is selling. One could assume that the librarians, who are responsible for choosing the publications for purchase, would look less favorably on those that are advertised poorly, but again, this is beyond the scope of this study and an avenue for further research regarding the effect of error. Maxine Hairston's (1981) study examined the effect of error by polling professionals for their responses to different kinds of error. She found that "women's attitudes toward language are more conservative than men's" One respondent said "We should not compromise proper grammar . . . wrong should not evolve into right through use and misuse" (p. 796). Through the course of Beaufort's second study (2007) a member of a large engineering firm "told [an] engineering faculty member, 'If a graduate of your school wrote incorrect sentences, I'd fire him and not hire another graduate from your school for a long time'" (p. 108). Clearly error is going to negatively affect outcome in some circumstances depending on the error *and* the audience. It is simply incumbent upon the writer to minimize error and for us as teachers to adhere to a fairly conservative stance on error.

Mr. Green Jeans is writing to the board of directors of his corporation—all of them holding college and/or advanced degrees. One could assume that sentence level error would affect the outcome of his initiatives, but one could also assume that he would not have been chosen for his position if he could not write grammatically and mechanically correct documents. When Jennifer was first hired, she had to submit her writing to her supervisor before it was disseminated to the proper state agencies. If her writing had been inadequate, she would not have kept her job. All three participants are probably correct in their assertion that grammar and mechanics are of vital importance and that none of the three would have their current jobs without these basic skills. However, while Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans' *might* have learned grammar the old fashioned way—through skill and drill—and Jennifer *might* have learned through whole language instruction, it is possible that all three learned their grammar growing up in homes where standard English was spoken and reading encouraged, as all three participants are from the dominant culture.

Another issue concerning grammar and mechanics is that we are increasingly conducting cross-global business. This means that as audiences expand so, too, do language differences. While English is considered *one* of the global languages of business, we are seeing the effects of grammatical and syntactic diversity and new forms of English. Giorgio is seeing it in his work because most of the scientists are utilizing English as a second language. He is adamant that non-native English writing is a significant problem in comprehension. We must make students aware of the diversity they will encounter in English writing and what they might consider error might not be considered error in another culture. Research into language acquisition including fluent grammatical skills is, again, beyond the scope of this study. It is pertinent that my participants equate good grammar with writing skill but years of research indicate otherwise.

The views about grammar expressed by my informants provide testimony to Micciche's (2004) view of grammar as rhetorical in her essay "Making a Case for Rhetorical Grammar."

Micciche "emphasize[s] the rhetorical aspects of grammar by asking students to focus on connections between grammar and concepts such as audience and purpose, paying particular attention to grammar as an art of selection," which is an effective approach in the college classroom (p. 723).

The pedagogical implication for the college writing classroom is to stress the importance of grammar and mechanics and their relation to productive outcomes. None of my three participants required grammatical and/or mechanical help with their writing by the time they reached college. It could be that graduates, who find themselves in jobs that require writing, are more adept at this aspect of writing than students, who seek employment that does not require writing. Again, my informants *believe* that effective grammatical and mechanical writing skills represent a concrete transfer whereas other aspects of the writing process either do not transfer from academic to workplace contexts or are less quantifiable as having transferred. Also, the importance my participants place on good grammar and mechanics is *their* perception, when in actuality the complexity of their workplace writing indicates that grammar and mechanics is only one facet of effective workplace writing. While we can conclude that grammar and mechanics are, indeed, important, and do represent concretely transferred skills, each participant also observes that the writers must know their audience in order to achieve their writing goals.

Audience Shapes Workplace Writing

Giorgio cites a former vice president of sales and marketing for teaching him the single most important lesson he learned to improve his writing. She told him that he need not describe whatever it is he wants to market, but he must address the customer's needs, either by showing

the customer how the product will fulfill an expressed need or by convincing the customer s/he needs the product even when the need has not been expressed. Giorgio has three audiences, scientists, librarians, and sometimes instructors, who will use the writing Giorgio markets in their classes. If he is writing to the librarians, he will explain the science in more detail where he does not have to do so for scientists or instructors because they will already understand the material. Giorgio writes to persuade people to buy whatever scientific journal or book he is marketing. As he says, “I am always in some way convincing people to part with their money,” which is also what Jennifer is doing in getting agencies to provide money for client services.

Jennifer writes for two audiences, herself and outside agencies. When she is her own audience, she is writing contact notes that simply report each contact she has with her clients. (See Appendix B, page 153.) When she writes reports for outside agencies in order to procure services for her clients, she says “there’s a difference in my writing if I’m writing something that goes out of the office, like a formal document or even an email that goes out of the office like to the regional office or another agency.” Jennifer very often finds that public agencies demand new forms and reports without clarifying what information they want and how they want that information presented. She says that her writing process for new forms can be trial and error because even the requesting agency does not know what it wants. She sometimes has to call them and ask for further specificity, so her writing is very much tailored to audience specifications. Jennifer’s ability to rewrite for her audience is in sharp contrast to Mr. Green Jeans’ composing process.

Mr. Green Jeans’ writes for a rarefied audience, senior management and the board of directors, who make the large financial decisions for the company, a company that had 4.6 billion dollars in poultry sales alone last year. He directs his writing specifically to them, and he

is always asking for a multi-million dollar outlay to finance a new initiative or a diversification of the agri-business side of the company. He is not going to get a second chance if his writing is unclear or his argument unsound. He must anticipate all of their questions and answer them succinctly, which can be tricky because several of the board members are family, as it is a privately held family owned and operated company. Further, two of the board members, who are family, do not work for the company, so they are not as well-versed in the salient technological issues. Mr. Green Jeans must write for the board members who are savvy to the business and technology issues and those who are not.

All three participants write specifically for and to their audiences. Mr. Green Jeans knows his audience because it is a family-owned business, and as a senior vice president, he socializes with the owners. For Giorgio, his audience is remembered from his time at Wiley when he worked directly with publishers. Jennifer must imagine her audience for the most part but does occasionally speak to them by phone when they have rejected one of her requests. She is also learning how bureaucracy works and the kinds of people who make decisions, so her audience is not entirely unknown to her. The pedagogical implication of teaching audience is perplexing because our students mostly write for us. Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans had years to learn to write for their audiences. They know their audiences' needs intimately and how to write for them in order to achieve the desired result, which always involves convincing the audience to part with their money. Jennifer is learning about her audiences, but it was immediately evident to her how important audience is to her writing. Our students do not know us, and I would argue that they should not be writing for us. I have my political, social, spiritual ideology, and I do not want my students parroting it to me. I want my students to think for themselves, to explore new ideas and grapple with them in their writing, perhaps changing course, perhaps staying the

course. Yet, because I am awarding a grade for their efforts, it follows that students want to write for me, their audience, which is what they will do in the workplace. If it is important in workplace writing to know and write to a specific audience, we must consider how we can effectively teach writing for a particular audience in the writing classroom. Or we must teach students about audience and that students will have to learn who their audience/s are, what's important to them, and how to write to them.

Giorgio and Mr. Green Jeans learned how to write for different audiences over many years, but Jennifer is still learning to do so. Because Jennifer is still unclear about her audience, she has what Peter Elbow (1987) calls “ghost or phantom ‘readers in the head’” (p. 50). Elbow (1981) differentiates audience as “the actual readers to whom the text will be given . . . and the writer’s conception of those readers.” Her survival strategy is to go through files looking at examples of all the reports she is required to write, and she models her own work on the examples she found. She assumes her predecessors cracked the audience “code.” Elbow delineates two more audiences, “the audience the text implies . . . and the discourse community or even genre addressed or implied by the text” (p. 186). Jennifer is negotiating all of these audiences, so she shows her writing to her supervisor before sending it out to her audience. Patrick Bizzaro (2007) calls the supervisor a “shadow audience.” Jennifer’s dependence upon her supervisor highlights the fact that most workplace writing is necessarily collaborative (Bizzaro).

The Writing Process is Messy and Often Collaborative

Notions of the writing process as linear and fixed have long been disregarded. We know that writing is recursive, but it is also messy in the sense that the writing process changes with the writing of each text. Sometimes we ask our students to peer review each other’s work, and

sometimes this is helpful. But for two of my three participants, collaboration is not optional; it is necessary and for Jennifer—required. Jennifer dialogues with supervisors and outside agencies in order to craft effective narratives and arguments that will result in services for her clients. Often, especially with new documents, outside agencies reject requests, and Jennifer calls them to ask specifically what they want. She may go back and forth with them two, three, or even four times before they are satisfied. Jennifer expresses her frustration that her audience is often vague in telling her what they want in the first place. She suspects they don't know until they see it, which is why they are not clear in their expectations to begin with. Unclear teacher expectations is a familiar student complaint. Months after interviewing Jennifer and while writing this dissertation, Jennifer informed me that office procedures were changed. Now she *must* bring *all* forms to her department staff meeting so that everyone can have a say as to what the service request and/or recommendation will be and how it will be written. As a result, Jennifer's writing now is *always* collaborative.

Mr. Green Jeans collaborates with coworkers to create documents that are clear and informative without talking over the heads of his board of directors. He elucidates that the six iterations he gave me for this study had input from four coworkers in addition to himself. He says that 75 percent of the revisions were content based, and 25 percent were stylistic changes. One peer in particular is the “wordsmith,” and Mr. Green Jeans cautions that one should not go to him for help unless one can tolerate stylistic editing. “He’s been here forty-two years, so he’s got a lot of experience, so I always go to him because he’s a resource. He’ll take the time, and he’ll edit it, and he’s going to edit the living daylights out of it. So you have to know that going in. That’s his style.” Writing teachers often experience students who bristle at criticism.

