



Gathering Information

STEP SEVEN Synthesis

STEP 7: SYNTHESIS

The synthesis is the final step in the search strategy. It is the process of using deductive reasoning (from the first principles to a conclusion) to combine the different ideas, facts and figures you have learned in the course of your research and create a new cohesive whole.

A synthesis can take many forms. For example, the form that the synthesis takes for the first search in this class is completely different than the form that it will take for the second search. The first search requires a synthesis in the form of a search strategy report and a magazine article. The second search requires a synthesis in the form of a formal report and a power point presentation.

NOTE: There will be a “sample” for each of the search synthesis so that you can see what the finished projects are supposed to look like. (See Week 4 for a sample of Search One and Week 8 for a sample of Search Two.)

SYNTHESIS FOR SEARCH ONE

SEARCH STRATEGY REPORT:

Retrace your steps through the 7Step Search Strategy and write a report that outlines what you found at each step along the way while researching your first topic. This will help commit the search strategy to memory. It's also my way of determining if the steps were fully understood before moving on to the second research project.

MAGAZINE ARTICLE:

The first research project will require that you write a two-to-three page article suitable for magazine publication. Two to three pages is not a large amount of space. Obviously, with the wealth of information you will be gathering through such an extensive search, not everything that you find out will fit in such a short article. It's not important that everything you know to go into your article. It's important that you become knowledgeable about your topic so that you can write from a well informed perspective. A lot of the information will simply become background information from which you draw your conclusions and/or determine your focus.

NOTE: This is to be your original work. I do not want you to reiterate what others have written or quote from books or articles as you are used to doing with a research paper. I want you to take all of that information and create something new and fresh your own original thoughts on the topic, using quotes that you have gathered from conducting your own interviews with expert sources.

SYNTHESIS FOR SEARCH TWO

FORMAL ANALYTICAL REPORT:

Unlike the Search Strategy Report that you did earlier, this report will be the type of formal report you would submit to your boss or a board of directors. The second search will involve a comparative study in which you compare two or more things. The report will explain your research, give the pros and cons for each side, support your facts, and make a final recommendation. Included in the formal report is an annotated bibliography.

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, interviews, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION:

You will create a Power Point presentation to accompany and compliment your formal report. The presentation will include word slides, tables, charts, images, and anything else that will visually enhance the printed document. Prepare the Power Point slides as if you were giving the presentation on your formal report in person.