

Analysis of Lab Work: Inefficiency and Efficiency

The Engineering Method of Technical Writing

Spring 2017

Due Wednesday, February 15, at 11:59 PM.

Self-Assessment of Working Practices: Inefficiency and efficiency

The purpose of this homework is to help you assess, in a structured way, what may not be not working for you.

Write a *short essay in the form of advice to your future self*, addressing the following topics:

- Difficulties or “inefficiencies” (similar to those from Boice, page 189) that are getting in your way
- Practices that simply are not working for you
- Old habits that may not be serving you well, particularly if they are hard to break
- Things that *were* getting in your way in the past, but that you have now resolved
- Things that are going well that you can build on

Your advice should serve two purposes:

- The lesser purpose should be to identify things that have gone wrong:
 - If you have fixed something that went wrong, you have a record of what you did, so that if something similar goes wrong in the future, you are well equipped to handle it.
 - If something went wrong and is still wrong, you have an idea where to focus.
- The greater purpose should be to focus your future self on your successes. Your successes provide opportunities for you to build on right away, and

the record of your successes has more lasting value—showing your future self that you have succeeded in the past, that you can succeed again, and providing some additional support beyond what you may get from the group.

As before, by “short” I am thinking one to three pages.

Evaluation

In this essay I am looking for more than just self-assessment based on contemporaneous observation. I want to see some insight or some self-understanding that will enable you to make progress. And I want you to recognize *priorities*: don’t just list things that happened; recognize the difference between minor impediments and things that are really getting in your way. Recognize the best, easiest ways to build on your current and past successes.

My primary evaluation of this essay will be *formative*: I will read what you have written and do my best to supplement your advice with my personalized, experienced advice about how to manage your difficulties and build on your successes.

I will also provide a *summative* assessment for a grade:

A+	I’m really impressed
A	Plausible, balanced assessment that sets clear priorities consistent with your accomplishments and demeanor in class
A-	The assessment reads like something plausible and sets clear priorities, but it is much more pessimistic or much more optimistic than is consistent with your accomplishments and demeanor in class
B	I see evidence of effort, observation, and some understanding, but I can’t figure out what your priorities are.
C	I see evidence of effort and observation, but not enough understanding of what’s happening.
F	I do not see evidence of effort and observation.
