Chapter 7: Communication and Presentation of Information

7.1 Selection of the Communication Medium for the Intended Purpose and Audience

Before you start any writing, you should find out the answers of the following questions:

- What is the purpose of your presentation?
- Who are your target audiences? Are they layman or experts in this particular field? Can you estimate the number of audience?
- Are you able to meet all of them simultaneously (such as a seminar)? Can you inform all of them to attend the seminar?

7.1.1 Selection of Medium

**Traditional Report**

- **Advantage:**
  - It is easy to prepare traditional report with a word processor (such as Microsoft Word).
  - You readers can read the report in their convenient time.
  - Your reader can keep the report for future reference.

- **Disadvantage:**
  - It could be expensive if you have a large number of audience and a bulky report. The costs include printing, binding, delivery, etc.
  - It is not interactive.
  - It might be difficult to distribute new versions to readers if you update it frequently.

**Presentation in a seminar**

- **Advantage:**
  - It is interactive. Your audiences can ask questions. You can also collect feedback in the seminar.

- **Disadvantage:**
  - It might be difficult for all of your audiences to attend the seminar, particular if you have a large number of audiences. Some of your audiences might live in different cities.
  - You need to learn a presentation software such as powerpoint.
Web pages

Advantage:
➢ Anyone who has a browser and computer can access your page at any time, any place.
➢ It is easy to update the web pages and your reader can get the new version instantly.

Disadvantage:
➢ It takes longer time to develop web pages (particularly for web pages with interactive animation) than the traditional report.
➢ You need to have a reliable web server.
➢ You need to learn how to develop web pages.

7.2 Organization of the Content of Presentation
Different projects have different requirements. If you are working on a term paper, you should consult the subject teacher. Usually a report consists of the following sections:
➢ Introduction
  ■ Why do you think your work is important? Why do you choose this topic?
  ■ What is the scope of your project?
  ■ What are the objectives of your work?
  ■ How do you measure your work? (i.e. Is your work a success or failure?)
➢ Body (several sections)
  ■ Details of your approach (methods)
  ■ Details of survey or experiments and their results (if any)
  ■ Discussion of the survey’s result, experiments’ results or findings (Do they match your prediction or theory? If the results do not match the prediction, what are the possible reasons?)
➢ Related works
  ■ Related works by others
  ■ Related works by you (in previous works, if any)
  ■ Compare your work with those of others (i.e. what is advantages and disadvantage of your approach and/or work?)
➢ Conclusion
  ■ Summary of your findings
  ■ Have you achieved your objectives (mentioned in the “Introduction” section)? If the answer is no, you should specify the reasons (e.g. constraint of money, time, equipments, etc.).
  ■ Are there any future plans for further research?
➢ Reference
  ■ List of papers, books and other sources of information
7.3 Integrating of New and Prior Information

We called it “plagiarism” if someone uses other person’s works as his/her own. It is not acceptable even if it is done through carelessness mistakes. “Work” includes spoken or written materials, art work, lab results, statistics or survey result, etc. These works are published in books, newspapers, magazines, journals, etc. In the Internet age, it also includes web pages in World Wide Web or other electronic mediums.

On the other hand, you are wasting your time if you try to re-invent the wheel. The first step of many projects is to investigate the related works which have been done by others. The investigation results are sometimes referred as “literature survey”. It is fine (and sometimes compulsory) to include the literature survey in your project report provided you specify clearly they are the works from others.

Requirements of project reports will be different depending on the nature of your project. However, most of the times you need to include the answers of the following questions:

- What is the objective of your work? Why is it important? Why should it be of interest to your target reader?
- What is the related works which have been done by others? What is the difference between your work and others?
- Have you done similar works before and have you published your works? What is difference between your previous works and your present work? (e.g. Are you extending the scope of your previous work? Do you take a different approach? etc.)

7.4 Format of Written Presentation

Each Journal or Institution may have different requirements and there will be minor differences. You should consult your editor or teacher before you write your paper.

