research writing and

ORGANIZING

your paper

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RESEARCH WRITING

Your research is now complete. You have consulted all relevant sources. Your notes, organized according to the final outline, are ready to be transformed into a written report. The time to write has come. You have already put in about two-thirds of the total time needed to complete the paper; writing and rewriting will take another third. For many, this last third is the hardest part of all. That's one reason why you will meet a lot of ABDS—all but dissertation graduate students. Of course, if you do not write the report, your well-done research will pass unnoticed. Therefore, you need to write a clear, concise, readable report.

This chapter describes research English, makes suggestions on how to write coherent and interesting paragraphs, and instructs on the use of transitional and introductory phrases. It also outlines the stages of the writing process and lists helps for the novice writer.

Research English

English research writing uses simple, concise, and clear language. Other words to describe it are impersonal, objective, formal, dignified, factual, and unbiased. One author has said: "Research writing is exact writing, featuring well-planned sentences with proper subordination of minor elements and at the same time employing concrete, specific words."[1]

Impersonal language minimizes the importance of "me" and "I." Generally speaking, the first person singular does not appear in research writing.

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1. James D. Lester, *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*, 2nd ed. (Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman, 1976), 57.

A modern trend does allow for its use, especially in the introduction and conclusion; even then, the emphasis must not be on the writer but on the research topic.

Some writers refer to themselves as "the writer" or "the researcher" to avoid use of the first person pronoun. Others use the first person plural, "we." Neither of these devices is desirable. While the passive voice ("the cake was eaten by the boy") can be employed to avoid the first-person pronoun, its use makes sentences heavy. As often as possible, use the active voice. Keep your writing alive! Write naturally, directly. While minimizing yourself, avoid the impersonal passive as much as you can. For example, instead of saying in the introduction, "I decided to limit this paper …," write "The natural limits of the topic determined the shape of the paper." Be sure to consult the preferences of your school and adviser on the matter of impersonal language.

A paper or thesis is not the place to use fancy words, metaphors, and similes. Imaginative phrases and comparisons, as well as superlatives ("best," "finest," "largest"), are to be shunned. Idiomatic expressions are out of place. Exclamation marks do not fit.

Research language is modest and tentative. Instead of definite and dogmatic words such as "never," "all," or "none," use "some," "somewhat," or "often." Even when you have evidence for what you write, do not overstate your case.

A well-written research paper will not contain as many adverbs and adjectives as nouns and verbs. Adverbs such as "marvelously" do not fit. Unfortunately, in research language no one is going to be "an outstanding success." But neither should research language be boring. Instead of a general noun such as "man," use a more specific one: "youth," "gentleman," or "scholar." Instead of a verb such as "go," use "amble," "stride," "ride," or "fly." To find these more specific and colorful synonyms, use a dictionary or thesaurus — the ones that come with Microsoft Word and WordPerfect are most helpful.

Research language is standard, not colloquial; it never uses slang. The contracted forms of the negative ("can't," "won't," "didn't") are out of place. The full form should be used. Of the following four levels of English, the proper research language is the standard:

Formal	Standard	Colloquial	Slang
superlative	excellent	first-rate	cool
exasperating	irritating	aggravating	burns me up
deranged	irrational	crazy	nuts

The greatest temptation of theology students is to use sermonic instead of research language. The language of the pulpit is not the language of the thesis. Phrases such as "souls won to the truth" should be replaced with something understandable to the general public: "people baptized into the church."

Another aspect of writing demands attention: inclusive language. The times require sensitivity to gender issues. Without syntactical errors ("everyone did their homework") or excessive recourse to "he or she" (or worse, "he/she"), write in ways that include both genders and do not stereotype sex roles. "Mankind" becomes "humanity"; singular "he" is changed into plural "they," or alternates with "she."

Excellent writing takes time and effort. Mediocre writing is faster and easier. However, it does not usually merit the professor's approval, a reader's interest, or your own satisfaction.

The Paragraph: Smallest Unit of the Paper

The smallest unit of the paper, the paragraph, is somewhat like a link in a chain. And, as in the case of the chain, the paper is only as strong as its weakest paragraph. Therefore, time spent learning how to write strong paragraphs is time well spent.

