

The Research Project

Academic Research & Writing Skills: A Practical Example

Lecturer: Ms. Mary Anne Puli

Date: 26th August 2023



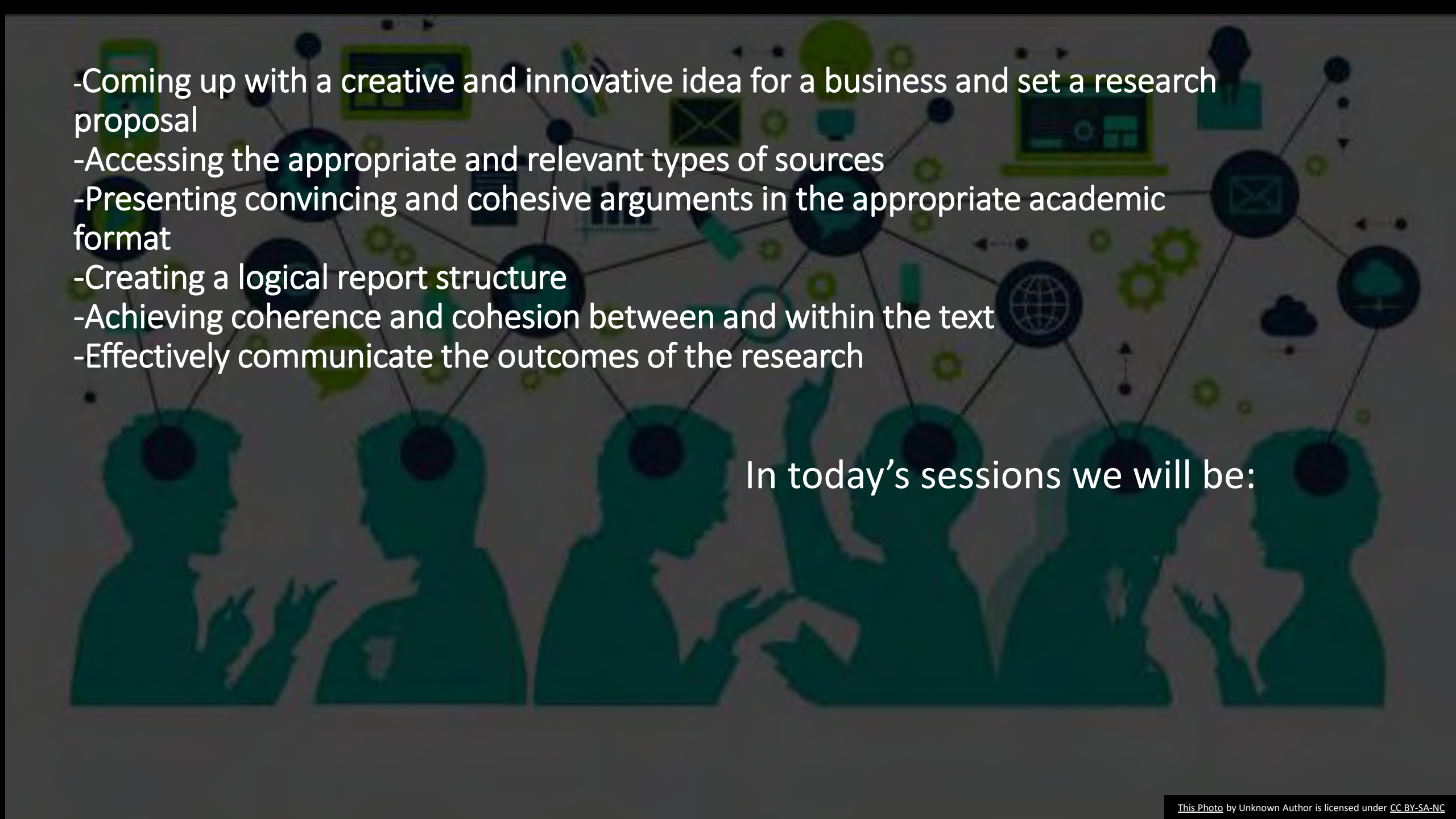
**Undergraduate Diploma in
Business Administration**

Module- Research and Academic Studies...

Helps you develop the skills to succeed in the writing task
(Using practical examples as much as possible)

- learn to write as clearly and accurately as possible
- learn to question and evaluate everything you read (is it relevant and reliable?)
- learn to cite and refer carefully the sources that make up all your ideas
- learn presenting your work through a standard system



- 
- Coming up with a creative and innovative idea for a business and set a research proposal
 - Accessing the appropriate and relevant types of sources
 - Presenting convincing and cohesive arguments in the appropriate academic format
 - Creating a logical report structure
 - Achieving coherence and cohesion between and within the text
 - Effectively communicate the outcomes of the research

In today's sessions we will be:

The Purpose of my Research Project

- to answer a question, I have been given
- to report on a piece of research that I have conducted
- to synthesise research done by others on the topic



Your Final Research Question:

Prepare a Business and Financial Plan for a fictional start-up company. This plan will serve as a basis for presenting your ideas to potential funders.

In this submission, you will demonstrate your ability to conduct thorough research, analyse data, and present a comprehensive plan that highlights the potential of your start-up.

One crucial aspect of this project is to demonstrate how you arrived at the product or service your fictional company will offer. Provide evidence of your creative and innovative thinking in developing the concept.



The Foundations of Research?



- At its most basic, research is activity used to increase knowledge.
- Research is *“a detailed study of a subject, especially in order to discover (new) information or reach a (new) understanding.”*

Cambridge Dictionary



To be effective, any research project needs to be an organized, systematic, data-based, critical, objective, scientific inquiry/investigation.





Philosophical bases / Epistemology

- Positivist Research
- Interpretivist Research
- Critical Research

Positivist Research

- Uses precise, objective measures and is usually associated with quantitative data
- Researcher remains separate from the subjects and uses deductive reasoning



Interpretivist Research

- Believes that people experience physical and social reality in different ways
- Reality is socially constructed
- Researcher becomes fully involved with individual subjects and is usually associated with qualitative studies



Critical Research

- Empower people to create a better world
- Uncovering and going beyond surface illusions
- Uncover myths and hidden meanings



Educational Focus: Why projects matter

Employers want students to have both content skills, as well as softer skills.

Research projects assist in demonstrating you can do systematic work, individually or in groups.

When in business the best idea is not always chose, it is the most effectively argued idea.



