

**A POCKET
GUIDE TO
PUBLIC
SPEAKING
4TH EDITION**

Chapter 10

Finding Credible Sources on the Internet

Use a Library Portal to Access Credible Sources

- Library portal
 - ▶ Electronic entry point into library's holdings
 - ▶ Resources selected by trained professionals
 - ▶ Information is reliable and credible
 - ▶ Part of the deep web
 - ▶ Inaccessible by search engines

Typical Resources Found on Library Portals

- Full-text databases
- General reference works
- Books and monographs
- Archives and special collections
- Digital collections
- Video collections

Access Journal Articles

- Begin with a general database search.
 - ▶ *Academic Search Complete*
 - ▶ *Academic OneFile*
 - ▶ *Academic Search Premier*
 - ▶ *LexisNexis Academic*

Access Journal Articles (cont.)

- Subject-specific databases are also available.
 - ▶ Business: *ABI/INFORM*
 - ▶ Science: *Web of Science*
 - ▶ Health: *PubMed*, *CINAHL*, *Alt HealthWatch*
 - ▶ Public affairs: *PAIS International*, *iPoll Databank*
 - ▶ Ethnic and minority-specific: *Ethnic NewsWatch*

Access Books and Popular Magazines

- Book databases
 - ▶ *Worldcat*
 - ▶ Google Books
- Magazine and newspaper databases
 - ▶ *General OneFile*
 - ▶ *InfoTrac*

Be a Critical Consumer of Information

- Search engines cannot discern quality.
- Ask yourself:
 - ▶ Who posted this information, and why?
 - ▶ What are the source's qualifications?
 - ▶ Where is similar information found?
 - ▶ Is this information timely?

Distinguish among Information, Propaganda, Misinformation, and Disinformation



- Information

- ▶ Data presented in an understandable context
- ▶ Example: vital signs

- Propaganda

- ▶ Information represented to provoke a response
- ▶ Example: military posters encouraging enlistment

Distinguish among Information, Propaganda, Misinformation, and Disinformation (cont.)



- Misinformation

- ▶ Something that is not true
- ▶ Example: urban legends

- Disinformation

- ▶ Deliberate falsification of information
- ▶ Example: doctored photographs

Evaluating Web Sources

- Check the most authoritative sites first.
 - ▶ Official Web sites of organizations
 - ▶ For topics related to those organizations
 - ▶ Government-sponsored Web sites
 - ▶ Free of commercial taint
 - ▶ Contain highly credible primary materials

Evaluating Web Sources (cont.)

- Evaluate authorship and sponsorship.
 - ▶ Examine domain in Web address
 - ▶ .edu (educational); org (nonprofit organization)
 - ▶ .gov (government); .mil (military)
 - ▶ .com (business/commercial); .net (network)

Evaluating Web Sources (cont.)

- ▶ Look for an “About” link.
 - ▶ Describes the organization
- ▶ Identify the creator of the information.
 - ▶ Look for author’s biographical information
 - ▶ Avoid if no contact information is provided

Evaluating Web Sources (cont.)

- Check for currency.
 - ▶ When was information published or updated?
 - ▶ Outdated information may be inaccurate.
- Check that the site credits its sources.
 - ▶ Reputable sites document their sources.
 - ▶ Verify information with two reputable sources.

Evaluating Web Sources (cont.)

- Check the site for objectivity.
 - ▶ Look for
 - ▶ Fallacies in reasoning;
 - ▶ Distorted data;
 - ▶ Oversimplification of information;
 - ▶ Signs of conflict of interest.

Make the Most of Internet Search Tools

- Distinguish among types of search engines.
 - ▶ General search engines
 - ▶ Compile their own databases
 - ▶ Examples: Google and Yahoo!

Make the Most of Internet Search Tools (cont.)

- ▶ Specialized search engines
 - ▶ Allow narrower but deeper searches
 - ▶ Examples: Google Scholar and THOMAS
- ▶ Blog-specific search engines
 - ▶ Search blog posts
 - ▶ Examples: Technorati and Google Blog Search

Make the Most of Internet Search Tools (cont.)

- Consult subject (Web) directories.
 - ▶ Searchable catalog of Web sites
 - ▶ Organized by a human editor
 - ▶ Allow you to progressively narrow searches
 - ▶ Examples: ipl2 and Infomine

Make the Most of Internet Search Tools (cont.)

- Search engines and subject directories
 - ▶ Subject directories
 - ▶ Learn about and narrow a topic
 - ▶ Search engines
 - ▶ Emerging information not yet found in subject directories
 - ▶ Terms, facts, etc., buried within documents

Make the Most of Internet Search Tools (cont.)

- Beware of commercial factors.
 - ▶ Paid placement
 - ▶ Giving higher rankings for a fee
 - ▶ Paid inclusion
 - ▶ Guaranteeing result listings, but not ranking

Conduct Smart Searches



- Search engines
 - ▶ Use keywords to retrieve information
- Library catalogs, databases, and Web directories
 - ▶ Use subject searching

Recording and Citing Web Sources

- Locate and record these citation elements:
 - ▶ Author of the work
 - ▶ Title of the work
 - ▶ Title of the Web site
 - ▶ Date of publication/last update
 - ▶ Site address (URL) and date accessed

Recording and Citing Web Sources (cont.)

- Record notes.
 - ▶ Create separate headings for each idea.
 - ▶ Record citation elements from your sources.
 - ▶ Indicate direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary.
- Orally cite sources in your speech.
 - ▶ Alert audience to source of ideas not your own.

Create Effective Keywords



- Keywords
 - ▶ Describe main concepts of topics
 - ▶ Search engines tag them within documents.
- Keyword queries
 - ▶ Use more rather than fewer words.
 - ▶ Use quotation marks for exact phrases.

Create Effective Keywords (cont.)

- ▶ Use Boolean operators.
 - ▶ Words placed between keywords
 - ▶ Specify how keywords are related
 - ▶ Examples: *and*, *or*, *not*
- ▶ Use nesting.
 - ▶ Parentheses and *or* for synonymous terms

Create Effective Keywords (cont.)

- ▶ Use truncation.
 - ▶ Retrieves different forms of words
 - ▶ Affix an asterisk to your term
- ▶ Consult the Search Tips section.
 - ▶ Review tips for use before searching

Search by Subject Heading

- Subject headings
 - ▶ Used with library catalogs and databases
 - ▶ Describe and group related materials
 - ▶ Selected by information specialists

Use Advanced Search

- Keywords
 - ▶ Filters include:
 - ▶ “All”
 - ▶ “Exact phrase”
 - ▶ “At least one”
 - ▶ “Without”

Use Advanced Search (cont.)

- Language
 - ▶ Search in a specified language
- Country
 - ▶ Results originating in a specified country
- File format
 - ▶ Specify document formats (*.doc*, *.pdf*, etc.)

Use Advanced Search (cont.)

- Domain

- ▶ Limits results to specified Internet domains
- ▶ Common domains: *.com*, *.edu*, *.gov*, *.org*

- Date

- ▶ Searches a specified range of time

Record Internet Sources

- Keep track of your speech sources.
 - ▶ Internet sites often change.
 - ▶ Record source information as you use it.
 - ▶ Create footnotes.