Evaluating Information Resources

In the process of conducting research, the most prominent resources one finds are books, periodical articles and web resources. Library-related databases provide access to resources that meet the evaluation criteria used by professionals who select resources for inclusion. It is up to you to evaluate the appropriateness of all resource for your research purposes.

Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Although criteria will differ somewhat depending on the type of source you are evaluating, several criteria that are generally used for all resources include:</th>
<th>Additional criteria that could be used include:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authority / Credibility / Publishing Body</td>
<td>Currency / Timeliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy / Verifiability / Quality</td>
<td>Scope / Depth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bias / Objectivity / Point of View</td>
<td>Intended Audience</td>
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“How to” Evaluation Web sites

The following websites include overviews of criteria. Take note of the url/web address to see where the page was produced.

Evaluation
http://www.lib.purdue.edu/rguides/studentinstruction/evaluation/

This succinct group of web pages provides a clear overview and the charts for books, periodicals, and websites provide additional suggestions and sources of information for verifying the criteria.

Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply & Questions to Ask
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html

Here you’ll find helpful explanations and questions one would ask concerning a web source.

Critically Analyzing Information Resources
http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill26.htm

This page is particularly useful for evaluation of books and articles.

Evaluating Internet Information
http://www.lib.vt.edu/help/instruct/evaluate/evaluating.html

This site includes criteria, rationale, and “how you can tell”. A link to their bibliography on evaluating web information includes sample “believe it or not” sites and hoax sites.

Evaluating Information Found on the Internet
http://www.library.jhu.edu/researchhelp/general/evaluating/

The information in this guide is quite helpful except for its specific tips involving search engines. Why? It hasn’t been updated since 1996. Still, the information on criteria is still accurate.
Evaluating Blog Credibility


This albeit casual blog post is on target in providing guidelines for the evaluation of a blog. I wasn’t impressed or interested in other posts from this author nor could I critically evaluate his experience. Still, this specific post corresponds with my professional opinions so I chose to include it here for you. Would I include it in a research project? Only if it added something unique to my argument. I’d probably look elsewhere to have these criteria verified in a more authoritative resource.