Manage

Now that you have gone through the processes involved to find and evaluate information, the next step is to start working with it. This is where the Manage pillar comes in: it focuses on the need to organize information professionally and ethically.

Individuals understand

- Their responsibility to be honest in all aspects of information handling and dissemination (e.g. copyright, plagiarism, and intellectual property issues)
- The need to adopt appropriate data-handling methods
- The role they play in helping others in information seeking and management
- The need to keep systematic records
- The importance of storing and sharing information and data ethically
- The role of professionals, such as data managers and librarians, who can advise, assist, and support with all aspects of information management.

They are able to

- Use bibliographical software if appropriate to manage information
- Cite printed and electronic sources using suitable referencing styles
- Create appropriately formatted bibliographies
- Demonstrate awareness of issues relating to the rights of others including ethics, data protection, copyright, plagiarism, and any other intellectual property issues
- Meet standards of conduct for academic integrity
- Use appropriate data management software and techniques to manage data
The Information Literacy User's Guide

Chapter 6: Manage

Proficiencies in the Manage pillar

**manage**

**means**

organizing information effectively and ethically

**understand, know, recognize**

the need to adopt appropriate data handling methods and the need to keep systematic records

the role individuals play in helping others in information seeking and management

the role of professional data managers and librarians, who can advise, assist, and support with all aspects of information management.

the responsibility to be honest and ethical in all aspects of information handling and dissemination

**able to**

demonstrate awareness of issues relating to the rights of others

meet standards of conduct for academic integrity

use appropriate software to manage information and data

create appropriately formatted citations and bibliographies
It is wonderful to have access to information. It empowers us humans, with data and knowledge that leads us throughout our busy days and helps us organize our leisure time more efficiently. GPS devices and mobile phones help us get to unfamiliar destinations. We can find places to eat, to stay, and to get entertainment. All of this information is at our fingertips due to modern technology. We all take advantage of this technology to some degree and use this information to our advantage.

But there is another type of information—not just the kind that provides directions. We seek such information when we are ill and need to look up medical advice. We also seek information when in school—very few subjects require only the use of a textbook. We need to search for information and then use it in our intellectual work, because every paper or project produced in college is a product of someone’s creativity.

So how should we handle this product of creativity (a.k.a. information)? Let’s think about a simple example: apple picking in the fall. It is a popular thing to do, especially here in the Northeast where most of the authors of this textbook live. People come to the farm, get bags or baskets, gather apples, and then line up to weigh them and pay. The farmers’ hard work is being rewarded.

Now imagine a different situation. You worked hard and wrote a very good paper and your roommate just copied a couple of paragraphs and inserted them into her own paper because the topics were related. Was this fair? How were you rewarded for your hard work? Nobody is saying that your roommate should have paid you, as you would pay the farmer for apples. But she should not use your intellectual capital without attribution to you! What she did was an act of plagiarism—you will read more about it soon!

You might publish an article in your college newsletter. This article is your intellectual personal property and you hold the copyright, which means that no one has the right to reproduce all or any part of it (i.e. copy it) without your permission. If your roommate decides to use some information from your article in her paper, she should provide a citation (the information that will help the reader identify and find your article should they decide to do so). If she is using direct quotes from your article, again, she would need to put double quotes around your words and provide information about the author (you, in this instance) to avoid plagiarism. Keep reading to find useful information about avoiding plagiarism.

Copyright and plagiarism are just two aspects of intellectual property that you need to deal with. You have to respect copyright, i.e. the rights of the author and avoid plagiarism. However, there are more aspects to it. Have you heard of patents? If you are planning a career in science and technology-related fields then you also have to learn more about patents. Patents deal with creators’ rights to their invention of new machinery or processes. Plants and design can also be patented. You can find useful information at the United States Patent and Trademarks Office (USPTO) http://www.uspto.gov/patents/law/. Trademarks and trade secrets are other aspects of intellectual property that you may have to deal with.

