

Documentation: methods and styles for practices and processes

How does process documentation work?

- Begin with a plan or a need
 - Hooking up a DVD player to your TV, building a website for a client
- Perform the process
 - Hook up the DVD player! Build the website!
- Document the process
 - What did you do? How did you do it?

Documentation methods

- In print:
 - Manuals, instruction sheets, handouts, etc.
- Electronically and/or online:
 - Blogs, wikis, collaborative text tools, video, audio, multimedia, etc.

Documentation: Practical Applications

What is documentation in the workplace?

- Evidence of:
 - “what the organization plans to do”
 - “what it has already done”

(Robinson, 2009, p. 35)

Why is it important?

- Helps with organizational goals (Robinson)
- “Communicates expectations and requirements” (Robinson)
- So that someone else can replicate your work (Robinson)
- When things go wrong, useful to know what led up to it (Edge)
- Reflecting on the successes and failures of a process can help improve it (Edge)

What are some issues?

- Documenting your plans implies that you are actually going to do it (Robinson)
- Documentation must be regularly maintained and updated (Robinson)
- Remember, documentation is the end, not the means! Must have a real purpose (Robinson)

Why are we discussing it in this class?

- Edge: “good documentation” is “a thorough conveyance of thoughts and processes” (p. 18)
- Your research journal blog posts, proposal, bibliography, draft and final paper are all documentation of your research.

More Research Paper Strategies

- Start by presenting and summarizing your sources
 - Badke: describe then analyze (p. 167)
 - Summaries: [Columbia University guide](#)
 - Paraphrasing: [library handout](#), [Purdue OWL](#)
- Avoid excessive quotation
 - I need to hear your voice and thoughts!

Even More Research Paper Strategies

- Finally, analyze your sources in light of your research question
 - And arrive at conclusions
 - Was your research question answered?
 - Do you have any recommendations?
 - Conclusions do not need to be long!

General Writing Advice

- Omit needless words
- No use of first or second person “I” “We” “You” “Yours” etc.
- Spellcheck, proofread; watch your CAPS and commas
- Purdue [OWL](#) for almost any writing question
- Lastname of author only in text
- “it is” “that is” NOT it’s, that’s

For Monday, November 28

- Continue working on the final draft of the research paper
- Please get in touch with questions – I will check email every day
- Submit final version of research paper by 10 a.m. on Wednesday, November 30