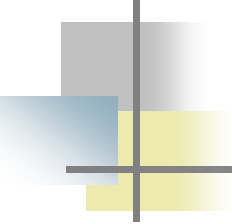


Literature Review

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Source: O'Leary, Z. (2004) The Essential Guide to Doing Research.
London: Sage

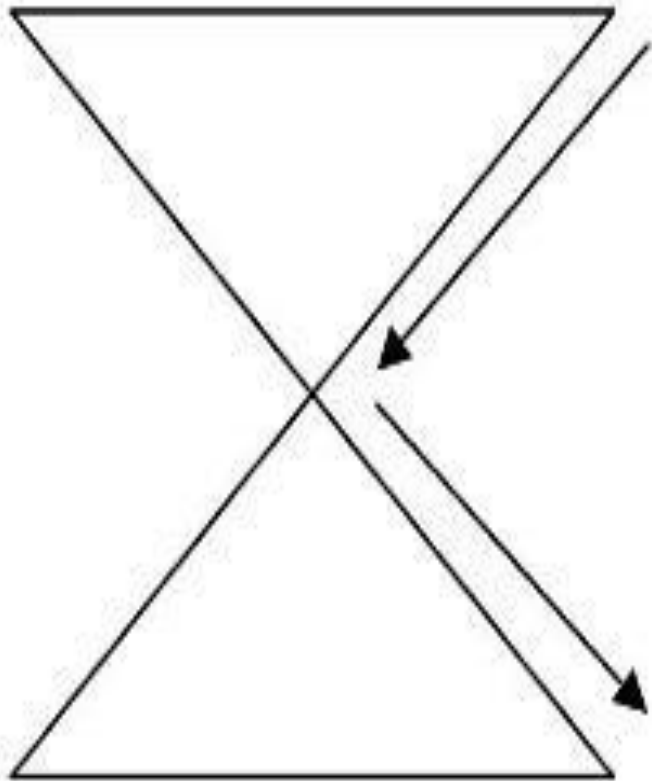


*'A researcher cannot perform significant research
without first understanding the literature in the field'
(Boote and Beile, 2005: 3)*



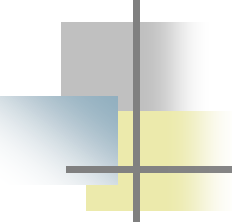
What is a literature review?

- It is not an annotated bibliography
- Develops an argument by summarising (present key information) and synthesis (reorganisation of information)
- Distinguishes what has already been done and identifies what needs to be done (Hart, 1998)
- Key developments in the literature (research landscape)
- How your work **connects** with current literature needs to be explicit.
- framework where new findings are compared to previous findings presented in the literature. This takes place in the discussion section



Literature Review: Starts broad and narrows to show how past research relates to your project.

Discussion: Starts specific by explaining what your results show in relation to your project, then widens out to say what this may mean for the field of research as a whole.



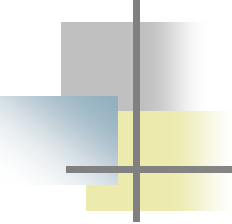
Doing the literature review

- To complete a literature review requires **planning, time, reading, writing, drafting, reflection and editing.**
- A successful literature review has a firm idea of the **research problem** and an understanding of the **research framework/paradigm.**
- In order to refine the research problem, **conduct preliminary research** which will help you narrow your focus and identify key search terms.



Approaching the literature review

- You are expected to 'place' your research in the existing academic literature.
- Simply describing the literature should be avoided. A **critical and analytical judgement** which demonstrates how/where your work is best placed as well as work that needs developing is essential.
- Your work should **contribute** to existing literature in the field.
- Ensure consideration is given to the methodological and/or theoretical arguments that inform the literature.
- Be aware of how research paradigms influence the research.



