

The Problem Statement

Adapted from: Bwisa, P. (2017). *The basics of writing a statement of the problem for your research proposal.*

DeFreitas, P. (2015). *An Investigation into the use of Automated Usability Tests for debugging software.*

Layne, A. (2017). *EMR-PHR Integration For Improved Diabetes Outcomes In Guyana*

Basics of the Problem Statement

- Not a single statement!
- Presented as part of the introductory section of the Formal Proposal, just after the Background to the problem
- Takes a generalized problem and expresses it as a targeted or more focused issue

Basics of the Problem Statement

- Directs readers to the issue/s that your project will address
- Provides the reader with a concise idea of the project
- Words or page length?
 - Less than 500 words, or less than 1 page

Key Characteristics to Consider

- Addresses a gap in knowledge
- Suggests that the issue is worthwhile
- Shows that there is room for contributing to the body of knowledge
- Suits the skills, time and resources of the researcher
- Speaks to an **ethical** course for addressing the issue

General Structure

- **The Ideal Situation**
 - Portrays the desired goal or how things should be
- **The Reality**
 - Illustrates a condition that prevents the goal, state, or ideal situation from being achieved
 - Explains how the current situation falls short of the goal or ideal
- **The Consequences**
 - Identifies the way you propose to improve the current situation and move it closer to the goal or ideal

What next?

- The problem statement forces you to examine the problem
- During this process, you are faced with questions.
- From here, you can begin to formulate your research objectives and questions, which are presented after the statement of the problem
- The aim of the research objectives or questions is to further provide focus and scope for your study

References

- Bwisa, P. (2017). *The basics of writing a statement of the problem for your research proposal*. [online] Editage Insights. Available at: <https://www.editage.com/insights/the-basics-of-writing-a-statement-of-the-problem-for-your-research-proposal>.
- DeFreitas, P. (2015). *An Investigation into the use of Automated Usability Tests for debugging software*.
- Layne, A. (2017). *EMR-PHR Integration For Improved Diabetes Outcomes In Guyana*