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## Writing Samples

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**Shmoop** is a digital curriculum and test prep company that makes fun, rigorous learning and teaching materials.

### [Cattle rancher](#)

Today's ranchers, for the most part, don't spend their lives the way the cowboys of yore did. You're as likely to find them at a desk or in a truck as in a saddle. They don't stare moodily off into the distance with a gun on each hip and a lovelorn Miss Kitty on their arm. Instead, American ranchers are, first and foremost, businessmen: They raise and sell the cows, pigs, and sheep that go on to become the steak, pork loin, and lamb chops that grace your kitchen table. (Mmmm, steak...)

### [Diplomat](#)

Exotic locales. Formal dinners. Meeting heads of state. Luxurious accommodations. A wealth and breadth of stories to tell at cocktail parties.

All of those things are entirely possible when you're a diplomat representing your country and its interests to other countries' leaders, people and interests. But it's the work in between the fancy breakfasts and satiny pillowcases that makes a diplomat... a diplomat.

### [Sports agent](#)

Peyton Manning didn't become *Peyton Manning* (the italicized version) without a certain someone (and we don't mean his mother). And LeBron James, love him or hate him (you know, depending on your geographical location—lakeside or seaside) didn't become *LeBron James* without a certain someone either.

This *certain someone*—a sports agent—is someone with a lot of energy, a tendency toward talkativeness, an eye for raw, long-term talent and the gifts of persuasion, gab and tenacity. And all of these things need to be going full speed ahead...at all times and at the same time. It takes

a lot of gumption and hard work (not to mention that tenacity—sometimes known as heart) to make a real living as a sports agent. It's competitive, it's not a 9-5 desk job, and you're going to be dealing with egos, egos and more egos.

[Shmoop.com/careers](http://Shmoop.com/careers)

**The Crabby Office Lady** was created by me in 2002 to fill the gap between what is helpful technical content and what is actually readable. With a readership of 1 million+ I had a column, a blog, a podcast, a YouTube channel, and I published a book in 2006. Below are three of the more than 200 columns I wrote over the course of nine years.

[Take your elbows off the table and mind your email manners](#)

I get truckloads of letters imploring me to address the universal lack of e-mail etiquette. From that infernal "Reply to All" button to server-choking graphic files, some cyber-discourtesies are driving us all nuts.

[Crabby demystifies strange Internet terms \(part 1\)](#)

Words pay my mortgage. They provide my daughter with violin lessons. They are the meat & potatoes/hamachi & unagi/beans & rice of my work life. Although you may not make your living as a writer, you obviously read, and the majority of you communicate by using language. Language separates us from the other primates (that and the ability to take your own sweet time backing out of a parking space when you know someone is waiting).

[Crabby's telecommuting tips, redux](#)

Now that I've had some serious telecommuting experience, I'm equipped to debunk a few myths about this style of working and offer some useful real-world tips. No, it's not a fuzzy-slippered fantasy come true, but if it's right for you, you can make telecommuting work.

[Crabby Office Lady Tells It Like It Is: Secrets to Surviving Office Life](#)

Published by Microsoft Press, June 2006

"We all have to work for a living—so why not make that time work for you? Whether you're in a cubicle or corner office, the Crabby Office Lady shows you how to be more productive on the job so that you can really enjoy your time off the job. Humorous but practical, the lovable know-it-all reveals her secrets in this easy-to-read survival guide based on her popular column. You'll get her no-nonsense lessons to succeeding at work, as well as tips and tricks for working with Microsoft Office programs to help simplify your life. She'll give you the straight scoop—so pay attention!"

**Open Scan Technologies, Inc.** is a small software company located in the heart of the Santa Fe Arts District in Denver, Colorado. I write its weekly blog about its very technical products. Here are links to a few of them.

### [What Henry Ford Taught Is About Specializing](#)

Surely you've had the experience of finally sitting down to have dinner with family or friends when the unswervingly earnest young person with her environmentally-friendly clipboard knocks on your front door to get you to sign the Bacteria Rights Act. Or maybe you're having one of those super-energetic (and often most effective) ad-hoc hallway meetings at work when it's time for the monthly fire drill.

Whatever the event, your dinner is cold, your train of thought gone, and you sheepishly realize it was you leaning against the box that set off the alarm.

### [So Happy Together](#)

If you pluck someone from a somewhat mindless job (again: typing data into a machine hour after hour, day after day) and train him to do something else, something that may encourage him to really think, will it make him a happier, more productive employee? Will it offer him higher job satisfaction? Personal satisfaction? Will it erase all his fine lines and bad memories? But seriously: What about the company's bottom line? Does feeling useful and challenged directly translate into better productivity?