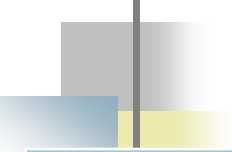
Boolean operators

Command	Purpose
AND	Looks for articles that include all search terms/keywords
OR	Looks for articles that include any of the search terms
NOT	Excludes articles that include specific keyword



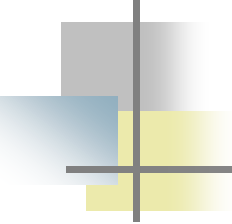
Reading

- What are the relevant sources that you need?
- Produce a bibliography which will also act as your **reading list**.
- Read, read and read some more!
- Once you have familiarised yourself with the literature, **annotate the bibliography**. Annotation is a brief overview/summary of the main point/s of each article.
- Once an overview of the literature has been obtained, develop your focus. The annotation provides you with a list of sources which needs to be turned into a review of the **literature organised around ideas**.



PQRS

Preview	Preliminary reading (reading abstract, introduction, 1st sentence of each paragraph and conclusion). Only read thoroughly when you are certain the information is relevant to your research area.
Questions	What do you need to find out? What are the main questions and conclusions of the paper? Are there possible alternative interpretations of the literature?
Reading	Be Active! Search for answers to the questions. Be ACE
Summarise	Take selective notes. Use colour and space to organise (note template)



Question the readings

Questions to ask when grouping sources

- What are the shared themes, ideas or issues presented?
- Does there appear to be a gap missing?
- What trends/developments are evident in the literature?
- What theoretical approaches have you identified?



Problem statement

Examples:

- Companies claim to act in a corporately socially responsible manner despite continuing to engage in business that is fundamentally unsustainable'.
- Information and Communication Technology allows employees to be constantly tethered to their ICT devices.



Research Questions

Identify three questions that your literature will answer. Key topics will be discussed in these questions. What questions do you need to ask in order to obtain the answers that will enable you to respond to the research problem?

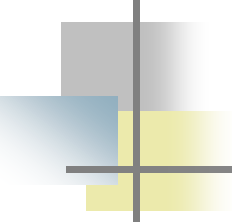
Example

Problem statement

- 'Information and Communication Technology allows employees to be constantly tethered to their ICT'.

Research Questions:

- What are the intended consequences of ICT use?
- What are the unintended consequences of ICT use?
- How does ICT use allow employers to expropriate from employees?



Organising a Lit review

- Chronological: depending on the nature of your literature and development of ideas, a chronological approach will present the development of a key trend and/or progressions and changes in practices.
- Thematic/conceptual: Time is not a factor here. The review of the literature will be around particular topics/issues/theories.
- Methodological: This review focuses on the methodological or paradigmatic approaches to your material.



Example structure

Introduction

Statement

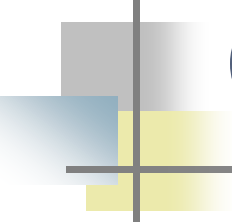
- Purpose of the review and concise overview of the research problem
- Outlines the organisational pattern of the review/sequence of themes covered and the scope of the research
- Limits, inclusion/exclusion criteria should be clearly outlined.

Body

- Summarisation and Synthesis (discusses and presents findings from the literature)
- Ensure continuity by summarising each theme/section and present how it relates to following section.

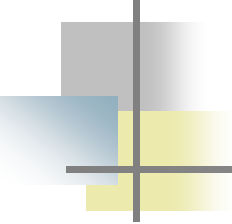
Conclusion

- Concise summary of the findings
- Presents a rationale for conducting future research
- Identified gaps in the literature should lead logically onto the purpose of the proposed project (Cronin, Ryan and Coughlan, 2008)



Common Mistakes to avoid

- Failure to link the findings of the literature review to your own research study and project
- Does not start the reading process early and fails to identify suitable sources
- Does not refer to primary sources
- Absence of criticality and accepting findings as valid without questioning all aspects of the research design
- Produces an annotated bibliography