In addition to being aware of plagiarism, patents, trademarks, and trade secrets, you need to be mindful of open access issues, which relate to valuable research data and academic publications posted online for everybody to read. However, you cannot always just use the data from open access sources. You often need to ask the author for permission. Many open
access publications use Creative Commons licensing. You can read more about open access in the Science Literacy chapter.

There is a lot to learn about using information legally and ethically, but this knowledge will empower you in your academic work and ultimately allow you to succeed. The following examples and tips will get you off to a good start.

Unintentional Plagiarism

Have you ever thought about why teachers and professors seem to spend way too much time urging everyone to be sure to cite all of their sources properly? You’ve heard it all before: footnote this, endnote that, put this in the bibliography, capitalize this word, where are the italics, the commas, periods, hanging indents, yada yada yada! It’s enough to make you give up and just wing it. But hold on a second while you gather your thoughts. Why do your professors always spend so much time urging you to do something that seems to have little practical purpose?

Scenario

Jackie was working on her 10-page research paper at the last minute. It was 3:30 am and her paper was due in class at 9:00 am. She finished the last sentence at 5:15 am, did a spellcheck and voila! Done! Groggy yet awake she went to class, turned in the paper and waited for her grade. She received an email from her professor that read, “There are some major issues with your research paper that I need to discuss with you. Please see me.” Uh oh. What could it be?

When she nervously went to see him, Professor Muntz told Jackie that she hadn't cited any of her sources, and because she included a lot of direct quotes in her paper, she was guilty of plagiarism. She received an F on her paper and may be referred to the school administration for academic dishonesty.

Was she really guilty of something that bad? In fact, yes she was. In this chapter we will discuss the importance of managing your information sources and some tips on how to easily and effectively avoid Jackie's pitfall.
Real World Cases

Students often feel that they are being singled out in regard to plagiarism and academic dishonesty. But that is far from the case. There are numerous examples of scholars and other professionals who have been caught plagiarizing. One such person is Doris Kearns Goodwin, a famous historian who wrote the noted *Team of Rivals: the Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (2006). She included material in an earlier book, *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* (1987), from three other sources without citing it, according to an article written by Michael Nelson.1

Although she has since published other works, her reputation has been tarnished, and people may not take her work as seriously because of this. Unfortunately, as Nelson points out in his article, she is not the only well-known historian caught plagiarizing.

Another example, with a dramatic outcome, is that of Eugene Tobin. He was the president of Hamilton College in New York State, when it was discovered that he had included plagiarized material in speeches he had given over the course of almost a decade. He resigned from his position as the head of this prestigious institution, admitting his guilt.2 Other college presidents and administrators have also been caught violating academic trust: if you try a search using the terms plagiarism and college president, you may be dismayed at the number of results.

Like some of the historians Nelson cites in his article, many students fall into a trap when they do research because they fail to mention where they found all of their information. Thousands of students in schools, colleges, and universities are guilty of committing plagiarism, but often they don’t know they are plagiarizing.

Let’s look at plagiarism and how to avoid it, and then continue on to some other intellectual property issues you may need to deal with.

What is Plagiarism?

In short, plagiarism is when you use words, thoughts, or ideas that belong to someone else without giving them credit. In the classroom (and in the world of publishing), documenting your information sources is the only way others can tell how thorough and careful you’ve been in researching your topic. If you don’t tell readers where your information came from, they may think (and many do) that you either made up the information or “stole” it. Failing to cite your sources is plagiarism.

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1 Nelson, 2002
2 Isserman, 2003
By managing the sources in your papers, you encourage others to do the same and you can be a go-to expert for your friends and classmates when they need help with how to find out how to cite sources properly. The information and advice you impart may help them avoid serious difficulties. Some students truly don’t know that they are doing something wrong when they paraphrase information without citing the information source. They might feel that paraphrasing the words of someone who is clearly an expert on the topic is the best way to write an accurate paper. And because they aren’t quoting it directly, it doesn’t need quote marks or attribution, does it? While the penalties they receive might (and this is a big “might”) be less severe than someone who buys a paper online or copies and pastes big sections of material into their work, the penalties could still be substantial. Raising your friends’ awareness so they won’t face this situation would be a kind thing to do.

