

# Final Portfolio



Tara Graeve  
Business Communications  
Professor Nguyen  
Autumn 2018

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## Self-Reflection

Over the course of the quarter, I became a more effective communicator. I have always been a person that needs more words to say what I want to say, so this class was a challenge for me in that regard. I learned how to become clearer and more concise with my words while placing the bottom line on top. It stretched my mind in regard to how I think about communicating and what the most effective way is to communicate what I'm intending to say. With each BWA, I had the chance to improve my writing and then revise each of them to make them better. Seeing the transformation was not only incredible, but it taught me about effective writing. I was encouraged to stray away from long, wordy paragraphs and use more bullet points to make my writing skimmable. Coming from a college prep high school, and being a college student, it seems like we are always supposed to be writing in such a formal tone with full paragraphs. Figuring out what could be said in simpler, more concise terms with bullet points is something that I wish to employ in future business writing scenarios. I don't like reading long paragraphs, so I must assume that many other people feel the same way and want something that's concise, skimmable, and to the point.

This quarter I also became more comfortable presenting. From my first presentation to our final live case presentation, my presentation skills improved drastically. I really enjoyed doing the power poses to help prepare me to get in the mindset of presenting. As the quarter progressed, I wasn't as nervous to present (though I'd be lying if I said I wasn't nervous at all) and I got more comfortable in front of my classmates. Each presentation I got gradually better and it really benefitted me to watch back my presentations. I became more aware of myself—there was one presentation where I consciously realized I was using a vocal filler due to the fact that I saw Professor Nguyen noting something on her rubric. I was always trained not to use "um", but I definitely realized this quarter that there were other words that I may have been using as filler words. Even with the improvements I made, there is still room for more. My weight shifting was something I did all quarter and, while I think it got better as the quarter went on, I would like to continue working on how I am standing to look confident and eventually be able to move around more when I'm presenting.

When it came time to present the final live case challenge, I felt that my group had prepared well. We had practiced in the room and I thought our content was solid. I wished we had more website mockups; that was something I thought we were going to do from the beginning, but it never ended up materializing. Overall, we worked effectively as a team and accomplished the challenge. I saw so much improvement from not only myself, but in my teammates from the beginning of the course and our first group presentations to our presentation in front of the judges. Even the little things were considered, like stepping forward when we were speaking to highlight the speaker.

I really enjoyed this quarter and learned so much about communication that I definitely want to take and apply in both future classes and the business world. I am by no means a professional communicator, but I am able to much more strategically communicate now.

## BWA #1: Orienting the New You

To: Alicia Ebeid

From: Tara Graeve

Date: September 12, 2018

Re: You're Moving to Denver. Now What?

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Alicia,

I'm going to guide you through what I call Denver Boot Camp as you begin to navigate life here. Denver is a great city, and, as someone who was born and raised in the suburbs of Denver, I can attest to that. It is a city that is majestic, full of life, full of opportunities, and the great outdoors are at your fingertips.

### **Weather and Climate**

General weather is as follows:

- Generally dry
- Not as much snow as you think in wintertime
- Snow typically melts within a day
- Snow one day, could be nice the next
- Summers are hot but not unbearably hot
- Spring and fall are moderate

Take these for what they are, but as we like to say, it's Colorado and anything is possible on any given day when it comes to weather.

### **Mountains, the Outdoors, and More**

Colorado is home to the Rocky Mountains. Living in Denver, you have the beauty of the mountains within a short drive away. From skiing and snowboarding, to hiking and mountain biking, the opportunities are endless.

Some of my favorite under-the-radar hidden gems are:

- Hanging Lake
- Idaho Springs
- Mount Evans
- Glenwood Springs
- Lake Dillon

If you don't feel like driving to the mountains, there are many opportunities around the city, too. The foothills are on the outskirts of Denver, giving a mountain feel conveniently located close to the city.

- Golden is a beautiful city
  - Woody's Pizza restaurant
  - Explore Clear Creek
  - Lookout Mountain provides a great view of the entire city of Denver

- Especially gorgeous at night and at sunset
  - Hiking trails as well
- Red Rocks Amphitheatre near Morrison
  - Great natural scenery
  - People also like to work out there
  - Explore Morrison while you're there
- Chatfield State Park in Littleton
  - Variety of outdoor activities—including a lake
- Chatfield Botanic Gardens: little-known botanic garden

The opportunities are endless when it comes to enjoying Colorado's mountains and outdoor scenery.

### **Driving in Denver**

As with most any city, there are times when there's traffic near Denver.