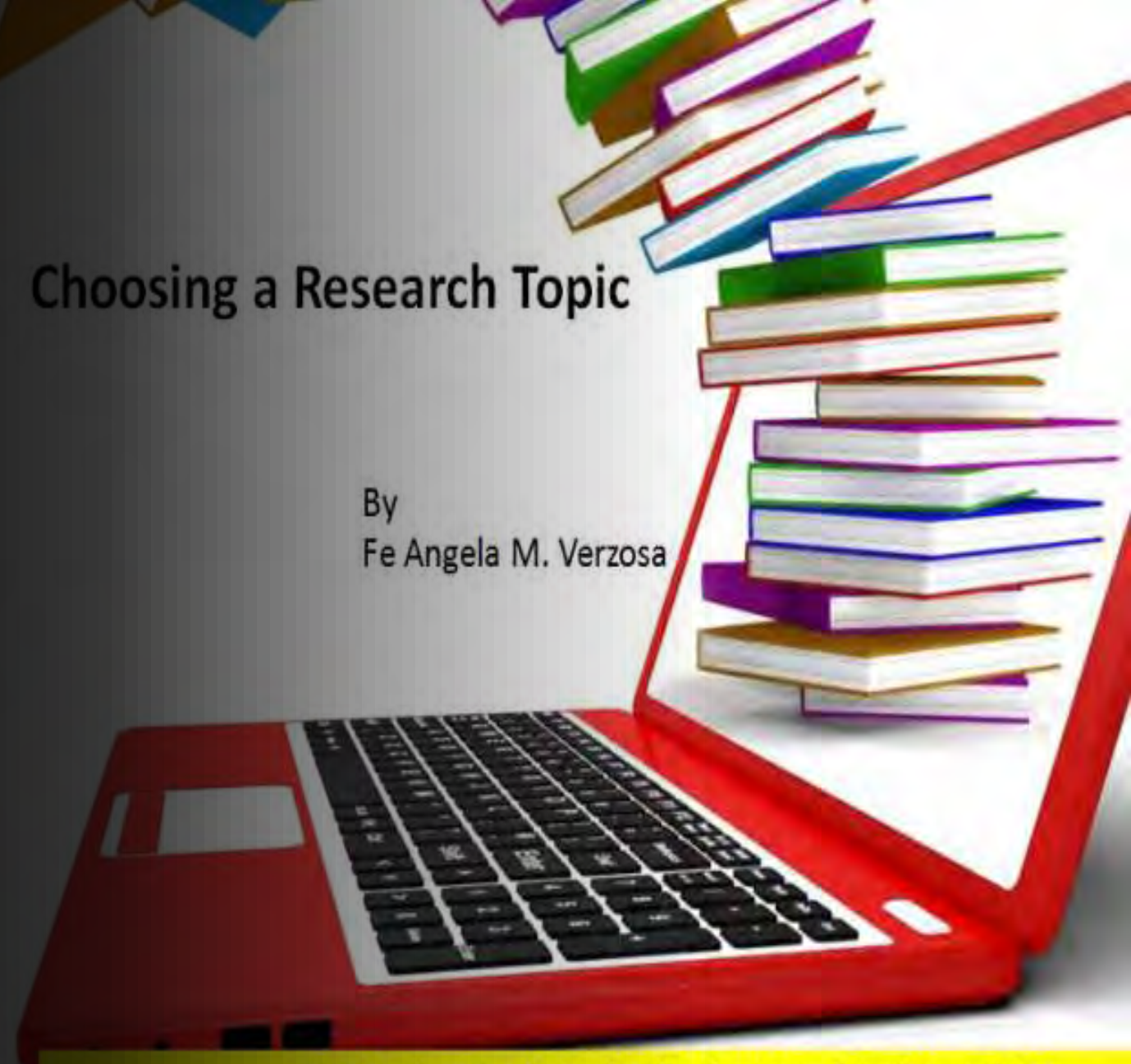
Choosing a topic

Steps in choosing a topic

- Step 1: Define Your Purpose
- Step 2: Explore Potential Topics
- Step 3: Evaluate Each Potential Topic
- Step 4: Finalize Your Topic
- Step 5: Begin Your Research

Choosing a Research Topic

By
Fe Angela M. Verzosa



Purpose



1: Define Your Purpose

- You want to pass the subject and comply with the assignment requirements.
- You should systematically explore some issue of interest to practice or theory.
- You want to use it to assist you in
 - a) getting a job,
 - b) advancing your academic career, or
 - c) personal growth.



2. Explore Potential Topics

- Develop a set of issues or areas that you are interested in.
- Do reading to get some background on the issues.
- Discuss alternatives with potential supervisors, lecturers, other students, friends or workmates.
- If you can't think of a topic- look at the recent business press (traditional and new media) for ideas.





3: Evaluate Each Potential Topic

- Interest of Researcher/Audience
- Appropriate for the Purpose
- Feasibility
- Topics of Other Research Projects
- Questionable Topics
- Business-Linked Projects

Questions to Help Evaluate Alternative Topics

- Are you interested in the topic?
- What do you already know about the topic?
- Are the other group members (if any) also interested in the topic?
- Will the topic fulfill the purpose of the project?
- Is there enough information about the topic?



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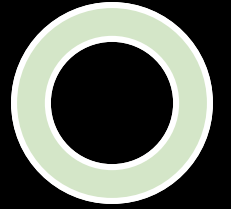
Questions to Help Evaluate Alternative Topics (cont)

- Will you be able to collect primary data on the issue, if this is required?
- Do you have the skills or knowledge of the methodology to complete the topic?
- Will your supervisor, or the audience, be interested in your topic?
- Could the topic offend some members of your audience?
- Will this topic keep your interest for the time it will take to complete the project?

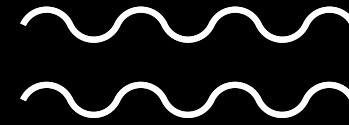
4: Finalise Your Topic

- Consider what type of research you want to undertake and what analytical methods you want to use as this will affect the final topic.
- Don't be too broad or too narrow.
- Set parameters:
 - What variables and relationships
 - What context (industry, region, etc.)
 - When
- Work with your supervisor to define the final topic

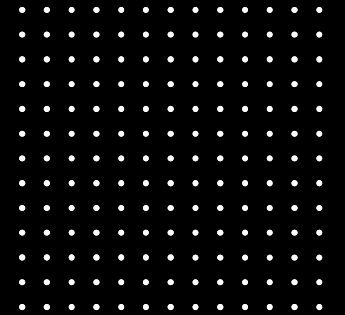




5. Begin your Research



- In the process of undertaking the research you may in fact refine the concept or potentially refocus it.
- Remember you cannot do everything and adding something may mean cutting other parts.
- The focus should be on your learning and less on the 'outcome' of the research.



GRADCOACH

Literature Review Process



The Literature is the pre-existing work in your area that has already been published



The Literature Review

The Literature review goes from broad to narrow.



Concept Map or Mind Map – Consumer Response to Fair Trade Accreditation of Sports Shoes