A paragraph should be all about one topic. Its length is determined by how much has to be said about the matter. If it is too long, it probably includes ideas that do not belong to the main topic. Rule of thumb: if your paragraph fills more than one computer screen, it is suspect. Here, short is better than long. But a paragraph cannot be extremely short either — one sentence is never a true paragraph — because it cannot cover the topic thoroughly.

Many types of effective and interesting paragraphs can be designed. However, certain elements are found in all paragraphs that communicate well and please the reader. Specific elements discussed in this section are unity and coherence. A sampling of paragraphs is also presented.

Paragraph Unity

A good paragraph puts in one place all the material that belongs together and keeps it apart from other items that do not belong. Every well-constructed paragraph has some unifying thought. All the materials included are somehow related to that thought. This precludes the inclusion of extraneous ideas and comments.

One device that fosters paragraph unity is the use of the topic sentence.

This sentence, which states the main idea of the paragraph, may come at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of the paragraph. Its purpose is not only to give the chief idea of the paragraph, but also to provide an anchor, so to speak, for the rest of the sentences in the paragraph. It does so by providing a center to which the rest of the paragraph can relate. Examples of the use of the topic sentence are found in this paragraph and in the majority of paragraphs of this book.

Paragraph Coherence

A strong paragraph hangs together; it coheres. Paragraph coherence is concerned with the order in which the information is presented and with the clear and logical relationship of one statement to the next in the development of ideas. A coherent paragraph conveys information clearly and effectively.

In the following paragraph from Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Self-Reliance*, coherence depends on the repeated references to the hypothetical man being described and on the movement from the small, personal, and material to the intangible and universal.

> The civilized man has built a coach, but has lost the use of his feet. He is supported on crutches, but lacks so much support of muscle. He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky. The solstice he does not observe; the equinox he knows as little, and the whole bright calendar of the year is without a dial in his mind.[2]

Sample Expository Paragraphs

The following paragraphs are built around definition, enumeration or classification, comparison, and cause and effect. Other types, such as reiteration, question and answer, and analogy, could also be cited.

Definition

> The term *leitourgia* in classical Greek described the performance of a special honorific service for the state, such as, for instance, outfitting a warship or providing a choir for a theatrical performance at a major ceremony. The honor dimension was important to the term. By the second century B.C. the word was used in popular language for priestly service in the worship of the gods. In the Septuagint it

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2. Accessed May 31, 2013, from http://emerson.thefreelibrary.com/Essays-First-Series/2−1−2.

was used for the Hebrew *sharath* to designate participation in the divine worship, either as an officiant or as a worshiper. While in the New Testament the more common term for serving is *diakonia*, by Hippolytus' time *leitourgia* and *munus* were the accepted terms for the performance of Christian worship, especially the Eucharist. These words conveyed the idea of the prestige of the one who could officiate in the church service.[3]

Enumeration or Classification

Women [in the nineteenth century] were not accorded what the twentieth century considers basic human rights. Politically, women were virtual nonentities. Their contributions were confined largely to the domestic realm. They could not secure employment in the occupation of their choice, and higher education was practically closed to them. In addition, they were not only denied the right to vote; they were, socially and individually, perceived as being under the jurisdiction of men. Once married, a woman lost all claim to any property she had previously owned; it was transferred to her husband. She had legal claims neither to her own body nor to her children in the event of divorce.[4]

Comparison/Contrast

In the evangelical Christian community, the issue of headship/submission/equality lies at the heart of the fundamental differences between the two major proactive groups in the ordination debate. The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, representing those who oppose women's ordination, ultimately bases its biblical argument on the premise that the divine plan in creation affirmed equality of the sexes in spiritual status but included role distinctions involving the headship of man over woman.... Those holding this position have been referred to as "patriarchalists," "hierarchalists," or (their preferred self-designation) "complementarians." The second group, Christians for Biblical Equality, representing evangelicals who support women's ordination, argue that the divine plan at Creation affirmed full equality of the sexes without any male headship or female submission.... Those holding this view have been referred to as "Christian feminists" or (their preferred self-designation) "egalitarians."[5]

Cause and Effect

Even in the religious arena, [nineteenth-century] women were limited. Most churches did not ordain women and either prohibited or frowned upon women

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3. Daniel Augsburger, "Clerical Authority and Ordination," in *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Nancy J. Vyhmeister (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1998), 83. (Hereafter referred to as *WIM.*)

4. Alicia Worley, "Ellen White and Women's Rights," *WIM*, 357.

5. Richard M. Davidson, "Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture," *WIM*, 259.

speaking in public. Because a large sector of society perceived the church as responsible for the denigration of women, many elements in the women's movement became hostile to it. For example, powerful crusader Elizabeth Gage called the church the bulwark of women's slavery. For her, no entity was more offensive than organized religion. For this reason, freedom from religious orthodoxy became crucial to feminist leadership.[6]

These samples illustrate good writing. They also show different ways of constructing paragraphs.

