UEL-CN-7000 Mental Wealth; Professional Life (Dissertation)

Weeks 23-24 – Reading Material

The 'end game'

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The initial chapters recognized the distribution of your ideas and outcomes as a crucial aspect of the research process. Unless you have created a sizable piece of software or hardware (and even then, individuals might only get to read your report rather than utilize the software/hardware), the report is frequently the only record of your project once it is complete. Keep in mind that the report serves as a representation of your project and that a terrible report could undo all of your hard work. If you are unable to communicate your discoveries to others, performing a significant amount of worthwhile and significant computing research and development is pointless. A poor project, however, cannot be improved by generating a nice report. Even if a strong report can help a bad project, you must keep in mind that your report is a reflection of your project. You cannot cover up shoddy approach, investigation, development, or implementation with a few well-chosen words. The presentation of written materials for your research/dissertation is the main topic of this chapter (Levin, 2012).

By the end of this week, the students will be better able to comprehend the structuring reports, referencing material, and presenting data:

1. Be familiar with the format and style of formal reports.

2. Produce simple, clear abstracts.

3. Have a thorough understanding of data and outcome presentation.

4. Know how to cite sources and prevent plagiarism.

It's almost certain that you'll want to modify the outline you're using when you're writing your first complete draft. This is entirely typical. It's not until you really start writing the chapters and parts that you discover something doesn't go where you first thought it should, or that a chapter is either too lengthy and needs to be divided into two, or it's too short and needs to be merged into another. As a result, plan on continually modifying your outline as you create your first complete manuscript (and possibly for some time after). You essentially work on your outline and first full manuscript until they are in sync. To begin writing your draft, you must have an outline. However, as your draft progresses, you will almost probably want to make changes to your outline. Never try to compel the draft to match the outline you had in mind before to producing your draft (Berndtsson et al., 2008).

Writing as assembling instead of "writing as thinking" You should have a collection of notes that you have already created when you begin writing on the first draft of your dissertation: the results of using "writing as thinking" while working on your project.

A "linear" presentation should be made You have a hurdle in converting your collection of notes into a linear presentation. What examples should we use as guides? The story, which is the most prominent example of a linear exposition, can be found in fiction writing. Here, events "unfold" instead of just following a "time line," with each setting the stage for the following. Readers continue reading in order to learn more about the events as they unfold, rather than solely to find out what occurs next. The "Question-to-Answer" structure, which guides readers down a logical path, is the next best thing in the world of dissertations.

Initial draft Your initial draft should be primarily of your notes strung together. There will undoubtedly be voids, overlapping areas, jagged edges, discontinuities, and inconsistent areas.

5

Your first draft is valuable because it will make these things clear to you. After that, you can address them as you work to make your manuscript better. Additionally, it will be worthwhile to think about your discussion and conclusions as you work on the initial draft of your paper. The more certain you may be about them and the direction the dissertation is taking, as well as what you do and do not need to include in the early chapters. This will also make it easier for you to understand what has to be done to finish your project if you haven't yet (Dawson, 2005).

USING SOURCES AND PREVENTING PLAGIARISM

'Nothing is said that has not been said before.' Terence (ca. 195–159 BC), The Eunuch, Prol.

In light of Terence's assertion, it is crucial that you provide adequate references to back up the work you are providing in your report. In particular, for undergraduate projects, a lot of what you provide will have already been mentioned, debated, written about, or covered by other authors in the past. Therefore, you should support any claims you make in your report, especially in your literature review, with references to prior studies (Saunders et al., 2007). Reports contain references to material:

Avoid plagiarism in other words, you cannot display someone else's ideas, thoughts, words, figures, diagrams, or conclusions as if they were your own without giving them due credit; you must give others credit for their contributions. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offense whether it is done intentionally or unintentionally. This is one reason why you should conduct a thorough literature review: to make sure that you are not merely reiterating what others have already written.

Identify context to set your work in relation to other credible publications. By demonstrating how your report develops on and expands on the work of others and how it fits within a reputable academic field of research, you will enhance your argument.

Support and validate to substantiate any claims you make and to back up your own claims. You must include evidence for any statements you make, such as research data or references to other authors.