Keeping Track of Your Sources

Try this the next time you do research. If you find some great articles on your topic, collect the following information about each as soon as you realize they will be helpful resources:

- Author name(s)
- Title of the article
- Name of the journal
- The volume number
- The issue number
- The date of the issue
- The name of the database where you found the article

Or, if you found a book, note the following once you think it might contain useful information:

- Author name(s)
- Title of book
- Place of publication
- Publisher’s name
- Year of publication

Or, if you found a website you want to use, collect the following details before you leave the site:

- Author name(s)
- Title of article or webpage
- Title of overall website
- The date of the webpage (if any)
- The URL (or web address)
You might be able to get some of this information with a simple screenshot, but be sure to fill in any missing elements.

This information is often referred to as bibliographic information or metadata. It consists of essential information that identifies the information resource used to inform a research project.

You may not use every single item that you found when you gathered your sources, but having a list of all of the sources you considered will help you keep track of everything you use for your paper.

As you read each source, write down any of the authors’ ideas, quotes, or thoughts you want to use and be sure to write down page numbers, if the source provides them. When you put your paper together, you will then have all the information you need to properly cite any quote, idea, or thought that came from each source.

Reference Management Software

Many researchers take the time to gather all of this information before they start writing. However, when they are ready to compile their footnotes or bibliography they can’t find their preliminary notes. It may be the case that some notes are in one notebook, other notes are in a file in their computer and still others are missing entirely. Fortunately, software has been developed that helps researchers manage their source material. You may have heard of some of these reference management products. Endnote, Refworks, Mendelay, and Zotero, among others, all help manage the information gathering and retrieval process.

In addition to providing one central location for all of your references, these reference managers can:

- import bibliographic information directly from a library catalog database,
- provide additional space for personal notations,
- create a bibliography or list of references in a variety of citation styles such as APA, MLA, Chicago, and more.

Some academic libraries provide access to Endnote or Refworks. If your library does not, Zotero is available free for use with the Firefox browser and Mendelay is also available at no charge from www.mendelay.com.
When to Cite

Now that you have gathered all of your information resources, you need to be mindful about how you used them in your research project. There are some very firm rules about what constitutes plagiarism:

- If you copy a sentence or paragraph verbatim (exactly) from a book, article, website, blog posting, or anywhere online or in print, you must provide information on the author and the publication in which the sentence or paragraph appears. This is known as “citing a source.”
- If you use some of the exact phrases in a sentence or paragraph, even if you are not copying the whole sentence or paragraph, you must cite your source.
- If you use original information that you have obtained from an interview or conversation with someone, you must cite your source.
- If you do not use the exact sentence or phrase but paraphrase it, or use the ideas inherent in the exact sentence or phrase, you must cite your source.
- If you reprint images, maps, diagrams, charts, or tables, you must cite your source.
- If you embed video files or audio files into your work, you must cite your source.

Exercise: Plagiarism Quiz

The following paragraph is from an article titled, “Hydraulic Fracturing Overview: Growth of the Process and Safe Drinking Water Concerns” in the March 1, 2012 issue of Congressional Digest.

The use of hydraulic fracturing continues to increase significantly, as more easily accessible oil and gas reservoirs have declined and companies move to develop unconventional oil and gas formations. Hydraulic fracturing is used for oil and/or gas production in all 33 U.S. states where oil and natural gas production takes place. According to industry estimates, hydraulic fracturing has been applied to more than 1 million wells nationwide. (p. 71)

Which of the following sentences does not plagiarize?

a. As of March 2012, hydraulic fracturing has been applied to more than 1 million wells nationwide.

b. Hydraulic fracturing has become more prevalent nationwide. More than one million wells have been created.

c. According to the Congressional Digest, more than one million wells in the United States use hydraulic fracturing (Congressional Digest, 71).

d. None of the sentences contain plagiarism.
Citation Styles

Citing sources and avoiding plagiarism should always be an author’s intent, but it is easy to get confused about how to cite. Citation styles were introduced in the Gather chapter, but it is worth repeating that there are many different citation styles. The three styles that are used most often are APA (American Psychology Association), MLA (Modern Language Association), and Chicago. There are no hard and fast rules about when to use each style. Professors often have a preference for one style over another, so make sure that you check with your instructor about which style they prefer.

