Writing an Academic Piece

Types of Piece

- External
  - articles and general interest pieces
  - conference papers/posters (with/without proceedings)
  - journals, chapters in books, books
- Internal
  - assignments, programs, etc.
  - projects (eg, BSc, etc.)
  - dissertations (eg, MSc, etc.)
  - theses (eg, MPhil, Phd, etc.)
- … but some overlap …
  - many PhDs and good MScs are cited elsewhere!

Focus and Content

- The paper needs to have a meaningful introduction and conclusion, as well as related content in between
  - So, you won't simply be able to lift parts of your research and call them a paper!
- Plan what you want to include
  - Identify the most appropriate issues from your research, and then plan a section structure
  - Get your supervisor to agree the proposed structure

Focus and Content

- The paper must focus upon something **you** have done
  - Not just a review of literature or a set of unproven ideas
- The paper must be standalone
  - You are writing for people who have no prior knowledge of your work
  - People should not have to read the rest of your research in order to understand it

Language

- With the exception of general interest media pieces (which aren't really 'academic' anyway), *all* academic work should have the same formal style
- Be clear and concise
  - Say it once – once only – don't say it again
  - use the best/clearest grammar/vocabulary you can
- Assume that your reader is intelligent – they *will* understand what you are saying
  - even if in truth they have to read it several times
  - only if you are actually *unclear* are you responsible for your reader's difficulties

Person

- Never say ‘I’ or ‘me’ (first person)
- Some people are happy with ‘we’ or ‘us’
  - but it’s better if this means the *author* and the *reader* rather than just ‘we’ the *authors*
- Some people prefer ‘the author(s)’ (third person)
- Best to avoid the issue all together
  - and, yes, it *can* always be done …
  - for example. ‘I/we noticed that …’ becomes ‘It became apparent that …’
  - or, ‘I/we wish to thank …’ becomes ‘Thanks are due to …’
  - actually, this is a good exercise in English!

Format

- Use the template of set of guidelines when available …
- … or devise your own consistent formatting and style for other times
- Pay attention to:
  - Margins, columns, headers & footers
  - Font sizes for text, headings, captions
  - Title, author details, abstracts & keywords
  - Tables and figures
  - use of references
  - length restrictions
  - how to submit work

Structure

- Typical …
  - Title, authors (and affiliations*) (contents*)
  - Abstract
  - Keywords*
  - Introduction (to subject^)
  - … other sections(^)
  - Conclusions (and future work^)
  - Acknowledgements*^
  - References
- … but not all have to be included (*) and the order can change (^)

Abstract

- This may be the only bit that the reader initially gets to see
  - browsing electronically through Tables of Content
  - searching by keywords (if used)
  - flicking through journals
- They will decide whether (or not) to read the piece on the basis of the abstract
- So it must be a clear description of the contribution your work makes
- it's a summary of what you've done but is not a route-map through your paper
  - that's for your 'Introduction'

Introduction

- May fulfil one or both of the following …
  - A ‘route-map’ through your work …
    - Section 2 does this …
    - … is considered in Section 2
    - …
    - … Section 11 concludes and suggests future work
    - sentence/paragraph for each
    - do *not* repeat what you’ve said in the abstract
  - An initial discussion/overview of the topic/subject area in question
    - any in-depth analysis gets saved for the next section
  - (can be in either order)

Other Sections

- As required by the nature of the paper. eg …
  - (1: Introduction)
  - 2: Whatever the current way is
  - 3: What's wrong with the current way
  - 4: Inspiration for my new system
  - 5: Detail of my new system
  - 6: Implementing my new system
  - 7: Testing my new system
  - 8: My new system is great
  - (9: Conclusions)

Other Sections

- As required by the nature of the paper. eg …
  - (1: Introduction)
  - 2: What I'm trying to figure out
  - 3: Where I've looked and what I've found
    - i.e., the literature review
  - 4: What I've done with these results and what I think they mean
  - 5: What I'm still not sure about
  - (6: Conclusions and future work)

Tables and Figures

- Remember 'a picture paints a thousand words'
  - but only if it's clear and relevant
    - otherwise it's just a picture!
- Be sure to *explain* what the numbers, terms, etc. actually *mean*
  - either in the text (typical)
  - or in the caption (IEEE)
- Use a consistent numbering system
- (Maybe) include tables of figures/tables

