

Reflective report - Academic writing, note-taking and finding information/research skills.

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Introduction

Academic achievement frequently depends on a specific skill set that enables people to learn, retain, and apply material. Understanding how they impact your career might help you reach your objectives. Academic talents are the abilities, methods, and habits that enable students to excel in academic settings. Academic abilities are vital since they can boost your productivity and success in school. Many abilities are transferable to the job, in addition to assisting you in obtaining the academic qualifications required for entry into the workforce. Academic writing, note-taking and finding information/research skills are some of the skills I have learnt to utilize during the course of this module.

Academic writing

Academic writing allows students and researchers to express their ideas, thoughts, and research findings in writing, contributing to ongoing scientific debates.

Academic writing is a crucial component of education, enabling students to effectively communicate in the academic setting. Academic writing teaches students how to articulate their ideas and arguments in a precise, clear, and scientific manner, particularly in certain scientific areas. Students must acquire and develop the knowledge, skills, and talents necessary for correct and high-level academic writing. Precision and clarity are essential for effective communication in academic writing. Correctly selecting the proper words and structuring sentences are critical for effectively delivering your desired message. Having an scientific idea, does not mean that the sentences we use should be long and complicated, on the contrary they should be specific and the ideas should be simplified, but the scientific context should still be intact. Practical advice on how to keep the specificity is to give a detailed explanation to the critical words and phrases, to avoid slang and informal language and to use data that is scientifically supported. The key point in academic writing is the use of active and passive voice. Active voice typically makes sentences clearer and more direct, and it is preferred in academic writing due to its ability to simply express the subject as the doer of the action. (Table 1.) Passive voice is frequently utilized when the focus should be on the action rather than the doer. It can encompass the subject, making it beneficial in scientific and professional writing to convey a neutral or unbiased perspective.(Table 1.) In academic writing, it is critical to maintain a balanced expression. Exaggerated terms commonly used in regular speech, such as "perfectly" or "always," can drastically undermine the trustworthiness of your paper. Subjective language can frequently influence the reader and distract from the objective standards required in academic writing. It is critical to present facts and arguments in a neutral manner, particularly in formal research and analytical articles.

Voice	Example sentence	Context in which it is used
Active	The researcher conducted the experiment.	It highlights the actor, clear and direct.
Passive	The experiment was conducted by the researcher.	It focuses on the action; the actor is less important.
Active	The team analyzed the data.	Direct action, clear character.
Passive	The data was analyzed by the team.	The action or result is the focus, not the actor.

Table 1. Use of Active or Passive voice in academic writing.

Note-taking skills

Note-taking abilities are one of the most important skills that any student should have. Depending on your work circumstances and style, you can utilize a variety of note-taking techniques to stay organized, remember key data, and communicate successfully with classmates or teammates. You can increase your productivity and performance at work by creating regular and efficient note-taking techniques. There are 2 note-taking methods that have proven to be efficient to me. Firstly, the Cornell method (Fig 1.) which divides the notes into three sections: the primary notes, the character column, and the summary section. The structured note-taking approach allows you to organize your notes in a clear and logical manner. You may rapidly review the key aspects of your notes without having to read them all again. Because you must actively interact in the content you are learning, which might help you better absorb and retain the information. On the other hand creating a layout for each set of notes can take some effort. It can be tough if you have a lot of notes to take, because space is limited for each segment. It may not be as effective for issues that require more thorough and technical notes. Lastly, one of the most extensive note-taking methods to include here is the Outline method (Fig 2.), which entails building a hierarchical list of key points and sub-points, using indentation to demonstrate the link between them. Its advantages are that there is no need to use limited space to specify information, you may quickly and easily examine your notes prior to a presentation or meeting and you can automatically draw arrows and lines to connect themes and subtopics. On the other hand, it may not work well in certain STEM subjects and this method is difficult to employ if the lecture is too quick, hops from topic to topic, or lacks a structured and logical flow.



Figure 1. Cornell method of note-taking.