Rush Hour:

- 7:00-9:00am
- 4:00-6:00pm
- Especially prevalent near downtown Denver
- I-25 is notorious for traffic; I-70 gets bad during ski season and on weekends

Did I mention that driving downtown you have to pay attention to one-way streets too? Beware!

### **Downtown Denver Life**

Besides office buildings, Denver has a lot to offer:

- The 16<sup>th</sup> Street Mall
  - Outdoor shopping mall in the heart of downtown
  - Target store recently added
- Professional sports teams:
  - Broncos football is popular—Denverites love their football
  - If football isn't your thing, you can enjoy Colorado Rockies baseball, Denver Nuggets basketball, or Colorado Avalanche hockey, too.
- Visit museums: Denver Art Museum, Museum of Nature and Science, Baseball History museum
- Zoo and aquarium

There's sure to be something you like here.

With that being said, welcome to Denver! I hope you enjoy it here. It's truly a great city that you will enjoy. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask me.

Sincerely,  
Tara

## BWA #2: Action Memo

To: Team Manager

From: Tara Graeve

Date: 9/19/18

Re: Women's Salaries Average Less Than Their Male Counterparts

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It has been found that women are often underpaid in comparison to their male counterparts, even though they are performing the same job. I have been notified that this may be the case with one of our employees, Jane. Our salary practices should be assessed in order to ensure that we are appropriately compensating all employees.

### **The Issue**

Jane is currently receiving a salary that is 20% less than her team member, Bob.

Both of them:

- Were hired at the same time
- Work in the same position
- Receive equal benefits and bonuses
- Are performing equally well in their positions

This is something that needs to be addressed within our company.

### **Recommendations**

I am recommending that we act to ensure we are appropriately compensating Jane for what she does.

We should:

- Look into other employees' salaries
- Ensure that everyone who works here is compensated justly with no biases
- Use our results to correct salary practices, if need be
- Fairly compensate Jane for the quality and quantity of work she does

Why?

- We value being inclusive to all employees
- It helps us attract and retain diverse employees
- It's not right to discriminate against someone

If we don't review these practices, we risk losing great employees to better paying companies.

### **Conclusions**

It is important that we ensure that all employees are being paid fairly for their work. To do this, we should review our salaries so that we know if we are paying employees fairly. Then we can see if we

need to act on our findings or not. Jane is an important asset to our company, and we should show her respect for what she does.

## BWA #3: Executive Summary—Business Trends

### **Purpose**

Businesses evolve over time, largely based on trends. This will serve as an introduction to some of the latest business trends in today's business environment—one that has become increasingly reliant on today's technology.

### **Methods**

Research was done in order to determine recent business trends. The main source of information was the Internet. After obtaining information, it was analyzed, and conclusions were drawn.

### **Findings and Conclusions**

Many recent business trends center around new technology. This includes, but isn't limited to:

- Artificial intelligence
- Augmented reality
- Internet of Things

These three trends relate to the use of business intelligence, which is a great way to see how a business is doing. Today's world is becoming increasingly data-centered, and artificial intelligence, augmented reality, and the Internet of Things all shape it.

Other trends include:

- Placing company values over the bottom line
- Focusing on the customer experience

Millennials tend to be very values-focused and value experiences over material items in their purchases. With this, a company must be sure it has strong values and is creating appealing products. As millennials increase in market share, businesses must ensure they are appealing to them and the rest of the market alike.

### **Recommendations**

What should a business make of these trends? My suggestions are:

- Take advantage of business intelligence
  - Use technology to your advantage to create insights
  - Take advantage of data available to better your results
- Be aware of your market
  - Millennials are different consumers
  - Think about company values and how they relate to products and customers
  - Think about how the product relates to consumers' interests



### Works Cited

The Top Business Trends To Look Out For in 2018. (2018, June 15). Retrieved from

<https://www.workzone.com/blog/business-trends-2018/>

Uzialko, A. C. (2018, June 14). 19 Small Business Trends and Predictions for 2018. Retrieved from

<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/7605-business-trend-predictions.html>

## BWA #4: Executive Summary for Final Live Case Project

### **Purpose**

The nonprofit Project C.U.R.E. is requesting our help with revamping its website and marketing strategies. Recommendations for next steps are outlined below.

### **Methods**

The challenge was introduced in the form of a verbal presentation. A representative of the organization delivered information about the challenge to our class.

She also used:

- Slides
- Videos
- Visual aids and demonstrations

### **Findings and Conclusions**

Main takeaways from the presentation are as follows.

Project C.U.R.E.:

- Provides medical supplies and care to those living in underprivileged countries
- Has 4 target audiences: doctors, volunteers, financial donors, and medical supply donors
- Is looking to expand its offices to 3 more locations in the United States
- Values its shipping containers—but is there another image it can market?
- Requests help revamping its website and marketing strategies

### **Recommendations**

To fulfill this challenge, we are tasked with pitching our ideas to the organization in a presentation.

