



Essay Writing for Management

Anna Jones

Teaching and Learning Unit

Economics and Commerce

The Question

- What are the operational words (the words which are telling you what to do)?

Eg take a position, justify, discuss, analyse.

Some others are: *argue, compare, define, describe, evaluate, explain, outline*

The Question continued

- What are the key words?
- Q1 manager, performance, motivating
- Q2 customers, marketing frameworks
- Q3 business strategy,
- Q4 corporate culture, managers

Pre-Planning

Make a list of questions based on the topic

- Why is this important?
- What terms need to be defined?
- What about?
- How does this affect?
- Who are some of the key theorists?
- What are the key factors?
- What is your point of view?

Example of Pre Planning questions



Q2

- What is a customer?
- Why are they everything?
- Who says they are everything?
- In what ways are customers important?
- Who has written about customers?

Example continued

- What are the marketing frameworks?
- How do they operate?
- Which ones are interesting/relevant?
- Who are the theorists?
- How do marketing frameworks deal with the idea of customers?
- What is my point of view?

Example continued

Q3

- What is business strategy?
- What different kinds of strategies are there?
- Who are the major theorists on business strategy?
- Why does it differ across companies?

Example continued

- In what ways does it differ across companies?
- Why is strategy important?
- How is strategy important?

Example continued

Q4

- Who has written about corporate culture?
- What is it?
- Are there different elements?
- Do different writers have different viewpoints?

Example continued

- What is the manager's role
- What is the connection between the manager and corporate culture?
- Why is corporate culture important to managers?
- How is corporate culture important to managers?

Research

- Read widely (not just the text book)
- Be focused
- Keep your topic and the questions you wrote in your mind
- Write down the citation details - the author, page no. title, publisher, place and date.
- Make sure in your notes you are clear what are your own words and what is a quotation

Brainstorm

- Write down all your ideas on the topic without referring to your notes, without organising or worrying about what is relevant
- Then organise these ideas into categories or headings
- Use mind maps or spider diagrams or concept maps to develop the connections between ideas

Planning

- Group ideas together
- Develop an argument or point of view
- Think about the connections between ideas
- Think about how you develop your ideas
- Think about how the ideas develop
- Think about how the ideas connect
- Your essay should move in a line

Writing

- Keep the question in front of you
- Ask yourself:
 - How am I answering the question?
 - Why is this relevant to the question?
 - How are these ideas connected to each other?
 - Is this absolutely clear to the reader?

Writing continued

Make your point clear by using phrases such as:

- Thus it can be seen that
- Hence, it is clear that
- From this it can be argued that
- The evidence suggests that

Paragraphs

- Each paragraph should have only one idea
- It should begin with a topic sentence that states the main idea and connects with the paragraph before
- The following sentences should develop the idea and give examples
- The final sentence should bring your ideas together

Connectives

- These are the words that link your ideas
- They are very useful signposts for the reader and give an indication of the logical flow of your writing
- eg furthermore, moreover, in contrast, however, nevertheless, in conclusion, in summary therefore, consequently

See Good Writing booklet for complete list

Academic Writing Style

Generally, an impersonal, formal style is expected eg

- When considering instrumentality, it is clear that
- In order to understand the manager's role, it is important to consider
- It is clear that motivation is one of the key factors in the performance of an employee

Analysis

Your essay is supposed to do more than simply describe. Think about

- Why something happens this way
- Why something is important
- What it means
- What the implications are
- How something works

Analysis continued

- What the strengths and weaknesses are
- What the other point of view is
- What has been left out or not mentioned
- What the connections are
- How one idea links to others

Introductions

- Need to indicate the central idea and put it in context
- Should make your point of view or central theme clear - make the end clear at the start
- Should answer the question
- Should state the direction your essay will go
“this paper will begin by discussing ..., it will then ...and finally will consider

Introductions continued

Introductions may do some of the following:

- define terms
- give an overview
- outline the limitations (what is beyond the scope of this paper)
- give the background or context
- introduce the questions the essay will be discussing

Conclusions

- Should tell the reader ‘this is what I have been saying and this is the perspective I have arrived at’
- Bring together the main points
- Sum up the argument rather than repeat it
- Make it clear that you have answered the question
- Link in to the introduction

Citing

- Acknowledge all sources used, even if they are summarised rather than quoted directly
- You will get more marks from citing sources than not citing them
- Make it clear what is a summary and what is a direct quotation
- Think critically about what someone else has said

Citing continued

When referring to an author, ask yourself:

- Why is what they say important?
- Why are you quoting the idea?
- Who else has written on the topic (do they agree/disagree/ consider another angle?)
- How do these ideas connect to others?
- What is your point of view?

Citing continued

If you use a direct quote, use quotation marks and the page reference

- According to Abrahamson (1991: 34)
“.....”
- Lee (1999:259) has argued that “.....”
- Smith (1997:139) identified the three key features as being “.....”

Citing continued

When using a summary or paraphrase use phrases such as:

- Williams (1996) comments/ argues/ claims/ asserts that.....
- Schiavello (1990) discusses
- There is much evidence on which to base the argument that(Cameron 1987, Perkins 1992, Chen 1995)

Citing continued

The reference list at the back of the essay should be organised alphabetically

- should only include references cited
- underline or italicise the title of the book or journal
- if you are using the internet, state the author, date, name of article, home page, web address

Citing continued

Dunphy, D., & Stace, D (1990) *Under New Management: Australian Organizations in Transition*, Sydney, McGraw-Hill.

Abrahamson, A. (1991) 'Managerial fads and fashions: The diffusion and rejection of innovations', *Academy of Management Review*, 16(3) 586-612

Citing continued

From the internet

Burka, Lauren (1993) 'A hypertext history of multi-user dimensions' MUD History, <http://www.ccs.neu/home/1pbud-history.html>

Editing

Check that:

- there is only one main idea per paragraph
- each paragraph has a topic sentence
- each main point is supported by evidence
- each paragraph connects to the next
- there is a logical structure and flow

Editing continued

- you have CLEARLY answered the question
- you have cited all your sources
- your expression is clear

- Get someone to check your essay