

Baseline Self-Evaluation Memo

We would like for all of us (you, your instructor, and your TA) to have a sense of your communication strengths and weaknesses as we begin the semester. We would also like to know the goals you would like to accomplish in this class. This assignment will help you benchmark your communication skills in order to help us assess your progress throughout the course. It will allow you to measure how well you are moving towards your objectives, so that you can gauge how much effort you must devote to strengthening those skills you have identified as needing improvement.

In answering the following five questions, provide enough examples and specific details (e.g., kinds of communication, audiences addressed, purpose of the message) to give your instructor and TA a clear picture of you as a communicator. To the extent that you have had experience in a “professional” setting (e.g., a club, a job, an internship, volunteer work), focus on those experiences. In evaluating your strengths and weaknesses, consider feedback from others (professors, employers, club advisors, fellow students) as well as your own opinion of your proficiency.

Finally, in setting goals for yourself, state what writing, speaking, and interpersonal communication skills you specifically want to improve. The more specific you can be, the better your chance of reaching your objectives.

Answer these five questions:

1. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a writer? What part(s) of the writing process do you find easy? What part(s) do you find difficult?
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a speaker? What part(s) of creating and giving presentations do you find easy? What part(s) do you find difficult?
3. What are your strengths and weaknesses as a member of a team or a group? What part(s) of teamwork do you find easy? What part(s) do you find difficult?
4. What are your three or four specific goals for improving your communication in 15.279 this semester?
5. How do you intend to reach those goals? How can your instructor and TA best help you meet your goals?

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Content: Is there enough detail (including examples and illustrations) to give readers a complete picture of you as a professional communicator? Have you included feedback from others as part of your analysis? Are your goals specific, clear, and attainable?

Style: Are paragraphs coherent and sentences concise?

Mechanics: Is the memo free from spelling, punctuation, and grammatical mistakes?

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