COM 307 – BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

SEARCHING FUNDAMENTALS
There are two ways to search for information: to search by word (keyword) and to search by idea (subject). In keyword searching you choose your search terms; you have greater flexibility but you must try multiple searches using different spellings and synonyms in order to match all the variations authors could use. You will get results not related to your topic. Alternatively, subject searching is very organized and uses only librarian-determined terms; you find your terms -- usually called Subjects or Descriptors -- and you search using them to get fewer, more relevant results. Try using this procedure:

1. Perform a search using important terms that define your topic
2. Find a good result and look at its Subject / Descriptor
3. Perform a subject search using the Subject / Descriptor you find

RESEARCH IS A TWO-STEP PROCESS
You should divide your research into two stages:
Stage 1: Use the library databases to identify a source, e.g., a journal article
Stage 2: Use various resources to obtain the source, including:
   360 Link to Full Text / List of E-journals – a list of magazines & journals available via our databases (Do not forget the tutorial on the library web page.)
   List of Print Journals – a list of our print serials; the list is available in print & online
   Librarians – always feel free to ask a librarian to help you locate material
   Interlibrary Loan – fill out an online ILL form to obtain material we do not own

RECOMMENDED SUNYIT DATABASES
Academic Search Complete - Scholarly multi-disciplinary database designed specifically for academic institutions
Business Source Complete - Covers virtually all subject areas related to business
Emerald - Full-text journal articles in all areas related to business
Proquest - Full-text articles in including ABI Inform, a business database
SUNYIT Catalog – Lists material owned by Cayan Library
WorldCat - An international catalog of books, websites, maps, etc.
The database(s) that you choose make a big difference in the results that you receive. If you are not sure which database to choose, look at the database descriptions to help you with your choice(s): http://www.sunyit.edu/library/lib/descriptions.inc

INTERLIBRARY LOAN (ILL)
Our library shares its materials with other libraries, and those other libraries share their materials with us; this sharing is called interlibrary loan. If you want a journal article which we do not own then fill out an online ILL form and we will get the material for you. Use the Library’s Interlibrary Loan page to access the ILL form.

RF, BBG 9/09
What is a Periodical? – helpful guide from Erie County Community College Library
http://elinks.ecc.edu/library/Journals.htm

SUBJECT DIRECTORIES
Librarian’s Index to the Internet – trusted sites for research
http://www.lii.org
Internet Public Library – lists of information on many topics from the School of Information at the University of Michigan
http://www.ipl.org
Google Directory – Choose your topic by selecting subject area you need to research
http://directory.google.com

EVALUATING WEBSITES
Always evaluate your web results for their:
Accuracy  does the site misstate, misrepresent or exaggerate facts? are there errors?
Authority  who created the site and what are their affiliations and credentials?
Bias  does the site offer a point of view or opinion?
Coverage how much information is there?
Currency when was the site last updated?

ADDITIONAL EVALUATION INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE
• Google’s Directory page: search for web site evaluation and choose the Category
• Evaluating Web Pages to Apply & Questions to Ask (UC Berkeley)
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html
• Evaluation of Information and Sources (Purdue)
http://www.lib.purdue.edu/rguides/studentinstruction/evaluation/websiteevaluationchart.html
• Five criteria for evaluating Web pages (Cornell)
http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/webcrit.html

DOCUMENTING YOUR WORK
• Official manuals for APA and MLA are on Reserve and in Ready Reference.
• Citation handouts are available online through the Library’s Research Guides page
• Make A Citation -- http://citation.sunyit.edu, for older editions of APA and MLA

RF, BBG 9/09