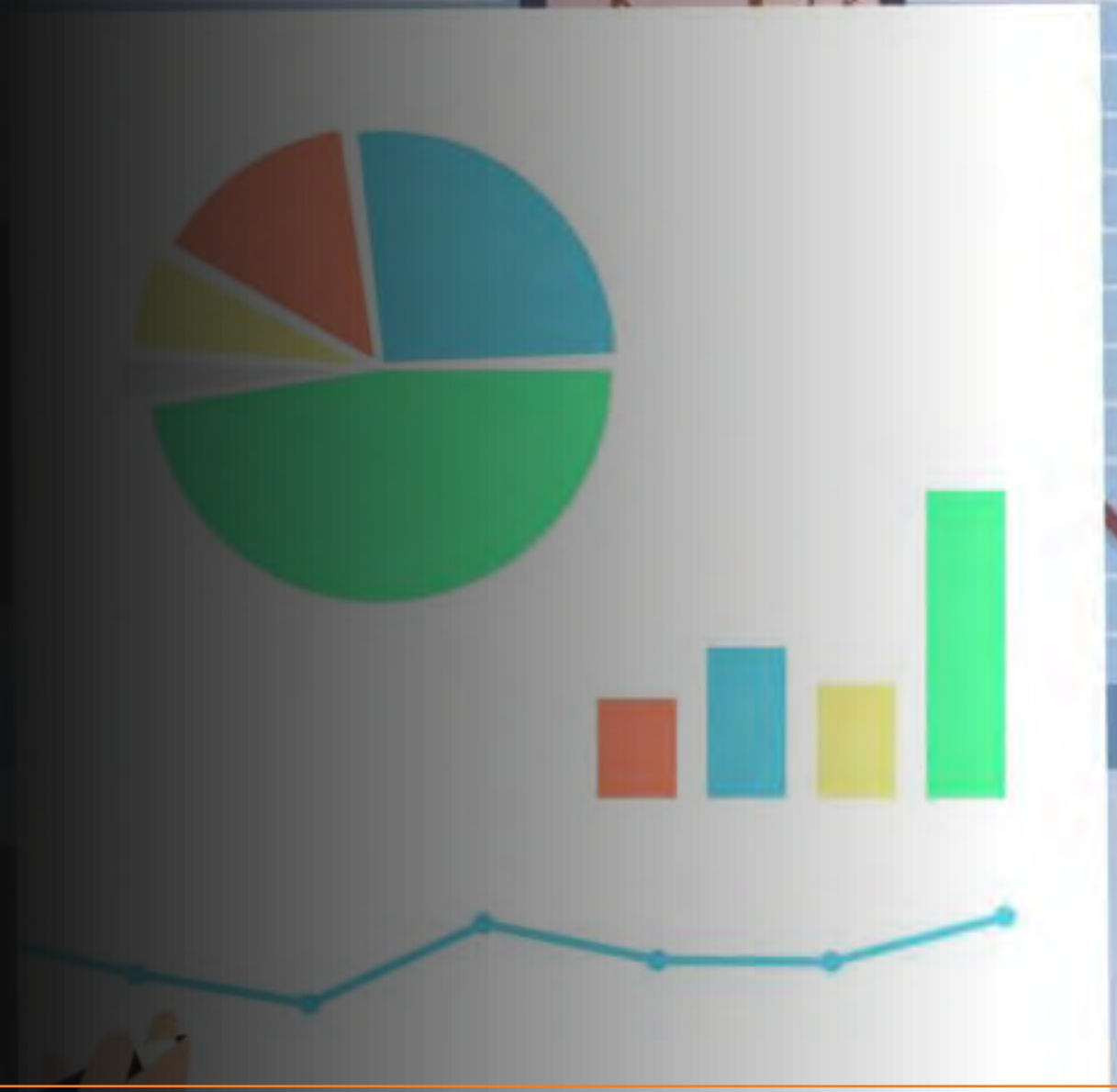
How Can Literature Be Used?

- Selecting a Topic
- Background
- Setting Research Questions and/or Hypotheses
- Methodology
- Analysis and Discussion



Selecting a topic

- By reading (academic and practitioner) work you might identify an issue that interests you.
- Identifying practical problems that can be scientifically examined is valuable.





Background

- Understanding the issue regarding theory and practice will require extensive reading.
- The literature can provide the rationale for the thesis or even articulate the importance of the issue

(e.g.: We lose x million dollars of GDP by employees interacting with networking sites while at work).

Hypotheses and research questions

You will usually base these on the past research which suggests possible relationships.



Research Method

- Not only will literature discuss theory, but it will also provide background regarding analytic processes.
- Previous works in a given area will provide support for examining your question in each way.
- There is also specialized literature examining research methods.



Analysis and Discussion

- What do your findings mean?
- Are they consistent or inconsistent with the literature?
- Can you develop alternative explanations of your findings based on the literature?

ANALYSIS



Where to Obtain Literature

- Books- generally you should not use textbooks to make points. Although textbooks can provide references to the original works proposing ideas.
- Journals- these tend to be peer reviewed and thus we often have more confidence in the ideas and results.
- Electronic databases- which pool together works from journals or other sources, thus make searching more efficient as multiple sources are explored at once.
- The Internet- highly variable and it is important to have some confidence in the source providing the info.
- Government and Industry reports- these can be variable in quality. We frequently have more confidence with governmental documents that don't necessarily push a particular aspect. Many industry documents also are rigorous and systematically reserved.



How to write a Literature review

- Having a structure in mind is helpful, as this allows you to develop linkages in areas.
- Your job is not only to overview issues but draw together divergent works identifying similarities and differences.
- It is essential to acknowledge that alternative views exist. You should also identify which you agree with and why!
- Developing a table summarizing the work is often very helpful.
- You can develop criteria regarding issues-sample, context dependent variables, independent variables, etc.
- This type of approach can also be useful in looking at definitions and how they have evolved or how other people have measured a construct.



Some Commonly used Electronic Databases

- Google Scholar
- ABI/INFORM Global
- Academic Search Premier
- Business Source Premier
- EDGE (Informit)
- Factiva.com
- Emerald
- PsycINFO (OVID)
- Science Direct (Elsevier)
- WARC



Some Caution relying on the Internet

1. Information overload—too much information identified.
2. Information accuracy—anyone can put anything on the Web.
3. Limited breadth of coverage— some academic information will be overlooked, unless you explicitly search targeted databases.
4. Information moves or sites change— materials are added and deleted all the time.

How much literature?

The goal with a literature review is to provide a rationale for work, based on earlier research.

One thus needs to adequately cover an issues (i.e., be comprehensive), but not try and include all the literature (i.e., be exhaustive).





Referencing

- Referencing Styles- set out how to identify material cited in the bibliography and in the body of your report.
- **Harvard Style:**
 - Polonsky, M.J. and Waller, D.S., 2019. *Designing and managing a research project: A business student's guide*. Sage publications.
- **American Psychological Association:**
 - Polonsky, M. J., & Waller, D. S. (2019). *Designing and managing a research project: A business student's guide*. Sage publications.
- **Chicago Style:**
 - Polonsky, Michael Jay, and David S. Waller. *Designing and managing a research project: A business student's guide*. Sage publications, 2019.



Managing Your References

- There are several electronic systems that allow you to manage your references these assist with:
 - keeping track of what you have used;
 - creating a reference list;
 - a file system that allows you to take notes related to articles.
-

References

1. Bechtolsheim, S. (1993), *T_EX in Practice: Basics*, Vol. 1, Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg, Germany / London, UK / etc.
2. Benhamou, F. & Colmerauer, A., eds (1993), *Constraint Logic programming, Selected Research*, MIT Press.
3. Kehr, R. (1998), 'xindy—A flexible indexing system', *Cahiers GUTenberg* 28–29, 223–230.
4. Muntean, T. (1993), *Puces très performantes*, Terres du futur, Les Editions UNESCO, Hatier, Paris.
5. Roux, M. & Smart, J. (1995), A model of medical knowledge representation, application to the reports analysis of descriptive pathology, in 'Methods of Information in Medecine', Schattauer, Holland. À paraître.

Data Gathering

Some issues to consider

- (1) **Validity** – will the data allow us to answer our question?
- (2) **Reliability**- will the data in fact be accurate?
- (3) **Appropriate** – Will the data collection method access the right people?
- (4) **Amount of data** – Will we get the right amount of data (how much is enough)?
- (5) **Flexibility** – can we adapt the process if needed?