Identify sources give readers of your report a thorough list of similar works they might utilize to go deeper into your subject or continue your work. People reading your report will be able to find the articles you used by explicitly identifying sources.

Numerous citing problems that show up in subpar student reports are identified in the literature review. These are items you should stay away from because they are indicators of poor reports:

- The absence of references. There are references, but they all point to traditional writings. More sources than only the common textbooks suggested throughout the first year of your course should be consulted.

- Numerous allusions to obscure and antiquated books This can be a sign that you simply copied them from another source rather than researching the topic further and finding more recent sources.

- The list of references at the back of the report differs from the references in the main body. This shows carelessness and a disregard for the significance of references.

- Rather than using conventional sources, the references are flooded with URLs. The content on the Internet is mainly unreferenced, despite the fact that it might be a helpful place to start your search. A reference list that is primarily made up of URLs

demonstrates a lack of discipline in your literature search as well as some laziness. It also suggests that your work may lack a solid foundation and instead be constructed on a variety of unproven opinions and hypotheses.

Referencing has two components. The first thing to think about is how to properly cite (or show) references inside the body of your report, taking into account their context and appropriateness. The second consideration is how to properly cite these sources at the conclusion of your report. These aspects will be discussed one at a time.

Citing references There are typically two formats for citing sources: the Harvard System and the Numeric System (also called the Vancouver System). However, we'll focus on a broad overview of a Harvard-style system in this article. The Harvard system is preferable because the numerical system demands that each reference be given a special identification number that must be updated if you decide to add or remove a reference from your report. The author to whom you are referring is frequently not indicated by the numeric system, so the reader must look up the author's name in the reference list at the end of your report. These days, a lot of word processing programs contain reference management features that make it quick and simple to update and maintain the references in your report. To individually identify each reference inside a report, the Harvard-type method uses the name(s) of the author(s) and the year of their publication.

Listing references in general, the back of your report, rather than footnotes at the bottom of pages or lists at the end of each chapter, is the best place to list all the references you utilized. This gives the reader an accessible single compendium of all pertinent information. References or Bibliography are the headings used to present the articles you used. Only articles that have been mentioned in the report itself are listed in the references. All the articles you used for your

project but did not necessary refer to in the report's body will be listed in the bibliography. Bibliographies are helpful to readers since they list all the sources that are necessary to advance or fully comprehend your work (Levin, 2012).

MAKING YOUR DRAFT BETTER

Your dissertation's initial draft will be a sloppy, imperfect document. It's time to start making improvements now. You can complete portions in any sequence; you don't have to start at the beginning and work your way through to the conclusion. The idea of portions "growing up" together is rather typical. However, you must keep in mind that what you are doing is improving and getting your dissertation in shape; you are not yet at the polishing stage, and you should never try to polish your dissertation until you have completed the improving step.

Synchronize and tidy up the various chapters and aspects of your manuscript should be 'synchronized,' which is a crucial component of developing it. For instance, your Introduction and Conclusions should to "flow" together. You may need to change the question in order to avoid having an answer in your Conclusions that does not address the issue raised in your Introduction.

Make your dissertation accessible to readers If you have made an effort to make your dissertation readable, the examiners who read it will undoubtedly appreciate it. Here are some ideas for accomplishing this:

- Understand your reader. There may still be academics out there who prefer to read a single piece of literature rather than one that is broken up into chapters and sections.

- Provide obvious "signposts" for your reader. Include a contents page, chapter headings, and subheadings (section headings).

- While there is no ideal chapter length, they typically end up being a 'natural' length.

- Use lists when they can help to clarify ideas, but avoid using them only for their own sake. It is probably preferable to avoid using bullet points. They will give your writing a staccato aspect that can jar the reader.

- Insert images, graphs, and tables into the text when necessary.

- Some factual information may be allowed to be included in the dissertation's appendices.

- Under no circumstances add any new information in your conclusions. This will undoubtedly harm your work's reputation among academics.

- If you can, set aside and forget about a reasonably finished manuscript for two or three days before printing it out and reading it.

Write good English There are several style manuals and guides, both American and British, although these are better seen as reference materials. Nevertheless, whether English is your first or nth language, you should find the American books "The Elements of Style" and "Style: Toward Clarity and Grace," both of which are accessible in the UK, to be of great use.