Transitions and Introductions

Student writers often have trouble finding an appropriate word to make the transition from one idea or sentence to another. A further difficulty is finding words to introduce quotations. This section suggests some terms for both purposes.

Transitional Words

Following is a list of transitional words and phrases that may be useful in relating sentences and ideas from one to another.[7] Using these words can further improve your research writing style.

accordingly	finally	likewise
again	first	meanwhile
also	further	moreover
thus	and	hence
next	so	at the same time
however	nor	besides
in like manner	but	in addition
on the whole	too	consequently
last	or	on the other hand
then	to sum up	to conclude
second, third	therefore	similarly

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6. Worley, 357.

7. Kate L. Turabian, *Student's Guide for Writing College Papers*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 71.

To sum up, words and phrases such as these can be used effectively to smooth transitions and *thus* make for easier reading. *However*, make sure you are certain what the word means and choose the one that best fits your writing. *Finally*, use a variety of these transition words.

Introducing Quotations

Quotations are the words and ideas of another author; we borrow them to enhance a position or strengthen an argument. These quotations need to be introduced. Readers are jolted when a quotation comes out of the blue and upset when they have to look at the footnote to find who said such a thing. However, constantly introducing quotations with the phrase "So-and-so wrote that" bores the reader. Here is a list of different verbs that can be used to introduce quotations:

accepts	asks	denies	mentions	proposes
stipulates	adds	believes	describes	objects
recalls	submits	admits	combats	discusses
opposes	recommends	suggests	affirms	confirms
expresses	points out	reports	thinks	agrees
declares	indicates	points to	reveals	verifies
argues	defends	labels	portrays	states
writes				

In introducing quotations, tense usage is important. To refer to an event of the past, use the past: "John Wesley argued that …" or "Manalo defended…." When referring to stated views and beliefs of present or past writers, the present tense may be used. The idea still stands! In a discussion of the theological understanding of Bultmann, it is correct to say: "Bultmann admits …, but points out that…." One could even write: "Luther accepts that … and confirms …," even when Luther has been dead for centuries. However, you should avoid changing back and forth between past and present. The simplest solution to the tense dilemma is to consistently use the past tense for whatever happened or was written in the past. Whatever the choice, consistency is mandatory; the rationale for using one verb tense over the other should be clear.

Formal quotations may be preceded by a colon or a comma. The setting will determine your choice. Quotations must remain identical to the source, with only the possibility of changing the case of the initial letter. For exam-

ple, Paul wrote the Corinthians: "Pursue love" (1 Cor 14:1). The quotation remains intact.

A quotation may also be woven into your sentence. In that case the initial cap will change to a lower case. The syntax of your sentence is the one that counts. For example, if your sentence began "Paul wrote to the Corinthians that," you would need to change the quotation. I could write: Paul wrote to the Corinthians that they should pursue love (1 Cor 14:1). You had to change the person (you to they) and the tense (pursue to should pursue). What Paul wrote is now part of what you are saying. This is a paraphrase, but it still needs a reference. As you make quotations fit smoothly into your writing, be especially careful with the person and the tense. Above all, be faithful to your source; use brackets to show any addition or modification.

Quoting Bible texts presents unique problems. We often hear: "First Samuel 3:10 says" (at least the sentence begins with a written-out number!). Obviously, the passage cannot speak. We need to look for another way to quote it. "In 1 Sam 3:10 we read" would be appropriate. Or I could write, "The story reads: 'Now the Lord came and stood there' (1 Sam 3:10)." In the Pauline letters, it is appropriate to write: "Paul wrote." When quoting from Chronicles, I would have to speak of the Chronicler or the author of Chronicles.

American usage calls for double quotation marks around what is quoted. If what I quote contains something in quotation marks, those marks will become single quotation marks within my quotation.

