

Topics for the Research-Based Persuasive Report

This week you begin work on your final project, the research-based persuasive report, which is due in Week 8 at the end of the session. Each discussion board and assignment that you do from this point forward in the course will take you one step closer to completing the final project. In effect, from now until the end of the course, you will be completing bits of this final report.

What Should I Write About? To begin work on the final project, first choose a topic (see suggestions below). Before doing so, let's review the assignment directions for WA#4, the Research-Based Persuasive Report:

Write a report to a decision-maker on a problem that you identify in an organization or community. Propose a solution for the problem. The report should:

1. define the problem accurately that exists in your organization or community
2. propose a solution to the problem or issue that works for your organization or community
3. present the solution to a decision-maker or group of decision-makers who can implement it.

Implied Structure. This assignment description implies that the project include:

1. **Identification and description of the problem.** The description of the problem should include any background information necessary as well as specific, detailed examples of the problem so that the reader can have a clear sense of what is happening.
2. **Analysis of the problem.** In this section (and note that a section can consist of multiple paragraphs), you should drill down to the causes of the problem. In doing so, you should draw upon the course materials we have covered, your own first-hand observation and investigation of the problem,

and outside research.

3. **Solutions to the problem.** How can the problem be remedied? This is an area where research of "best practices" can be important to the solutions that you come up with. In other words, how have other people and organizations solved the same problem? How can those solutions be applied to your situation?

What have been successful topics in past classes? Good question, and variety is the answer. The topic you choose is less important than your ability to describe the problem, analyze it, and provide solutions for it in the context of your organization. Here are some topics that have resulted in top papers in the past:

Some possible topics related to communication issues within the workplace or community environment:

- Cross-cultural communication problems at a DC-area bank
- Communicating computer security information and procedures to remote workers
- Effect of combat stress on communication in a military unit
- Lack of effective communication from managers to employees in a U.S. government agency
- Overcoming communication obstacles in a command's family outreach program
- Overcoming communication barriers between German and American business associates
- Communication pitfalls in a small business environment
- Communication barriers between civilian and military personnel working together
- Effective RFP Development in a contracting corporation
- Establishing and maintaining effective communication channels with a non-profit's volunteer workers
- Improving customer flow and satisfaction in a retail store with improved signage
- Communication barriers facing the adult student returning to college
- How to educate the elderly to avoid internet scams

Here are some possible workplace research topics:

- Going to a wireless network
- Switching from Windows to Linux (or other similar switch)

- Installing/upgrading a company firewall
- Establishing a workplace drug policy
- Establishing an employee leave donation program
- Establishing an equipment donation program for used computers, etc.
- Establishing a company recycling program (paper, etc.)
- Education/retraining for your employees
- Designing a training program for workplace safety issues
- Redesigning employee performance evaluations
- Developing a work-at-home (telecommuting) policy
- Developing a flex-time policy
- Establishing on-site day care or providing other child care benefits
- Providing gym membership or creating an on-site workout facility
- Creating or revising a charitable contribution policy
- Creating or improving a tuition assistance program
- Accommodations needed for employee/s with specific health issues (for example, migraines)
- Establishing a Habitat for Humanity (or other group) chapter at your organization

Some students have chosen topics outside of their workplaces, such as:

- Starting a neighborhood watch program
- Starting a mentor program at your place of worship
- Getting additional lighting in the neighborhood
- Changing traffic patterns around your child's school
- Starting a PTA website for your child's school
- Installing a "tot lot" in your neighborhood
- Constructing a crying baby room at your place of worship
- Offering ESL courses at your church
- Increasing participation in a military Family Support Group
- Introducing a youth sports program to a school or community

Discussion Board Assignment

Your first step toward completing the final project, the research-based persuasive report, is to choose a topic to work on for the rest of this course. You may choose one of the topics above or come up with one of your own.

In either case, post your chosen topic to this discussion board below and explain why you chose it. What motivates you to explore this topic and what do you hope results from your work on it?

Please post your work by Wednesday midnight of this week.

Please reply to at least one other student.