

**THE TITLE OF YOUR ADP PROJECT GOES HERE: CAPITALIZED, BOLD AND  
CENTERED**  
(single space title if more than one line)

An Applied Doctoral Project submitted

by

**STUDENT'S FULL NAME** (no credentials)

Month 20XX

to

**ASHFORD UNIVERSITY**

Upon the recommendation of the Faculty and the approval of the Board of Trustees, this  
Applied Doctoral Project is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of

**DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY**

Approved by:

---

Name of Chair, degree  
Committee Chair

Committee Members:  
Name, Degree  
Name, Degree

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20XX

Title of the Applied Doctoral Project

by

Student's Full Name

### Abstract

According to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA manual), an abstract is “a brief, comprehensive summary of the contents” of the article or paper (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010, p. 25). The purpose of an abstract is to provide the reader with a quick overview of what is contained in the article or paper.

The abstract consists of one double-spaced page or less which includes the following:

- A concise description of the study, a brief statement of the purpose or importance of the study, and a summary of study approach
- A summary of findings and implications

The APA manual indicates that an abstract should be written in “clear and concise language” (2010, p. 26), using active voice and present tense. The abstract for an ADP final report should be no more than 350 words. Do not write the abstract until the study is completed; simply include a “placeholder” page for the abstract when submitting your proposal.

*Key words: list here in italics the key words that might lead a reader/researcher to the project report. These may be some of the key words that were used in the literature review.*

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)

Write a meaningful thank you to those people in your life who have helped you accomplish your academic goals. An example follows:

Though naming a single author is traditional in academia, no piece of work is done in isolation. All the people in my life, past and present, have contributed to my own development as a practitioner, scholar, and researcher that has allowed me to focus on a particular piece of knowledge. I am thankful for the journey that has brought me to this time and place, and to the people I have met along the way.

Thank you to my parents, my spouse and my siblings. I have been lucky all my life to have had a family who allowed me to follow my interests without prejudice. Thank you for all your support, emotional and financial, that allowed me to have this gift of taking the time to pursue my doctoral degree without any tangible evidence of what lay beyond. I am especially thankful that, as a student in my mid-life years, I have become even closer to all of you.

This ADP would not have been possible without .....

I am especially thankful to..... (my colleagues, my Chair, my committee members, my mentor or coach)

I appreciate the support I have received because.....

This is a personal statement that you may *choose* to include in your final project report. Speak from the heart. This statement is usually written at the end of the study and not for the proposal; insert a “placeholder” page in lieu of the dedication when submitting your proposal.

## DEDICATION (OPTIONAL)

You may include a dedication, if you wish. Typically, a dedication is short, one to two sentences at the most. This optional statement is usually written at the end of the study and not for the proposal; insert a “placeholder” page in lieu of the dedication when submitting your proposal.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### [No initial heading]

Chapter I introduces the reader to the nature of the ADP by introducing the topic and then moving the focus of attention from a broad overview to a more specific discussion of the intent of the study. This chapter should be written in present and future tense for the Proposal and in past tense for the Final Project Report.

### **General Statement [or Background of the Study]**

In this section of Chapter I, describe the over-arching topic of the ADP and the issue, situation, problem or opportunity the study addresses. Explain both *what* will be studied and *how* conducting a research study on this topic will add to the literature or provide practical value for professional in your field of study. Support the rationale for the relevance of the topic, with sound documentation from the literature.

### **Justification Statement**

In the Justification section, provide sufficient background about the topic area and its relationship to the discipline or field of study that supports the need for, or opportunity to, conduct the proposed project. You can use the information from your Project Justification Template to write this section of the report, but expand the two or three paragraphs you originally wrote to comprise an in-depth (at least two or three pages) project justification. Convey the relevance of the over-arching topic, the research focus, and the issue, situation, problem or opportunity the study addresses. Summarize how the intended outcomes could be used to advance knowledge, understanding or practice in the content area. This statement serves as the foundation and rationale for your study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This is the heart and soul of your project justification. What, exactly, do you intend to accomplish with your proposed study? Provide a specific and accurate synopsis of the overall purpose of the study and align the purpose of the study with the project justification. Begin the section with a single-sentence Purpose Statement (**the purpose of this study is to....**) that succinctly describes the focus, study approach, population and geographic location of the study.