Mr. Green Jeans is adamant that writers *should* seek feedback and be *willing* to hear it, but he had an experience recently that caused him to see how difficult accepting criticism can be for some people. He illustrates: “I had a young intern, a graduate student, in January, and he took a stab at it [writing a draft of a basis for interest document], and it really bugged him that I would edit his work. I’m rewriting it because he’s not getting the message across. He said, ‘Well, this is what I think.’ And I said, “Well, guess what? I’m trying to get someone to give us ten million dollars. They’re not going to give us ten million dollars based on what you wrote.” Mr. Green Jeans, however, balances his assertion by clarifying that “this is not a democracy . . . ; it’s a business, so in the end, if it’s my project, I have to make a decision. You *like* to have a consensus,” but ultimately the final document is his responsibility. His concern is that the document is clearly and concisely conveying the message he wants it to convey. There are two issues here: writer sensitivity to criticism and the differences between what writers write and what readers read.

We should consider the issue of writer sensitivity to criticism. Bizzaro (2011) offers a section in his Technical Writing course that “teaches students how to effectively comment on other people’s writing” (P. Bizzaro, personal communication, 17 June 2011). I see a twofold benefit to such an approach, the most obvious being that students learn how to provide helpful criticism in a supportive positive manner. Secondly, students will learn how to accept criticism and that thoughtful criticism can improve their writing. Mr. Green Jeans’ intern was resistant to criticism, perhaps, because he received it as critical rather than helpful. If we teach students that criticism is a vital part of the writing process, we alleviate their stress regarding it.

The second issue regarding what writers write and how readers read it—so this speaks to both audience and collaboration—was never more poignantly illustrated by the Challenger

disaster. The engineers clearly stated the O rings and the putty holding them were a “potentially major problem,” and advised against the launch, but management did not *hear* the message (Herndle, 1991, p. 297). Sometimes miscommunication occurs because the writer is unclear, which was not the case in the shuttle disaster. In that case Herndle argued that the different discourse communities—engineers and management—failed to communicate because “bureaucratic organizations are richly differentiated social structures, subdivided into functional, geographical, and hierarchical subgroups” (p. 280). The workplace writer will have to negotiate the dominant literacy of the corporate structure and the various discourse communities within that structure. As in the case of the shuttle disaster, the goals of two different groups, engineers and management, clashed, and the lead engineer “seems then to have realized that what he considered to be argumentatively compelling was quite different from what the managers would believe” (p. 302). The pedagogical implication here is to teach students to expect the need to negotiate various discourse communities within the same corporate identity as well as having to negotiate with outsiders.

Both Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans are collaborating with co-workers and/or outside agencies, but Giorgio is working alone. So he employs a survival skill; he collaborates—in a sense—with himself. He explains: “My big thing is to get a first draft very quickly, and the first draft is always horrible . . . I write something generally as quickly as I can, so I have something to react to, and once I have something to react to; I can very quickly reassemble it into something I think is good, but I generally don’t know what I want until I put something down on paper, and I can say, no, it’s no good, or it should move in this direction or that direction. I like to have something to react to.” Nancy Welch (1998)—borrowing from Bakhtinian theorist Gary Saul Morson—calls this sideshadowing. Welch compares sideshadowing to foreshadowing, “which

fixes our attention on a predetermined future; sideshadowing redirects our attention to the present moment, it's multiple conflicts, its multiple possibilities . . . by calling on students to initiate, to extend, a marginal conversation with their writing" (p. 377). Giorgio is forced to collaborate with himself not only to create text but because his clients rarely ask for revisions, and he believes there are two reasons for this. First, his clients are such poor writers that whatever Giorgio gives them looks fine to them, and, second, revisions cost money. Giorgio finds the first draft "arduous," but the second draft has him "playing around, and it's often a question of how much time [he] is willing to play around." He expands: "the rewriting I find very much easier. I find it much easier to see something and figure out what's wrong with it than to know without reacting to it what should be there in the first place." This is not collaboration in the same way that Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans are collaborating, but Giorgio works alone, and, as he says, his clients are generally poor writers, so he cannot collaborate with them. Giving himself time between two drafts allows him to see his work in a different light so that he can revise accordingly.

There are two pedagogical implications here. One is that we must teach students how to collaborate on their writing. Experiencing firsthand how audiences receive one's writing illustrates to students that what they *think* they wrote is not necessarily what they *actually* wrote, as was the case with Mr. Green Jeans' intern. Collaboration will ferret out holes and misunderstanding in the writing. Mr. Green Jeans makes a fair point, however, that writers can be resistant to accept criticism, so we must seek ways to alleviate the stress of criticism for students. Being open to criticism requires students to give up some percentage of ownership of their writing in order to accept criticism. Releasing ownership and maintaining ownership requires writers to walk a fine line. Student resistance to criticism is fertile ground for more

research of workplace writing. Mr. Green Jeans indicates that he is ultimately responsible for the documents he writes, as are Jennifer and Giorgio. But is there workplace writing that is collaborative in the sense that a *team* is responsible for the writing as opposed to one particular employee being entirely responsible for the end product? As writing teachers we should strategize effective ways to teach collaboration and inform students to expect it in the workplace. Additionally, we should call it collaboration and not group work. I have had many students complain that when forced into group work, they do all the work while other students do little to nothing yet receive the same grade as the students, who worked hard. Additionally, the hard working students suggest that if they make it known to the teacher that members of their group did not contribute adequately, the hard working students will appear to be complainers or poor team players.

Collaboration is something very different from group work, the latter producing one project for which all group members will receive the same grade. Jennifer asks her supervisor and the outside agencies for very specific help with her writing. Mr. Green Jeans asks four particular co-workers for help with specific parts of his documents. Everyone brings something to the table, and teaching collaboration might benefit students in determining where their strengths lie in the writing process. One might be a good researcher while another writer might be an effective organizer, and still another might be the best wordsmith. Perhaps, to teach collaboration rather than group work, one might focus on the differences of the writers in the group rather than pretending that they each have the same talents and will contribute those same talents equally. The goal is to create an effective team which together can create an effective product. Collaboration is also an effective means of dealing with writer's block.

Writer's Block or Writer's Apprehension

Giorgio makes two important observations regarding writer's block. First, he needs adequate information in order to write, which almost sounds too obvious. But the pedagogical implication is that we make students, who are experiencing writer's block, aware that they might consider conducting more research in order to reignite the writing process. Second, as Giorgio has stated previously, he is very much a reactionary writer; he needs something to react to, so it is imperative that he write something/anything, after which he knows what to do to refine the piece. Lastly, Giorgio has a salient experiential insight, one that our students could benefit from, and that is not to be overwhelmed and defeated at the beginning of the writing process, which is something many writers experience at the start of a new writing project, the terror of the blank page.

Mr. Green Jeans' solutions to writer's block are that he needs time and/or to discuss the writing with his colleagues. He explains that he is a very social writer and conversation tends to generate ideas. Jennifer concurs with Mr. Green Jeans' social strategy claiming that she consults her office mates or her supervisor to generate ideas. Both Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans collaborate to move past writer's block, but they have co-workers with whom to collaborate while Giorgio does not; he must collaborate with himself. All three writers are employing Bizzaro's "shadow audience." Elbow (1987) argues that some audiences can be "powerfully *inhibiting*—so much so, in certain cases, that awareness of them as we write blocks writing altogether. There are certain people who always make us feel dumb when we try to speak to them: we can't find words or thoughts. As soon as we get out of their presence, all the things we wanted to say pop back into our minds" (p. 51; author's emphasis). Elbow suggests that writers must also develop "the [higher] ability to *turn off* audience awareness—especially when it

confuses thinking or blocks discourse” (p. 56). Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans have differentiated their audiences—those who may sometimes cause writer’s block and those who will help solve writer’s block. These are important audience distinctions for our students to comprehend. Additionally, Mr. Green Jeans’ first strategy for curing writer’s block—time—is one that I have employed writing this dissertation. Sometimes the mind simply needs time away in order to recharge, and, undoubtedly, when I return to the writing, I see it in a different context, which ignites my thought process. Again, these are strategies we should discuss with our writing students. Kimberly Miller (2010) studied writer’s block in college students and found that “participating students agreed that most [students] struggle with writer’s block at some point,” but they were surprised that expert or professional writers experience writer’s block (p. 209). Miller’s informants “noted that if they struggle with writer’s block it is often at the early stages of writing” but overall consider it to be a part of the writing process (p. 210). Miller concludes that “if discussions of writer’s block could be framed as being a natural part of the writing process, and, further, an opportunity to engage in better writing, student writers may feel less inhibited in discussing writer’s block and also less fearful when it does occur” (p. 211). Thus, it is my contention that we should teach students *about* writing while we are teaching them to write.

Reframing the Teaching of Technical Writing

While we are teaching students all the things we teach in composition and technical writing classes about how to write thesis statements, how organization improves argument, and how to answer the so-what question, we must teach them the experiences we know they will face as academic writers and eventually as workplace writers. This is precisely what Elizabeth Wardle and Douglas Downs (2007) urge the field to consider, “moving first-year composition

from teaching ‘how to write in college’ to teaching *about writing*—from acting as if writing is a basic, universal skill to acting as if writing studies is a discipline with content knowledge to which students should be introduced, thereby changing their understandings about writing and thus changing the ways they write” (p. 553). Such a meta-analysis of what writers experience while they are writing would prove useful when students move from academia into the workplace because they would carry with them an understanding of writing as an *experience* rather than it being a skill they can neatly or easily transfer to the workplace. We can teach students to expect experiences that all writers face—the terror of beginning, the frustration of writer’s block, and the knowledge that what they think they wrote is not necessarily what is understood by the audience, the need for effective collaboration. Further, we can provide them an arsenal of strategies with which to work through those experiences in order to accomplish their workplace writing goals.

