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Communication 403
Final Synthesis Paper

My choice of what organization I would like to work has stayed the same. The organization I would like to work with the Federal Government, mainly with the Federal Bureau of prisons. My hopes for plans after graduation are to obtain a position with the Federal Correctional Institution in Morgantown. Throughout this paper I will discuss the employment and courses that have prepared me to obtain a position with the Federal Government.

My choice in career goals has not changed since the beginning of the semester, but has been reinforced my thoughts on going in to the field. This course has been one of the most beneficial courses in my pursuit of my degree in Communication Studies. One of the most useful assignments that I completed was the informational interviews. The interviews allowed me to speak to those in the field and to get information that will help me once I graduate. Through the interview I received tips on how to revise my resume with aspects to highlight. Also I learned what those who participate in the hiring process look for in new hires. I received more insight from the interviews than I received while doing my internship with the institution this past summer. Another assignment that has helped me in this course was the professional presentations. This allowed me to fully research the institution and to apply my skills and experience to the organization. I know that I am better prepared for the interview process with the organization based on the knowledge I have gained by the research and preparation of this course.

Another communication course that I feel has prepared me for my future career is Communication 303 which is Business and Professional Communication. There were a lot of assignments that focused on aspects and activities that can take place in real world work situations. We wrote emails, memos and other letters for a variety of reasons and set up office meetings. These assignments allowed us to apply our knowledge gained in our prior

communication classes and also with the knowledge we were gaining in this course. At FCI Morgantown there is a lot of communication through email and memos, this course has allowed me to learn the proper way to format emails and memos in all situations, something that will be very beneficial.

Another communication course that was extremely beneficial in my career choice is Communication 491, which was my internship. I did my internship at FCI Morgantown where I was mainly in the Education Department. The main reason I wanted to do my internship here was because I wanted to see if I could handle working in a prison environment. I found that I think I would like to work for the prison if an opportunity should arise, after graduation. I learned a lot during my time at FCI Morgantown this semester. I overcame unease with working around inmates and also got to better my communication skills with a large number of staff. I am used to working with only a couple of people not as many as I dealt with while doing my internship. I believe the biggest learning experiences come from stepping out of one's comfort zone and that is what I did. I feel prepared to obtain a job within the company. I have a good working knowledge of the applications and policies that are present in the institution and I know how to use their main computer software to complete work. These aspects I believe could put me above others (those not familiar with the company and do not work for it) applying for the same jobs. Another benefit of my internship is the fact that I have expanded my network. I still maintain constant contact with my internship supervisor and she continues to be a valuable aspect while I am preparing for graduation. I also found out that my internship not only was a positive influence on myself but also to the education department. During my informational interview with the Warden of the institution she told me that my supervisor was talking about how positive of an experience she had during the summer with me as the intern. She also said

she would love to have someone else come in like I did. The Warden told me that I sure made an impression on them. This has provided me with more confidence to apply to the organization.

In addition to the communication courses I have I have taken some other classes that I believe will be beneficial to my career. First off I am going to combine two classes Orientation 151 and specifically Orientation 252. I combine these courses because they reviewed the same things and went hand and hand with each other. Orientation 151 is Career Exploring and Planning and Orientation 252 is The Job Search: Career Series. These courses are great for figuring out what to do after graduation. They offer ways to figure out what career paths to go into based on personal interest and allow for exploration of ideas so that once graduating one could find a career that they will be happy with. The courses also go over vital skills such as resume and cover letter writing and these are evaluated by staff at the Career Resources Center. This is extremely helpful because they give great pointers on how to form a resume and discuss what areas need worked on. Also they are available once finished with the courses to review resumes and other career information to all students. During the classes there were also great tips for interviewing one assignment I remember from Orientation 252 we had to watch videos of interviews and then discuss what when wrong and right within them. This was extremely helpful in seeing what some things that people did during interviews that should be avoided. After the videos we got to see the interviewer's opinion of the different candidates and see what they look for during an interview. This was a great way to see what to do and not do when preparing for and during an interview. The thing I will take most from these courses is that all the resources used during class will forever be available to me through the Career Resource Center, I know that if I ever have any change of plans in my career path that I will always have a place to go to receive help.

Another course outside of the Communication Department that is beneficial is my Spanish courses. I have taken four semesters of Spanish and am on a path to learn a great deal more on my own after graduation. Working in the Federal Government having some additional language skills will be extremely useful. I saw firsthand during my internship how handy the Spanish would be in the prison environment. At FCI Morgantown as well as other prisons there is a fairly high population of Spanish speaking individuals, in some cases they do not know how to speak English or are very limited in their English. By having some knowledge of Spanish and by continuing my learning of Spanish I feel I will be able to make a positive contribution to the organization.

Along with my course work I have work experience that will be beneficial to obtaining a successful career. Most of my jobs have been customer service related which truly utilized my communication skills. I have been on both sides of customer service taking calls for Comcast Cable through their customer service line and working the referral line at West Virginia University Hospital and face to face through working at stores such as Hibbett Sports and Sams Club to my current job at Eye to Eye Optical. My main duties in each job have been to assist the customers. While all the jobs I have had are in different companies the goals were primarily the same, kept the customers happy, solve their problems in general be a good people person. I believe working in these positions has allowed me to open up as a person. I mean I am still quite shy but having to deal with people on a daily basis is helping me come out of my shell more and more. Being able to be open and more of myself will only help me in gaining a new position once I graduate. I feel I can bring a confidence to my interview that I am building through these jobs. Also in just about all jobs it is important to be a team player, things run a lot better when people are working well together. I feel my jobs have equipped me to be a great team player

because in most cases things at work would not get done unless we all worked together. For example, when working at the hospital we were in charge of updating a data base that was home to physician information both within the hospital as well as external physicians. It was a huge database with thousands of names and the higher ups gave us a deadline as to when it should be done. The office came together and split up the information and called the physicians' offices to verify information for the data base. I too was calling people but they put me in charge of updating the computer. By working together we were able to get the database done fairly quickly. It took good communication and an organized group to get it done. By expanding my communication and teamwork skills I feel I have a lot to bring to the organization.

Overall, I feel my course work and work experience have prepared me for obtaining a position with FCI Morgantown or other similar organizations. I believe I took a good route throughout my college career to get to where I am today. When I started school I had completely different goals. I do not believe I did the wrong thing changing my end goals, it just took courses and experiences to put me where I need to be. In the end I hope to fulfill my goal of obtaining a position with FCI Morgantown and then see where that road leads. I know that any job within the Government offer endless possibilities for advancement, I am just looking forward to seeing where my road leads.