Then, briefly define and delimit the specific area of the research and clearly identify the project approach and intended outcomes. Identify and define the central concepts or ideas of the study and the units of analysis in the study. Briefly justify the general method of inquiry used in the study: qualitative, quantitative, mixed method or other, and present the over-arching study question(s) or statement of project intent. Make sure to demonstrate alignment between the justification statement, the purpose statement and the project approach. Identify specific quantitative research questions and hypotheses (as applicable), if hypotheses will be tested.

### **Importance of the Study**

Work from your Project Justification Template to describe how your study represents a contribution to theory and/or practice in your field of study. Clearly identify how the study outcomes may be used by practitioners and scholars, and provide sound support from the literature to justify the rationale for the study. Answer the following in a logical, explicit manner: what is the importance of this study, what will the study contribute to theory and/or practice in the student's field of specialization, and what are the potential implications of the study?

### **Conceptual Framework**

This section of the report places your study within a specific theoretical area in the student's field of study. Although not included in the Project Justification Template, the information in this section should be well-informed by your field of study and your conceptualization of the framework in which the study is grounded. Then, in the text of the section, situate the study among other research studies within the theoretical area, summarizing relevant research literature and justifying the study based on its potential contribution to the existing body of research or to practitioner knowledge in your field of study. Articulate the connection of the study to a certain body of literature vis a vis the framework for grounding the study in the literature. Be explicit in referencing the identified framework, citing contemporary literature.

### **Overview of the Project Approach**

This section of the report should presage the information in Chapter 3, describing the proposed project approach and data collection methodologies. Working from your Project Justification Template, describe the overall approach for the proposed project, including how the project will be conceptualized, organized and implemented. Discuss how the proposed project will reflect accumulated learning from your academic program, and any proposed data collection methodologies and instrumentation, as well as the study population, as appropriate. Then, describe how project outcomes will be achieved.

For studies that use secondary data or that employ an alternative form of research, check with your Chair or Methodologist about the appropriate approach to writing this section of the report.

### **Definition of Terms**

This section is intended to provide information to your reader about terms frequently used within the research study that may be potentially confusing to the reader. Define important terms to be used in the study, especially those that have multiple meanings or connotations. Use citations to support the origin of definitions, and define important technical terms that may be unknown to a reader. Operationalize key variables or constructs.

### **Assumptions, Limitations and Delimitations**

This section of the report is intended to illustrate the real and anticipated boundaries of the study. Start with assumptions, those beliefs about facts that are not actually verified (for example, that the sample is representative of the general population, or that participants will tell the truth in interviews). Describe the scope and bounds of the study that are beyond the researcher's control and those that are within the researcher's control (delimitations are boundaries you, the researcher, have set). Address major limiting factors in the study that could possibly affect the results. Articulate assumptions about facts that are not actually verified. Address potential weaknesses of the study, and discuss generalizability of the study findings.

### **Summary**

The summary should be an accurate and brief articulation of the points covered in the chapter. Summarize key points of the study articulated in Chapter I (don't introduce any new concepts or resources). Provide an overview of the content of the next chapter, bridging to Chapter II.

## **CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

### **[No Initial Heading]**

Chapter II constitutes a comprehensive understanding of the historical and current thinking and research into the pertinent topic. To support the legitimacy of the current study, a thorough understanding of what the study will add to the most current literature on the topic is necessary, as is a synthesis of the relevance of the current study to practitioners in the field. Literature should be critically analyzed, synthesized and integrated to produce an overview that allows your reader to understand where the study fits into the current thinking concerning the topic. Existing and historically seminal literature should provide a contextual framework within which the research is situated. Part of the literature review should provide an academic foundation for the project approach. Begin with the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the Proposal and Final Project report, and the organization of the chapter. Frame the review by restating the topic and the over-arching research question(s) or project intent. This chapter should be written in past tense.

### **Search Strategy**

In this section of the chapter, describe the strategy you used to collect relevant literature, indicating which search engines were used and the key search terms employed. Provide an overview of the professional, institutional and governmental database sources you used in the literature review. Review the strategy used for focusing on empirical research that most closely resembles the current study.

Indicate your strategy for identifying historically seminal studies and writings of theorists, and justify the time interval for current sources (last two to three years? last five years?). If applicable, explain the lack of currency of recent publications.

**[Topical Heading]**

The rest of the literature review should include **logical topical headings of your choice** that aid the reader in understanding the content and organization of the chapter. The specific headings will differ for each Proposal or Project Report.

