

Goizueta Business Library

Creating Bridges to Knowledge

Developing an Effective Research Strategy EvMBA International Research Paper

Be creative, be original, and keep an open mind

- Start with a theory, and then test it statistically. Don't begin with data and then rationalize the findings to fit.
- Expect shifts in insights, rethink anticipated outcomes. Stay open to what your findings tell you; if your original hypothesis is proven wrong, work your discovery into the paper.
- Do not regurgitate your secondary research.
- Weave your course content into the paper.
- Apply your findings in a real world context (such as a concluding "recommendations" section).
- Don't let your assumptions get in the way of new discovery.

A well written paper strengthens your proposal and recommendations

- Manage your time carefully. You cannot write a graduate level, persuasive, intelligent paper at the last minute.
- Contact the school's Writing Center now for help with the organization and editing of your paper. <http://www.bus.emory.edu/bwc/>
- Include a Table of Content, Table of Figures, sectional headings and sub headings, etc.
- Proof read carefully; typos demonstrate sloppy work.
- Edit with care.

Step back; gather exploratory information around your issue

- Approach your topic very broadly; use the knowledge and tools from this class to frame your topic with a multi-dimensional perspective.
- Use a wide range of reliable and reputable sources, academic and business
 - Think depth – breadth – relevancy
- Keep asking yourself:
 - "What more do I need to know?"
 - "Where do I go from here?"

Think *where information lives, who owns it*

- Who are the primary "owners" of your information? The closer to the original source, the better.
- Constantly look for leads in everything you read
 - References within the text, e.g. "according to a study by..."
 - Imbedded within footnotes and bibliographies.

Is the data reliable?

- Is it from reputable, authoritative sources?
- Is it clear how it is derived (which sources, what calculations, etc.)?
- Can you compare apples to apples?
- Be aware of bias in data or perspective.
 - Consider if/how you balance this.
 - Acknowledge and discuss inherent bias rather than simply buy into arguments.

Recognize what you will not find? Process impact

- Sometimes information simply does not exist.
- Information is unattainable (too expensive to purchase, not published yet, etc.)
 - Can you glean some of the intelligence through articles, etc?
 - Can you develop your own proxy for the data point using data that does exist?

Learn from your results. Work (and rework) your search strategies

- The more you understand how to "push" search engines, the more efficient and effective your searches will be.
 - What advanced features should you be using, such as use truncation (*), AND, OR, etc.
- Invest time looking at your search results; scan 50-75 returned hits.
- What do they tell you that will inform a better search strategy?
 - Look for additional keywords to add to your search

Bibliography, bibliography, bibliography (and footnotes and graphics)

- Document every source you used. It's called a bibliography.
- A lengthy and substantive bibliography is important indicator of original analysis; a bad bibliography paints just the opposite story.
- Keep gathering complete bibliographic citations as you conduct your research; if you wait until the end to pull it together, you will be sorry.
- You also need to include footnotes/endnotes and cite every graph/chart imbedded in the paper; failure to do so calls into question the credibility of your research.

