

I have a confession. I hated research. Until last semester, I would procrastinate, attempt to find credible sources, then write a paper and hope it met minimum requirements. Then my attitude changed all because of a simple change in the presentation of a research assignment.

CCT 300W, known at Eastern Kentucky University as Managerial Reports, is a writing intensive requirement for students looking to obtain a Bachelor's degree in any business related area. I have chosen to pursue a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in accounting. The thought of taking a class labeled "writing intensive" petrified me so I put off enrolling as long as I possibly could without delaying graduation and chose my instructor, Dr. Robles, based on teaching styles disclosed by previous students.

In late August Dr. Robles introduced a large research project with an early December due date. I instantly started to panic. Dr. Robles outlined all the requirements, explaining how the report should be presented and then as if sensing my fear, she explained that she would walk us through the proper form for each part of the project, but I was not convinced.

The first step in the research project was to choose a topic and pose a question about that topic. It was then I realized one of the reasons I hated research: there were too many choices! I dreaded committing to a topic and realize later that I hated it. The preapproved list allowed me to narrow down the process and choose a topic, Business Etiquette in College Graduates, that I would not have thought of. I have always enjoyed learning about the proper etiquette in different situations so this subject was one that I could relate to and anticipate learning about. The research sparked my interest further in this field and has opened a possible new opportunity this summer. The research has shown there is significant lacking of correct business etiquette in recent college graduates, and I believe this is due to the lack of focus on etiquette in the curriculum. Currently I am outlining a program to test at my home church that will introduce basic social etiquette to middle and high school students of my community in hopes that it will prepare them for the future with correct business etiquette.

The next vital moment in my transformation occurred when I realized that Dr. Robles had set due dates that were months prior to the final submission date. Simply stated, the second reason I hated research was because I did not know how to organize any project in a manner that promoted well-written work. These due dates forced me to work on a specific part of the paper and complete it before the final deadline, receive feedback and correct it, thus reducing stress as the deadline approached. The end product was better quality work than had I procrastinated. I now know that to complete successful research I must organize myself and set internal deadlines to prevent stress and produce quality research.

The third reason I hated research surfaced when I realized that I did not know how to research a topic and decided scholarly from non-scholarly articles. Dr. Robles dedicated a few class meetings to explain the different type sources. She also set up a meeting with a librarian that showed us firsthand how to conduct research with the ECU Libraries online databases and how to narrow down our search material to only those articles that held merit and were considered scholarly. Now I know how to conduct effective research on a topic and structure the search terms to produce the most credible sources.

The transformation took an entire semester but I can honestly say that research does not scare me like it would have a year ago. Applying for a scholarship such as this would have been completely out of the question. Knowing how to organize myself and how to conduct research properly, I feel more confident stepping out of my comfort zone academically. I have also obtained the skills necessary to start a new chapter in life after graduation that will require constant research to stay on top of all of the new accounting rules and regulations.