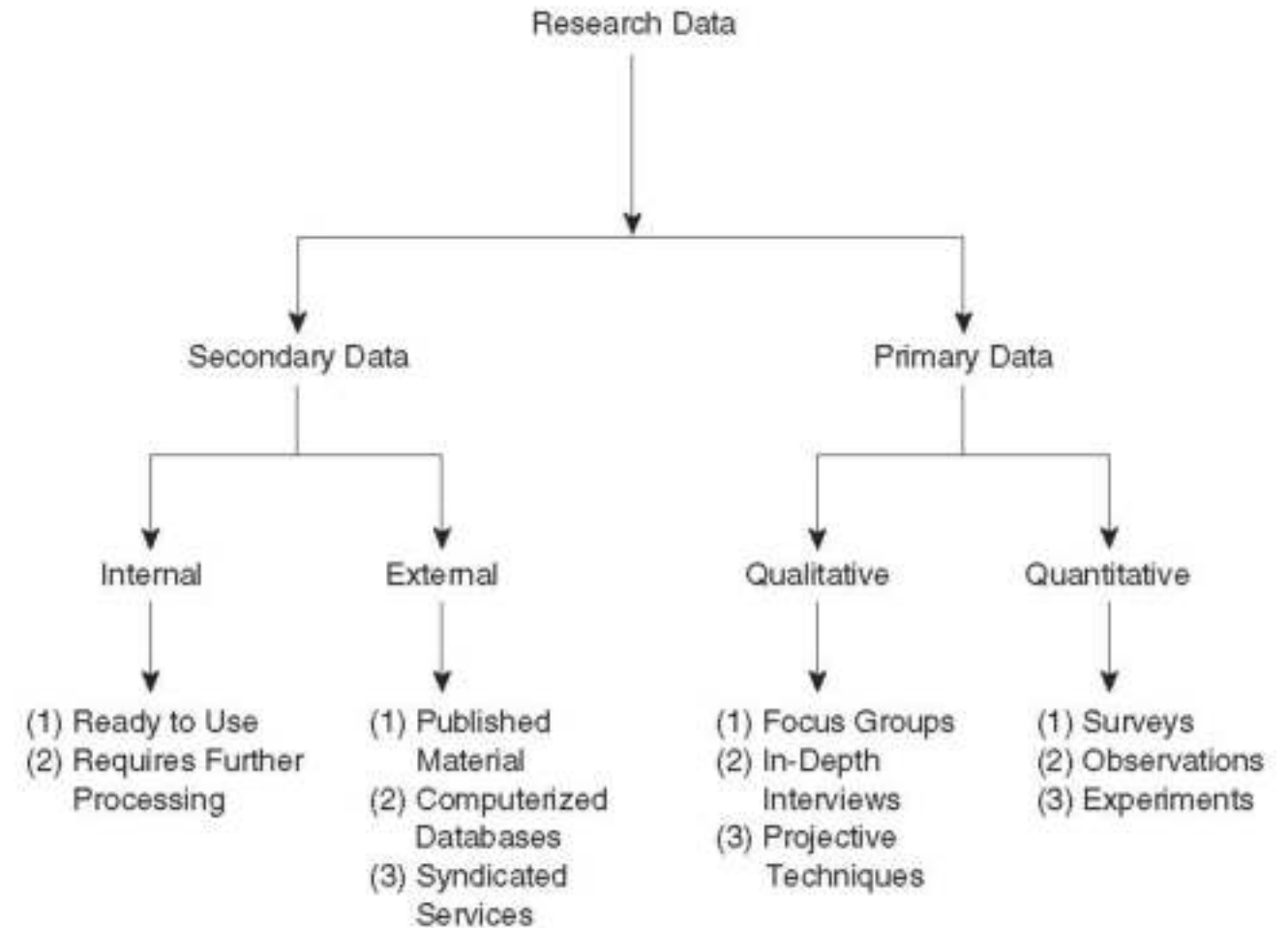
Issues continued.....

- (6) **Cost**- is the process cost effective?
- (7) **Time restraints**- how long will it take to collect our data?
- (8) **potential for errors**- is there a potential for bias or errors?
- (9) **Researcher's ability** – do we have the expertise to implement the data collection process.



Types of Research Data

Model 8.1 Types of Research Data



SOURCE: Based on Malhotra et al. (2002).

Secondary Data

- Internal organizational data
- External Data
 - Published materials
 - Computerized and online sources
 - Syndicated sources

Secondary Data

Questions to ask about Secondary Data

1. What was the purpose of the study?
2. Who collected the information?
3. What information was collected?
4. When was the information collected?
5. How was the information obtained?
6. Is the information consistent with other studies?

Primary Data

Qualitative Research

- *Focus Groups* – moderated discussion that is open ended allows deeper explanation and can be used to develop counter views
- *In-Depth Interviews*- one on one discussions with participants, allowing in-depth discussion
- *Projective Techniques* – often hypothetical situations asking people to reflect on what they (or others) might do and why
- *Ethnographic Methods*- where researchers immerse themselves in a research context and draw inferences by observing behaviors



Primary Data

Quantitative Research

- *Surveys*- asking respondents specific questions which are answered on structured scales.
 - Personal surveys*
 - Telephone surveys*
 - Online surveys*
 - Mail surveys*
- *Secondary Data*- existing data that is used to look at relationships
- *Experimentation*- where researchers manipulate situations to examine effects on respondents.



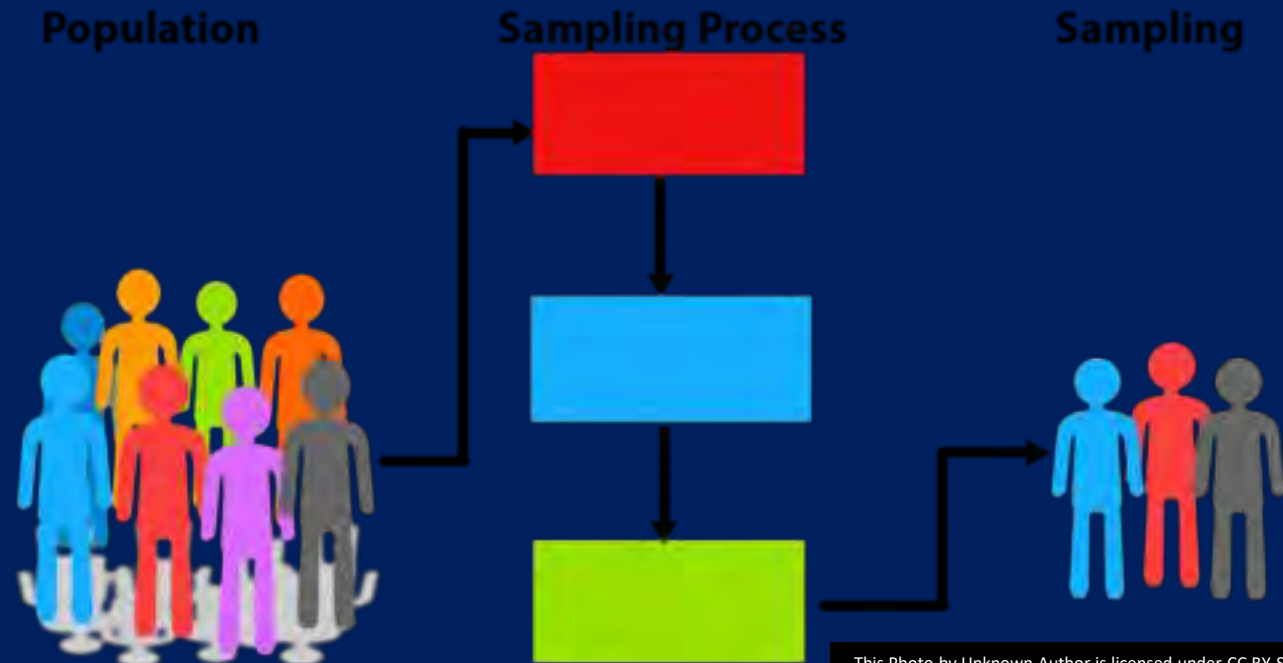
Mixed Methods

Increasing researchers are using both qualitative and quantitative research to explore a problem.