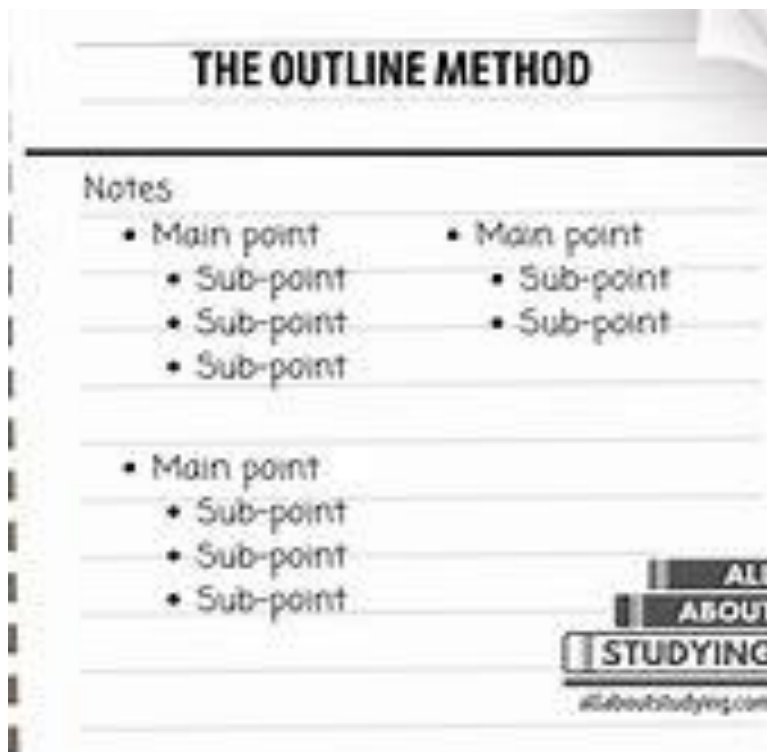


Figure 2. Outline method of note-taking.

Finding information/Research Skills

Research is a complex process that involves recognizing, analyzing, and creating new information. As a result, research differs from random data collection in that it does not involve searching for a needle in a haystack. Data gathering is systematic and aims to achieve specific objectives connected to the findings. Any form of inquiry constantly yields fresh knowledge. This new knowledge is crucial for decision-making at individual, organizational, and national levels, as well as for understanding the context of the research question (sensing). There are three modes of knowledge that I gained in this course. Mode type 1 (Fig 3.) which is information which I use academically. Similarly, it serves to supplement existing theories or to broaden my academic knowledge of the topic. This knowledge is based on theory and past literature, including a critical examination of current understanding and identifying new directions for progress in the field. Mode type 2 (Fig 3.) which is critical for making decisions at any level of organizational, institutional, or state placement, as well as academics engaged in applied research. This information is context-dependent. And finally there is Mode type 3 (Fig 3.) knowledge, which is not intended to enrich theory in one area or to provide me with more specific knowledge that will allow me to work more efficiently rather, the purpose of this knowledge is to provide a clearer picture in relation to certain questions of greater benefit.

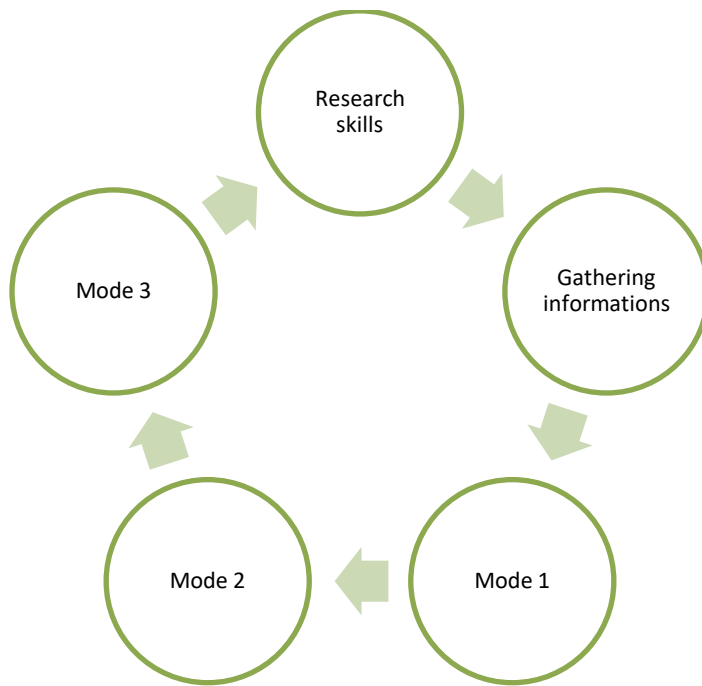


Figure 3. Gibb's reflective cycle of research skills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the development of academic writing, note-taking, and research abilities is critical for academic achievement and professional development. These abilities enable successful communication and orderly knowledge retention. Mastering academic writing ensures that ideas are conveyed clearly and precisely, while effective note-taking approaches such as the Cornell and Outline systems allow for disciplined learning and revision. Research skills, particularly an awareness of many modalities of information, improve critical thinking and the ability to contribute to practical disciplines. Overall, these abilities provide a solid basis for academic achievement and potential professional success.

References

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