Creating properly formatted citations has become easier in recent years with the introduction of reference management software and citation generators. A citation generator is software that will help to correctly format your citations. Some popular citation generators are Noodlebib and Easybib, both are available for a fee. There are also free citation generators available online. You can search the web to retrieve them. These generators are handy to use but they often contain errors so it is important to check the results for accuracy. The following resources are useful tools for all writers.

- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- *Citation Fox* (available at the University at Albany, University Libraries website)

You should be able to locate the three manuals in the reference section of your library. *Citation Fox* is available at http://library.albany.edu/cfox.

Where to Go For Help

Even if you are a very organized person and have diligently collected bibliographic information on all of the information resources that you consulted during the research process, you may misplace essential information on a resource. You may think that since you can’t find this information, you will be unable to use it. But there is another option—consult a librarian. Librarians have comprehensive knowledge about how information is organized and retrieved. They also have a wealth of information resources at their fingertips. Even if you can’t retrace your steps to find the missing data, it is likely that a librarian will be able to help you find the bibliographic information you need. Librarians can also help you determine when and how to cite your work. They may even be able to help you navigate citation generators and reference managers. Librarians at your library are available to help you in person, by telephone, and via email and chat. Consult your library’s website for contact information.
Ethical Issues and Intellectual Property

The Manage pillar includes the practice of professional and ethical use of information. Ethical treatment of information assumes that you are treating an author’s rights appropriately and avoiding an act of academic dishonesty such as plagiarism. As a creator of information yourself, you should understand the importance of respecting other authors’ rights and following the general rules set forth in legal documents (see the Useful Links about Intellectual Property section for citations to some of these documents).

There are many examples of intellectual property issues that you can find in the media. For example, in June 2013 as the authors were working on this textbook, the Supreme Court of the United States overturned the law that had previously allowed gene patenting. It might sound strange, but up until now if you were a scientist who studied the human genome and happened to discover a new gene, under the earlier law, you could patent it, thus assuring that whenever a person needed to have a medical test involving the gene they would have to pay you as a patent holder. These types of tests usually weren’t covered by insurance companies and were very expensive.

As an information creator, you want to be respectfully treated by others. That is why you should constantly strive to improve your ability to practice fair treatment of other authors’ works, including being cognizant of copyright, patents, and other issues associated with intellectual property.

Academic Integrity

You have already learned about plagiarism, often enemy number one when it comes to academic success involving research and writing. But there are other issues under the larger umbrella of academic dishonesty. First of all, every academic institution has a set of academic regulations that explain what is expected of students. Students are required to make themselves familiar with these rules.

Other examples of dishonesty that are mentioned in academic regulations are multiple submissions (one may not submit one project for two different classes), cheating on examinations, and forgery. Professors are dismayed when they have to talk to the students about these issues because, inherently, every teacher wants to believe that her students are honest. Unfortunately, plagiarism is so common that educators have begun using plagiarism detection software, such as Turnitin (see the Useful Links section). You obviously don’t want to be identified as committing plagiarism by this software.

It is imperative to understand that everybody has to be accountable for their own work and respectful of the work of others. Future scholarship depends on the accuracy and integrity of prior scholarship. That is why, when doing research one must use the information produced
by other people responsibly, i.e. provide citations within the text and a list of references at
the end of the paper with full citation information that will allow retrieval of the document.
Remember what you have learned in this chapter about managing your sources and citation
style. If you are diligent about applying this knowledge and careful about giving credit
where credit is due, you should have no worries.

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