1. The qualitative work is valuable in understanding the issue and thus serving as the grounding for later quantitative research.
2. Alternatively, the qualitative research could be undertaken after quantitative work to better explain the results.

Sampling Methods

- We rarely examine an entire population and must select a sample, which is ideally representative of the population.
- We want to make sure that the responses collected reflect the views of the overall population, even though we have only collected information from a sample of people.
- What is the unit of analysis? An organization? Individuals? Groups of individuals or organizations? Something else?



Sampling Methods

Nonprobability Sampling

- *Convenience sampling*
- *Judgmental sampling*
- *Quota sampling*
- *Snowball sampling*

Probability Sampling

- *Simple random sampling*
- *Systematic sampling*
- *Stratified sampling*
- *Cluster sampling*



Non-Probabilistic Sampling

Convenience sampling – selects people we can easily access.

Judgmental Sampling – we identify people we believe are part of the population.

Quota Sampling – we want to have a predefined set of characteristic and then select people to fill the relevant groups (gender age, income, etc.).

Snowball Sampling – where participants recommend others who might be included in the sample (participants would know other people like themselves).



Probabilistic Sampling

Random Sampling - each member in the population has a known and equal probability of selection.

Systematic Sampling –select a random starting point and then picking every i -th element in succession from the sampling frame.

Stratified Sampling – randomly select people from a set of people with a given characteristics.

Cluster Sampling – we select a block or group of people (say selecting a block in a municipality).



How to present findings

- Visually Clean Presentation.
- Reader-Friendly Format.
- Suitable Presentation for Type of Data.
- Appropriate Number of Visual Aids.
- Appropriate Use of Visual Aids.
- Non-distracting Presentation.



Numerical Tables

These (as the below examples) can summarise results or provide concise summaries of data.

	Number	Percentage
GENDER:		
Male	48	51.1%
Female	46	48.9%
	94	
AGE:		
17	4	4.3%
18	11	11.7%
19	15	16.0%
20	17	18.1%
21	23	24.5%
22	17	18.1%
23	6	6.4%
24	1	1.1%
Total	94	100.0
YEAR OF STUDY:		
Freshman	20	21.3%
Sophomore	24	25.5%
Junior	26	27.7%
Senior	24	25.5%
TOTAL	94	100.0%

	<i>MALE</i> Number (%)	<i>FEMALE</i> Number (%)	<i>TOTAL</i> Number (%)
GENDER:	48 (51.1%)	46 (48.9%)	94
AGE:			
17	2 (4.2%)	2 (4.3%)	4 (4.3%)
18	5 (10.4%)	6 (13.0%)	11 (11.7%)
19	7 (14.6%)	8 (17.4%)	15 (16.0%)
20	6 (12.5%)	11 (23.9%)	17 (18.1%)
21	11 (22.9%)	12 (26.1%)	23 (24.5%)
22	13 (27.1%)	4 (8.7%)	17 (18.1%)
23	3 (6.3%)	3 (6.5%)	6 (6.4%)
24	1 (2.1%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.1%)
Total	48 (100.0%)	46 (100.0%)	94 (100.0)
YEAR OF STUDY:			
Freshman	9 (18.8%)	11 (23.9%)	20 (21.3%)
Sophomore	12 (25.0%)	12 (26.1%)	24 (25.5%)
Junior	13 (27.1%)	13 (28.3%)	26 (27.7%)
Senior	14 (29.2%)	10 (21.7%)	24 (25.5%)
TOTAL	48 (100.0%)	46 (100.0%)	94 (100.0%)

Tables should provide:

1. Numbering to link it to text.
2. Title describing information presented.
3. Headings for each row and column.
4. Unit of Measurement used.
5. Arranged to display the most significant aspect of the data.
6. Order information logically.
7. Provide totals.
8. Be accurate with calculations of data.
9. Provide the source of the data.
10. Visually emphasize Items to better communicate.

Style guides usually give requirements for specifics of tables.



CHARTS & GRAPHS

We may want to present data in a more visual way to communicate results.

"Excellence in statistical graphics consists of complex ideas communicated with clarity, precision and efficiency." (Griffiths, Stirling & Weldon 1998 p196)

Alternatives include:

Bar charts- can be used for distribution or to identify differences.

Pie charts- good to show distribution.

Line graphs good way to show trends in data.