The quotation of longer passages has its own rules. According to Turabian's verdict, when you quote five or more lines, in which there are at least two separate sentences, you have a "block quotation." APA mandates a block quotation for forty or more words. In a block quotation, you will indent the quotation, at least from the left, and you will single space. This chapter gives you several examples. Naturally, you still need to introduce the quotation.

Be careful to include all the necessary quotation marks and footnotes (or endnotes) to avoid being labeled a plagiarist. Even if you paraphrase, give the reference. The origin of a borrowed phrase or idea must be acknowledged by a footnote.

The Writing Process

Writing a paper is a process to be achieved in stages: writing, correcting, and rewriting. Two drafts and a final copy may be enough to produce a good paper; often three or four drafts are needed. If your language is not English, or if the subject is complex, writing and rewriting become even more

necessary. Some students may need to find editorial assistance, since ghost-writing papers is not part of the professor's job description.

First Draft: Write and Rewrite

Writing cannot be done effectively in small segments of time. Set aside enough time to write one complete section of the paper. If you have to stop and start too many times, you will waste time rereading what you wrote before in order to "get the feel of things" again.

In bygone days, teachers always recommended a first, hand-written draft, to be typed later. Today computers make keyboarding the first draft directly a good idea. You can "cut and paste" and edit to your heart's content, all the while working from a rough draft. If you are computer illiterate, now is the time to learn the computer skills needed for scholarship. If you must write your first draft by hand, leave an empty space between lines so you can make legible corrections.

Write one section at a time, following the order of outline given by your notes. The wording of the notes suggests the wording for the paper. When you come to a quotation, you may paraphrase it, copy it from your hand-written note card, or cut and paste from your computer notes to your paper (numbered notes—paper or computer—make this easy). In any case, you will need to reference the quotation, citation, or allusion.

How you write will depend on how you have taken notes. If you are writing by hand, you will put the footnote number in the text and make a list of the footnotes on a separate paper. You may also use the computer, with three files: one contains the notes, another contains the alphabetical list of bibliographical entries, the third contains the developing text. Finally, you can use one of the bibliographic management programs that makes automatic footnotes directly from the bibliographical entries you have already entered. Modernizing your work style will spare you sweat and tears.

Once the first writing is completed, allow the draft to rest for a day or so. Then reread and rewrite, making the necessary corrections. A word to the wise: experience tells me that I see mistakes more easily on a printed page than on a computer screen. Rewriting includes deleting, adding, rearranging, checking spelling and punctuation, completing footnotes, and general editorial work.

Second Draft: Rewrite and Type

After you have corrected the first draft, even you may have trouble reading through the red marks. Rewrite, retype, or—better by far—enter the cor-

rections on the document already in your word processor. This becomes the second draft.

Now is a good time to read the whole paper again, this time aloud or to someone else. Another person who hears or reads the paper usually notices problems you cannot see. Many students find spouses to be excellent critics of their literary work. Students who do not write well in English may need an editor to make corrections.

Whether you input the paper on the computer or hire someone else to do it, you are responsible for any mistakes, either in format or typing. Advertisements around schools tout "low prices" for computer work. Saving money is not wise here. You need a computer operator who knows the required format and gives you a perfectly typed paper. Remember, you assume final responsibility for the contents, language, and presentation of the paper. This being so, you probably should acquire the computer skills to do your own work.

Revising

In the revision process, the writer needs to look for wrong spellings, bad punctuation, unclear sentences, and anything else that mars the reading. The following is a list of specific areas that may cause problems. Pay special attention to them.

1. Flow of ideas—there should be a natural continuity from one idea and one sentence to the next.
2. Coherence—there should be cohesion (a "sticking together") of ideas and sentences. In order to have coherence, there must be some organizing principle.
3. Bridges—there should be natural bridges from one topic to another; over these the reader may walk from one part of the paper to the next. There should be no abrupt transitions or changes of thought.
4. Logic of organization—there must be a reasonable explanation for the way the ideas and topics are organized. The ideas must also be expressed in logical sentences.
5. Weak spots or omissions—there should be no places where it appears there has been insufficient research or something has been left out. If you discover such a spot, go back to the library and look for something to enrich the poor portion of the paper.
6. Awkward sentences—there is usually a better way to say something. If the sentence does not sound right, change it! The best possible syntax and grammar should be used.