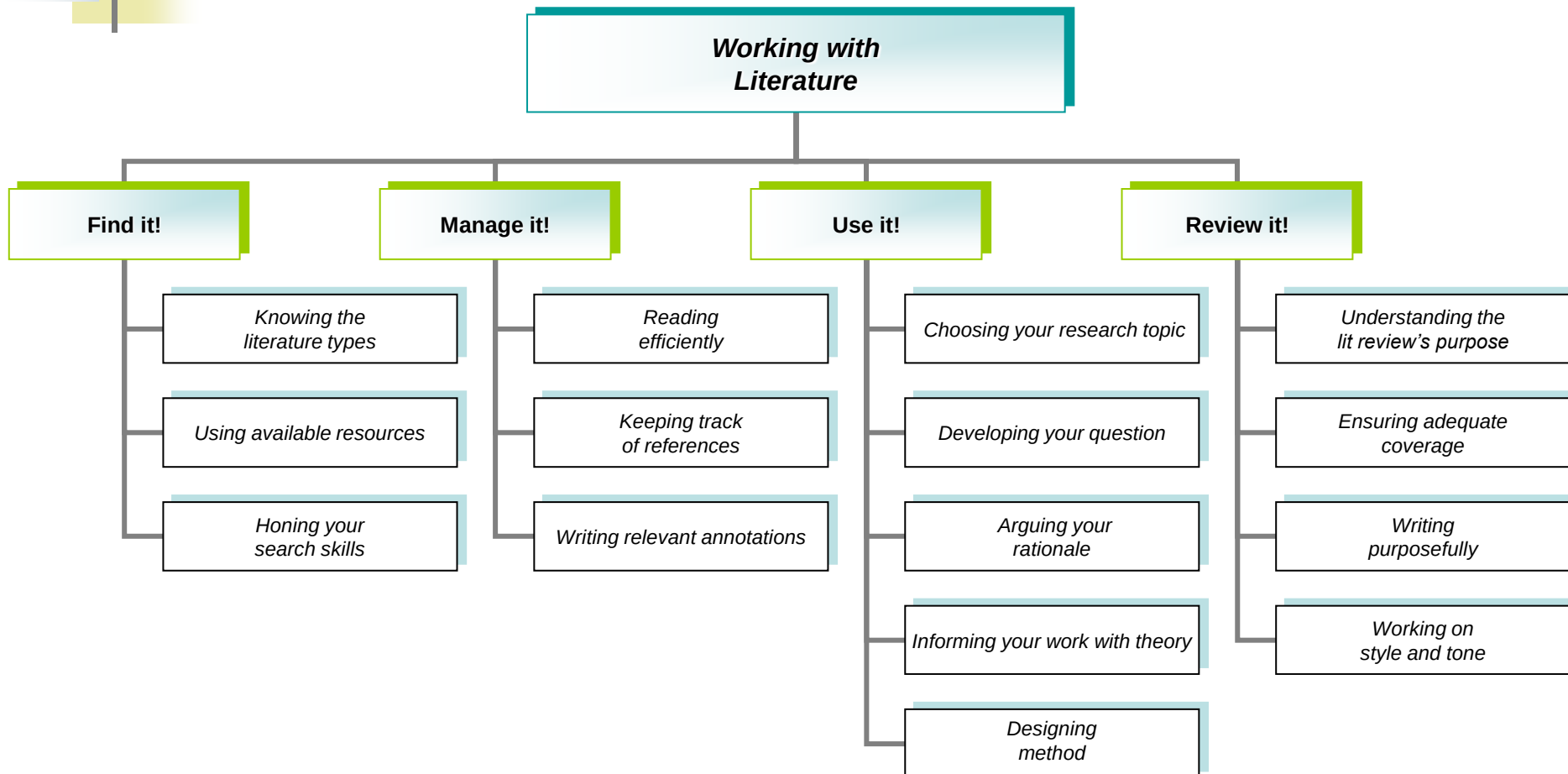


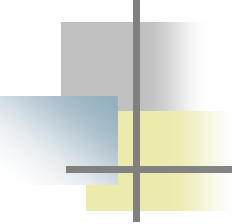
The Importance of Working with Literature

Working with literature is an essential part of the research process that:

- generates ideas
- helps form significant questions
- is instrumental in the process of research design

Working with literature

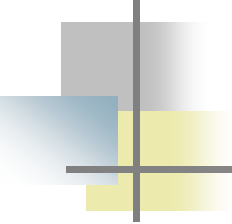




Finding literature

Finding relevant literature can be made easier if you are able to readily access and draw on a wide variety of resources such as:

- reference materials
- books
- journals
- grey literature
- official publications
- archives

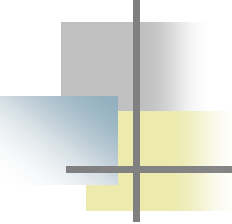


Finding literature

Don't go it alone!!

