Career Research Project

**There are two parts to the Career Research Project:**

* Part 1: Career Research Work plan – 15 points.
* Part 2: Career Research Report – 50 points.

**Part 1: Career Research Work plan**

In the real world, prior to doing a research project, you may be asked to create a document called a Project Work Plan. This document helps to guide the research project and is a planning tool to help you identify the steps in completing the research and writing the final project report.

Read Ch. 10 – Understanding and Planning Reports. Review the sample work plan on page 240 in the textbook. Then, create a work plan for the Career Research Report. **Format** your work plan the same as the sample on page 240. The Section headings for our Career Research Work plan are the same as the example:

* TITLE (WORK PLAN FOR CAREER RESEARCH PAPER) with your name and date underneath. For some reason, the publisher did not use a title for the sample work plan, but there should be one.

* STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM (OR STATEMENT OF THE OPPORTUNITY)
* PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF WORK
* SOURCES AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION
* PRELIMINARY OUTLINE
* TASK ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

As part of the work plan, you will include a preliminary reference list (following APA format) with a minimum of 5 references that include the mandatory Marketline reports for the company profiles and SWOT analyses.

**Part 2: Career Research Report**

For this report, you will research and analyze two companies, which you may want to target in your future job searches, and you will determine which company (one, both or neither) you would prefer to work for. The paper should be approximately 2000 min - 2500 max words and follow the guidelines for an analytical report, focusing on conclusions and recommendations.

Read Ch. 11 – Writing and Completing Reports. Your paper should follow the format of the sample report in Chapter 11, beginning on page 281. Because most of the information that will be presented in the report will be from secondary sources, you must follow the APA guidelines for in-text citations, and reference list, as well as the use of headings. (See page 415-418 for APA guidelines)

**Seven distinct sources are required – e.g. the company website counts only as 1 source, even if you use several different articles from that 1 website. For each company, you would only have 1 Marketline resource.**

**Report Sections** (Italicized sections\*\* are the “body” of the report, i.e. the content; these would be used in the outline):

1. **Cover Page – see pg. 281 in the textbook**
2. **Table of contents – see pg. 283 (Tables and Chart are required)**
3. ***\*\*Introduction*** *– Present the reason why the report is being written, the nature of the opportunity you are facing, the scope of your research, sources of materials and what conclusion you reached (direct approach). This is a brief statement about which company you preferred as your number 1 choice of an employer. (There are several possible conclusions you might draw – you prefer 1 of the companies over another; or both companies are appealing to you; or neither company meets your requirements.) You will also forecast what you will be writing about in the rest of your paper.* ***(1/2 page)***
4. ***\*\*Characteristics of your “perfect” company***  *– In this section, identify the characteristics of an ideal employer, using both professional and personal preferences, for example - company growth or types of products might be important to you from a professional point of view; and good benefits or location might be important from a personal point of view. Describe each in a separate paragraph and state why it is important to you.****(1/2 – ¾ page)***
5. ***\*\*Company Evaluations***  *– In this section, you will present your evidence as to why you chose one company over another. You will report for each company the following:*

*- Products and services,*

*-Customers*

*-Markets*

*-Company culture*

*-SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, threats) Each part has to have its own paragraph*

*-Your impressions of how each company would meet (or not meet) your personal criteria.*

***(4 pages total - 2 pages for each company)***

1. ***\*\*Conclusion*** *–Compare and contrast the advantages and disadvantages of each company and give your final reasons for choosing one company over the other (or neither or both).* ***(1 page)***
2. ***\*\*Next Steps -*** *What will be your next steps in following up on this report as you begin planning for your career. What do you need to do to be ready to begin your job search and choose a company.****(1/2 page)***
3. **Reference page –** following APA guidelines; example on the bottom of page 294.