7. Unnecessary words — there should be no more words than needed. Such words as "pretty," "rather," and "very" are useless and must be eliminated. The best way to say something is the simplest and shortest way.

These seven items provide a good basis for examining and revising the paper. Obviously, this kind of rewriting takes time. But high marks and the satisfaction of having done excellent work should repay your effort.

Help for the Novice Writer

The following books from the University of Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing series provide a wealth of material to help you write better:

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed., 2008.

Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed., 2010.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and the University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. 8th ed., 2013.

Williams, Joseph, and Gregory G. Colomb. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*, 1995. With a slightly different title (*Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*), this book was published by Longman in 2010.

Many books on writing could be listed. These could help you:

Hacker, Diana, and Marcy Carbajal Van Horn. *A Writer's Reference*. 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2011.

Henson, Kenneth T. *The Art of Writing for Publication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1995.

Hudson, Robert. *A Christian Writer's Manual of Style*. Updated and expanded edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

Strunk, William, Jr., E. B. White, and Frank McCourt. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Macmillan, 2011.

This chapter described English research writing style. Chapter 21 will deal with the format required for research papers and dissertations.

ORGANIZING THE PAPER

Organizational decisions take place from the moment you choose a topic until that last change just before you hand the paper in. You must deal with macro-organization as well as micro-organization. This chapter speaks to both issues. The larger picture deals with the organization of the parts of the paper, especially the body of the report. Micro-organization deals with smaller items, including the visible organization of headings and enumerations.

Parts of the Paper

A well-written research paper should have five main parts: the preliminary pages, the introduction, the body, the summary and conclusions, and the bibliography. If needed, appendixes may be added.

The principal parts of the paper—introduction, body, and conclusion—must harmonize. That is, they must integrate into one whole. The introduction sets the stage, preparing the reader to understand the purpose, nature, and direction of the research. The main body of the text gives a clear report of the findings. The conclusion summarizes and evaluates the results of the investigation. The bibliography documents what has been presented.

To achieve the overall harmony of the paper, take your proposal seriously. Then begin writing with the first content chapter (chapter 1 in a paper, chapter 2 in a dissertation), leaving the introduction for later. Write the rest of the body, chapter after chapter. Then summarize and draw conclusions. After all that, you will be ready to smooth the proposal into an introduction. Then prepare the bibliography and appendixes before going to the preliminary pages, which include the table of contents.

Preliminary Pages

In a class paper at the graduate level, the preliminary pages include the title page, the table of contents, and, if needed, lists of figures, tables, or illustrations. A thesis may include a dedication and/or acknowledgment. In a short class paper, the preliminary pages are not numbered; the beginning of the introduction is page 1. In a thesis or dissertation, the preliminary pages are numbered from the title page (no number typed here!) with lowercase roman numerals, at the bottom center of the page. While these details may vary at different educational institutions, what we have here is a generally accepted traditional mold.

Title Page

The title page includes the name of the institution where the paper is being presented, the title of the paper, the name of the class or program for which the paper is written, the name of the writer, and the date. The professor's name is not included. A thesis or dissertation also requires an approval sheet (see chapter 21). A model title page also appears in chapter 21.

Table of Contents

The table of contents lists everything that comes after it, starting with lists of abbreviations and illustrations and continuing through the bibliography. Chapter titles, as well as headings and subheadings to the third level, are listed. An example of the format of a table of contents is given in chapter 21. Use Arabic numbers for your chapters, unless you want to go through the battle of lining up the dots after the Roman numerals (not recommended!).

List of Illustrations

If two or more tables, figures, or illustrations are used, these should be listed. The format to follow is shown in the list of illustrations for this book. If there are only a few of each, the list of tables and figures may be on the same page, as part of a list of illustrations.

List of Abbreviations

To avoid writing out the titles of books and journals you use repeatedly, you may insert a list of abbreviations just before the introduction and then use only the abbreviations in the work itself. Some schools require that the abbreviated sources be spelled out the first time they are used, even if they

are in a list; others consider that the abbreviation list takes the place of the first reference. Make sure you know what your school requires. Include in this list only items used in the paper or dissertation. This list does not take the place of a bibliography. Abbreviations of titles of books and journals should be italicized. Other abbreviations, such as PW for Pauly-Wissowa, *Real Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, are not italicized. Websites that give access to online lists of acceptable abbreviations appear in appendix C.

