

# Handy All-Purpose ILP/IRP/Research Paper Hints!

Note: This “one size fits all” outline may help you to understand how your paper should be organized, but

- Be sure to follow the instructions your advisor gives you
- Every paper is different, and none will fit exactly into this model
- Research papers and Capstone papers do not require all these sections

## Cover Page

- Does the title tell what your paper is about?
- Did you include all of the required information in proper format?

**Abstract** In no more than one double-spaced page summarize:

- What issue or problem did you address?
- What argument did you try to prove OR What solution did you give?
- How did you do your research?
- What were the results?

**Acknowledgments Page** Thank anyone you wish.

## Table of Contents

**Introduction** Briefly answer these questions to tell your reader what your paper will cover.

- What issue or problem are you addressing?
  - What are the circumstances in which it occurs?
  - Who does it affect?
  - How does it affect them?
  - What history does it have?
  - What causes it and why?
  - Will it get worse in the future?
  - What argument will you try to prove? OR How will your ILP help solve this problem?
- Present a thesis statement which includes your opinion about the issue or problem and the main points you will make to prove your argument or main ways you believe your project will solve the problem.
- How will you do your research?
  - How will you present your findings?
  - Who do you think will want to read your paper?
  - Why is this issue or problem important to you?
  - How will your work be helpful to others?

## Literature Review

- Have others studied this issue or tried to solve this problem?

- What did they do, such as research or creating a model program?
- How did they do their research?
- What did they find out?
- How did others respond to their work?

**Methodology** Explain how you gathered your information and/or produced your product.

For all papers:

- What sources of information did you use?
- How did you evaluate the quality of research studies?
- How did you evaluate the credibility of researchers or theorists?
- How did you know your research was adequate?

If you did a questionnaire, survey, focus group, or interviews:

- What questions did you ask?
- Why did you choose those questions?
- How did you decide who to question?
- How did you find the people to question?
- How did you administer the survey or hold the interview?
- How did you analyze your data?

If you did a business plan:

- What instructions did you use? Cite source in APA style
- How did you gather local information, if included?

If you presented a case study:

- How did you decide who or what to observe?
- How did you conduct your observation?

If you produced a manual, brochure, workshop agenda, or curriculum:

- How did you determine the need for the product?
- How did you decide which media to use?
- How did you determine your learning objectives?
- How did you decide what content was appropriate?
- Where did you get the information you presented?

**Substantive Chapters** Every paper will be different here, ranging from none to eight or more chapters. What else does the reader need to know to understand the issue, its history, or your research? How can you organize this information into chapters?

**Presentation of Product** Business plan, manual, curriculum, etc. goes here.

**Presentation of Data** Results from questionnaire, survey, interviews, etc. go here.

- What did you find out? Give results, but don't draw conclusions
- How was each question answered? Give the numbers, but don't interpret them
- What was said in the interviews? Give a summary, but don't analyze

**Analysis of Data** How does the data you presented prove or disprove your argument?

**Conclusions** Summarize your paper. Do not add any new information in the Conclusion!

- Did your research confirm your argument or suggest solution to problem?
- What other issues did your research make you aware of? Based on your results, what do you recommend?
- How might you do this paper again differently?

**Statement of Learning** What new skills did you learn from doing this project? Did you gain research, interviewing, writing, computer, or time management skills? Self-confidence?

**References** Every direct quotation, fact, and paraphrase which you cited must be listed here with complete bibliographic information in APA style. Only include books and articles cited in your paper.

**Appendix** Provide a copy of your questionnaire or transcripts of interviews; copies of other documents such as flyers or charts which you did not write but referred to in your paper