

WRTG 394 students,

Your next writing assignment will be a **background review and synthesis of the literature for the topic of your research-based report**.

This assignment is designed to help you prepare for the final paper in WRTG 394. Keep in mind that your final paper in WRTG 394 will be a report in which you do the following:

- *define a problem in your workplace or community persuasively and accurately*
- *propose a solution or solutions to the problem or issue*

Steps to Take in Completing this Assignment:

- Locate at least seven articles on your topic. At least four articles should come from scholarly journals or credible trade journals. You should use OneSearch through UMUC's Library and Information Services or individual databases through the library for your research.
- Take notes, perhaps by applying the skills from your annotated bibliography exercise, on each article.
- Write a synthesis of the articles. The synthesis will be 1000-1400 words.

In your synthesis, you will group the themes of the articles. For example, if have collected seven articles on the topic of paperless offices, you might find that three major themes emerge from your perusing of the seven articles:

- Common reasons for resisting the move to a paperless office
- Costs of transitioning to a paperless office
- Benefits of transitioning to a paperless office

Examples of Topics and the Role of this Assignment:

For example, you might write a report on any one of the following. **Please note that these are examples of topics.** You might not choose any of them. They are provided here to help illustrate this assignment.

- a report to your manager at work suggesting that more teleworking options be given to employees at your workplace
- a report to your supervisor at work suggesting that email be used less frequently for communication and that another application be used to improve communication.
- a report to your manager at work suggesting that your office become paperless
- a report to the board of directors at your townhouse community to argue that the playground area in your community should be renovated
- a report to the manager of your unit at work noting that recycling facilities in the workplace should be improved

In any report of this nature, some background research is necessary. For example, consider the following strategies when collecting background research for the topics mentioned above:

- For a report to your manager at work suggesting that more teleworking options be given to employees at your workplace, some research studies on teleworking would be very persuasive.
- For a report to your supervisor at work suggesting that email be used less frequently for communication and that another application be used to improve communication, some scholarly literature or articles from credible trade journals on transitioning to alternative electronic communication would be beneficial. In addition, articles that demonstrate the problems with email communication would add to the argument.
- For a report to your manager at work suggesting that your office become paperless, some scholarly literature on paperless offices would be effective.
- For a report to the board of directors at your townhouse community to argue that the playground area in your community should be renovated, some scholarly articles or trade journal articles on the benefits of playground areas for communities, the benefits of exercise for young children, the effect of such playground areas on home values, etc. would be effective.
- For a report to the manager of your unit at work arguing that recycling facilities in the workplace should be improved, some scholarly articles or studies on the challenges of and benefits to implementing recycling facilities in organizations would be persuasive. Of course, there are varieties of recycling programs. The articles you find would help define what type of recycling program you would propose.

Length of your paper:

As noted above, your background review of the literature on your topic should be 1000-1400 words in length.

The sources should be cited throughout the paper in APA format and listed in a **References** page at the end of the paper in APA format.

Due Date:

Your instructor will notify you of the due date. You will write a first draft, your instructor will comment on the first draft, and you will submit a second draft using the comments as your guide.

You will find that your synthesis will be a helpful component of your final research-based report. In fact, if your synthesis is well written, you might be able to take whole parts of it and copy it into the final report. In any case, the skills and strategies you gain from writing the background review and synthesis of literature will be very valuable in writing your final research-based report.

Topics to Help You Come Up with Ideas on this Assignment:

Some possible workplace research topics are the following. These are examples to help you get started. Please contact your instructor to have other topic ideas approved.

- Going to a wireless network
- Going to a paperless office
- Switching from Windows to Linux (or other similar switch)
- Installing/upgrading company firewall
- Establishing a drug policy
- Establishing an employee leave donation program
- Establishing an equipment donation program for used computers, etc.
- Establishing a company recycling program (paper, etc.)
- Education/retraining for your employees
- Establishing a program for millennial workers (e.g., training on certain aspects of etiquette, on understanding other generations, etc.)
- Designing a training program for workplace safety issues
- Redesigning employee performance evaluations
- Developing a work-at-home (telecommuting) policy
- Developing a flex-time policy
- Establishing on-site day care or providing other child care benefits
- Providing gym membership or creating an on-site workout facility
- Creating or revising a charitable contribution policy
- Creating or improving a tuition assistance program
- Accommodations needed for employee/s with specific health issues (for example, migraines)
- Establishing a Habitat for Humanity (or other group) chapter at your organization

Some students have chosen topics outside of their workplaces, such as the following:

- Starting a neighborhood watch program
- Starting a mentor program at your place of worship
- Getting additional lighting in the neighborhood
- Changing traffic patterns around your child's school
- Starting a PTA website for your child's school
- Installing a tot lot in your neighborhood
- Constructing a crying baby room at your place of worship
- Offering ESL courses at your church
- Increasing participation in a military Family Support Group
- Introducing a youth sports program to a school or community