7.4.1 MLA format

- Paper size: 8.5 X 11 inches
- spacing: Double-space
7.4.2 APA format

- margins: 1 inch on all sides (i.e. left, right, top and bottom)
- header: page number of all pages should be in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and align to the right margin.
- Emphasis: Use either underlining or italics for emphasis.

7.5 Citation Styles

As discussed in previous sections, we should clearly specify the sources of information. It protects you from the accusation of plagiarism. Unfortunately there are many different citation styles. If you are writing for Journal or proceedings, you should check their citation styles before you start writing. Such kind of information can be found in a document “call for paper”. Alternatively you can get information from their web pages or send a message to the editor. If you are working on your assignment, you should consult your teacher.

There are too many citation styles (e.g. MLA, APA, Chicago, Britannica, CBA, Harvard, etc.). However, it is not necessary to study all of them. We will discuss some frequently used standards in the following sections. Once you can master these common standards, you will be able to adopt new one in the future, if necessary.

Some standards include more than citation styles, it also specify the page format.
7.5.1 Modern Language Association (MLA)

7.5.1.1 Citing source in the text

You should include the author's last name (or the title of the work) and the page number of the work in a parenthetical citation inside your writing.

e.g. Socket connection is more reliable than datagram (Smith 125).

where Smith is the last name of the author while 125 is page number.

If you want to cite more than one page, it will be in this form: (Smith 125-129).

Although the normal form is the author name followed by page number inside parentheses, e.g. (Smith 125), it is possible that the author's name may appear in the sentence itself and not in parentheses. You should use this method when the author's name is a natural part of the sentence.

e.g. Smith stated that socket connection was more reliable than datagram (125).

If you reference list has more than one author with the same family name, you should include their first initial.

e.g. (P. Simth 125) (A. Smith 237)

7.5.1.2 Reference List

Provides a list of full citation information for the work mentioned in your text.

Books

Author(s). Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication.

Book with one author

Book with two authors


Book with more than two authors

You can mentioned the first author and append the phrase \textit{et al.} (the abbreviation for the Latin phrase “and others”). Alternatively you can also list all the authors in the same sequence of which their names appear on the book.

An article in a scholarly journal

Author(s). “Title of Article.” Title of Journal Vol (Year): pages.

"Vol" - volume number of the journal.

\textit{e.g.} Thelwall, Mike. “Commercial Web Sites: Lost in Cyberspace”, Internet Research 10 (2000): 150-159.

If page number of each issue starts from 1, you need to provide the issue number following the volume,


Where 19 is volume number and 3 is the issue number.

Magazine or newspaper article

Author(s). “Title of Article.” Title of Source Date: pages.

\textit{e.g.}


A web site

Author(s). Name of Page. Date of Posting/Revision. Name of organization which own the site. Date of Access <electronic address>. 
It is important to provide the date of access because web pages are often updated. Web pages might even be removed and they are not available later. Be sure to include the complete address for the site. Please note that you need to use the angled brackets <….> around the electronic address.

Web site examples


You should also consult the following books in our library if you are asked to follow MLA style in your term project.

- MLA handbook for writers of research papers / Joseph Gibaldi; 808.02 GIBA 1999.
- MLA style manual and guide to scholarly publishing / Joseph Gibaldi; 808.027 GIBA 1998.
7.5.2 American Psychological Association (APA) Style

7.5.2.1 Citing Source in Text

The in-text citation of APA is quite similar to MLA. The normal form is the author name followed by publication year inside parentheses.

e.g. Socket connection is more reliable than datagram (Smith, 2003).

It is possible that the author’s name may appear in the sentence itself and not in parentheses. You should use this form when the author’s name is a natural part of the sentences.

e.g. According to a recent investigation of Smith (2003), Socket connection is more reliable than datagram.

7.5.2.2 Reference list

Journal or Magazine Article
(for the case of each issue start with page one)

Journal or Magazine Article
(The page number continues from one issue to other issue in the same volume)

Newspaper Article

Book

Website
Bibliography


