

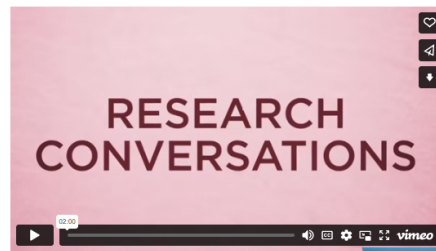
Research Success in 7 Steps

Introduction

You're probably beginning to realize that academic research is quite different from the research you may have conducted in high school. The types of sources you're expected to use are different as are the types of papers/assignments you're expected to write.

Academic research is the process of discovering what has been said about a topic by experts, developing your own ideas, and contributing them to the ongoing scholarly conversation.

Please take two minutes to watch this Vimeo video about academic research courtesy of the library at the **University of Central Florida**:



I think I need a plan!

Before you begin to look for resources for your assignment, it's important to have a clear plan that will help you to find what you need. Spending a little time to plan up front will save you lots of frustration later.

Planning a research strategy is a task that is sometimes overlooked by students. Some students will say that they don't have time; they already have an idea of what they want to research and just want to get started with writing. There is a fundamental flaw in this logic.

The **quality of your work** can only be as good as the **quality of the research** you are able to find. Unless you begin from a basis of **facts**, your personal ideas and theories may lack credibility. That's why it is crucial to undertake some reading of the research about your topic and then test your ideas/theories against this research.

A couple of important questions to think about **BEFORE** you begin writing are:

- What are the experts saying about my topic?
- Are there other points of view that I should be considering?

Research Success in 7 Steps

Below is a **visual representation** of a 7 step research strategy.

Each step presents a logical progression which begins with the **RED BOX** at the top of the circle. You'll notice that each step builds upon the other and, when carried out successfully, the strategy should result in a well-researched and well-referenced report/assignment.

Keep in mind that that **research does not always follow a linear process**; at times research can involve some jumping back and forward, so it's important to be **flexible** in your approach. This is especially true if, after you have undertaken some background reading, you decide to take a different direction with your topic.



The next sections in this module will focus on each of these 7 steps to demonstrate the most appropriate research strategies that, if followed, should result in a well-researched and well-referenced assignment.