When looking for literature be sure to call on the experts such as:

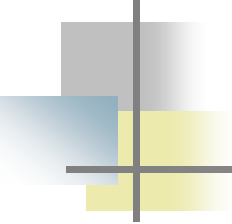
- librarians
- supervisors
- other researchers
- practitioners



Managing the literature

It also pays to be organized and diligent when it comes to keeping references.

- Keep and file copies of relevant books, articles, etc.
- Avoid lending out your 'only copies'
- Find out about the recommended referencing style and use it from the start
- Consider using bibliographic file management software such as *Procite*, *Endnote*, or *Reference Manager*



Annotating Sources

Annotating your sources provides you with a record of relevant literature. It should include:

- the citation
- articulation of the author and audience
- a short summary
- critical commentary
- notes on relevance that remind you of the significance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited

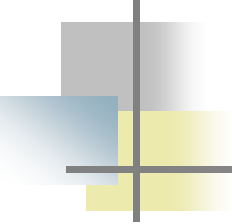


Using the Literature

Literature is used for disparate purposes throughout the research process. Whether it be:

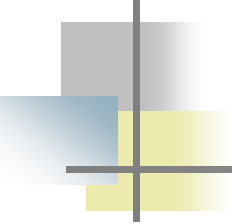
- focusing interests
- defining questions
- arguing a rationale
- theoretically informing your study
- developing appropriate design, or writing a formal literature review

every stage of the research process demands literary engagement



The Formal Literature Review

Most find the writing of a literature review a difficult task that takes patience, practice, drafts, and redrafts



The Formal Literature Review

The formal literature review is a very specific piece of writing designed to:

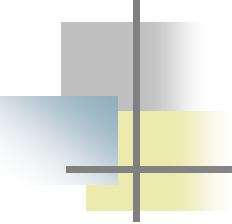
- inform your readers of your topic
- establish your credibility as a researcher
- argue the need for, and relevance of, your work



Reviewing the Literature vs. 'Literature Review'

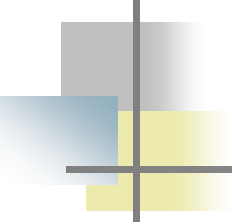
TABLE 6.1 REVIEWING THE LITERATURE VS 'THE LITERATURE REVIEW'

Reasons for reviewing the literature	Purposes of the 'literature review'
• Informing yourself of what is happening in the field • Gaining a level of topical and methodological knowledge and expertise • Finding potential gaps in the literature that may point to potential research questions • Critically evaluating common/ typical methods • Facilitating the development of your own methodological approaches	☑ Informing your audience of what is happening in the field ☑ Establishing your credibility as a knowledgeable and capable researcher ☑ Arguing the relevance and the significance of your research question(s) ☑ Providing the context for your own methodological approach ☑ Arguing the relevance and appropriateness of your approach



Writing the Literature Review

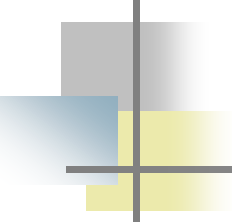
A good literature review is an *argument* that is more purposeful than a simple review of relevant literature



Writing the Literature Review

Writing a good review requires you to:

- read a few good reviews
- write critical annotations
- develop a structure
- write purposefully
- use the literature to back up your arguments
- review and write throughout the research process
- get feedback
- and be prepared to redraft



Writing the Literature Review

Style

- Writing a good literature review can be likened to holding a good dinner party conversation
- They both require individuals who can engage, learn, debate, argue, contribute, and evolve their own ideas, without being hypercritical or sycophantic