

## **How to Use this Guide**

This edition of the School of Business Guide to Writing is designed to accomplish two goals: the first goal is to present you with the entire picture of what is involved in providing clear and complete assignments (whether they are research papers or memos) to your professors and managers. The second goal is to provide a quick “go to” index for when you have specific questions that you need fast and definite answers to. The first goal is accomplished by reading through this Guide in its entirety. The second goal is accomplished by the Table of Contents with its live links to the various sections.

This Guide was compiled by School of Business faculty from several departments, along with the Business and Economics Librarian and the Director of the Tutoring Center. While the authors of this Guide believe we have provided advice on how to write and cite in the best style for business, it is important for you to make sure that you always follow your professor’s or manager’s instructions as to format and citation for whatever assignment or task you need to accomplish. There is no “one size fits all” model for a memo, or a research paper, or for whatever other assignment you will need to complete. Additionally, you may need to ask your professors or managers questions such as “what is your preferred format for this project?” While this Guide endeavors to help you do your best possible work, it is not a substitute for making sure that you understand what it is you are to produce.

In addition to asking your professors or managers about the preferred project format, be sure before you begin writing that you are clear as to the purpose of the piece you are going to write and that you know who your audience is. You will include more or less explanatory information depending on whether you are writing for a group of colleagues knowledgeable about your topic or a manager or executive who will make a decision based on your research and conclusions. The tone of your writing is also critical. You need to treat your audience with respect and not assume a casual tone that is best left for your correspondence with friends. And remember to always check your spelling, grammar and punctuation before sending your work along. Text message conventions are for text messages, not for writing assignments.

This Guide is just one resource. In the Guide we also reference books and websites that provide information on writing and citation as well. Be sure to look at those resources. We look forward to working with you.