

Would anyone pay you for this skill? Plus Tips for Each Good Habit.

The 5 Good Habits for Evidence are essential to figuring things out, problem solving, and to critical thinking. They are listed in the left column below and they are covered in the Evidence Quiz folder.

Frequently, students who have been rewarded for their actions in the past have incorrect assumptions about what bosses and professors expect. They seem to reevaluate their assumptions only when I ask "If you got really good at doing this, would any business or group want to pay you to do this?" If companies (or you if you had a business) could not afford to pay for this kind of errors or fantasy work and upper level profs would lose their credibility if they rewarded for it, then change your habits now.

5 Good Habits for Evidence	Would a Company Want to Pay You for These Skills?
1 Reliable Sources Only	No one would ask you to "Google this for me and copy anything you like from the Internet" and no one would pay you for doing it. What's a reliable source? What your boss or your professor thinks is a reliable source.
2 Factual Accuracy That You Verify with the Reliable Source Before You Write	No one would pay you if you cannot figure out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the question asked • the right facts carefully read and selected for that question • the meaning of the facts carefully read as a whole <p>Example: if your boss asked you to explain why the Dallas plant is failing and instead you investigated the plant in San Antonio, you better have a very good story.</p>
3 Factual Accuracy That Is Verifiable for Every Statement You Make	No one would pay you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if you don't know exactly where (including the source and the specific page) you found your evidence • if someone has to check your work all of the time.
4 No "Half-Copy" Plagiarism or "Patchwriting" ¹	No one would pay you—at least not well—to copy another's words and move them around. No one will want you around if you present yourself as the author of work that another person did. ² If you think STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) are just about memorizing, remember these disciplines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may require you to be able to repeat terminology accurately • but they always require you to be able to apply knowledge accurately. <p>Also see Why I Make a Big Deal About "Half-Copy" Plagiarism and "Patchwriting." The reasons may surprise you.</p>
5 Quotation Changes Revealed Clearly	No one would pay you (or want you around) if you are so careless that you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make others look like they can't write a correct sentence. • Change the meaning of what others say and write

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¹ The quoted terms are explained on page 746 in the ninth edition of *The Bedford Handbook* by Diana Hacker and Nancy Sommers.

² Page 746 and 747 also provide examples that show that listing a page number in a citation is not enough. You are claiming that you created **all** the words:

- If you copy another's words without using quotation marks (") to distinguish your words from the author's words
- If you take another person's sentence structure and just swap out what you *think* are synonyms

The 5 Good Habits for Evidence As Common Sense Actions + Links to Tips

Years ago a student asked me what could he do to **prevent** errors with evidence? He was in sports and used an analogy. He said **"I need to know how to hold the racket."** The right column has common sense tips. Some came from my 4th grade teacher, others from a wonderful world history professor in a junior college, a few (but they were good) from my dissertation director, and many from colleagues in industry jobs. This may be different, but **you can do this and it will help you figure things out.**

Good Habits As Common Sense Actions You Can Do	Practical Examples for Each Good Habit
<p>Use only the sources that your prof or boss considers reliable, especially any you are told to use.</p>	<p>Habit 1. Reliable Sources Only</p>
<p>Pay attention.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the question and notice its parts. What is the boss or prof asking you to do? 2. Read the correct part and all the parts of the sources that you are told to use. 3. Figure this out. Caution: Repeating and collecting words is not figuring something out. 	<p>Habit 2. Factual Accuracy You Verify with the Reliable Source Before You Write</p>
<p>Plan your writing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When you think that you have figured out what the sources mean and what happened, then decide what you must "teach." 2. You do not need to teach everything, but everything you teach must be true: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never cherry-pick • Never embellish (These 2 words and others are defined at the bottom of the Evidence Quizzes folder.) 	<p>Habit 3. Factual Accuracy That Is Verifiable for Every Statement You Make</p> <p>Tips: 3 Frequently Asked Questions about Citing</p>
<p>Create your own simple words; do not steal another's words. If you use another's words, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ""(quotation marks) marks accurately • Cite – show ownership accurately <p>Examples of both plagiarism and "half-copy" plagiarism are at the bottom of the Evidence Quizzes folder. Do not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plagiarize (Copy whole sentences, paragraphs, etc.) • "Half-copy" plagiarize or "patchwrite" Copy sentence structure or many short phrases (See examples!) 	<p>Habit 4. No "Half-Copy" Plagiarism or "Patchwriting"</p> <p>This may also help you: Why I Make a Big Deal about Plagiarism and Patchwriting</p>
<p>When using "" (quotation marks), protect your reputation by being careful with the author's reputation.</p> <p>Do not use "" inaccurately and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the author's sentences look grammatically incorrect. • Change the author's meaning (the bigger error) 	<p>Habit 5. Quotation Changes Revealed Clearly</p>

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