Post Process Theories in Relation to Workplace Writing

In Chapter Two I discussed Kent’s (1999) post process notions that writing is public, interpretive, and situated. Kent pushes against previously held writing theories that originally privileged product and later privileged process. I argue that as our field evolved we had a tendency to discount previously held ideas about writing in order to further our theoretical considerations, the most obvious example of which is when we moved from current traditionalism, which privileged product, to expressivism, which privileged the individual writer’s voice. Later, when the field moved to consider notions of post process, Kent posited that writers—and the moments during which they write—are constantly changing. Therefore “no process can capture what writers do during these changing moments and within these changing relations” (Kent, p.2). However, as my three participants express, there *are* processes

they utilize that are unchanging, such as collaboration for Jennifer and Mr. Green Jeans.

Giorgio, who works alone, writes a quick first draft so that he has something to react to. These are very effective processes they employ *every* time they compose in the workplace.

Kastman Breuch (2002) argues that “the broader implications of post process theory have very little to do with process,” and I agree. Post process is a misnomer, for its theories are pushing us *beyond* process without disregarding it. I suggest that we continue to broaden our horizons, that we consider how workplace writing *is* different from the various forms of academic writing or other genres of public writing, and that we develop a post process theory for teaching professional writing as well as academic writing. My participants say that what transferred from academic writing to the workplace is grammar and mechanics. Teachers of freshman composition often wonder what transfers from freshman writing to other academic disciplines. Just as each job has its own particular literacy, each academic discipline has its own literacy as well. Additionally, we know that each professor has his/her own peccadilloes concerning writing. As a graduate student studying for my master’s, I had one professor who preferred very long complex sentences and another who wanted short sentences with little complexity. The point is that each rhetorical situation is different, and we should be illuminating students to the fact that each rhetorical situation will present its own challenges.

Four years after Kastman Breuch’s seminal discussion of post process, Vandenberg, Hum, and Clary-Lemon (2006) offer that:

- Writing occurs through conversations and negotiations with others (**relations**).
- Writing is shaped by material places and intellectual spaces (**locations**).
- Writing reflects the contingency of our beliefs and values and in so doing composes identity (**positions**)” (p. 8-9).

My participants' discussion of collaboration in the workplace illustrates Vandenberg, Hum, and Clary-Lemon's first point, that collaboration—**relations**--is not only an effective workplace writing strategy but a necessary one. However, Mr. Green Jeans is *choosing* the people with whom he collaborates because he knows which of his colleagues to approach for help with different aspects of the writing process. How can we mirror this in the classroom when we have a handful of students who will be excellent resources for their classmates and many others who will be less so?

Additionally, workplace writing is shaped by material places and intellectual spaces—**locations**—or the ideological practices of the workplace. Questions of workplace identity and ideology must be understood and accepted for workplace writers to appropriate the language and culture in order to write effectively. My three participants are comfortable with the ideological practices of their employers. Mr. Green Jeans expressed dismay at the public's perception of his company, especially in light of the great strides he has made in implementing green initiatives, which garner no attention from the media. Perhaps one pedagogical implication this poses for the writing classroom is that we consider studying notions of workplace ethics, a salient point in light of the shuttle disaster after which "a senior manager . . . told the vice president of engineering to 'take off his engineering hat and put on his management hat'" (Herndl et al, p. 301).

The final claim concerns identity—**positions**—and for my three participants they are comfortable with their positions as experts in their workplaces. Giorgio admits that his clients consider him to be more of an expert in science than he is, but he can write with authority even though he knows he is not the expert they think he is. Part of his comfort is due to the fact that while he is not an expert in science, he is an expert writer and has had over twenty years'

experience in scientific publishing. Mr. Green Jeans, like Giorgio, has had many years experience and even when he must write about something he does not understand, he knows what strategies to employ to get the writing done, such as traveling to Wisconsin to watch the process about which he must write. Jennifer, who is only twenty-three and has only two years in her workplace, knows to collaborate to solve some of her writing problems, and she is beginning to experience herself as an expert. I wonder how often our students experience themselves as expert writers in our classrooms, or if it is even possible for them to identify as experts. This is an area for further research.

In my proposal for this dissertation, I anticipated seeking a post process theory for teaching professional writing. I do not particularly care for the term post process, for it seems to imply that writing no longer requires a process. All action requires a process. The field needs a new theoretical name that encompasses all of our theories thus far because they all add something important to the teaching of writing. Perhaps something along the lines of Buzz Lightyear's "To infinity and beyond!" I agree with Elizabeth Wardle and Douglas Downs that it is time to teach our students *about* writing, that an "Intro to Writing Studies course would be akin to the introductory courses offered in all other disciplines." Further they argue that their "concern is not simply to improve writing instruction but also to improve the position of writing studies in the academy and change common misconceptions about writing" (p. 554). While Wardle and Downs focus their argument on first year composition, I believe their points are pertinent to all writing studies.

Each rhetorical situation presents different **relations**, **locations**, and **positions** whether they are academic or workplace writing. Aside from grammar and mechanics, each rhetorical situation or context requires unique research, literacy, and writing. It seems we should be

teaching students strategies for negotiating the writing *process* in order to create an effective *product* regardless of the rhetorical situation, and to do this, we must teach them *about* writing.

Wardle and Downs propose a course that teaches the theoretical underpinnings of our discipline:

How does writing work? How do people use writing? What are problems related to writing and reading and how can they be solved? Students read writing research, conduct reading and writing auto-ethnographies, identify writing-related problems that interest them, write reviews of the existing literature on their chosen problems, and conduct their own primary research, which they report both orally and in writing. This course would serve as a gateway to WAC and WID programs better able to address issues of specialized discourse within specific academic disciplines. (p. 558)

I envision a technical writing course in each discipline, one that would provide more discourse specificity. As Wardle and Downs suggest, such an approach “heightens students’ awareness that writing itself is a subject of scholarly inquiry. Students leave the course with increased awareness of writing studies as a discipline, as well as a new outlook on writing as a researchable activity rather than a mysterious talent” (p. 560). I like this approach for our students and our discipline.

Final Thoughts

Working on this dissertation has caused me to question my pedagogy in both my Technical Writing and Composition III courses. Wardle and Downs’ contention that we teach students *about* writing resonates for the reasons I have delineated here and also because in the course of writing this dissertation, I have experienced a myriad of things—emotions ranging from frustration and despair to exhilaration and jubilation, physical trials such as exhaustion and back aches, and I have experienced many intellectual challenges. I have shared these on

Facebook with fellow dissertators, some finished and some still struggling to finish. The camaraderie has been enormously comforting and inspirational. Our Facebook conversation represents a form of writers' self-reports. The experience of sharing as I write and listening to others as they write has caused me to understand that my students would benefit from such experiential sharing *about* the difficulties and joys of writing in addition to understanding the intellectual processes that precede and run concurrently throughout the writing process. Wardle and Downs seem to agree, for in their recently published book, *Writing about Writing: A College Reader*, they include the self-reports of Anne Lamott, Stephen King, Allegra Goodman, Kent Haruf, Susan Sontag, and Junot Diaz. In addition the text includes seminal articles authored by important theorists in our field, who weigh in on the important issues my study highlights such as error, audience, collaboration and literacy As I have theorized here, writer's self-reports are an important source of knowledge that can inform our discipline and our pedagogy if we listen.

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APPENDIX A—Participant Interview Questions

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

Pseudonym

Age

Undergrad

Major

Graduate

Major

Job description

What percentage of your time is spent writing?

What genres do you write?

HISTORY

How did you get to the job you currently have?

Tell me a bit about your history as a writer.

Do you consider yourself a good writer?

What kind of a writer were you in college?

How is writing for your job the same and/or different from academic writing?

You have said that you spend ____% writing; how much time do you spend reading others' writing?

Were/are you surprised by the amount of writing you do for your job?

PREPARATION

What writing preparation, if any, did you receive before your employment?

Did you have a writing course in your major?

Was this preparation appropriate/enough to prepare you for your workplace writing tasks?

What preparation, if any, did you receive on the job?

If so, how did this preparation differ from previous writing training?

If you learned on your own, how did you do that?

What advice would you give a neophyte workplace writer?

What advice would you give a college writing instructor to improve pedagogy?

MOTIVATION

How important is writing to the advancement of your career and/or maintaining your position?

What motivations do you attach to each of the genres you write?

AUDIENCE/S

Who are the audiences for each of your genres?

Do you consciously consider audience when you compose?

IDENTITY/VOICE

When you first took your position, did you feel immediately adept at writing for your job?

If so, why; if not, why not, and describe your learning curve.

Do you shift identity/voice (from personal to corporate) when writing?

Did you have to learn to do this, and if so how did you learn it?

Did you have to learn a new vocabulary and/or syntax?

If so, how did you accomplish this?

PROCESS

Describe your writing process.

Do you work in hardcopy or on the computer?

How do interruptions factor into your process?

Do you always compose at your workplace, or do you ever compose at home or elsewhere?

How do you approach your writing tasks, with anticipation, dread, or something in between?

Do you prefer to tackle complex writing tasks first or simple writing first?

Describe challenges you face in completing your writing tasks.

How do you meet those challenges?

Is any of your writing collaborative?

If so, which genres, and how does collaboration affect your process?

Can you describe your process when faced with a new writing task, a completely new genre, perhaps, or a new audience?

REVISION PROCESS

Does anyone edit your work before it reaches its intended audience(s)?

If so, who and why?

Does this editing include the editing of content as well as style/mechanics?

What percentage of your editing is done for content and/or mechanics?

Are you ever in a position of having to argue for specific content and/or mechanics/style?

If so, what sorts of arguments must you make?

Do you ever edit the writing of others?

If so, whose writing and why?

If so, what considerations do you make in reviewing the writing of others?

WRITERS' BLOCK

Do you experience writer's block, and if so, how do you deal with it?