In order to prepare for this, we need to:

- Research the organization as well as its competitors
- Create a strategy for the organization to move forward
- Explore ways that the organization can improve its website
- Explore what the company's strengths and weaknesses are
- Create a PowerPoint presentation detailing recommendations
  - Present this to the organization
- Detail our recommendations in an executive summary

Cover Letter  
**Tara Graeve**

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November 7, 2018

Lisa Cunico  
Tibco Software, Inc.  
6430 S Fiddlers Green Cir #125  
Greenwood Village, CO, 80111

Dear Ms. Cunico,

Tibco is a great organization centered on software and technology. It improves people's everyday lives through focusing on integration, innovation, and analytics. As a person who appreciates both software and analytics, I am strongly interested in what Tibco is doing to create innovative new products in the analytics realm.

I am currently a student at the University of Denver's Daniels College of Business pursuing a degree in Information and Analytics. I am also working towards minors in computer science and marketing. The Business Analyst Intern position is an opportunity for me to blend both aspects of my major together—the database and information management side, and the analytics side.

I have a strong interest in database management and am open to learning new systems and techniques. I also have an interest in exploring analytics to find out what best suits me. The other part of my skill set involves the collecting of data, which gives me the ability to collect data and interpret it in a meaningful way. I am an independent person who is capable of taking initiative without intervention. I am a certified Microsoft Office Specialist in Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. My current on-campus job requires the use of Microsoft Access, something that I am getting better at by the day. I am hoping to increase my confidence in asking questions, when it is necessary. With my background in cheerleading in high school and participating in two extracurriculars in college, I have developed essential time management skills. I am proficient in email communication and well-versed in communicating in other forms as well.

I hope you can see how my skill set, combined with my own interest in software and analytics, makes me an ideal candidate for this internship. I truly believe in what Tibco is doing in the realm of analytics technology. Please contact me so we can discuss my qualifications and fit for this position further. Thank you for taking the time to consider my application.

Sincerely,  
Tara Graeve

## Resume

# Tara Graeve

Denver, CO | 720-382-3985 | tara.graeve@du.edu | www.linkedin.com/in/tara-graeve

## EDUCATION

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**University of Denver, Daniels College of Business, Denver, CO** Expected Graduation: June 2021

*Bachelor of Science Business Administration—Information and Analytics*

*Minors: Computer Science and Marketing*

**D'Evelyn Jr./Sr. High School, Denver, CO** Graduated May 2017

## EXPERIENCE

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**University of Denver Youth Gymnastics, Denver, CO** August 2018-Present

*Front Desk Associate*

- Assist clients with questions and needs
- Maintain the program's wait lists and records
- Gain experience working with Microsoft Access

**College Gym News** June 2017-Present

*Editor: University of Denver Gymnastics, Big 12 Conference, Mountain Rim Gymnastics Conference*

- Oversee, track, and compile updates for Denver Gymnastics, the Big 12, and the MRGC
- Satisfy deadline requirements for articles and updates
- Collaborate with site team to create ideas, do site updates, and determine meet coverage
- Curate compelling, visually appealing social media graphics, specifically for Instagram Stories
- Communicate with Sport Information Directors and with coaches and athletes in interviews

**Terrifically Tara Blog** June 2016-Present

*Owner and Content Creator*

- Write blog posts for an audience on a variety of topics, from lifestyle to college life and academics
- Control social media to create a following and communicate and network with other bloggers
- Monitor and manage website and its design, operation, and performance

**Project C.U.R.E., Denver, CO** October 2018-November 2018

*Business Communications Live Case Challenge*

- Collaborated with a team of my classmates to solve a business problem
- Researched methods to help Project C.U.R.E. improve its marketing, branding, and web design
- Detailed recommendations in a written executive summary and oral PowerPoint presentation

## INVOLVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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**DU Catholic Student Fellowship, University of Denver** September 2017-Present

*Member*

**Alpha Delta Chi – Alpha Beta Chapter, University of Denver** January 2018-Present

*Historian (Fall 2018), Secretary (Fall 2018); Chancellor of Scholarship (Winter/Spring 2019)*

- Created a chapter presence on social media as chapter Historian

**Clermont Park Retirement Home, Denver, CO** September 2017-November 2017

*Volunteer*

- Collaborated with residents to create an exhibition exploring personal histories of photography

## SKILLS

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- Certified in Microsoft Excel, Word, and Powerpoint
- Photoshop
- Wordpress
- Basic HTML and CSS