Conclusions

- A summary of what you've done
  - AND what it means, what has been achieved
- May include a 'future work' section
  - things either not completed in your work or new questions raised by your work
    - to be considered by you in your next venture
    - or as suggestions to others for their research
- May (for a dissertation for example) include a 'critical review' of the artefact or yourself
  - … how good was the final product
  - … how you managed the project

Referencing

- Your paper will be supported by references
- Do not list sources that you have not cited in the text
- Cite references that readers would have a chance of obtaining
  - e.g. MSc lecture notes are not a valid reference!
- Use credible and authoritative sources where possible
  - E.g. citing journal or conference papers is better than citing online news sites or vendor websites

References

- Do it the way you're told to …
  - by the conference/journal/editor
- Be consistent
- Be complete
- Be correct

STYLE *and* SYSTEM (or Method)

- STYLE: rules used to describe a source / bibliographic details
- SYSTEM / METHOD:
  - - Running Notes
  - - Numeric
  - - Harvard

Why reference?

- Enable others to follow-up your sources
- Acknowledge the work of others
- Avoid pretending the ideas/words of others are yours (plagiarism)

When to reference

- Source of an important specific idea or example
- Referral to a body of work
- Source of a Quotation

Running notes

- Bryant has challenged the systems method.[1]
- Footnote or Endnote:
  - 1. Anthony Bryant, All systems are go. London: Thunderbirds Publishing, 1991.

Numeric referencing

- Bryant has challenged the systems method [2]
- References:
  - [1] Ball, Shirley …..
  - [2] Bryant, Anthony ……

Harvard referencing

- Bryant (1996) has challenged the systems method.
- In references give details in full:
  - Bryant, A. (1996) All systems are go. London: Thunderbirds Publishing, 1991.

Mistakes with referencing

- Too little or too much referencing
- Inconsistent style
  - Jones, A. (1996), *Foxes are brown*, London: Cape and Cope.
  - Jones, A. 1996 Foxes are Brown.
  - Cape and Cope, London
- Full reference given in text
  - This argument is countered by Ann Jones, in her article *Some trees are green* (Harvard Botanical Review, 12:2, July-August, pp. 43-9), who offers the opinion that not all trees have green leaves.

Mistakes (continued)

- Failing to reference a source which contains the source you've used
  - E.g. Jones quotes Owen and references this source. You then use the quote by Owen.
  - Your reference should read: (Owen in Jones, 1996, p. 43) N.B. Both Owen and Jones to appear in the references
- Double naming of authors
  - Jones and Hill argue that 'most grass is yellow in colour' (Jones and Hill, 1993, p. 12)
  - Should be: Jones and Hill (1993, p. 12) argue that …….
- Not citing page numbers in book references
  - Most grass 'would appear to be contaminated' (Jones, 1990).
- List of References
  - - not in order
  - - missing a source named in the text

Exercises

- Read, and compare the styles of, …
  - A journal paper
  - A book chapter (in an edited academic book)
  - A professional magazine article
  - A student assignment
  - A project report
  - A dissertation
  - A thesis

Language problems

- Avoid informal language (e.g. don’t, can’t etc)
  - It’s OK to speak like it, but we don’t write like it . . . except in PowerPoint slides! ;-)
- Avoid writing in first person style
  - Rather than say “I investigated ...” say “The research project investigated…”
  - So, no mention of ‘I’ or ‘my’ in the text!

Language problems

- Make sure that acronyms are defined
  - Only define them **once** (the first time they are used in the paper)
- Poor spelling and grammar
  - Make use of the spellchecker!
  - Read the paper yourself – does it read well?
  - Try to get someone else to read it, and give you feedback