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—Mark H. Ebell, MD, MS, Professor, University of Georgia and Editor-in-Chief, Essential Evidence Plus

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APPENDIX C—Jennifer’s Writing Samples

CRITICAL NEEDS LIST RECOMMENDATION FORM

INDIVIDUAL’S NAME: [REDACTED] **DISABILITY(S):** Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis,

SS#: [REDACTED] Orthopedic Impairment, Paraplegic

DOB: 1/17/1983 **FUNCTIONAL LEVEL (ID ONLY):**

CAREGIVER NAME: [REDACTED] N/A

CAREGIVER DOB: 3/29/1958 **CAREGIVER PHONE#:** [REDACTED]

CAREGIVER ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

COUNTY: [REDACTED] **PRESENTER:** [REDACTED]

Eligibility Information (Indicate specific limitations to independent functioning, maladaptive behaviors, etc.):

[REDACTED] is a 28-year-old female with multiple medical diagnoses’ that affect her ability to live independently. Her seizure disorder is currently controlled with meds and she reports her last seizure occurred last year. She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but due to family circumstances, she was forced to drop out. [REDACTED] uses a walker and wheelchair to ambulate and has a speech impediment, but this may be due to her native language. [REDACTED] requires assistance with ADLs primarily because of her limited ambulation and range of motion. She is a short-statured person (roughly 3’ tall) that relies on her walker for moving around her home and her wheelchair for long-distances. When eating, she is prone to choking and when using utensils, she is not able to cut and drops her food a lot due to her unsteady hand. With regards to personal hygiene, she needs assistance in bathing, dressing and undressing. She toilets independently and can brush her teeth and hair. She is independent in taking her medications and caring for her personal possessions. [REDACTED] is adequately independent in this area. She is able to grocery shop for small items, she can make simple purchases, she understands currency, and she is able to make change. She however does not have a checking account and cannot help with household chores such as vacuuming, laundry, and lawn mowing due to her ambulation and short stature concerns. She is unable to dust due to allergies and finds chores such as washing dishes exhausting. [REDACTED] is very independent in accessing community resources. This is a strength of hers and I was sure to let her know. She takes initiative to apply for services that she learns and takes public transportation to get to where she needs to go. She uses the phone easily and knows what to do in the event of an emergency. Her one limitation is that she must use chubby pens and pencils as this is the only way she can grip to write.

ELIGIBLE AS:

DD X (Please attach necessary documentation for this eligibility) **SO**

Priority Justification (Indicate individual and caregiver factors or other circumstances that justify recommendation with examples):

■■■■■ lives with her father, who has health concerns, and a little sister that also has scheloris. ■■■■■ is independent in most areas of her daily living, but needs assistance. Her father is who she considers her primary care giver, but he only manages the household finances, and deals nothing with ■■■■■ disability. She will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating. She would also benefit from a day program or supported employment program for socialization as ■■■■■ is depressed and desires to be out of her home during the day.

SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

DAY: Traditional Crisis Resolution ____ Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need ____ M/D/Y

RESIDENTIAL: Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention Current Request Future Need ____ M/D/Y

SUPPORT CSLA Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need ____
(Specify) M/D/Y

NOTE: PLEASE PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN. PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THE FORM OR ATTACH AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NEEDED.

Revised 03/16/11

CRITICAL NEEDS LIST RECOMMENDATION FORM

INDIVIDUAL'S NAME: [REDACTED] DISABILITY(S): Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis,

SS#: [REDACTED] Orthopedic Impairment, Paraplegic

DOB: 1/17/1983 FUNCTIONAL LEVEL (ID ONLY):

CAREGIVER NAME: [REDACTED] N/A

CAREGIVER DOB: 3/29/1958 CAREGIVER PHONE#: [REDACTED]

CAREGIVER ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

COUNTY: [REDACTED] PRESENTER: [REDACTED]

Eligibility Information (Indicate specific limitations to independent functioning, maladaptive behaviors, etc.):

[REDACTED] is a 28-year-old female with multiple medical diagnoses that affect her ability to live independently. Her seizure disorder is currently controlled with meds and she reports her last seizure occurred last year. She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but due to family circumstances, she was forced to drop out. [REDACTED] has a goal of getting her GED. [REDACTED] uses a walker and wheelchair to ambulate and has a speech impediment, but this may be due to her native language.

Personal Management: [REDACTED] requires assistance with ADLs primarily because of her limited ambulation and range of motion. She is a short-statured person (roughly 3' tall) that relies on her walker for moving around her home and her wheelchair for long-distances. When eating, she is prone to choking and when using utensils, she is not able to cut and drops her food a lot due to her unsteady hand. With regards to personal hygiene, she needs assistance in bathing, dressing and undressing. She toilets independently and can brush her teeth and hair. She is independent in taking her medications and caring for her personal possessions.

Household Management: [REDACTED] is adequately independent in this area. She is able to grocery shop for small items, she can make simple purchases, she understands currency, and she is able to make change. She however does not have a checking account and cannot help with household chores such as vacuuming, laundry, and lawn mowing due to her ambulation and short stature concerns. She is unable to dust due to allergies and finds chores such as washing dishes exhausting.

Using Community Resources: [REDACTED] is very independent in accessing community resources. This is a strength of hers and I was sure to let her know. She takes initiative to apply for services that she learns and takes public transportation to get to where she needs to go. She uses the phone easily and knows what to do in the event of an emergency. Her one limitation is that she must use chubby pens and pencils as this is the only way she can grip to write.

ELIGIBLE AS:

DD X (Please attach necessary documentation for this eligibility) SO

Priority Justification (Indicate individual and caregiver factors or other circumstances that justify recommendation with examples):

■■■■■ lives with her father, who has health concerns, and a little sister that also has scheloris. ■■■■■ is independent in most areas of her daily living, but needs assistance. Her father is who she considers her primary care giver, but he only manages the household finances, and deals nothing with ■■■■■ disability. I have assisted her in applying for personal care and AMDC through AERS, but if she is denied, or the personal care hours that she is allotted aren't enough, then she will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating. She would also benefit from a day program or supported employment program for socialization as ■■■■■ is depressed and desires to be out of her home during the day.

SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

DAY: Traditional Crisis Resolution ____ Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need ____ M/D/Y

RESIDENTIAL: Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention Current Request Future Need ____ M/D/Y

SUPPORT CSLA Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need ____
(Specify) M/D/Y

NOTE: PLEASE PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN. PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THE FORM OR ATTACH AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NEEDED.

Revised 03/16/11

CRITICAL NEEDS LIST RECOMMENDATION FORM

INDIVIDUAL'S NAME: [REDACTED] DISABILITY(S): Epilepsy, Multiple Sclerosis,

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CAREGIVER ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

COUNTY: [REDACTED] PRESENTER: [REDACTED]

Eligibility Information (Indicate specific limitations to independent functioning, maladaptive behaviors, etc.):

[REDACTED] is a 28-year-old female with multiple medical diagnoses that affect her ability to live independently. Her seizure disorder is currently controlled with medication and she reports her last seizure occurred "sometime last year". She has a 10th grade education and was on a diploma track, but due to family circumstances, she was forced to drop out. [REDACTED] has a goal of getting her GED so that she will have more vocational opportunities. [REDACTED] uses a walker and wheelchair to ambulate and has a speech impediment, but this may be due to her native language. [REDACTED] is a very mature woman that understands her limitations and does not exhibit any maladaptive behaviors.

Personal Management: [REDACTED] requires assistance with ADLs primarily because of her limited ambulation and range of motion. She is a short-statured person (roughly 3' tall) that relies on her walker for moving around her home and her wheelchair for long-distances. When eating, she is prone to choking and when using utensils, she is not able to cut her food and drops it a lot due to her unsteady hand. With regards to personal hygiene, she needs assistance in bathing, dressing and undressing. She toilets independently and can brush her teeth and hair. She is independent in taking her medications and caring for her personal possessions.

Household Management: [REDACTED] is adequately independent in this area. She is able to grocery shop for small items and can make simple purchases. She understands currency and she is able to make change. She however does not have a checking account as she struggles with balancing a checkbook and writing checks. She relies on her father to assist her with household finances. [REDACTED] cannot help with household chores such as vacuuming, laundry, and lawn mowing due to her ambulation and short stature. She is unable to dust due to allergies and finds chores such as washing dishes exhausting.

Using Community Resources: [REDACTED] is very independent in accessing community resources. This is a strength for her and I was sure to let her know. She takes initiative to apply for services that she learns of and takes public transportation to get to where she needs to go. She uses the phone easily and knows what to do in the event of an emergency. Her one limitation is that she must use chubby pens and pencils as this is the only way she can grip to write.

ELIGIBLE AS:

DD X (Please attach necessary documentation for this eligibility) SO

Priority Justification (Indicate individual and caregiver factors or other circumstances that justify recommendation with examples):

██████ lives with her father, who has health concerns, and a little sister that also has schelerosis. ██████ is independent in most areas of her daily living, but needs assistance. Her father is who she considers her primary care giver, but he only manages the household finances, and deals nothing with ██████ disability. I have assisted her in applying for personal care and Adult Medical Day Care through the AERS program. If she is denied, or the personal care hours that she is allotted are not enough, then she will need additional supports from DDA to maintain her standard of living as her health is deprecating. She would also benefit from a day program or supported employment program for socialization as ██████ is depressed and desires to be out of her home during the day.

SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS:

DAY: Traditional Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need M/D/Y

RESIDENTIAL: Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention Current Request Future Need M/D/Y

SUPPORT CSLA Crisis Resolution Crisis Prevention X Current Request Future Need
(Specify) M/D/Y

NOTE: PLEASE PROVIDE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS YOU CAN. PLEASE USE THE BACK OF THE FORM OR ATTACH AN ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NEEDED.