Introduction

A carefully written proposal is the basis for a clear and effective introduction, which should contain the same parts suggested for the proposal (see chapter 13). The introduction is a reader's guide to the paper. It tells the reader what problem was studied (and solved), how the researcher went about finding the answers, and perhaps even suggests the solution to the problem.

Whereas the proposal may simply list the items included (statement of the problem, purpose of the research, significance of the research, definition of terms, limitations and delimitations, procedure, and an outline), the introduction polishes the writing and smoothes the transition from one section to the next. It often adds a paragraph or more on the background of the problem. Additionally, the future tense of the proposal becomes past tense, since the research has now been completed.

The length of the introduction varies. An introduction to a class paper may be only one page long. An introduction to a thesis may contain twenty or more pages. What is important is that all parts are included and the paper is correctly introduced.

Page 1 of the introduction is the first page of the paper. In class papers the title, INTRODUCTION, is given chapter standing (on the 13th line or 2 inches from the top edge of the page), but not a chapter number. In a thesis or dissertation, the introduction usually is chapter 1.

Main Body of the Paper

In this part of the paper you report the findings of the research. The body is evidently the longest part of the paper. It is divided into chapters (or major sections, in a short paper), each with its own divisions and subdivisions. Since the organization of the main body of the paper is so important, this topic will be covered in a separate section.

Summary and Conclusions

As the title indicates, this part of the paper summarizes the findings and draws conclusions. No new evidence is brought in. The presentation of data has been done in the main body. The summary should be brief—only as long as needed to bring the issue into focus. The conclusions are then drawn from the summary. Remember that many paper/dissertation readers never read more than the introduction and summary/conclusions. Everything you want readers to know about your research must be in those two places.

Take the time needed to craft your concluding section with care. The conclusion or conclusions must fit the problem or research question declared in the introduction of the paper. It would make no sense to ask one question and answer another. Conclusions presented may be firm or tentative. Sometimes the research only "suggests" a solution to a problem. At times the research may turn up areas that need to be investigated and could be a topic for further study. It is proper to note such instances in the conclusions.

The status of the summary and conclusions must match that of the introduction. If the introduction was given a chapter number, the summary and conclusions must be considered a chapter. If the introduction was not a chapter, the summary and conclusion will not be a chapter either.

Appendixes

A paper may have one or more appendixes. These are added sections that contain materials not indispensable for reading and understanding the paper, but useful for gaining deeper insight or for validating and documenting what has been stated. Use lower case (appendix) to refer to them in the text of the paper. Appendixes may include raw numerical data, statistical information, photocopied materials, or whatever else the researcher needs to present. Appendixes are much more common in dissertations than in papers. When there are several appendixes, as in this book, each has a title and is listed in the table of contents.

Bibliography

The bibliography documents and gives weight to the research. It tells the reader how serious the study was. It also leads readers to sources for further study on the topic.

In research papers, the bibliography, as well as the reference list in APA, follow the appendixes. Instructions on preparing bibliographies appear in chapter 19. Model bibliographies are those in chapter 21 and at the end of this book.

A general overview of the organization of the paper may suffice. But organizing the body of a paper demands special attention. The next section deals with this specifically.

Organizing the Body of the Paper

There are no firm and exact rules regarding how the body of a paper should be organized. Whatever system you choose must be clear and logical—to you and to your adviser, as well as to your readers. Ask your adviser and your peers for a critique of your suggested outline. Be able to defend your organization by answering this question: Why does it make sense for you to start where you do and follow the thought path you do? Reread the section on "Organization" in chapter 11.

Each chapter must be a self-contained unit. That is, everything on one topic should be in the same chapter. Everything in one section should be related to the same matter; no extraneous material should be allowed. The same topic should not be discussed in several sections. Naturally, there may be references from one section to another, but good organization demands dividing the topic into independent units, tied to each other in some logical manner, but not repeating the same information.

The outline approved by the professor or adviser when the proposal was presented was a good starting point; it served as the skeleton for your paper in its initial stages. However, after reading and studying, you may feel the need for changing that outline. Remember, though, to talk to your adviser before you write on the basis of a new outline.

