

→ Mark your confusion.

→ Purposefully annotate the article (1-2 mature, thoughtful responses per page to what the author is saying)

→ Write a 250+ word response to the article.

(If you are a teacher or student who would like to modify this Google Doc, go to File > Make a Copy. I cannot and do not respond to Share requests -- my apologies!)

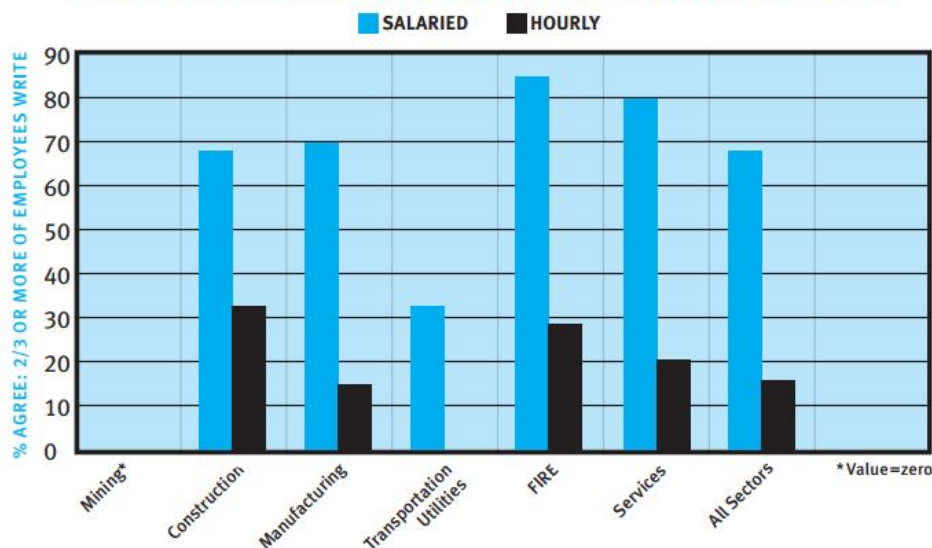
Writing: A Ticket to Work... or a Ticket Out

By The National Commission on Writing, September 2004

[The following is excerpted from the full National Commission on Writing report, which you can find [here](#).]

- Close to 70 percent of responding corporations report that two-thirds or more of their salaried employees have some responsibility for writing, either explicit or implicit, in their position descriptions (see Figure 1).
- With the exception of mining and transportation/utilities, large majorities of salaried employees in all industries are expected to write.
- Writing is almost a universal professional skill required in service industries as well as finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE). It is also widely required in construction and manufacturing.
- Among hourly (i.e., nonprofessional) employees, the expectations for writing are not as high. Even among hourly employees, however, between one-fifth and one-third of employees have some writing responsibilities in fast-growing sectors such as services, FIRE, and construction.

Figure 1:
Most Professional Employees Are Expected to Write



Discussion:

- Most growth in the U.S. economy over the next decade is expected to be in service industries. They are expected to create 20.5 million new jobs in this decade. (Berman, Jay M. "Industry output and employment projections to 2010." *Monthly Labor Review*, Nov. 2001, p. 40.) These are corporations (including those in the FIRE category) reporting that 80 percent or more of salaried employees have some responsibility for writing.

- Internationally, functions emphasizing communications (such as customer contact and R&D) are least likely to be outsourced. Payroll and information technology, on the other hand, are most likely to be outsourced. (*CEO Briefing: Corporate Priorities for 2004*. A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit, London, New York, Hong Kong, January 2004, pages 26 and 29.)

Respondents' Comments:

- “In most cases, writing ability could be your ticket in . . . or it could be your ticket out.”
- “All employees must have writing ability. Everything is tracked. All instructions are written out. Manufacturing documentation, operating procedures, reporting problems, lab safety, waste-disposal operations—all have to be crystal clear. Hourly and professional staff go through serious training. They must be able to communicate clearly, relay information, do postings, and the like. As a government contractor, *everything* must be documented.”
- “Writing skills are fundamental in business. It’s increasingly important to be able to convey content in a tight, logical, direct manner, particularly in a fast-paced technological environment.”
- “My view is that good writing is a sign of good thinking. Writing that is persuasive, logical, and orderly is impressive. Writing that’s not careful can be a signal of unclear thinking.”
- “Most of our employees are hourly . . . so most of our people don’t really write very much.”

Written Response Instructions:

- Using They Say / I Say templates, begin your response with a paragraph summarizing what the above report says, and particularly how it relates to the world of work you’ll be entering at some point high school.
- In the I Say portion of your response, some ideas include
 - How does this article relate to other articles we’ve read about the changing world of work?
 - Is it wise for future students to bet that they won’t need to write in their future jobs, based on what this report says?
 - How does this article affect the way you think about writing in high school?