Revised 03/16/11

DATE	TYPE OF CONTACT	
5/24/11	FV	This day was ****'s IP and also RFSC meeting for his reduction in CSLA staff. Refer to meeting notes and IP summary. [REDACTED]
4/8/11	FV	Met with ***** at ***** this day. He told me that he was thinking about moving in with his mom and wanted to know if this was possible with the bridge subsidy. I told him I would explore this and get back to him. Upon exploration, I let him know that it was not possible based on his mom's criminal record. [REDACTED]
3/11/10	FV	A team meeting was held this day to discuss ***** transportioan and his schedule. The team agreed to allow him Thursdays nights alone and will move around the staff. [REDACTED]
3/10/11	CS	Received letter of intent for transportation for a start date of March 1, 2011. Confirmed transportation start date of 3/1 with ***** and sent notice to ESRO. [REDACTED]
2/22/11	FV	***** RFSC was approved and ***** provided a SFP that outlined this approved request for transportation. I went to ***** apartment to have it signed by him. While there, we discussed his upcoming lease renewal. He is interested in living in *****. We also discussed his money. I informed him that he can request a statement from ***** at any time. He is still asking about getting Thursdays without staff. I called ***** and a team meeting will be scheduled. Submitted SFP to ESRO. [REDACTED]
2/7/11	CS	Submitted request for service change after I received the transportation documentation from *****. [REDACTED]
1/20/11	FV	A team meeting was held for a request for service change. ***** is in need of add on transportation so that he can get out in the community. [REDACTED]
12/28/10	CS	Received *****' respite redetermination from ***** this day. After speaking with *****, he decided that he no longer needed respite because he is in his own home, has staff that can take him where he wants to go and does not like going to camp. I told him that if he wants to go to camp, he will need to save his money. [REDACTED]

12/21/10	CS	<p>***** from Dvoe Pointe called this day and requested that I complete a request for service change for transportation for *****. A meeting has been scheduled to do this.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
12/1/10	FV	<p>Took ***** to his appointment with ***** at *****. Picked him up from ***** where he is working in the dishroom. He enjoys that job a lot and likes getting away from *****. At the appt. the doctor reviewed with ***** the medication that he has taken. He has weighted him (212 lbs) which is down 15 pounds since June. ***** asked how he was doing and he stated that he was doing well. He reports not hearing voices and reduced anxiety. ***** will continue him on the Invega and requested new lab work. Since ***** just had blood work done by Dr. *****, I called Dr. *****'s office and requested that they send the lab work.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
11/30/10	CS	<p>Received notice from ***** that ***** has been re-approved for the waiver and MA.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
11/17/10	FV	<p>Reviewed ***** IP this day with his team. ***** has been visiting the ***** monthly and is also continuing to work in the banquet hall. He is also learning skills for independence through life skills training. ***** is also learning to budget, meal plan and do his laundry independently.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
11/4/10	FV	<p>A team meeting was held this day to discuss ***** not staying at his apartment. He stated that he is scared for his life and has been staying at his moms house because someone is knocking at this door during the early mornign hours. I told him that ***** would move his apartment if he wanted to, but he said that was not necessary. ***** will put in overnight staff for a few nights and ***** knows to call the police if someone does come.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
10/5/10	PC	<p>***** called this day. He went to the pharmacy and they did not have a rx on file for him for his Invegra. Called ***** and they called in a rx. I called ***** to let him know and that he shoul have his staff take him there this afternono.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
9/20/10	FV	<p>Met with *****. He let mek now that he was locked out over the weekend. He asked if I would keep a key for him and I told him that it would be best to ask a close family member or friend that he trusts.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
9/14/10	CS	<p>Submitted recert this day.</p> <p>████████████████████</p>
8/24/10	CS	<p>***** owes \$60 in court fees to the lawyer for his dental bills. I paid this amount and submitted the receipt to ***** for reimbursement.</p>

		<p>[REDACTED]</p>
8/18/10	CS	<p>***** has a balance of \$141.32 with ***** (lawyer) for unpaid medical bills. I called his office at ***-***-***** to determine whether ***** must appear in court (*****) on Friday at 9AM. They told me that he had a balance of \$141.32. I called ***** at ***** and she let me know that she sent out a check on Tuesday for \$81.32. I let her know that there was a discrepancy and requested a sheet with charges and balances from the lawyer office. I will fax this to *****.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
8/17/10	CS	<p>***** signed his checks over today and has paid off as of this morning for the entire amount. She was also interested in more info regarding his dental bills. The amount has been paid out, but she is unclear if he still must appear Friday. I called and left a message with *****, and checked Case Search and nothing active came up.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
8/4/10	FV	<p>Met with ***** this day after picking up his medication at *****. He did not enjoy camp. I also found out that ***** is paying off ***** dental bills. He may not need to stand trial.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
8/3/10	CS	<p>My supervisor met with ***** to complete the form that ***** needs to appeal the decision not to cover the Invega. I faxed it to ***** to process and send off.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
7/27/10	CS	<p>**** at ***** needs a form completed by ***** in order to appeal the denial for the Invega. I went there to get the form and let **** know that ***** is at camp this week and that I can meet with him next week.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
7/22/10	CS	<p>***** called this day to let me know that ***** was going to Camp ****. This was funded through the *****.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
7/20/10	CS FV	<p>*****' insurance is still not picking up the cost of the Invega, but **** (*****) just let me know that the drug rep came in and dropped off the dosage that ***** needs for 2 weeks. I told her I would come in tomorrow and pick it up. I did so and went to ***** and gave the packs to ***** reminding him that he needs to take one pill daily. At this point, ***** tells me that he is going to camp ***** next week and I let him know that I was excited for him that he could go on a vacation.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
7/9/10	FV	<p>Issue with medication. His in*****rance will not cover it. He needs a coupon or ***** to call in*****rance company. I called Mary Britton at ***** and she will follow-up.</p>

		<p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/28/10	CS	<p>Received ***** IP this day and sent verification</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/21/10	FV	<p>A team meeting was held this day. ***** is not coming into ***** clean and he is not pleased with his residential staff. ***** let him know that they were hiring for his position. His high cholesterol and exercise were discussed. Staff needs to be reminded that they are to help him to eat right and exercise.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/16/10	FV	<p>His current med is elevating his cholesterol and liver enzymes. ***** is slowly going to decrease the zyprexa and increase a new medication. Took him to get these prescriptions filled and will pick them up tomorrow. We also discussed his diet and exercising. He is still eating poorly.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/11/10	FV	<p>Took ***** this day to an appointment at *****. He met with the *****. She is concerend with the elevated bad chlesterol that was present in his blood work. He and ***** discussed heatlhy eating and the importance of exercise. ***** then composed a letter to ***** staff making them aware of this need and I delivered it to *****, ***** residential coordinator.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/8/10	CS	<p>***** had called letting me know that they had not received June's rent. I called the Housing Authority and they let me know that because the contract was recevied late, the payment would come in July. I called ***** back at ***** to let her know and she was fine with this.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
6/4/10	FV	<p>Took ***** to ***** to get his blood work done per ***** orders. ***** was also talking with me about his relationship with P.T. and he let me know that he was sexually active with her. I then took him to the health department to get condoms.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
5/27/10	FV	<p>Took ***** to ***** to meet with ***** to sort out the issue of the Zyprexa causing drausiness. ***** is now asking that ***** medications be taken in the evening. I then took him back to ***** , took his medication and brought it to his home this afternoon. I then called his staff and let them know that they are to remind ***** to take his medication in the evening daily.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

APPENDIX C—Mr. Green Jean’s Writing Samples

BASIS FOR INTEREST DOCUMENT

PRODUCTION AND SALE OF PRILLED POULTRY LITTER

The Strategy

Our strategy is to ~~expand~~ **convert** [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle’s product line with a prilled poultry litter by upgrading processing equipment and installing further processing capability (blending and bagging) at [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle enabling us to compete, not just in garden and golf markets, but also in commercial lawn fertilizer and other markets.

Rationale, Trends and Driving Factors

Environmental Sustainability continues to be a major topic of focus. In May 2009, President Obama issued an executive order for Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration for the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to coordinate the efforts of federal agencies and state governments. Under the executive order, the EPA could be empowered with enforcement authority should states fail to meet goals, e.g. reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus levels. In December 2009, [REDACTED], V.P. Environmental Sustainability, testified before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Energy and Research.² He stated [REDACTED]’s support for the reauthorization of the existing Chesapeake Bay Program but opposed additional regulations that would expand federal authority. He described [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle’s commitment to relocate measurable amounts of nutrients out of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. For the foreseeable future, [REDACTED] Corporate will be dedicating human and financial resources to an ongoing effort regarding environmental stewardship.

In addition to the environmental aspect of [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle ([REDACTED]AR), over the last year and half, we have also focused on improvements in operations and marketing. We anticipate our best financial results in FY10. On the marketing side, we have been developing a strategy for gaining a portion of the large volume lawn market. [REDACTED]AR’s current marketing plan targets organic customers (residences, agriculture and government) and high-end golf courses. We produce pellets and granular products that meet our customers’ requirements. However, several customers have told us that they want improvements to our products. In particular, Espoma, whose leading competitor in the lawn and garden market is Scotts, would like our litter product to be more consistent in size and appearance and without dust. With these improved product attributes, Espoma will be able to produce a naturally-based fertilizer for the lawn market that is easy to store, simple to apply with slow release capability. Espoma sees the industry eventually shifting to all prilled product. Scotts has also asked us to work with them ([REDACTED] must define with specific updated details from a named person at Scotts).

We have been researching technologies to improve our products. However, our work with A. J. Sackett, a dryer supplier, did not produce results. Sackett’s technology produced a wide

² Please see Exhibit A for Mr. [REDACTED]’s complete testimony in the Appendix at the end of the basis for interest document.

spectrum of finished product sizes. Until recently, none have suggested a commercially viable technology that addresses our upgraded product demands.

