

## 4.6.15: Documenting and Citing Sources

### Learning Objectives

- Document and cite sources using the correct style and formatting

Proper citation of sources is essential to avoiding plagiarism or copyright violations. The following video from Conestoga College Library Resource Centre discusses the Turabian Chicago Style found in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. You can find more detail about the *Chicago Manual of Style* online or purchase a printed copy of the Chicago Manual of Style, now on its 17th edition.



There is however something pertinent to the business world that we should consider: there is a common tension between Academic/University environments, and the often-labeled, “Real World.” While academic writing clearly requires proper citation in accordance with generally agreed upon rules, business writing might not need to be so precise. The spirit of attribution however, and not taking credit for someone else’s work, is still obviously at play. Consider your audience, the time available, and the purpose of the communication when making a decision about style and formatting of citations.

Style and visual considerations are often important for business writing as well. Consider this McKinsey Global Institute report. On page 11 of the report, we can find one simple reference. So as not to visually distract the reader, the authors use a footnote. This is appropriate for a glossy high dollar report, for which McKinsey and other powerful consulting houses are well known. On page 12 of the report, an infographic with extensive quantifiable data, provides source material towards the bottom of the table in a very muted and small font. This is reasonable for the type of document at hand, and could provide you with insight into citation style for your reports.

The key here is proper attribution, and doing it in a manner that conforms with the visual and general use of your sources. The closer to academic or think-tank like work you are, the more precise and formal it needs to be; if, however, you worked for something like a startup or a smaller company, overly formal and precise citation could actually be distracting and cumbersome. Use your best judgement.

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