Figure 1.1: Average drinks per week by gender



Figure 1.2: Age distribution of respondents

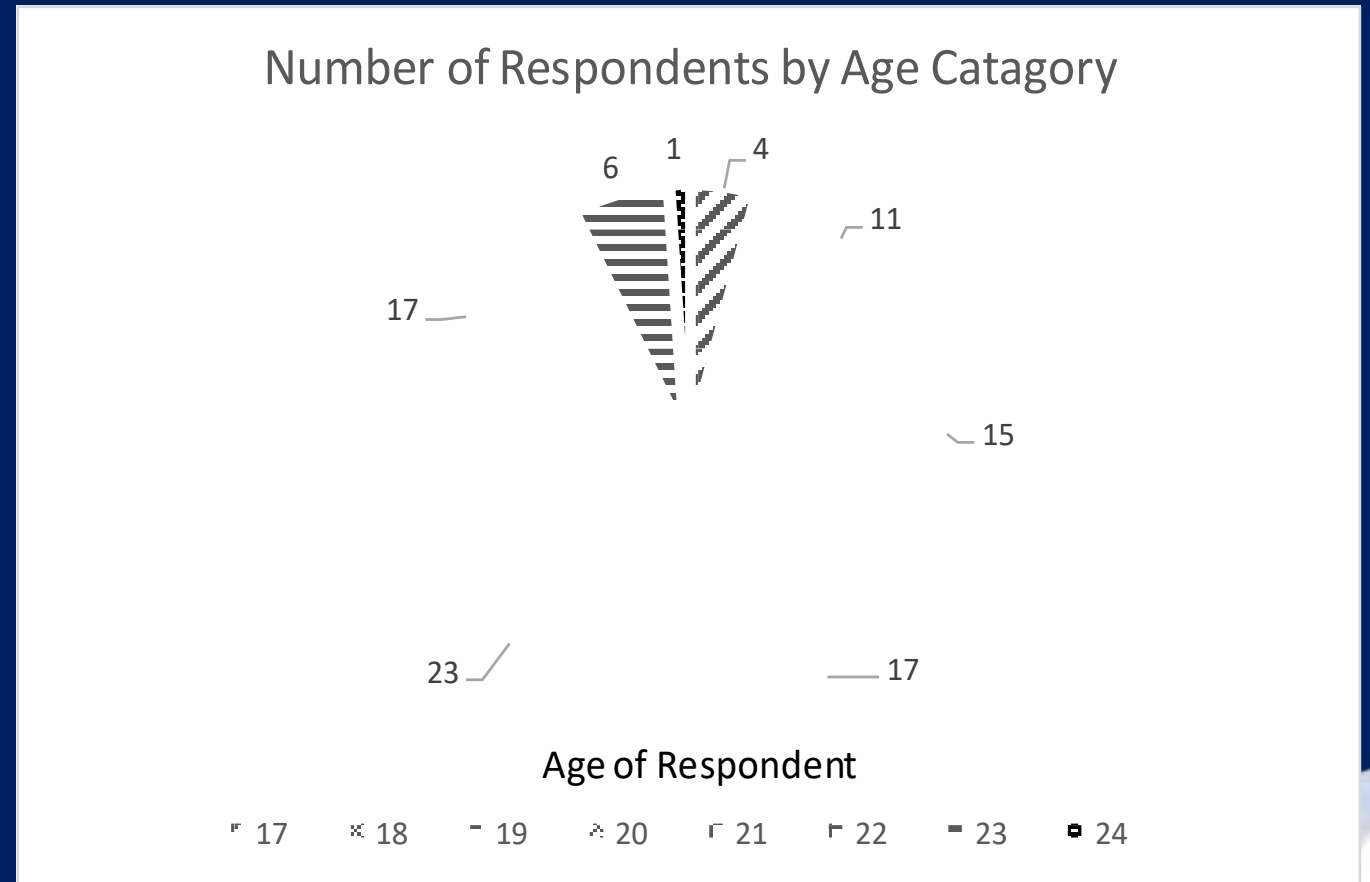
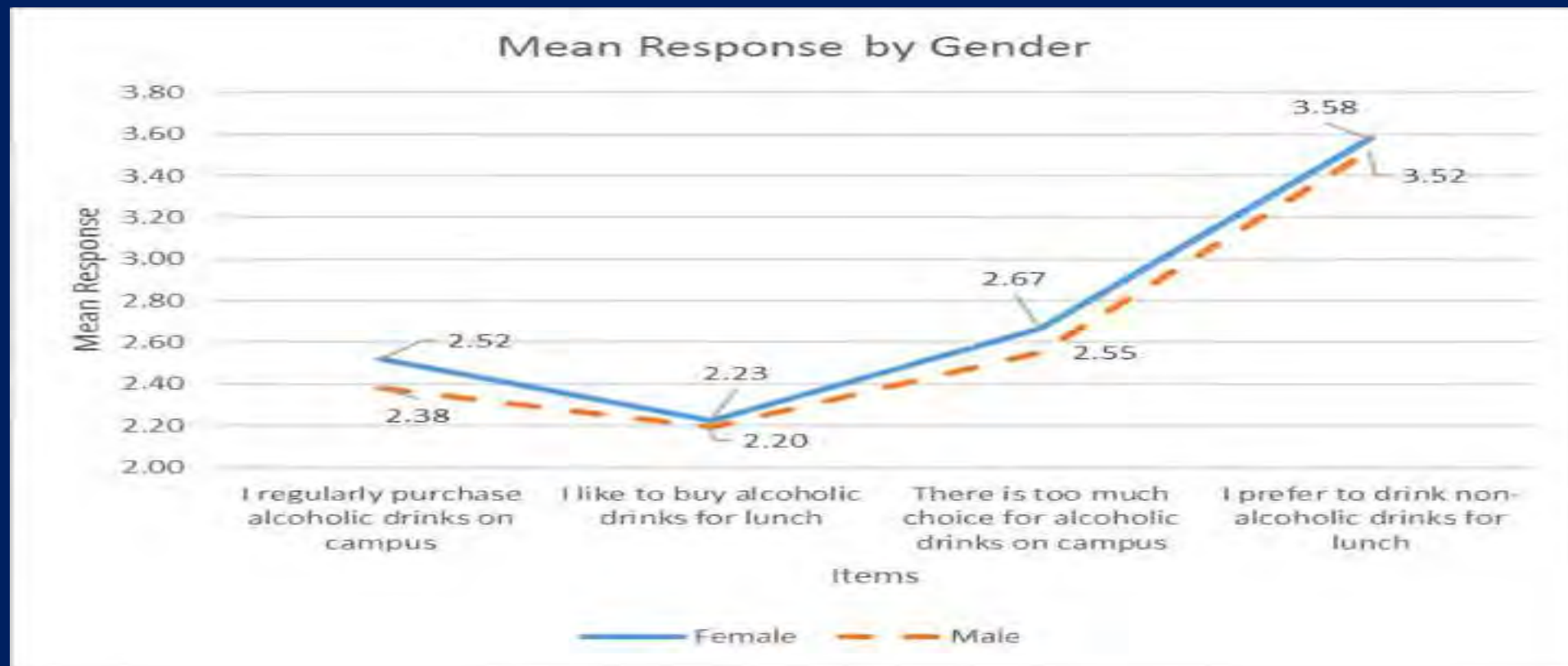


Figure 1.3 Line Graph Showing Mean Responses



Pictures

Can be useful, especially if these were used as stimulus in the research.

- Figure 11.4: Example of two images that depict alternative information used in the HPS Case.

HPS
HIGH PERFORMANCE SHOES
Performs on and off the field

ULTIMATE COMFORT
Seamless mesh construction and soft UltraGEL cushioning provides a smooth run on the harshest surfaces

LIGHTWEIGHT PROTECTION
The lightweight UltraGEL in the heel provides extra shock absorption so you can take on any distance

RESPONSIVE FEEL
The UltraGEL forefoot increases Dynamic toe-off by putting an extra spring in your step

FAIR TRADE APPROVED
Ensuring Workers are paid and treated fairly

Recommended Retail Price \$160



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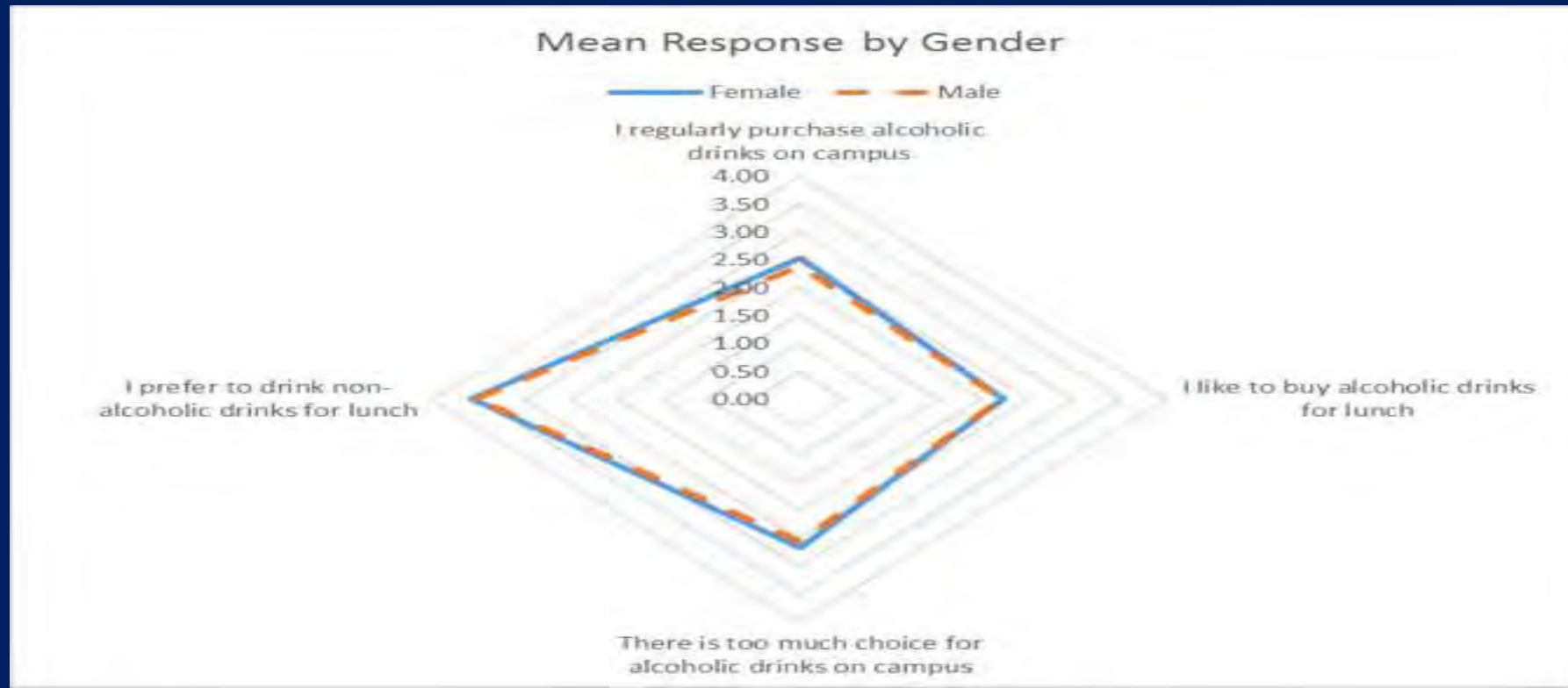
RESPONSIVE FEEL
The UltraGEL forefoot increases Dynamic toe-off by putting an extra spring in your step