**[Topical Heading]**

Write the literature review as an integrated, critical analysis and synthesis of the relevant research and other scholarly literature published on the topic. Your literature review should include the most recent scholarship and important historical theories and research to situate the topic in the field of study. Synthesize prior research to illustrate what is currently known about the topic, comparing and contrasting different theories and research results. Evaluate previous research and related theories, and integrate various studies and theories to describe the historical and current state of knowledge on the topic.

**[Topical Sub-Heading]**

Use sub-headings as appropriate to organize the review, but avoid having only one sub-section per primary heading. Make sure every paragraph in the report contains at least two sentences, preferably three or more sentences.

**[Topical Sub-heading]**

Each sub-section should relate to the primary or level one heading. The literature review should reflect a comprehensive understanding of the literature in which your study is grounded, covering the most important theories, research findings and/or practitioner-based



evidence upon which the study is based. In writing the review, introduce a range of issues, contradictions, controversies and points of agreement across sources. Make sure the review is well-organized around major ideas or themes, or is organized historically.

**[Topical Heading]**

Your literature review must address how your proposed research fits in the context of research to date. Provide evidence from current literature that reinforces the relevance of the topic and the research focus, and provide relevant context for describing, evaluating and elaborating upon the topic area, and the theories/models that undergird the project focus.

Draw primarily from published academic journal articles in peer-reviewed journals or sound academic books containing primary material; provide sound justification for using other sources. These other sources may include the professional (non-peer-reviewed) literature, and organizational, institutional and government databases.

**[Topical Sub-Heading]**

Be certain to identify how the research and reviewed literature relate to the Purpose Statement, the study population, the study context or setting, and the over-arching research question(s) or project approach. Include a discussion of differing and common methodologies or research approaches previously used to study the research topic, including their strengths and limitations.

**[Topical Sub-Heading]**

Review literature related to the proposed project approach, including major and foundational sources in the research design and application. Include literature that relates the purpose of the study to practical applications of potential study findings for practitioners in your field of study. Include literature that links the intended outcomes of the project with the

advancement of knowledge, understanding or practice in the discipline or field of study.

And, finally, ensure that the literature review reflects the credibility of the writer in his or her field.

### **Summary**

Summarize key points of the relationship between the study's over-arching research question or project intent and the literature. Summarize the study's potential contribution to the field of study.

Provide a bridge to Chapter III by summarizing literature-based arguments for choosing the intended project approach. Keep this bridge section short.

## CHAPTER III: PROJECT APPROACH

### [No Initial Heading]

Chapter III should describe the procedures that will be followed in conducting the study (for the proposal) and the procedures that were actually followed (for the final report), as well as the overall research approach. The format and content of the chapter will vary depending on the nature of your study and the type of research methods that will be used. This chapter should be written in the future tense for the proposal and in past tense for the Final Report.

Outlined below are sections that would be appropriate for a study in which *primary* data are collected from participants. Chapter III for a study in which secondary data (data from third-party sources) are analyzed or that comprises a meta-analysis or a systematic review of the literature will require different sections and content. Check with your Chair and your Methodologist about recommended sections for these types of studies.

Begin with the purpose and the organization of the chapter. Describe the method of inquiry used (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, mixed method, meta-analysis, program evaluation, etc.), and the specific project approach chosen. Explain how the project approach derives logically from the Justification Statement, the Purpose Statement and the over-arching research question(s) or project intent.

### **Study Approach**

In this section, describe the overall approach to the project, including the methodology that will be used. Include a description of each phase of the study, if applicable, and the ordering of the phases consistent with specific research approaches.

Justify and support the choice of the study approach using major and foundational sources, explaining why other possible choices would be less effective.

Discuss how the project will be conceptualized, organized and implemented, and include a well-defined execution plan. Describe your role as the researcher in the data collection procedure, and address the potential impact and minimization of research bias through methodological approaches.

### **Over-arching Research Question(s) or Project Intent**

Identify the over-arching research question(s) or project intent, including hypotheses for any quantitative research questions. Align the research question(s) or project intent with variables of interest, as well as with the Justification and Purpose statements from Chapter I.

Ensure your over-arching research question(s) or project intent is/are: clear and succinct, answerable/testable/achievable, and open-ended (*not* yes/no questions).