Two sample outlines, each styled differently, were given in chapter 13. One important rule of outlining is that a section that is subdivided must have at least two subsections. You cannot cut an apple into one piece! Likewise, you cannot have a section A (or 1 or a) without a corresponding section B (or 2 or b). Another rule is to make the titles of subsections parallel to each other, in form and content.

Since there is no one accepted method of organizing a paper, this section presents a sampling of possibilities. Again, consultation with the advising professor is indispensable.

Historical topics lend themselves to a chronological method. What happened first is narrated first. The biography of Hudson Taylor, missionary to China, can be divided into sections: childhood, youth, early mission, death of his wife, founding of the China Inland Mission, and so on.

The spatial (geographical) method might be used in reporting the research

on an ancient city. The New Testament city of Ephesus could be described part by part: the port, the theater, the library, the Temple of Diana, the marketplace, and so forth.

A comparative method could be used in comparing the Buddhist and Hindu beliefs concerning death. First, each would be described fully; then they could be compared.

For some studies a cause-to-effect method is appropriate. A study of the rapid growth of Christianity in Korea could use this method. The different factors leading to this phenomenon would be studied, one by one. Then, the effect (the growth of the Christian church) would be delineated.

Some topics do well with an unfolding method. Here one idea needs to be clearly explained so that it can lead to another. For example, an understanding of the ceremonies of the Israelite tabernacle would need to be established before progressing to an analysis of the way the author of Hebrews deals with these ceremonies.

A practical theology project or thesis normally has a theoretical basis and a practical application. That means the work is organized into two main parts. The theoretical foundation may be divided into biblical, theological, and sociological parts. The practical part may well be chronological — what happened first, what next. D.Min. projects often use this form; see chapter 10.

The starting point for research need not be the same in every case. One may begin from the specifics and arrive at general conclusions — inductive reasoning. Another may begin with general facts and arrive at specific conclusions — deductive reasoning. What is important is that the research process is so designed and executed as to make sense to the readers and to the professor.

Someone has suggested that writing a research report is like building a temple. One must lay the foundation, then erect each pillar. Finally, the roof is placed on the structure. As happens with all parables, this one, too, falls short. However, it does illustrate the need for balance and careful building so that a clear and convincing result may be achieved. It also suggests that each research paper is a unique construction and, to some extent, a work of art.

Specific guidelines for the organization of literary and bibliographic research are scarce. Specific schemes for organizing biblical-theological-pastoral research must be designed by the student, preferably in collaboration with the professor or committee for whom the paper or thesis is written.

Practical Helps for Organizing the Paper

The final organization of the topic takes place once all the research is finished. The task is difficult and important. This section gives practical suggestions for dividing up the topic and arranging its sections, and for planning the visible organization of the written report.

Organizing the Notes

When you use note cards, you have an advantage, as long as each note card or slip has its heading and subheading. The notes can easily be separated into piles. Use a table—or the floor—and separate the slips by headings and subheadings and sub-subheadings, if there are any. Then look through each pile, reading the notes as you do so. Organize each pile into a logical sequence. If there are notes that do not belong, take them out; put them where they do belong or discard them. Do not be surprised if the tentative outline no longer seems to fit. Once all the cards are distributed, a better outline may suggest itself.

When all the small piles are organized within themselves and put in a logical sequence with the other small piles that belong with them in a larger topic, the order and organization of each section or chapter of the paper are easily seen. Put an elastic or rubber band around each section to keep it separate and organized (if yours is a long paper, try using a shoe box). Then confirm your decision regarding the sequence of chapters.

Now, read the note cards in sequence, trying to feel (or see or hear) how these bits of information fall into place. If you are not satisfied with the way the cards fit together, you may start your sorting over again. It may take three sortings to organize the cards—and your paper. But the time will be well spent, for you will write with greater ease and speed for having gone through this process.

When you use a computer program, such as Access or Excel, you still need to sort the notes. I suggest using extra columns with a numbering or letter system so the notes can be automatically sorted using the sort feature in the program. The numbers/letters from the tentative outline prepared at the time of the proposal provide a reasonable beginning place, with one column for each level in the outline, plus one additional column to order notes within the level. This way the first sort can be done quickly in a few seconds. But then renumbering the notes to reorder them can be challenging when compared with reshuffling paper note cards. This second reordering of the notes is further hampered because it is possible to see only a few at a time. When all that is needed is to reorder a few notes that are all visible at the same time on the

screen, it may be easier to add a row, copy and paste the note to be moved into the row, then delete the original row.

