Writing Tips

• No Stories – A common mistake many students make is opening their research paper with a cute anecdote that has nothing really to do with research at all.

• Keep the "History" of the Subject to a Minimum – What is happening today in research and application? Not general details or definitions from a historical perspective.

• Do not write research papers in first-person. In other words, do not use the phrase “I” or “We.” Always refer to your research sources.

• Do not write like you speak. (Slang)

• Keep quotes to a minimum and never use a string of quotes together. There is no real need for more than two direct quotes per section. Use paraphrasing more than direct quoting and always cite your sources.

• Do not use contractions – like “can’t” and “don’t” etc.

• Remember this is a "formal" research paper so write professionally, use scholarly sources (See Below) and always cite your sources.

• Understand that this is a “research” paper and NOT a report or topical paper.

What is a 'scholarly' source?

• Class Textbook
• Published Book (no older than 15 years)
• Peer Reviewed Journal Article (no older than 15 years)
• Government based web sources (DOJ, NJRS, etc)
• Documentary video

It might be easier to define/list items that are NOT scholarly:

• Magazine articles (i.e. Time, Newsweek, etc)
• Newspapers
• Wikipedia or any generic .com like Dictionary.com or Encyclopedia.com
• Web pages that are not researched based and/or are written by someone who is not affiliated with a governmental agency and/or a faculty or staff at an accredited University
Research Links

http://www.uwplatt.edu/library/resources/cjs.html

Criminal Justice Periodical Index
Index to U.S., U.K. and Canadian criminal justice journals, newsletters and law reporters. Some full-text.

Limit your results to full-text and scholarly journals.

CQ Researcher
In-depth, weekly publication covering current and controversial issues. Full text.

Criminal Justice Abstracts
Index to journal articles, books and reports from criminal justice sources.
This product uses pop-ups. You must configure your pop-up blocker to allow this site

http://www.ncjrs.gov/ (National Criminal Justice Reference Service)

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/welcome.html (Bureau of Justice Statistics)

Helpful APA Links

Eastern Washington University (Excellent On Line Tutorial)
http://support.library.ewu.edu/reference/tutorial/flash/citation.html

Vanguard University of Southern California -

Ohio State University (OSU)  http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/apagd.php

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/
http://4teachers.homestead.com/Weekly_APA_Exercises.htm