### **Population and Sample**

If your proposed study has more than one phase, you should provide population and sample information for each phase of the study. Clearly describe the study population(s), how the population(s) will be accessed, and how sample selection will proceed. For each phase of the study, identify and describe the source of the specific population(s) and the population characteristics for each phase of the study, as applicable.

Verify that you have obtained permission to access the population(s), if applicable, and provide notice of permission in an Appendix. Describe the sampling method for each phase of the study, as applicable, as well as strategies for recruiting participants.

Identify and justify the sample size for each phase of the study, as well as the specific criteria that will be used for selecting participants for each phase of the study, as applicable. Describe the sample characteristics for each phase of the study, as applicable, and indicate how sample selection will impact the generalizability of the study.

### **Ethical Concerns**

In this section of the chapter, you should identify all procedures undertaken for protection and ethical treatment of participants. Describe the informed consent process in detail, including how participants will provide consent, and include a copy of the Informed Consent in an Appendix. Make sure to consult the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Handbook for guidance writing your Informed Consent.

Discuss in detail how confidentiality will be addressed, including procedures to protect confidentiality (and anonymity, as applicable) in data collection, analysis, reporting and storage of data. Refer to published guidelines and standards for ethical treatment of human participants, including those codified in the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>). Review guidelines in the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Handbook to guide you in writing this section.

Describe in detail any treatment or intervention to which participants will be exposed. If concealment or deception will be used, identify that as part of the treatment or intervention, and include a description of how participants will be debriefed following use of concealment or deception.

Identify whether a control group will be used and whether the control group will receive a standard intervention, and the nature of that intervention. Indicate if the control group will be offered the study treatment or intervention after completion of the study.

## **Instrumentation**

In this section of the chapter, list and describe the survey, research or testing instruments, interview or observational protocols, and/or data collection forms that you will use in collecting data for the study. Describe the reason for the use of these instruments, and defend the choice of instruments, addressing reliability and validity of the instruments, as applicable, and the utility of the instruments. Include a copy of any survey, research or testing instrument, interview or observational protocol, and/or data collection form in an Appendix or a series of Appendices.

### **[Quantitative Study or Phase]**

Describe in detail all instrument or data collection tools, including: the name of the instrument, if using an existing instrument; the specific type of instrument; each instrument's measures in terms of constructs, concepts, or variables; scoring of scales, subscales, and typologies and their interpretation; the level of measurement (NOIR) for each variable; whether a new instrument will be developed or an existing instrument will be modified or adapted and its use; and published reliability and validity statistic for existing instruments OR a detailed plan for statistically assessing the reliability and validity of new or modified instruments, or existing instruments without established reliability or validity. Describe in detail the data that comprise each variable in the study, and include an operational definition of variables.

## **Data Collection**

This section of Chapter III should include a discussion of specific procedures that you will follow for collecting primary data from participants. Depending on the nature of your study, this section may include a step-by-step overview of data collection protocols such that

another researcher could follow the procedures employed in the study. In the proposal, this section identifies what *will* happen, and should be written in future tense, while in the Final Report, the information should be updated to reflect any deviations from the plan and to outline the procedures actually followed in collecting data, and should be written in past tense.

**[Qualitative]**

For a qualitative study, describe and justify the data collection method(s) you plan to use, such as interviews, focus groups, or observation. Address the types of data that will be collected and the unit(s) of analysis. Include detailed protocol(s) for data collection (e.g. interview protocol/script, focus group protocol/script) in an Appendix or a series of Appendices. Clearly describe the logistics and the process by which data will be generated, gathered and recorded, and indicate the system you will use to keep track of data and emerging understandings (e.g. research logs, reflective journals, and cataloging systems).

Justify the data collection protocols by demonstrating their connection to the overarching research question(s) or study intent posed in relationship to the qualitative paradigm chosen for the study (e.g. case study, program evaluation, phenomenology). If applicable, describe the pilot study and any pilot study results. Provide sufficiently detailed information so that another researcher could reproduce the study.

**[Quantitative]**

For a quantitative study, describe the pilot study and any pilot study results, if applicable. Outline the sequence of steps and procedures that will be followed in conducting the research from development of the research instrument(s) to selection of the sample to

data collection and analysis. Provide sufficient information that another researcher could follow the steps to reproduce the study.

**[Mixed Method]**

For a mixed method study, combine information about data collection for both the qualitative and quantitative phases, following the guidelines above.