In November 2009, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]³ met with FEECO International⁴ to examine their disc pelletizing technology also known as pan granulation⁵. Pan granulation gathers material into a mass using processes that roll and agglomerate the material into spheres or prills. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] worked with FEECO engineers to conduct test runs with poultry litter⁶. Poultry litter, with as much as 35% moisture, was run with and without lignin sulfonate as a binder⁷. The resulting prills successfully met initial requirements such as prill durability and handling, few to no fines and consistent 10% moisture in finished product.

Under this outlook--the government's intense focus on nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, continued interest in relocating the nutrients in poultry litter, Corporate commitment to environmental sustainability and continuous improvement of the profitability of our micronutrient plant, we see prilled litter as a viable opportunity for the next generation litter product line and increased, higher-margin sales for [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle.

Market

According to The Fertilizer Institute, fertilizer is a \$10 billion industry with \$___ in the lawn market and \$___ in the garden market. Both Espoma and Scotts have approached us with plans to further expand their market share in commercial lawn fertilizers. With the installation of the pan granulation system, we would be able to produce a basic prilled litter in addition to a prilled litter blend⁸. Prilled litter, without additives or with less than 5% binder, would be an organic fertilizer that would help with the soil's ability to retain water and nutrients. A prilled litter blend would be a naturally-based fertilizer that would blend litter with traditional chemical N-P-K (nitrogen, phosphorus, potash) for customers who want higher performance with boosted nutritive value. The humus (organic matter) in the litter will absorb the N-P-K and be a slow-release delivery mechanism.

³ [REDACTED] is Senior Director, Co-Products and Oil Refining Operations. [REDACTED] is Plant Manager of the [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle micronutrient plant at [REDACTED]s, Delaware.

⁴ Based in Green Bay, Wisconsin, the privately held FEECO International, Inc. (Fertilizer Engineering and Equipment COmpany) designs, manufactures, markets and installs agglomeration equipment and systems for industries such as: fertilizer, chemical processing, mining, utilities, etc. In 2008 with 60 employees, they earned sales of more than \$11 million.

⁵ For information on the technology, please see Exhibit B: FEECO's Agglomeration.

⁶ Please see Exhibit C: FEECO Trip notes

⁷ Further research is planned to determine whether OMRI standards allow for the inclusion of lignin sulfonate in organic products.

⁸ We will work with OMRI to establish cleanout procedures between product runs to meet their standards for organic certification.

The prilled litter blend could be sold as a complete finished fertilizer. Further market research would be needed to determine whether we want to be a supplier of fertilizer, whether we want to direct sell to consumers.

██████-AgriRecycle is well-positioned to meet this developing demand. We are located in the region of highest concentration of manure and have existing, efficient infrastructure that enables us to manage nutrient movements on the ██████ Peninsula. We are also located close to the highest demand for lawn and garden products which is the Northeast U.S.

In meetings with Espoma, they conversationally project their demand for prilled litter to be as much as 10,000 tons per year.

We have heard that Scotts has already approached Tyson. We are planning a visit to Ohio to find out how we could work together. We would have the technology to produce the prills they need. We could be their Northeast supplier. ____.

Competition

New pelleting operations such as Rose Acre Farms in Seymour, IN and existing facilities operated by Foster Farms in California will be hampered, as we are today, by the inefficiencies of the current technology: double handling to produce granular product and production of the fine by-product.

_____, a new caged-layer company in Green Bay, Wisconsin is pricing aggressively and going after our Southeast market. They market a 5-2-3 product under the brand name “_____”. (██████ recently visited with them and we will need to include them with as much detail as possible.)

Working with the FEECO technology⁹, we will be ahead of other poultry litter fertilizer producers on the learning curve by as much as __ years. Although it may be possible that another litter fertilizer producer could obtain similar technology, that producer must also operate a facility located within a poultry live production region concentrated enough to have the critical mass to be commercially viable.

While the competition from litter fertilizer producers would be minimal, competition for the raw litter is more uncertain. We have heard that Maryland’s attorney general and Constellation Energy have held discussion with Fibrowatt. If Fibrowatt were supported to build a litter to energy power plant in the state of Maryland, competition for the litter would be ____.

Profitability of the Opportunity

Assumptions used to create the IRR sensitivity matrix:

- Reduced production cost (increased efficiency, no dye or roller replacement costs)
- Reduction of fines from 20% to 0; 100% of volume will capture full sales value

⁹ Preliminary steps to patent the litter prilling process are underway. ██████s, General Counsel, was of the opinion that it was worth pursuing.

-Additional unique selling points from the production of prills will upgrade existing customer purchases, attract new customers and improved net margin.

Investment and Resources Needed

Engineering analysis and discussion with FEECO continue. Following is an initial estimate for capital request for discussion purposes. Upgrading the existing operation at the ■AR micronutrient plant would occur in four phases.

Phase I:

- Building addition – The footprint of the pan granulation line will run parallel to the pellet line and may need to be taller as some of its efficiency is derived from gravity rather than conveyance.
- Installation of first pan granulation line – The new line will run 10 tons/hour of poultry litter for 20 hours/day, 5 days/week to produce 50,000 tons/year of finished prilled litter. The plant will still be able to produce pellets and crumbles during construction and the transition to all prill product. The pellet line will serve as back up as the pan granulation system is brought online.

Phase II:

- Dismantling the pellet line – Once the new pan granulation line is commissioned, we will dismantle the pelleting equipment.
- Installation of the second pan granulation line - The installation of a second line will not only give us operations redundancy; it will also lay the foundation for the capability to run two different products simultaneously, e.g. basic prills and prilled litter blended with N-P-K.

Prilled Poultry Litter	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV
Capital Investment (in \$ millions)				
Building Addition				
Pan Granulation System	\$4	\$4		
Dismantling Pellet Line				
Installation of Blending Equipment				
Installation of Bagging Equipment				
Total Capital				
Human Resources				

Supervisor				
Operators				

Phase III:

- Installation of blending capability

Phase IV:

- Installation of bagging capability

Add'l finished product storage?

Risk

- Will be the leader in poultry litter prilling. Beyond Scotts and Espoma, what will be the cost and effort to educate existing customers and develop new customers? Assume no loss of customers.
- To change operations at the micronutrient plant, what changes will the county request to the air and operating permits? How will the neighbors react?
- To produce the blended product, how will we procure the N-P-K ingredients? We would be competing against companies such as ADM, Bunge, Cargill, H.J.Baker to buy modest quantities compared to their purchases.
- What is the probability that Fibrowatt could interrupt our litter supply?
- AI outbreak ?
- Ultimate survival of Scotts and Espoma?_____.

Recommendation

— Continue market research discussion with Scotts, Espoma and Davisson Golf
Continue engineering tests with FEECO to fine tune the assumptions and economics of this opportunity.

Initial indications are that this opportunity is promising enough to start internal capital request procedures. A rough timeline would be as follows:

January 6, 2010	Heads up presentation to the Capital Committee
February 24, 2010	Presentation for approval to the Board
—	Obtain county and state permitting to upgrade
March 2010	Order equipment
—	Construction and installation begins
Fall 2010	Pan granulation online

Appendix

Exhibit A: [REDACTED]'s testimony before Congress.

Double click to open .pdf file.



Acrobat Document

Exhibit B: FEECO International's agglomeration brochure

Double click to open .pdf file.



Adobe Acrobat
Document

Exhibit C: FEECO (Fertilizer Engineering and Equipment Company) Trip Notes – December 1 thru 4, 2009

██████████ and ██████████ visited FEECO's manufacturing facility in Green Bay, WI for the purpose of observing them run our raw products through their pilot plant and determine if poultry litter could be prilled economically.

The first test was ran utilizing water only as the binder. The product was metered from a raw bin via a screw conveyor the a bucket elevator which carried the product to the pin mixer. This piece of equipment allows for water, binder and/or steam to be added to begin the prilling process. This is where the "seed" pellets are formed to begin rolling up our product into a prill.

The product discharges from the pin mixer on to the pan granulator, which is basically a rather large cake pan that is spinning in a clockwise rotation. As the product falls on the pan, nozzles are spraying water and/or binder to the product and as the seed pellets roll they start building up much like a snowball does in wet snow. Diverter plows control the flow of the product on the pan and as the desired size occurs on the pan granulator, they roll off to a collecting belt conveyor. The product appears very grainy, almost the texture of a large granulated sugar as it makes its way to the dryer.

Once the product enters the dryer, a single pas concurrent flow direct fired unit, the intial section of the dryer continues to roll the product. Then it passes through a section of the dryer that lifts and moves the product through the dryer. When the product exits the dryer, product temperature is approximately 170-180 degrees F. The product then passes through an air cooler to further cool the product and is elevated to a rotex shaker screen where the product is sized. 90% of the finished product was the desired size with 5% oversized and 5% undersized.

The second test was similar to the first with the exception of adding binder. This produced a slightly darker product but the strength test indicated its compression strength was greater.

We next tried running the product through the pin mixer only to see how small of a granulated product it could produce. It produced a very nice greens grade product with no dust.

We tested our feather blend product by running feather meal mixed with raw litter that had been dried but not ground. This produced a very nice product with the exception of large wood pieces and the occasional feather. Other than that it produced a nice uniform finished product.

We tried to run fines by themselves and found this to be much more challenging. The consensus was that the product was so fine and extremely dry, it took a lot of moisture to get the seed pellets started. The finished product had a tendency to roll up in to larger balls rather quickly. It was determined that a mixture of different particle sizes rolled up much more evenly and formed a more spherical prill when observed under the microscope.

The take away from the trip was that FEECO has the technology and the equipment to produce a uniform prilled product from chicken litter with no by-product (fines). We asked them to put a proposal together for a 10 tph pan granulation system for us and show us a Capex and a Opex.

BASIS FOR INTEREST DOCUMENT

PRODUCTION AND SALE OF PRILLED POULTRY LITTER

The Strategy

Our strategy is to convert [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle's manufacturing process from the current pellet mill and "cracking" rolls to a process called pan granulation. This process will produce a finished product referred to as "prills", thus the phrase "prilled poultry litter".

