

Communication Ethics Ethical Profile Assignment

This project lets you demonstrate individual information-gathering and analytical skills in relation to a specific career in communication ethics. It is worth 100 points and will result in a 5- to 6-page typed, double-spaced paper and a 4- to 5-minute oral presentation during class.

First, you'll select a communication professional you wish to interview about the ethical issues she or he has encountered in his or her career. By 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 1, use the Blackboard assignment tool to submit a 1- to 2-page, typed, double-spaced Word document that contains the following:

- Name, title and employer of the professional you propose to interview.
- An explanation of why you believe this person is appropriate to interview. You may need to do some backgrounding here, so you can describe this person's professional experience and/or training, as you explain why he or she is a relevant candidate to interview for someone with your communication career interests.
- An explanation of your relationship to this person and an assessment of how realistic your chances are of conducting the interview. Practice the principle of transparency; if you know this person from an internship, say so, for instance. It's OK to interview someone who's been your supervisor or mentor, but please avoid family members or people to whom you are too close. Please also avoid proposing to interview someone with whom you have no realistic chance of making contact. And do not propose to interview UST faculty or staff.

Next, after I've approved your interviewee selection, you'll prepare for the actual interview. By 5 p.m. Thursday, March 17, use the Blackboard assignment tool to submit a Word document that contains the following:

- A list of eight to 10 relevant open-ended questions about your professional's background and experiences dealing with ethical issues. Your questions will need to touch on such issues as what the professional sees as key ethical issues in the field, how often he or she encounters ethical issues, whether he or she thinks the workplace deals adequately with those issues, etc.
- In developing your list of questions, don't overlook course readings, discussions and activities that can provide ideas.
- Please also list any closed-ended questions you intend to ask, such as where the professional attended college, or what her or his first job was, but these questions are intended as background.
- A description of where and when you plan to conduct the interview during April. Your goal is to spend at least 45 minutes with your subject. You don't need more than an hour, however. You are expected to conduct an in-person interview. Doing it by phone, email or Skype is not appropriate for this assignment.

Finally, you'll write a 5- to 6-page essay summarizing your interview and prepare a 4- to 5-minute oral presentation about it. Submit the written essay by 5 p.m. Thursday, May 5, using the Blackboard assignment tool. The oral reports will be made during class time Tuesday, May 10.

- The written essay should be a narrative that synthesizes and summarizes what you learned. It should not be a transcript of your interview or presented in a Q and A format. Rather, focus on the key points you learned. How does this professional view ethical issues? Why?

What did you learn from his or her views that may help you as an entry-level professional? How does what he or she told you compare to the views we've discussed in class or read about? You can decide how to organize the essay, but it should flow well. Think of a well-written magazine or newspaper article. You're also encouraged to use direct quotations to capture the "voice" of your subject.

- The oral presentation will be brief, and any visual aids you use must be low-tech (so you don't need time to set them up). No PowerPoint for this one. For your presentation, I recommend focusing on the most important thing you learned from your interview, preferably something that your classmates will find useful as they pursue their own careers.