

In both written and verbal communication, references and citations are important tools that can help establish your credibility with the intended audience. Below you'll find some tips on how to effectively use references and citations.

1) *Be specific*

Cite your references specifically rather than generically. Check out the examples below:

"Warren Buffet has recently invested \$100M in this company." (www.wsj.com, Buffet Takes Stake mm/dd/yyyy)

versus

"Analysts rate this stock as 'buy'."

or

"A study by Deloitte consultants shows that on average costs can be reduced by 15% through the use of technology in Human Resources." (www.deloitte.com, Case Study – Improved HR Services, mm/dd/yyyy)

versus

"Experts say this will reduce costs by 15%."

2) *Utilize sources both internal and external to the organization*

Use statistics and figures to support your conclusions. Be sure to indicate the source of the data.

- Citing sources inside the organization helps to make others feel involved—and can generate support for your ideas. It can also position you as an effective leader and good team player who respects and values others' contributions.

"These profit projections were determined using cost studies provided by Alex Rogo in Operations and sales forecasts provided by Willy Loman in Distribution."

- External sources are often recognized as a neutral third party. Effective use of external sources can help bridge differences of opinion and resolve controversial issues.

"The US Census Bureau indicates higher expected population growth in the southeast than the northeast. Based on this projection, we should shift our real estate development focus to the southeast and relocate a major portion of our workforce to that area."

3) *Consider the source*

Evaluate the credibility of your source. Not all sources are held in the same esteem and will carry the same weight with your audience. Finding a source that supports your position does not always mean it will help to make your case with others. Utilize respected and recognized sources. Be familiar with a source's credentials and body of work so you can be sure of its motivations and reliability.

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