This process will provide us three important benefits:

- It will significantly reduce the production of fines which currently represents 20% of our production volume. Fines sell for about \$130 / ton less than our number one product.
- It will improve the quality of our product by providing a more consistent particle size, reducing dust and minimizing odor, solving three primary customer concerns with the existing product.
- It will give us a product which is well suited for lawn fertilizer application. Lawn fertilizer is a substantially larger market than the garden market. The physical characteristics of our current product do not lend themselves to lawn application.

Our strategy will consist of four phases each of which will be presented and justified independently:

- Phase I - Construction of a building addition and installation of a pan granulation line which will enable us to convert all of our production to prilled product.
- Phase II - Removal of the existing equipment and installation of a second pan granulation line.
- Phase III - Installation of blending equipment.
- Phase IV - Installation of bagging equipment.

Rationale, Trends and Driving Factors

Changing Regulatory Environment

Environmental Sustainability continues to be a major topic of focus. In May 2009, President Obama issued an executive order for Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration for the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) to coordinate the efforts of federal agencies and state governments. Under the executive order, the EPA could be empowered with enforcement authority should states fail to meet goals, e.g. reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus levels. In December 2009, [REDACTED], Vice President-Environmental Sustainability, testified before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Energy and Research.¹⁰ He stated

¹⁰ Please see Exhibit A for Mr. [REDACTED]'s complete testimony to Congress on December 9, 2009 in the Appendix at the end of the basis for interest document.

█████'s support for the reauthorization of the existing Chesapeake Bay Program but opposed additional regulations that would expand federal authority. He described █████-AgriRecycle's commitment to relocate measurable amounts of nutrients out of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. As a result of President Obama's order and subsequent EPA activity, we anticipate legislative and/or regulatory changes which would restrict land application of poultry litter increasing the need to find an acceptable solution for a greater volume of litter. Our strategy, which essentially expands and improves our manufacturing capacity will position us to accommodate some portion of this need. At the completion of Phase I, we will produce a product improved in quality and suitable for the much larger lawn fertilizer market. At the conclusion of Phase II, our production capacity will be doubled.

Business Improvements

In addition to the environmental aspect of █████-AgriRecycle (█AR), over the last year and half, we have also focused on improvements in operations and marketing. We anticipate our best financial results in FY10. █AR's current marketing plan targets organic customers (residences, agriculture and government) and high-end golf courses. The organic market provides the highest selling price and is growing along with interest in all things natural and organic.

Operationally, we have focused on improved scheduling to reduce cost, improved raw material flow, researching alternative manufacturing processes and improved finished product storage practices. This latter effort involves leasing finished product storage as an alternative to "ag bags" which require double handling of the finished product. We have reduced double handling of finished product this year by over 20,000 tons(??).

Quality Improvements

We produce pellets and granular products that generally meet our customers' requirements.



Current PAR pellets vary in length from as short as 0.5 mm to as long as 2mm—not aesthetically pleasing and difficult to spread evenly.

However, several customers are requesting improvements to our products. In particular, Espoma, whose leading competitor is Scotts, would like our litter product to be more consistent in size and appearance, without dust and have less odor.

In addition to feedback on dust, Davisson Golf noted that the variable size of our current product causes poor ballistics with an inconsistent spread pattern (Flight of the product as a projectile varies creating clumps or gaps upon landing).

In November 2009, █████ and █████¹¹ met with FEECO International¹² at their facilities in Green Bay, Wisconsin to examine their disc pelletizing technology also known as

¹¹ █████ is Senior Director, Co-Products and Oil Refining Operations. █████ is Plant Manager of the Perdue-AgriRecycle micronutrient plant at █████, Delaware.



As the spreader on this golf course passed over the cart path, the sythetic fertilizer landed in a uniform layer illustrating how it would land on the grass.

pan granulation¹³. Pan granulation gathers material into a mass using processes that roll and agglomerate the material into spheres or prills. Wayne and [REDACTED] worked with FEECO engineers to conduct test runs with poultry litter¹⁴. Poultry litter, with as much as 35% moisture¹⁵, was run with and without lignin sulfonate as a binder¹⁶. The resulting prills successfully met the initial requirements of our customers such as prill durability and handling¹⁷, no odor, few to no fines/dust and consistent 10% moisture in finished product. In addition, the pan granulation process created fewer air emissions and resulted in cleaner wastewater.

Growth Opportunity

Espoma has informed us of their strategic intent to enter the lawn fertilizer market. Currently, their products are targeted primarily to gardens. They have asked us to participate in this initiative by producing an organic product better suited for this market.

Lawn fertilizer requires physical characteristics different than our current product in terms of ballistics, dust and odor. As noted, we believe pan granulation produces a product well suited to this market.

¹² Privately held, FEECO International, Inc. (**F**ertilizer **E**ngineering and **E**quipment **C**ompany) designs, manufactures, markets and installs agglomeration equipment and systems for industries such as: fertilizer, chemical processing, mining, utilities, etc. In 2008 with 60 employees, they earned sales of more than \$11 million.

¹³ For more information on the technology, please see Exhibit B: FEECO's Agglomeration Solutions Guide.

¹⁴ Please see Exhibit C: FEECO Trip notes

¹⁵ Prilling technology tolerates higher moisture content in the litter compared to the pelleting process. We are researching the science and economics of drying litter on a concrete pad with forced air instead of the dryer—similar to composting operations. To further improve production efficiencies, we are analyzing options to use on-farm storage in manure barns to handle cakeout/wet litter, supplement our raw storage and control a steady supply to the plant.

¹⁶ Further research is planned to determine whether OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) standards allow for the inclusion of lignin sulfonate in organic products.

¹⁷ We are working with FEECO to study finished product storage in upright gravity-fed bins compared to flat bunkers loaded by conveyor belts and trucks. We will find out whether the prill stands up to different modes of handling and the pressure of storage.

The lawn fertilizer market is substantially larger (how much?) than the garden market. Additionally, like so many other markets, the lawn market is seeking organic and / or naturally based products.

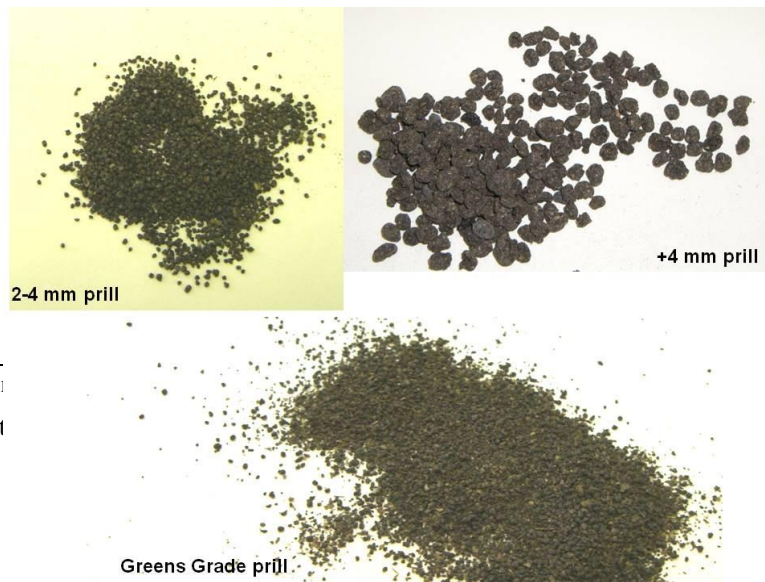
Under these drivers--the government's intense focus on nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, continued interest in relocating the nutrients in poultry litter, Corporate commitment to environmental sustainability, customers' demands for product functionality and continuous improvement of the profitability of our micronutrient plant, we see prilled litter as a viable opportunity for the next generation litter product line and higher volume, higher net margin sales for █████-AgriRecycle. This basis for interest document will support the near-term tactic to install a single pan granulation line at █AR and go on to outline our longer-term market vision.

Market

According to The Fertilizer Institute, fertilizer is a \$10 billion industry which is predominantly agricultural, but also includes lawn and garden. Both Espoma and Scotts have approached us with plans to further expand their market share. Both companies would like to have a "naturally based" lawn fertilizer for the retail market. Today, Scotts offers their "Four Step" program, which is all chemical. Espoma has minimal to no offerings in this category. Espoma wants to fertilize a consumer's 15,000-square foot lawn as well as their 100-square foot garden which they already service.

With the installation of the pan granulation system, we would be able to initially produce a basic prilled litter; later we would be able to produce a prilled litter blend¹⁸. Prilled litter, without additives or with less than 5% binder, would be an organic fertilizer that would help with the soil's ability to retain water and nutrients. A prilled litter blend would be a naturally-based fertilizer that would blend litter with traditional chemical N-P-K (nitrogen, phosphorus, potash) for customers who want higher performance through boosted nutritive value. The humus (organic matter) in the litter will help absorb the N-P-K and be a slow-release delivery mechanism. We will offer three product sizes: 2-4mm prilled, 4+ mm prilled and Greens Grade.

Samples of the three sizes of prilled poultry litter—2-4mm prill, 4+ prill and Greens Grade produced in test runs at FEECO's Green Bay facility in November 2009.



Espoma also wants to pursue "naturally based" product offerings to the commercial landscaping industry (players such as John Deere, Brickman, Lescro, Davey Tree who fertilize "corporate" accounts) as they have

procedures between product runs to meet

already had inquiries on such products and this is also not an area where Scotts would be a big competitor. In meetings with Espoma, they conversationally project their total demand for prilled poultry litter to be as much as 10,000 tons per year (double their current volume) and purchase it for as much as \$165-\$170/ton (currently paying \$140/ton). Another discussion meeting is scheduled with Espoma in February.

