

Troubleshooting Guide

Issue	Resolution	Reasoning
Issue 1: You can't find any information on your topic.	Broaden or expand your keyword search to a related topic or consider a new topic.	Information is out there, broaden your search or think of related subjects.
Issue 2: There is too much information on your topic to sort through	Find a specific part of the topic and focus in on that. Be flexible.	Get more specific by choosing a topic within the subject to explore.
Issue 3: All the sources on your topic say the same things.	Go to a different location or a different kind of source to find information.	If you started with the Internet, go to the library or talk to an expert to get another angle.
Issue 4: You realize that your hypothesis was dead wrong.	Amend your thesis and your questions. Be flexible.	Being wrong is as much a part of discovery as being right. Amend your thesis and continue.
Issue 5: You lose interest in your topic.	Find a new angle on the topic that interests you, and dig in deeper.	Looking for a new angle or something you did not know can help reinforce your interest in the topic.
Issue 6: Your topic is so historic that there are no primary sources.	Focus on the best secondary sources and find out what sources they used.	If a primary source seems impossible to find, look at a reliable secondary source to find the primary sources it references.
Issue 7: Your topic is too recent or information is classified, hard to get.	Try to find people to interview; they may know sources that are hidden.	If your topic is very current, people are probably the best resource you have available.
Issue 8: All the answers to your questions are in one source.	Keep looking. One source is not adequate to prove depth of research.	You must continue searching because one source is not adequate.
Issue 9: Your research got side tracked by a related topic that grabbed your attention.	Change the focus of your research to the side issue. Be flexible.	Go where the discovery process takes you and enjoy the trip. Be flexible.
Issue 10: You can't stop procrastinating because you feel overwhelmed.	Set small goals and set a deadline for each small goal.	Procrastination is often a result of feeling overwhelmed. Breaking the work down into small doable chunks can help.