2023 TIP Winner

Lettersmith: A Writing Support Tool That Provides Structured Guidance and Encourages Metacognition

Julie Hui
School of Information

*Lettersmith is developed in partnership with the Center for Academic Innovation and its team of designers, developers, behavioral scientists, and researchers.*
Motivation for the Project

- Majority of existing writing support tools do little to guide the cognitive processes of learning how to write.
- Professional writing is challenging to teach in the classroom because so much of it is learned through context-specific observation.
- Instructors and career counselors often attend to hundreds of students at a time, limiting their capacity to provide individual guidance.
What is the project?

- Lettersmith is a writing support tool that provides structured guidance via *shared annotations* and *annotated model texts*.

- Lettersmith encourages metacognition in an effort to improve writing quality and writer confidence.

- The tool was originally developed to help writers communicate more effectively with clients and professionals, and has since expanded to other forms of writing.
Inquiry about Data Analyst Position

September 1, 2022

Angela Lee
456 Fall St.

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am thrilled to apply to the position of Data Analyst at Opportunity Inc...

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Dear Hiring Manager,

I am delighted to be applying for the System Engineer position at NewTech Software. I met representatives from NewTech at the WCC Career Fair in November, where I came to learn about the XYZ System. NewTech’s focus to more efficiently serve customers, I would be excited to leverage my technical skills to join this team and increase your tremendous value for customers.

As a student volunteer for WCC’s IT Help Desk, I have health with various technical challenges and engaged with a wide range of users. This experience has given me a great deal of knowledge concerning all of the things that go into software development and the maintenance, functioning, and protection of computer systems and networks. My experience assisting users with their technical issues has also helped me develop the interpersonal skills needed to work with clients and peers. In this position, I uncovered various bugs with the school-wide systems and learned to write Quality Assurance reports.
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Interest in Systems Engineering Position

January 1, 2021

Mark Alabai
123 Summer Rd.
Ypsilanti, MI 45567

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My Draft 24 Words | Tag View: On | Feedback Link

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Outcomes: Students

“If we didn't have Lettersmith, we probably wouldn't have written an email similar to this, we probably would have just said, ‘Hi, we'd love to meet’ and not really like have the full agenda… It made us like have to become more prepared for the meeting.”

- Student
Outcomes: Instructors

“One of the things that I found really useful was that I could look at what students were tagging and try to kind of understand how each of them was grasping those individual concepts about writing. So, for example, I had one student who was continuously tagging what was actually the main argument of their writing as context, and so we were able to have a conversation. . . I could look at [their writing] and say all right, there’s a fundamental misconception.”

-Instructor
Outcomes: Instructors

“I think using Lettersmith has definitely improved my approach to teaching cover letters, because it has forced me to really think about all of these different components and defining them in really clear terms.”

-Instructor