

How to Write an Academic Paper When You have Limited Time?

Name

Institution Affiliation

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### **Introduction**

Writing an academic paper can be one of the most challenging academic activities as it includes a lot more than just skimming through articles written by other authors. A good academic paper consists several sections from the background through the conclusion and needs clear and authentic analytical thinking (Strauss, 2012). It allows the author to draw out the most credible, and useful information and put it in a compact form that can be further evaluated and expanded. Due to its complexity, an academic paper needs a fair amount of time, and under strict time constraints, the task becomes even more challenging (Swales & Feak, 2004). This essay includes a discussion on how to write an academic paper when little time is available.

### **Writing an Academic Paper and Time Challenges**

Writing academic paper is a challenge, and one of the most important factors to tackle this task is to start early. It does not only allow to handle the complexities of the paper, but also provides enough time to revisit the information included in the paper to make sure that it is authentic, well-put, and will sound compelling to the reader. When someone confronts time constraints while writing an academic paper, it is likely that the author will make mistakes in the formatting, content, structure, or the overall outline of the paper due to the eleventh- hour panic (Hyland, 2004).

The reason little time availability can be one of the major constraints in academic writing is because the author cannot get enough time to do research on the topic that can potentially reduce the descriptive and analytical content in the paper. If an author has to write an academic paper in little time, it is highly significant that he gives keen attention to some crucial points to be able to provide high-quality paper. Furthermore, wise planning can play a potentially constructive role in making the process smoother even with shorter deadlines (Street, 2009).

### **Time Management**

Although efficient time management skills are always important in writing an academic paper, their importance gets intensified with shorter deadlines. It is highly important to understand that time management is the key to producing a good paper. Based on the nature of the paper and his writing skill set, the author needs to realise how much time is left and break it down into smaller parts to prepare a personal schedule. The author should consider working on the sections that hold important spots in the paper and come back to the less important ones later. It enables the author to address the paper from the most important to the least important parts. Although the real-life time available for the task will remain the same, good time management can help the author to utilise the available time in the best possible way. (Murray, 2013).

### **Divergent and Convergent Thinking**

When time is short to write an academic paper, convergent and divergent thinking can help overcome the constraint and produce a high-quality paper. To choose the topic for the paper, the author can use divergent thinking and prepare a list of all the ideas that come to his mind. After listing all the potential focus areas or topics, the author can narrow down the list using convergent thinking to the most appropriate, relevant, and feasible ideas. It will make it easier to select an appropriate topic in less time, and also ensures that the author chooses the topic that interests him the most. To design the structure of the paper, brainstorming process can help in coming up with relevant and appropriate sections and can also provide flow to the paper (Dias, Freedman, Medway, & Par, 2013).

### **Staying Within the Limits**

Being in a hurry can be stressful, and it is most likely that the author fails to address the right question and gets distracted due to the time constraint. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the academic paper does not lose track, and all requirements are addressed in an entirely credible and academic way. The topic or the working thesis statement of the academic paper should be kept in mind to ensure that time constraints don't affect the relevancy of the paper. It can be done by reviewing the relevant sources and evaluating the appropriate articles that fall within the same academic domain. A significant amount of time can be saved if relevant sources

are chosen as staying within the focus of the paper does not only reduce the effort, it also saves time and makes the content academically sound (Strauss, 2012).

### **Maintaining the Quality**

It is most likely that while trying to meet the deadline, the author somehow loses his focus on sustaining the material included and the quality of the paper. This problem can be evaded if the author avoids distractions and follows the planned structure. Trying to incorporate a large amount of information in less time can affect the value of the paper, and therefore, it should be made sure that whatever material is included, it is worth it and is also appropriate (Dublicki, 2015). Even if the information incorporated in the paper is limited, if it is well-explained and analysed, the quality of the paper can be maintained, and blunders can easily be dodged. It is better that after selecting the topic, brainstorming, designing a structure, and developing a thesis statement, a rough draft is prepared to make sure that the content is clear and concrete and does not include any vague ideas that reduce the superiority of the paper (Hartley, 2008).

### **Final Touch**

No matter how little time is available, it is necessary that there is enough time saved at the end for editing, proofreading, and any possible revisions. Proofreading and giving a finishing touch are two of the most substantial phases of writing an academic paper and no matter how little time is left, it should always be made sure that these steps are not skipped due to the time constraint. It helps in spotting any weak points of the paper and also aids in facilitating the strengths of the paper to build a connection between the arguments made in the paper. Additionally, while these final touches help improve the grammar, content, and organization of the paper, they also make it easier to relate its material to the thesis statement that plays a vibrant role in a quality paper (Bailey, 2014).

### **Conclusion**

While writing an academic paper, there are some points that should be kept in mind to be able to deliver a quality paper in little time. The author should have decent time management

skills and has to be able to use both convergent and divergent thinking to develop a working thesis statement and well-organized structure for the paper in reduced time. Furthermore, trying not to lose the focus by avoiding distractions is a crucial step in maintaining the quality of the paper. In the end, giving sufficient time to proofreading can allow overcome the weak points in the content, and in that time, relevancy and connection to the thesis statement can also be revisited that might be weak due to the time constraints issue.

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