Existing vs. Projected Volume in Tons		
Key Customers	2009	Projected 2012
Scotts		
Espoma	5,000	10,000
Davisson Golf		

██████-AgriRecycle is well-positioned to meet the organic and developing naturally based demand. We are located in the region of highest concentration of manure and have an existing, efficient infrastructure that enables us to manage nutrient movements on the ██████████. We are also located close to the highest demand for lawn and garden

products which is the Northeast U.S.

We have heard that Scotts has already approached Tyson. We are planning a visit to Ohio to find out how we could work together. We would have the technology to produce the prills they need. We could be their Northeast supplier. ____.

Competition

New pelleting operations such as Rose Acre Farms in Seymour, IN and existing facilities operated by Foster Farms in California will be hampered, as we are today, by the inefficiencies of the current technology: double handling to produce granular product and production of the fine by-product.

R&J Partnership, LLC, a new caged-layer company in Lake Mills, Wisconsin is pricing aggressively and going after our Southeast market. They market a 5-2-3 product under the brand name "Chickity Doo Doo". (Tom recently visited with them and we will need to include them with as much detail as possible.)

Working with the FEECO technology, we will be ahead of other poultry litter fertilizer producers on the learning curve by as much as __ years¹⁹. Although it may be possible that another litter fertilizer producer could obtain similar technology, that producer must also build and operate a facility located within a poultry live production region concentrated enough to have the critical mass to be commercially viable. Moreover, they will not have, in place, the supply chain customer network or physical infrastructure to collect and transport the raw litter to their processing facility.

¹⁹ Herb Frerichs, General Counsel, thought it was worth pursuing a patent on the prilled litter process. Preliminary steps are underway.

While the competition from litter fertilizer producers would be minimal, competition for the raw litter is more uncertain. We have heard that Maryland's attorney general and Constellation Energy have held several discussions with Fibrowatt. If Fibrowatt were supported to build a litter-to-energy power plant in the state of Maryland, competition for the litter would be significant. The Baltimore Sun reported in November 2007, that Fibrowatt's proposed Eastern Shore plant would burn 400,000 tons/year of chicken manure to "produce more than enough electricity to supply a city the size of Salisbury". Estimates vary, but the widely accepted estimate of total litter on the Eastern Shore is ____ tons. [REDACTED]-AgriRecycle is permitted to process 80,000 tons of litter.

Profitability of the Opportunity

Engineering analysis and discussion with FEECO continue to fine tune the capital estimate for the installation of a single line for pan granulation. Assumptions used to create the IRR sensitivity matrix:

-Reduction of fines from 20% to 0; 100% of volume will capture full sales value for improved net margin

-Additional unique selling points (size, dust, ability to blend with other fertilizers) from the production of prills will upgrade existing customer purchases, attract new customers and enable them to enter/expand into the lawn fertilizer market.

Investment and Resources Needed

The profitability of this opportunity was calculated on the CER to install a single line of pan granulation technology. Later, we anticipate requesting capital funds for additional upgrades; each segment will submit its own business justification to support increased volume demand and/or product line extensions.

Segment I:

- Building addition – The footprint of the pan granulation line will run parallel to the pellet line and may need to be taller as some of its efficiency is derived from gravity rather than conveyance.
- Installation of first pan granulation line – The new line will run 10 tons/hour of poultry litter for 20 hours/day, 5 days/week to produce 50,000 tons/year of finished prilled litter. The plant will still be able to produce pellets and crumbles during construction and the transition to all prill product. The pellet line will serve as back up as the pan granulation system is brought online.

Segment II:

- Dismantling the pellet line – Once the new pan granulation line is commissioned, we will dismantle the pelleting equipment.
- Installation of the second pan granulation line - The installation of a second line will not only give us operations redundancy, it will also lay the foundation for the capability to run two different products simultaneously, e.g. basic prills and prilled litter blended with N-P-K.

Prilled Poultry Litter	Segment I	Segment II	Segment III	Segment IV
Capital Investment (in \$ millions)				
Building Addition				
Pan Granulation System	\$4			
Dismantling Pellet Line				
Installation of Blending Equipment				
Installation of Bagging Equipment				
Finished Storage Expansion				
Total Capital				
Human Resources				
Supervisor				
Operators				

Segment III:

- Installation of blending capability – The installation of blending capability will enable us to produce prills of litter combined with other nutrients, such as nitrogen or phosphorus, resulting in analyticals to customer specifications. For example, we could produce a landscaping product for Espoma's naturally based product line.

Segment IV:

- Installation of bagging capability

Risk

- In addition to Scotts and Espoma, what will be the effort to educate existing customers and develop new customers?
We anticipate that our customers will welcome the positive improvements in dust, size and ballistics and see any inconvenience to them as minimal.
- Customers, who bought our pelleted and granular products, will be able to choose distinctive, consistently-sized products: 2-4 mm, greens grade and 4+ mm.


- Analyses will be performed to determine density or lbs/cubic foot. In our initial observations, we have not seen much difference in density between our old product and the prilled product. If so, our customers' bag sizes may not change significantly. - Our rollout will include plans to work closely with customers over a ___ month period to assure that the transition for them is orderly.

- To change operations at the micronutrient plant, what changes will the county and state request to the air and operating permits? How will the neighbors react?
There is a high probability that we will have to modify our existing permit since we would be adding a second dryer. In fact, we should lower our emissions and our water would contain less ammonia.
Over the last ten years of operation, we have consciously worked at developing a good relationship with our neighbors and the community at large. We will continue to be proactive. We will keep our neighbors informed of our plans and our efforts to minimize any effect on them.
- We would be competing against companies such as ADM, Bunge, Cargill, Growmark, H.J.Baker to buy modest quantities compared to their purchases. To produce the blended product, how will we procure the N-P-K ingredients?
—
- What is the probability that Fibrowatt could interrupt our litter supply?
—
- What will the plant do should an AI (avian influenza) outbreak occur?
—

➤
Recommendation

We will continue market research discussions with Scotts, Espoma and Davisson Golf to build the business justification and engineering tests with FEECO to fine tune the assumptions and economics for the CER. The working timeline is :

January 6, 2010	Completed Heads up presentation to the Capital Committee
Jan/Feb 2010	FEECO engineering analysis
Feb. 1, 2010	Meeting with Espoma
—	Meeting with Scotts
Mid-February	FEECO presents layout for two lines with discussions on outsourcing engineering for structure, installation, air and millwright
Feb. 24, 2010	Heads up presentation to the Board
March 2010	Complete capital estimate and finalize CER

Mar. 31, 2010	Approval presentation to the Capital Committee
Jun. 2, 2010	Approval presentation to the Board
June 2010	Order equipment
—	Review existing permits to add a second dryer/building extension.
	Construction and installation
Jan/Feb 2011	Start up pan granulation line.
	-Train associates on new equipment.
	-Run tests on binders.
	-Provide samples (2-4mm prill, greens grade, 4+mm overs) to customers for their work on analyticals, bag size and marketing.
	-Continue to sell old inventory to organic customers, as soil amendment to Scotts and in 1-ton totes for Espoma
	-Conduct customer visits regarding prilled product. Educate them on the unique selling points, e.g. consistent size, ease of handling, good ballistics, no dust.
Spring 2012	Full market rollout.

Appendix

Exhibit A: [REDACTED]'s testimony before Congress on December 9, 2009.



Adobe Acrobat
Document

Exhibit B: FEECO International's agglomeration brochure

Double click to open .pdf file.



Adobe Acrobat
Document

Exhibit C: FEECO (Fertilizer Engineering and Equipment Company) Trip Notes – December 1 thru 4, 2009

██████████ and ██████████ visited FEECO's manufacturing facility in Green Bay, WI for the purpose of observing them run our raw products through their pilot plant and determine if poultry litter could be prilled economically.

The first test was ran utilizing water only as the binder. The product was metered from a raw bin via a screw conveyor the a bucket elevator which carried the product to the pin mixer. This piece of equipment allows for water, binder and/or steam to be added to begin the prilling process. This is where the "seed" pellets are formed to begin rolling up our product into a prill.

The product discharges from the pin mixer on to the pan granulator, which is basically a rather large cake pan that is spinning in a clockwise rotation. As the product falls on the pan, nozzles are spraying water and/or binder to the product and as the seed pellets roll they start building up much like a snowball does in wet snow. Diverter plows control the flow of the product on the pan and as the desired size occurs on the pan granulator, they roll off to a collecting belt conveyor. The product appears very grainy, almost the texture of a large granulated sugar as it makes its way to the dryer.

Once the product enters the dryer, a single pas concurrent flow direct fired unit, the intial section of the dryer continues to roll the product. Then it passes through a section of the dryer that lifts and moves the product through the dryer. When the product exits the dryer, product temperature is approximately 170-180 degrees F. The product then passes through an air cooler to further cool the product and is elevated to a rotex shaker screen where the product is sized. 90% of the finished product was the desired size with 5% oversized and 5% undersized.

The second test was similar to the first with the exception of adding binder. This produced a slightly darker product but the strength test indicated its compression strength was greater.

We next tried running the product through the pin mixer only to see how small of a granulated product it could produce. It produced a very nice greens grade product with no dust.

We tested our feather blend product by running feather meal mixed with raw litter that had been dried but not ground. This produced a very nice product with the exception of large wood pieces and the occasional feather. Other than that it produced a nice uniform finished product.

We tried to run fines by themselves and found this to be much more challenging. The consensus was that the product was so fine and extremely dry, it took a lot of moisture to get the seed pellets started. The finished product had a tendency to roll up in to larger balls rather quickly. It was determined that a mixture of different particle sizes rolled up much more evenly and formed a more spherical prill when observed under the microscope.

The take away from the trip was that FEECO has the technology and the equipment to produce a uniform prilled product from chicken litter with no by-product (fines). We asked them to put a proposal together for a 10 tph pan granulation system for us and show us a Capex and a Opex.