Step 4: Find other resources

Theses & dissertations
Go http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on "Databases," then choose:
• Dissertations & Theses
Also try:
• NTLTD, http://search.ndltd.org/

Beyond Penn State
Go http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on "Databases," then choose:
• WorldCat and/or
• ACCESS PA
Order items through ILLiad, Penn State’s Interlibrary Loan System, https://ill.libraries.psu.edu

Why search outside Penn State?
If your professor expects you to find “all” the information on your topic, you need to search many libraries. WorldCat is a database of more than 10,000 college libraries. ACCESS PA includes all types of libraries in Pennsylvania.

Citation help
Many databases can create citations in APA, MLA, or other formats. Ask a librarian to show you how.

Also see the library’s site on citation styles: http://www.libraries.psu.edu/psul/researchguides/citationstyles.html

Step 5: Evaluate your sources

Currency?
• When was this published or posted?
• When was it last updated?
• Is this up-to-date enough for your topic?

Relevance?
• Does this answer your question or relate to your topic?
• Was it written for college students or professionals? (or for other people with needs like yours)?
• Can you understand what you are reading? Is the reading level too easy or too hard?

Authority?
• Who is the writer, publisher, and sponsor?
• Does the URL tell you anything about who created or supports it?
• What is the writer’s education and profession? Where does (s)he work? Does this make her/him an expert on your topic?
• Can you contact the writer and/or publisher to learn more about this?

Accuracy?
• Is this “peer-reviewed,” “refereed,” or edited for quality? By whom?
• Is it backed up with evidence — citations to other books, articles, data, interviews, etc.?
• Can you find the same information in other sources? How does the information relate to your own experiences?
• Does this have any obvious grammar, spelling, or factual mistakes?

Purpose?
• Is this fact or opinion?
• Why are the writer and publisher providing this information? To entertain, inform, teach, or sell to you?
• Are there biases — cultural, political, religious, or other points of view that cause the writer to emphasize some issues or ignore others?

*The “CRAAP Test” was created by California State University—Chico

Adult Education, Training, & Development Resources
Step by Step
Penn State Harrisburg Library
351 Olmsted Dr., Middletown, PA
General Information: (717) 948-6070
Research Help: (717) 948-6073
http://www.libraries.psu.edu

Bernadette A. Lear
Behavioral Sciences & Education Librarian
BAL19@psu.edu
(717) 948-6360

For my web site, go to http://www.personal.psu.edu/bal19 or scan this QR code with your smartphone:
Step 1: Find basic facts, encyclopedias & handbooks
(some online; some on 1st floor of Harrisburg Library)

Start with
http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on “Databases,” then choose:
• Sage Reference Online
• Gale Virtual Reference Library
• Wiley Online Library

Next, try “Reference” on 1st floor:
— Adult Education: REF LC5200
— Management: REF HD30
— Human Resources: REF HF5549
— Other areas recommended by the librarian

Why use encyclopedias and handbooks?
They help you:
— Focus on important ideas & people
— Explore related topics
— Find more keywords to use further searches
— Identify best sources for researching your topic
— Put together a “bibliography”

With this background information, it’s much easier to decide which books & journal articles are going to be helpful & understand how they all fit together in your project.

Step 2: Find books
(some online; most on 3rd floor of Harrisburg Library)

Start with
• The CAT, http://cat.libraries.psu.edu/
  Use the CAT’s “Advanced Search” to look for books from certain dates, or to choose audio, video, or other formats.

Where to find them in Harrisburg

Most books:
— 3rd floor: “LC” section (Adult Education)
— 3rd floor: “HM700” & “HM800” sections (Organizational Psychology)
— Other areas recommended by the librarian

Why use books?
Books add to basic information that you learned from encyclopedias & handbooks. They bridge between beginner’s information & scholarly articles. Books may discuss:
— History or theories
— An overview: the “big picture” and related parts
— Best practices or recommendations
— Recent research

Look for a “Table of Contents” or a list of chapters in each book. Read the parts that most interest you.

Step 3: Find magazines & journals (most online)

Start with
• LionSearch, http://www.libraries.psu.edu
• Google Scholar, http://scholar.google.com

If you need to focus, or need better search abilities
Go to http://www.libraries.psu.edu, click on “Databases,” then choose:
• ERIC (Education)
• Business Source Premier
• ABI/Inform (Business & Human Resources)
• PsycINFO (Psychology)
• Other databases recommended by the librarian

Articles beyond Penn State
• Google Scholar, http://scholar.google.com

Why use databases?
Databases empower you to search thousands of journals at one time. They also allow you to limit results by date, type of article, & other criteria. Use the “Get It” button to see Penn State’s online copy of a journal (if it exists), check if Harrisburg Library owns a paper copy, or order a free copy through ILLiad (Interlibrary loan).

Some search tips
employ* = finds any word that begins with a root
employ* OR work* = finds either word (good for synonyms)
employ* AND learn* = finds both words (good for linking two different ideas together)
sort by relevance = puts “best” items at the top of your results list

If you need help at any time, just ask:
Bernadette Lear, BAL19@psu.edu,
(717) 948-6380, Room LIB 102G