**Data Analysis**

This section of Chapter III should describe how you will analyze the data collected during the study. In the proposal, the section presages the actual analysis which will be described in Chapter IV, and following data collection and analysis, this section should be updated to reflect the actual procedures followed, as appropriate.

**[Qualitative Data Analysis]**

Articulate how and when the data will be analyzed, aligning a detailed data analysis plan with the project approach to generate answers to the research questions. Describe procedures for dealing with discrepant cases, if any.

If you intend to use a software program to aid qualitative data analysis, identify the software and clearly describe how the software will be used. Provide details about the coding procedure and how themes/categories will be developed.

Explain how analysis of data will generate answers to the over-arching research question(s) or will address the project intent.

**[Quantitative Data Analysis]**

Include a detailed analysis plan that explains the descriptive and/or inferential analyses proposed, such as: descriptive statistical procedures, data distribution analysis, parametric and/or nonparametric statistical procedures, and statistical power calculation.



Explain how analysis of data will generate answers to the over-arching research question(s) or will address the project intent.

**[Mixed Method Data Analysis]**

Combine the analytical procedures for both the qualitative and quantitative phases, following the guidelines above. Reflect the phases of data analysis in alignment with the simultaneous or sequential mixed method design. Explain how analysis of qualitative and quantitative data will generate answers to the over-arching research question(s) or will address the project intent.

**Trustworthiness/Validity/Quality**

Depending on the type of study that you undertake, address issues of trustworthiness (qualitative study), validity (quantitative study), or quality (mixed method study). You must reference appropriate literature to both conceptualize the meaning of research excellence, and to verify the procedures followed to ensure trustworthiness, validity or quality.

**[Qualitative: Trustworthiness]**

Address credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Show evidence of quality by discussing how procedures will be followed to ensure the accuracy of the data and to lessen the impact of researcher bias (e.g. member checks, triangulation, etc.).

**[Quantitative: Validity]**

Address internal and external threats to validity and how they will be addressed during the study.

**[Mixed Method: Quality]**

Address credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. Show evidence of quality by discussing how procedures will be followed to ensure the accuracy of the data and to lessen the impact of researcher bias (e.g. member checks, triangulation, etc.).

Address internal and external threats to validity and how they will be addressed during the study.

### **Summary**

The summary should be an accurate and brief articulation of the points covered in the chapter. Summarize key points of data collection articulated in Chapter III, without introducing any new concepts or resources. Provide an overview of the content of the next chapter, bridging to Chapter IV.

## **CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS, EVALUATION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **[No Initial Heading]**

This final chapter of the Project Report contains the findings of the study, presents those findings in context of the literature and practitioner application, and includes recommendations both for the use of the study findings and for future studies on the topic. The content of this chapter focuses on analysis of data gathered through the procedures detailed in Chapter III, and must align with the steps or processes detailed in Chapter III as well as with the over-arching research question(s) or project intent. Additionally, in the chapter you should interpret the importance of study findings for research and/or practice, and include a discussion of the results within the context of other research on the topic. You should address the extent to which study results converge with or diverge from previous research, and include a discussion of how findings may add to the knowledge of the topic or to the work of practitioners in the field. The chapter should contain a discussion of any limitations of the research (e.g., generalizability issues or measurement limitations) and the implications of study results and applications to practice. Conclude the chapter with suggestions for future research. The content of Chapter IV will vary depending on the nature of the study you conduct, so the headings below are merely suggestive. Check with your Chair or your Methodologist for recommendations for appropriate content for this chapter. Write Chapter IV in past tense.

Begin the chapter by identifying the purpose of the chapter, how it fits in the ADP Final Report, and the organization of the chapter. Review the need or rationale for the study, the purpose of the research, and the over-arching research question(s) or project intent that guided the study.

## **Findings**

This section of the chapter should present a comprehensive overview of the sample and data collection process, as well as the analysis of data. The data analysis reported here must align with the processes outlined in Chapter III. Data should not be presented in “raw” form; instead, you should present the results of the data analyses in a manner that aligns with the over-arching research question(s) or project intent. The format and content of this section of Chapter IV will vary widely, depending on the type of study conducted and the nature of the data collected. Consult with your Chair or your Methodologist about recommended ways to report study findings.

### **Sample**

Present a brief description of the sample participants and sample demographics or other appropriate characteristics of the unit(s) of study.