Visible Organization in the Written Report

Using different levels of headings and enumerations helps to visibly organize the contents of a paper. How to do it is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Headings

Throughout this book different kinds or levels of headings have been used. These headings show how a topic is divided and subdivided and what belongs with what. The headings and subheadings represent the different parts of the outline. Once more, a heading must have two subheadings, or not be divided at all.

A first-level heading indicates a main division of the chapter. In this chapter, "Practical Helps for Organizing the Paper" is a first-level heading. It is centered and bolded.

The second-level heading indicates a subdivision of that main division. In this chapter "Visible Organization in the Written Report" is a second-level heading. It is centered but not bolded. Its "twin" is "Organizing the Notes." The graphic presentation shows it is a part of "Practical Helps for Organizing the Paper."

The third-level heading indicates a part of the second-level subdivision. In this chapter "Headings" and "Enumerations" are third-level headings. These headings are placed flush with the left margin and bolded. In the three kinds of headings already listed the first, last, and principal words are capitalized.

The fourth-level heading indicates a division of a third-level heading. It is flush with the left margin, but not bolded. Only the first word is capitalized. "Within the paragraph" is an example of fourth-level heading in this chapter.

The fifth-level heading, the smallest organizational subdivision in a paper, shows that what follows is a part of a fourth-level heading. This heading is reserved for a small segment of the paper, often only a paragraph. A fifth-level heading is part of the paragraph; it is indented (like the paragraph), bolded, and followed by a period or full stop. Only its first word is capitalized. Below, "With short sentences" and "With longer sentences" are examples.

If the organization of a paper does not need so many levels of headings, you may choose to use only three, for example, those that are bolded. However, you cannot use one scheme (complete sequence) in one chapter

and the incomplete scheme (bold only) in another chapter. Consistency is indispensable.

Use the same type and size for headings and text: for example, Times New Roman, 12 points. The difference is in the location and the bolding.

Notice the extra empty line between the text above and the subtitle, whichever level it is. This is a visual aid to organization — for you and for your readers.

Enumerations

Enumerations help to visibly organize materials in the written report. They can be used within a paragraph and within a sentence. Instructions follow.

Within the paragraph

Follow the model provided below. Indent the Arabic number, but allow the following lines to reach the left margin. You may have trouble with Word thinking it knows more than you do! It will want to make these into hanging paragraphs. Disable the automatic feature!

1. The number is typed after the same indentation as the paragraph and followed by a period or full stop, after which there is one empty space.

2. Double spacing is used as in the rest of the paper.

3. A period or full stop follows each item. There may be several sentences after each number.

4. If double-digit numbers are used, the indentation must be modified so that all the periods are aligned.

Within the sentence

An enumeration within a sentence may use letters or numbers, set in parentheses. Numbers usually represent a larger division; letters, a smaller one. The items are set off by commas unless they have punctuation within them, in which case they are set off by semicolons. For example:
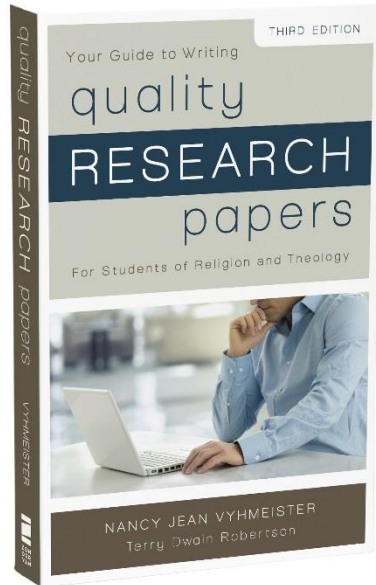
He gave three reasons for his resignation: (1) age, (2) gradually failing eyesight, and (3) desire to live under less pressure.

His failing eyesight is due to: (a) age, now 65 years; (b) a congenital, worsening disease; (c) stress, caused by the responsibilities of the job.

This chapter has explained the general organization of the paper and given suggestions, both theoretical and practical, for organizing the material in the research report. The actual writing skills are covered in chapter 17. How to reference your borrowed materials is the topic of chapter 19.

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