Getting Through the Information Search Process Guide



BALANCING

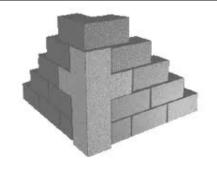
Is my strategy working?

Am I trying to rush by Google searching but actually losing time with too many results?

Is this a good source? Is the writer an expert or someone who really doesn't know all that much?

Is the writer's goal to inform people or is just to sell something?

Is the writer pushing his/her opinion with too much emotion and without facts to support the opinion?



BUILDING A BASE

Am I browsing?

Am I finding synonyms to use as search terms? Is my research question moving from general to specific?

Drugs (very, very, very general)

Illegal Drugs (general)

Heroin (somewhat specific)

Effects of Heroin (more specific)

Effects of Heroin on Teens (specific)



CHANGING COURSE

Do I need to change my topic?

Do I need to change the way I am searching?

Do I need to find different materials (books, digital library, reference books, newspaper articles)?

Do I need a more specific question to research? (too much info.)

Do I need a more general question to research? (too little info.)



COMMUNICATING

Am I talking about why I am stuck?

If I don't know how to evaluate a source, am I asking for help?

Am I identifying people whom I can ask for help? Am I getting them to help me?



CONNECTING IDEAS

Am I starting to group my information together to form paragraphs for a research paper or slides for a presentation? Am I seeing relationships or patterns in the information I am encountering?

Am I I organizing those connected ideas on paper or on the computer?



KNOWING WHAT YOU KNOW AND DON'T KNOW

Can I identify what information I still need?

Can I identify sources I need help in evaluating whether they are credible sources?

Have identified what I do well? (evaluate sources, use effective search terms, remember information, keep everything organized)



PLANNING AHEAD (Being a mooch)

Instead of reading for pleasure, are you reading to find information to answer the next question for your project?

Are you thinking of the next step while still thinking of the step you are on?

CURIOSITY

Is your curiosity helping you find valuable information? Is your curiosity taking you down a path that is not helping you to complete project?

Do you feel overwhelmed by all there is to know (this is normal)?

UNDERSTANDING MEMORY

Are you organizing information so you can remember where it is and find it?

Are you keeping track of citations so you don't have to go back and search for them later?



UNDERSTANDING TIME

Am I sticking with it even when I get frustrated or am I wasting time because I feel like I don't know what to do? (That feeling happens even to experienced researchers!!! Persist!)

Am I skimming heading and first sentences of paragraphs before I start reading to determine if the source will help me with my research?

Am I using indexes to find things alphabetically and table of contents to help me locate things by subject?

Am I noticing when my shortcuts are actually costing me time later?

RESEARCH RELATED EMOTIONS

| 1. Uncertainty??? | | 4. Clarity It's all making sense | 00 | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|----|--|
| 2. Optimism! I Got This! | | 5. Confidence | | |
| 3. Confusion! Frustration! Doubt! | ? | Project Due 6. Relief or Disappointment | | |