Plagiarism

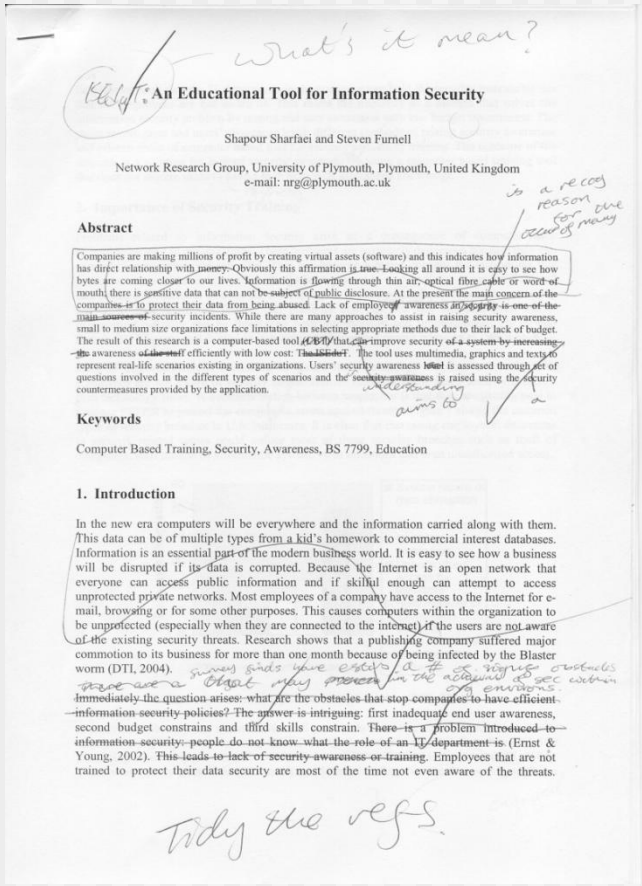
- The paper **must** be **your** work in **your** words
  - Even for parts relating to literature survey
  - Read something, then write down your understanding
- If you are quoting from other sources:
  - "Put the quoted text within quotation marks and include a reference" (Author, 2005)
  - You should not need to quote large segments of text
- If in doubt about something, ask your supervisor for an opinion

(Ab)use your supervisors

- It is extremely unlikely that you will create a suitable paper at the first attempt
- Your supervisors should give you feedback
  - this does not mean they will write it for you!

Addressing corrections

- Papers often require a lot of (additional?) work
- Expect to receive feedback from your supervisors



what's it mean?

An Educational Tool for Information Security

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Abstract

Companies are making millions of profit by creating virtual assets (software) and this indicates how information has direct relationship with money. Obviously this affirmation is true. Looking all around it is easy to see how bytes are coming closer to our lives. Information is flowing through thin air, optical fibre cable or word of mouth, there is sensitive data that can not be subject of public disclosure. At the present the main concern of the companies is to protect their data from being abused. Lack of employees' awareness in security is one of the main sources of security incidents. While there are many approaches to assist in raising security awareness, small to medium size organizations face limitations in selecting appropriate methods due to their lack of budget. The result of this research is a computer-based tool (CBT) that can improve security of a system by increasing its awareness of the staff efficiently with low cost. The tool is a CBT. The tool uses multimedia, graphics and texts to represent real-life scenarios existing in organizations. Users' security awareness level is assessed through set of questions involved in the different types of scenarios and the security awareness is raised using the security countermeasures provided by the application.

understanding aims to

Keywords

Computer Based Training, Security, Awareness, BS 7799, Education

1. Introduction

In the new era computers will be everywhere and the information carried along with them. This data can be of multiple types from a kid's homework to commercial interest databases. Information is an essential part of the modern business world. It is easy to see how a business will be disrupted if its data is corrupted. Because the Internet is an open network that everyone can access public information and if skilful enough can attempt to access unprotected private networks. Most employees of a company have access to the Internet for e-mail, browsing or for some other purposes. This causes computers within the organization to be unprotected (especially when they are connected to the internet) if the users are not aware of the existing security threats. Research shows that a publishing company suffered major commotion to its business for more than one month because of being infected by the Blaster worm (DTI, 2004).

surveys finds your exists a # of signific obstacles

Immediately the question arises: what are the obstacles that stop companies to have efficient information security policies? The answer is intriguing: first inadequate end user awareness, second budget constrains and third skills constrain. There is a problem introduced to information security: people do not know what the role of an IT department is (Ernst & Young, 2002). This leads to lack of security awareness or training. Employees that are not trained to protect their data security are most of the time not even aware of the threats.

Tidy the refs.