### **Data Collection**

Summarize the actual logistics of data collection, and describe any unusual circumstances you encountered during data collection.

### **Data Analysis and Results**

#### **[Qualitative]**

Present the results of your analysis, rather than raw data, illustrated with selected representative quotes in a way that will make sense to the reader. You should clearly identify the findings, reflecting analysis consistent with the specific research design, going beyond just identifying themes or patterns in the data.

Organize the findings by major themes and sub-themes, using section headings that are representative of the themes. Ensure that the findings are presented in a manner that

addresses the research questions. Support all findings with data, and account for all salient data in the findings. Include a discussion of discrepant cases and non-confirming data in the findings.

**[Quantitative]**

Organize the results of data analysis to align with and address research questions and hypotheses. Report results of hypothesis testing and indicate support for accepting or rejecting the null hypothesis when hypotheses are used. Demonstrate rigorous methodological approaches, reflecting appropriate and correct use of data collection instruments. Use research conventions and standard language/terminology to describe measures.

Report results of pilot tests, if used, and describe and justify modifications you made to existing instruments or procedures based on the results of pilot test. Describe how any modifications may have affected instrument scoring and/or interpretation.

Present the results of data analyses, using appropriate tools and approaches to display results. Interpret and explain the results consistent with the analyses, reflecting alignment with the specific research design, the research questions or hypotheses, and the conceptual framework of the study.

You must demonstrate sound analyses, with appropriate use of statistics, and report results that conventional research language and format. Highlight findings that approach statistical significance, and identify any inconsistencies or contradictions reflected in the findings, suggesting plausible explanations.

**[Mixed Method]**

Combine data analysis and reporting procedures for both the qualitative and quantitative phases, following the guidelines above. Ensure that data analysis reflects the phases in alignment with the simultaneous or sequential mixed method design, presenting the approaches and results for both phases (qualitative and quantitative).

For an explanatory design, present *quantitative* results first, describe how these findings were explored in the qualitative phase, and then present the qualitative findings. For an exploratory design, present *qualitative* results first, explain how these findings informed the quantitative phase, and then present the quantitative findings. In a triangulation design, present both sets of data and triangulate the findings from the two phases.

**[For All Designs]**

Use Tables and Figures (see samples below) judiciously to present information you have discussed in your analysis.

**Table 1**  
*Categories and Subcategories of Executive Coaches' Behaviors*

<b>Primary Skill</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Level Sub-skills</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Level Sub-skills</b>
Assessment	Motivation, Evaluation/Feedback, Tools	n/a
Awareness	Role, Discipline	Arbitrator, Mediator, Catalyst, Advisor, Leader
Skills	Relationship Professional	Boundaries, Engagement, Support, Question, Technique, Contracting



**Figure 1. Proposed process for becoming a “super” executive coach.**

### **Evaluation of Findings**

In this section of Chapter IV, you should interpret the importance of your findings for research and practice. Revisit the research you reviewed in Chapters I and II, and discuss how your results add to the body or knowledge or practice in the field. Provide an overview and interpretation of the major findings of the study, presenting compiled and analyzed data as opposed to raw data. Include conclusions that address the over-arching research question(s) or project approach.

Carefully examine all research findings referenced in the previous section, including those that do not support or only partially support the hypotheses (quantitative only). You must remain true to the evidence collected and present a comprehensive review of the entire range of findings.

Discuss how findings converge with or diverge from previous research as found in the Importance of the Study and/or Literature Review.

## **Recommendations**

### **Limitations of the Study**

Discuss limitations of the study that may affect the validity, generalizability, trustworthiness or quality of the results. Include a reflection on your experience with the research process (qualitative only). Discuss possible personal biases or preconceived ideas and values you may have had and how you overcame these preconceptions. Discuss the influence of you, the researcher, on the participants or the situation.

### **Implications for Theory and/or Practice**

This final content component of Chapter IV should situate the study findings in a larger body of literature on the topic, including the conceptual framework of the study. Review and discuss the findings as they relate to published research studies. Discuss the implications of the current study findings as pertinent to current theory, and in terms of how they support, extend, and/or refute prior knowledge.

Include practical implications and applications of study findings for professional practice or applied settings. Make specific recommendations for practitioner in the field and for future research, based on study findings.

Identify topics that may require closer examination and that could generate a new round of research questions. Conclude by recommending alternative research methods and design, as appropriate.



