From: Mr. Mixalot

To: Marcia Woodard

Date: October 27, 2010

Subject: First Progress Report—ENGR 231 Research Paper

**Purpose of Report**

As you requested on October 21, 2010, the following is my first progress report on my ENGR 231 research paper. The purpose of this report is to update, you, Marcia Woodard, on the progress I have made on my research paper as well as the problems I have encountered. At the end of this report, I will suggest action that I should take to remain on schedule.

**Work Accomplished**

The following is the work I've accomplished so far:

* + 1. **Feasibility Study***—*In order to pick the best topic for my research paper, I did a feasibility study on three possible research topics. I finished this October 11, 2010.

*Research Topic* Summary: The bottled water industry, as headed by Nestle, Coca- cola co., and PepsiCo; has been extremely successful. However, due to the immense amount of plastic waste the bottled water industry creates, many have called into question the environmental friendliness of the industry.

*Position*: Even though lots of products and foodstuffs come in plastic containers that tend to wind up in landfills, bottled water is by far the most threatening to the environment.

*Working Thesis*: Like soft drinks and most other products that come in plastic single-serve containers, bottled water is convenient to consume. However, unlike soda, humans need to drink a large amount of water every day to survive. Because of bottled water's convenience, bottled water may become the main way that people fulfill this need. If this happens, the waste generated by the bottled water industry won't be regulated by the demand for something possibly used once or twice each day by consumers, but by the demand for something that *will* be used *multiple* times each day by consumers. In order to avoid this situation, and its waste, we should come up with something that competes with bottled water's convenience.

* + 1. **Order Sources—**While researching my topic I found *Tapped* an anti-bottled water documentary, and *Inside the Bottle* an anti-bottled water book. After learning of these sources, I ordered them. I completed this October 22, 2010.

**Work in Progress**

The following is what I'm currently working on:

* + 1. **Find Sources—**After completing my feasibility study, I started looking for sources that related to my topic.

The following are the sources I'm considering using:

* + - * + “A dubious expense: bottled water for city workers”

*Source Type*: Secondary Popular

*Source Location*: ProQuest(News)

This article talks about a city council allocating a large amount of money for bottled water for city workers in buildings were fountains do not function. I can use this as an example of people falling prey to the convenience of bottled water.

* + - * + “In Stout Defense of Bottled Water”

*Source Type*: Primary Popular

*Source Location*: ProQuest(Newspaper)

This article touches upon the convenience of bottled water and how people need water. It also suggests that bottled water is no worse for the environment than other single-serving drinks. I can use this for counterargument and maybe a bit of background. However, this article is more of a rant than an informative article, so I don't know how much I'll be able to use.

* + - * + “A Battle Against the Bottles: Building, Claiming, and Regaining Tap-Water Trustworthiness ”

*Source Type*: Secondary Scholarly

*Source Location*: Academic Search Premier(Academic Journal)

This article argues that bottled water marketing strategies send an implicit message that tap water isn't trustworthy. The article then goes on to talk about how trust in tap water can be re-obtained. I don't know what I can use this for at the moment, but there's a lot of good material here, so I'll probably think of something.

* + - * + “Stout's Stations cut down on bottled water use”

*Source Type*: Secondary Popular

*Source Location*: ProQuest(News)

This article talks about a few “stations” installed at UW-Stout to combat the convenience of bottled water. I could use this as an example of a possible solution to bottled water.

* + - * + “Bottled water awash in a sea of controversy”

*Source Type*: Secondary Popular

*Source Location*: Academic Search Premier(Newspaper)

This article talks about bottle water “alternatives” that are being promoted due to the controversy surrounding the bottled water industry. There is one great idea in this article about how reusable water bottles may become an accessory “like [a] cell phone or [an] iPod”.

* + 1. **Refine Focus and Thesis**—As I read new sources, I adjust my focus and my thesis to make for a more interesting paper.

**Work Remaining**

The following is the work remaining to do on my research paper:

* + 1. **Review Ordered Sources—**Once I receive T*apped* and *Inside the bottle* I will read/watch them. Though these source will probably be extremely one sided, I'm hoping that they will still give me some ideas—particularly about locating arguments that are pro bottled water.
    2. **Draft Research Paper—**Once I've collected a few more sources and solidified my thesis a bit more, I'll start to draft my research paper.
    3. **Revise Research Paper—**After I complete my rough draft, and I have received feedback from my peers, I'll revise my draft into my final paper.

**Problems Encountered**

The following are the problems I have encountered so far:

* + 1. **Non-Solid Thesis**—From the beginning of the project to October 25, 2010, my thesis wasn't really formed to the point where I could research objectively. Because of this, my research efforts during this time were more exploratory than focused. Consequently, I made less progress on the actual research than I expected.
    2. **Lack of Scholarly Articles**—On October 21, 2010, I discovered that most of the scholarly sources ProQuest returns are not actually scholarly. However, this isn't a major problem because though the majority of the results aren't scholarly, I can still find some scholarly sources amidst the results. This is only noted as a problem because there are far fewer scholarly sources on my topic than what I originally estimated, so I'll have a bit harder time finding them than what I originally planned.

**Research Strategies**

So far I've been using ProQuest and Academic Search Premier for my research. These two databases have been good for my exploratory research, and I think they will continue to be good now that my research is more focused.

**Project Completion**

My research paper is approximately 9% complete. Though I have done a lot of research, the research has been, as I mentioned in problems encountered, mostly exploratory research. However, this isn't to say that this research was a waste. The exploratory research was actually quite productive because I'll still be able to use a bit of it in my research paper, and it helped me come up with a thesis for my research paper.

The figure below shows the progress that I've made so far on my research paper.

Figure 1: Research Paper Progress

As you can see from the chart, though I'm not quite where I would like to be on finding my sources, I'm well on my way. Additionally, one should bear in mind that now that I have my thesis a bit more refined, I'll be able to find sources a lot more efficiently.\_

**Project Recommendation**

Now that I have my thesis to the point where I can start researching objectively, I'll start looking for specific pieces of information that I want sources on. I should budget some extra time to do this, so that I won't fall behind schedule.

Percentage of Passive Sentences: 3%

Flesch Kincaid Formula: 8.14

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