Recommended Retail Price \$160



Maps

- Can be useful if you are discussing specific areas or regions or allows more complex graphical representations of data.
- Figure 1.5: Multi-dimensional mapping of mean responses by gender



Quotations

Useful for giving examples of qualitative data that exemplifies a given point.

“When I first started at university I tended to drink a lot and miss classes. I got together with some friends in the residences and we decided to drink more responsibly. This didn’t last long, because there were a lot of end of term parties in the residences. Next term I am moving off campus so I won’t be so tempted” (MP Female 21)



Reporting Statistical Results

- You will also need to provide visual depictions of statistical tests for readers to 'see' the results and how they are assessed.
- Table 1.6: Table comparing mean values of items by Gender

Statement	Female Mean (std)	Male Mean (std)	t-test (p-value)
1. I regularly purchase alcoholic drinks on campus.	2.52 (1.362)	2.38 (1.295)	.560 (.504)
2. I like to buy alcoholic drinks for lunch.	2.23 (1.075)	2.20 (1.128)	.849 (.136)
3. There is too much choice for alcoholic drinks on campus.	2.67 (1.261)	2.55 (1.176)	.651 (.447)
4. I prefer to drink non-alcoholic drinks for lunch.	3.58 (1.097)	3.52 (1.005)	.571 (.254)



Conclusion

- Visual depictions of information are valuable.
- They can make the information easier to understand and also break up the written content.
- They do not replace the need for detailed discussions of materials.



What do the results really mean?

You need to firstly describe the results.

You then explain what the results suggest.

This also has broader implications for your research question, theory and practice.

There may also be some issues that suggest you may want to be cautious with the recommendations AND the results suggest that additional focused research is warranted.

While you understand all these issues you need to draw them out for readers.



Describing the Results

Students often confuse the description of the results with the interpretation.

The description is just that, you tell the reader what the results are.

Depending on what you have done the description will vary. For example, it may talk about the percent of people who are satisfied with a service.

The description will generally also look at the hypothesis in your project and discuss whether this is supported or rejected based on the results of the analysis.



Describing the Results

The description is a critical first step and one that requires you to explain things to the reader in a meaningful way.

You need to have the reader understand what the analysis says, before you can begin to interpret what this means.

If they don't understand the results, they are less likely to agree with your interpretation.



Discussion and Interpretation

Here is where you draw out the results and explain what they mean in the context of your research question.

You will frequently make links between your results and the theory on which you built your research.

The discussion therefore gives the results context based on the past, as well as regarding to your specific question.

In some cases, your results will differ to past research and in the discussion, you will try and explain why this has occurred.

In many instances there may be multiple possible interpretations.

In this case you identify these alternatives and then explain why you believe it better supports one or the other.



Research Implications

You also will need to explain what the research means for theory and practice.

For example, identifying that two groups are different is important, but how can we use these to better develop organisational activities? If it is a marketing question one might suggest how firms need to engage with each group differently.

The research may also identify theoretical issues that need to be considered in future research?

You should consider alternatives when discussing the implications.



Limitations

Limitations are not failures. No research is perfect, and you should identify issues that may have prevented you achieving your research aims.

It is important to tell the reader you identify the limitations with your work.

In some cases, you can seek to explain why you believe these limitations to not be significant.

Limitations may also point to future directions for research, to possibly explore the issues identified in more detail.



Recommendations

How will your results assist in future business activities or in developing and examining theory in the future?

The recommendations set out the actions or alternatives and demonstrate you understand what you have found, within the larger research context.

People frequently do a poor job in this section as they see it as the end of the project and often don't allocate appropriate time to the task.



Recommendations

- 1) Clearly state your recommendation and justify why you believe your recommendation to be appropriate.
- (2) Be specific for each recommendation. In many cases you will have several recommendations and ensure they are systematically discussed.
- (3) Make SURE recommendations are linked back to the objectives and the research findings. (Be careful not to have unrelated recommendations.)
- (4) If you have business implications make them action-orientated, i.e. tells people what to do.



Limitations

Within your research there will be issues that might have restricted your project, many of these will build to future research opportunities.

- One context
- Narrow sample frame
- Limited respondents

Limitations do not represent a failure of your research (although it may acknowledge ‘mistakes’), but rather limitations are recognition of the realities of your work and that you understand how these factors may have influenced your research.



Future Research

How might one build on your research?

Future research could:

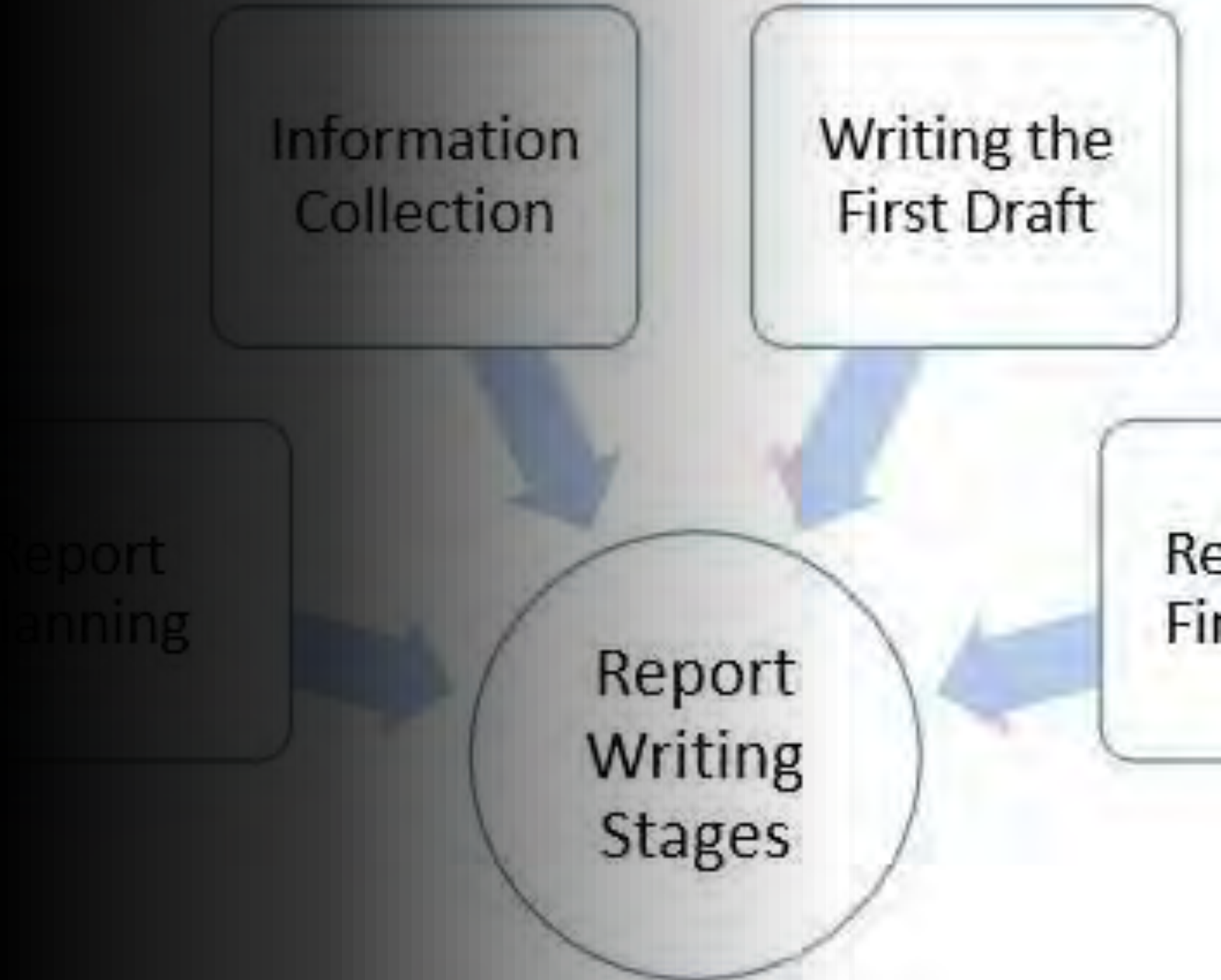
- explore issues identified in the limitations.
- Further examine issues identified in the findings.
- Consider implementation issues.

Tell the reader what should be done next in order to better understand the issues!



Writing the report

- Communicates with various audiences what you have done.
- Is a formal assessment criteria.
- Demonstrates you have strong communication skills, i.e. is a tangible output that you can show potential employers.



COMMUNICATIO

Written Communication- It is critical to get your ideas across in a written format.

1. *Decide what information should be included and what should be omitted.*
2. *Identify who is the audience.*
3. *Organize the materials to make it easy for the reader to follow.*
4. *Clearly ensure that you explain the five W's – who, what, where, when and why.*
5. *Keep it simple.*
6. *Be specific.*
7. *Revise and proofread.*

Practical tips (Scott Armstrong 2003)

1. Make sure you write information targeting the audience.
2. Identify who you are and any limitations associated with the project.
3. Guide by including a discussion of how the project will address the issue being considered.
4. Make recommendations that identify the benefits or pitfalls of corporate actions.
5. Give sufficient discussion of material to ensure that the reader understands how you arrived at your conclusions.
6. Use exhibits in a way that makes them visually easy to follow.
7. Write in a way that is balanced and makes it easy for the reader to follow issues.
8. The material needs to have a logical flow and be easy to follow.
9. Rewrite so that the report flows and is interesting to read.



A close-up photograph of a person's hands writing in a notebook. The person is wearing a light-colored, patterned shirt. The right hand holds a black pen with a gold-colored tip, and the left hand rests on the page. The notebook is open, and the page is white with some faint lines. The background is dark and out of focus.

WHEN TO WRITE?

Writing is a planned activity that requires MANY drafts.

Each draft may serve different functions:

1. Get the ideas down.
2. Structure the argument.
3. Clarify and edit for meaning.
4. Final revisions.

Do you write as you progress the project or write it up at the end?

- Writing as you go allows you to clearly document things as they develop.
- This forces you to document things, but also means you need to allocate time to writing up activities.
- Writing in this way also potentially allows the project to stay on track, as it focuses activities and ensures things are not forgotten.



Types of Reports

There are a range of different types of reports and each will be targeted at the objectives and audience of each.

Consider:

- What are the criteria on which your report will be assessed?
- What it is that the audience wants to know?
- What is their background, as this will effect the style, language and detail required.



An Academic Report

- Readers want to know that you have followed a systematic process.
- They possibly want more detail in regards to some areas that “business” readers may not be interested in concerned.
- Detail does NOT mean simply making it longer.
- The academic report focuses more on the theoretical grounding, methodology and academic implications of your research project.



A Business Report

- Readers are more focused on the implications and the justifications- what should be done and why!
- Business reports vary from “dot points” with brief explanation, to more detailed documents, similar to an academic report.
- While the theory and methodology will be less emphasized in these reports they need to be undertaken as systematically.





Structure of the Report

	Business	Academic
Title Page	Usually	Usually
Acknowledgments	Sometimes	Sometimes
Table of Contents	Usually	Usually
List of Tables, Figures, Exhibits and/or Appendices	Sometimes	Sometimes
Executive Summary	Usually	Usually
Introduction	Usually	Usually
Research Objectives	Rarely	Usually
Background	Usually	Usually
Literature Review	Unlikely	Usually
Methodology	Usually	Usually
Analysis/Results	Sometimes	Usually
Limitations	Usually	Usually
Implications/Discussions	Usually	Usually
Recommendations	Usually	Sometime
Conclusion	Sometimes	Usually
Further Research	Rarely	Usually
Bibliography	Usually	Usually
Appendices	Sometimes	Sometimes

Structure of a report

- 1. *The Title Page***- title of the project, all of the names of those in the project team, who the report is written for, and the date it was submitted.
- 2. *Acknowledgment*** -thank those who were particularly helpful in the undertaking of a project (including any industry or organisational support).
- 3. *Table of Contents***- gives the reader structure, level of detail will vary for the audience.



Structure of a report (cont.)

Lists of Tables, Figures, Exhibits or Appendices – if you have a lot of tables and figures it is normal to list these in a separate table of contents.

5) *Executive Summary*- a concise discussion of why the issue is important, what has been done, what were the findings and what does it mean.

6) *Introduction*- sets the scene and introduces the main concepts, briefly.

7) *Research Objectives* – tells the reader what is the purpose of the research and lists objectives, research questions and hypothesis if used.



Structure of a report (cont.)

- 8) **Background** – (not always its own chapter) gives the reader an understanding of the context in which the study was undertaken.
- 9) **Literature Review**- Develops a discussion of the literature drawn on for theoretical grounding. Should discuss each variable being studied and possibly even relationships between them.
- 10) **Methodology**- discusses the approach used to research the issue and then details the specific steps used to explore the question (including the analysis).



Structure of a report (cont.)

- 11) *Analysis/Results*** – What does the analysis say in a way that is meaningful.
- 12) *Implications/Discussion***- Explains the analysis focusing on what the results mean for theory and practice.
- 13) *Recommendation***- Possibly only in industry research discussing how one would operationalize the issues identified in the research.
- 14) *Limitations***- unforeseen issues, reasons why you might look at the results with caution.



Structure of a report (cont.)

15) Future Research- identifying opportunities for additional study, possibly drawing on the limitations.

16) Conclusion – Summarise what was found. A final opportunity to sell the research to the reader.

17) References- lists ALL materials cited. Make sure these are complete!

18) Appendices- Supplementary information that is discussed in the thesis but not expressly listed, survey, info sheets, etc.



For your Final Project remember to include all the sections as outlined in the project question!