Style Here are some suggestions about style:

- Avoid writing in a polemical, opinionated, or emotive manner.

- Save your value judgments for your Discussion if your topic and methodology demand them.

- Avoid using the pronouns "I believe" and "I think."

- Avoid writing in a conversational or journalistic tone.

- Avoid attempting to write like a textbook or a subject-matter expert.

- Use brief, simple statements instead than long, convoluted ones.

- Avoid sayings like "Many writers think..."

- Your supervisor and his or her coworkers can have very distinct opinions on style (Dawson, 2005).

FOLLOWING ACCEPTED ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Academic writing places a strong emphasis on using other people's writing as sources and recognizing their contribution by "citing" the source, or providing a reference to it. It is appropriate academic behavior. It demonstrates your legitimate concern for the caliber of the evidence you have utilized and for supporting your decision. Citing your sources will give the original author's moral claim to his or her "intellectual property" due respect and allow the reader to verify that you have used them correctly and that your argument is valid. Additionally, citing your sources shields you from possible plagiarism charges. Using sources and citing them requires three things:

- An excerpt from the source (a direct quote or your own paraphrase of a quote) or a statement you make that is based on the source should be included in your work.

- Include some sort of insert in your text as well, such as a cue or marker that points the reader to where the source's information is located.

- Information on the source.

FINAL REVISION

The text should only need to be revised once more to fit inside your word limit and to verify for style and clarity.

Reach the end of your word count Utilize the word count feature in your word processor to keep track of the words you've used. Read the rules again to make sure you understand whether the

word limit must contain appendices, tables, footnotes, references, bibliography, etc. You cannot be fined for omitting these if the regulations are silent on this. Do the following if you discover you've over the limit:

- Keep repetition to a minimum and pay attention to it. Don't show data in a table and also give a verbal description of what is in the table: keep to expressing your inferences from those data.

- Check to see whether you can omit any entire sections. (There might be one or two fascinating ones that won't get you very many points; leave them off.)

- Reduce the amount of description and direct quotes from the written works. These won't get you very many points.

- Use concise forms. Write "Jones found that" rather than "It was found by Jones that..."

- Pay close attention to the words and sentences you have enclosed in brackets (parentheses). You might be able to remove these without any meaning being lost.

- Check to see if you can relocate any factual information from your text to a table or an appendix in order to stay inside the word count (Dawson, 2005).

SUMMARY

Think about your reader and your dissertation's objective before you start writing. Your report should be organized top-down, with sections given room to change over time. There is a definite order in which you should write your dissertation as well as a specified format for it. Look for methods to refine and practice your writing style. One of the final things you should write is the abstract. The background, range, and significance of your dissertation should all be succinctly stated. Do not list the contents of your abstract in your paper. Charts and graphs can significantly

improve a dissertation's presentation and substance. Each one should have a distinct label and title, and it should be used appropriately (in terms of necessity and type). In order to make your message clear, you must also make sure that you scale them properly. The best technique to utilize for referencing content inside of your report is the Harvard style system. To enable the reader to locate the referred-to article, each article should have a distinct identifier, and each reference should be full.

REFERENCES

1. Berndtsson, M. Hansson, J. Olsson, B. and Lundell, B., 2008. Thesis projects A guide for students in Computer Science and Information Systems (2nd Edition), Springer-Verlag, London.

2. Blaxter, L. Hughes, C. and Tight, M., 2006. How to research (3rd Edition), Open University Press, Maidenhead, UK.

3. Cornford, T. and Smithson, S., 2006 Project research in information systems a student's guide (2nd Edition), Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, UK.

4. Dawson, C.W., 2005. Projects in computing and information systems: a student's guide. Pearson Education.

5. Herbert, M., 1990 Planning a research project, Cassell Educational, London.

6. Levin, P., 2012. *EBOOK: Excellent Dissertations*!. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

7. Phillips, E.M. and Pugh, D.S., 2005. How to get a PhD a handbook for students and their supervisors (4th Edition), Open University Press, Buckingham, UK.

8. Saunders, M. Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2007) Research methods for business students (4th Edition), Prentice Hall, Essex, UK.