## **Conclusion**

The conclusion of Chapter IV is somewhat different in content and purpose and is typically longer than the conclusions of each of the preceding chapters. In the conclusion to Chapter IV, reiterate the findings of the study and the primary conclusions you reached. Briefly recount the most important recommendations of the study, and briefly discuss what your research may contribute to the body of knowledge of the topic, and the implications of the research to theory and/or practice. Finish with a strong concluding statement.

## References

List all references cited in the document. Do not list sources that were consulted, but not cited. List sources in alphabetical order by the last name of the first author. Use a hanging indent format throughout the list as shown in the examples below (second and subsequent lines indented one-half inch from the first line). Individual entries should be single-spaced, but double space between entries as shown below.

Refer to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> edition) for guidelines that will help you format your reference list. Common source templates are provided below.

### Journal article:

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Date). Name of the article: Only the first word, proper nouns, acronyms, and words following a colon or dash should be capitalized. *Name of the Journal*, volume number(series number), XX – XX. doi number should be provided, if available, without a period at the end

### Book:

Author, A. A., & Author B. B. (Date). *Name of the book: Only the first word, proper nouns, acronyms, and words following a colon or dash are capitalized* (Xth ed.). City of Publication, State Postal Service Code: Name of Publisher.

### Chapter in an edited book:

Chapter Author, C. (date). Name of the chapter: Only the first word, proper nouns, acronyms and words following a colon or dash are capitalized and the chapter name is not italicized. In A. A. Editor & B. B. Editor (Eds.), *Name of the book: Only the first word, proper nouns, acronyms and words following a colon or dash are capitalized* (Xth ed., pp. XX-XX). City of Publication, State Postal Service Code: Name of Publisher.

### Internet Documents:

- Whether a title is italicized or not depends on the type of work.
- Broadly speaking, standalone works such as reports are considered analogous to books and are italicized; look for the author.
- Assessment titles should be italicized, since the assessment is published as a stand-alone work.
- Individual web pages are considered analogous to articles (i.e., part of a larger work) and are not italicized.

Internet Examples:

1. Standalone Report (*italicize title of the report*)

O'Hara, T. (2005). *Making the case for global leadership succession planning*. Retrieved from <http://www.leader-values.com/Content/detail.asp?ContentDetailID=1073>

2. Government or Organizational Report (*italicize title of the report or document*)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Extramural Research National Institutes of Health. (2008). *Grants process overview*. Retrieved from [http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/grants\\_process.htm](http://grants1.nih.gov/grants/grants_process.htm)

3. Corporate Document (*italicize name of the assessment*)

Multi-Health Systems. (n.d.). *The Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test—MSCEIT*. Retrieved from <http://downloads.mhs.com/MSCEIT/MSCEIT.pdf>

4. Page from a Website (do not *italicize* the title of an individual web page)

The College of William and Mary. (n.d.). Research and scholarship: Perfecting the art and science of discovery. Retrieved from <http://www.wm.edu/research/index.php>

Additional Formatting Requirements:

- For books, include the edition number **ONLY** if two or higher.
- Do **NOT** include database retrieval information from databases such as ProQuest and EBSCOHost.
- Do **NOT** include access or document ID number from databases such as ProQuest or EBSCOHost.
- Do **NOT** include ISSN or ASBN number of any item.
- Do **NOT** include retrieval date for Internet sources unless the source is constantly changing, like a blog post.

## Appendix (or Appendices)

Include all additional information or materials that support the study, and are referred to in Chapters I to IV. Examples include:

- Copies of solicitation letter(s) and instructions for participants.
- Permissions obtained from organizations or agencies to use resources, materials, or facilities, included previously copyrighted materials such as tests and measures.
- Copies of informed consent forms.
- Instrumentation and study protocols
- Descriptions of any special conditions of the research, etc.
- Tables or graphs that supplement, but do not provide. primary data gained from the study (subject to recommendations made elsewhere in this document).

Order appendices in the order they appear in the document. Thus, Appendix A should consist of the document, table or other item first referred to in the document.

Construct the heading for each appendix as follows:

Appendix X – Name of the Document

Appendix A - Name of the Document

### Biographical Statement (*Optional*)

Include a brief biographical statement. The focus should be on the professional aspects of your life, but may include items such as your place of birth, educational background, significant life events, reasons for choosing your field of study/specialization, and your interest in the content of the study.