

Organize and Synthesize Information

Introduction

Information needs to be organized in order to permit analysis, synthesis, understanding, and communication.

One way to organize the information you have gathered is to group materials by similar concepts or content.

For example, if you are doing research on the wine industry you can organize the data into several folders or "baskets":

Local wineries

Laws and regulations

Vineyard economics

Land use and Environmental Impact Reports (EIR)

Consumer profiles and demographics

Government publications such as Crushed Grape Reports and County Ag Reports

Global competition

Outlines

Another way of organizing information is to create an outline. An outline arranges materials hierarchically and sequentially by identifying main topics, subtopics, and details under the subtopics.

For example, market reports are organized to provide specific industry information:

Executive summary

Table of contents

Political, Economic, Socio-cultural, and Technology Analysis

Industry-wide conditions

Financial benchmarks and industry ratios

Competitive environment

Target markets

Industry forecasts

Well organized business information and competitive intelligence is essential – and expected – in today's competitive business environment. The basic flow of business intelligence generally moves from raw primary data to data sets to information to the creation of new knowledge that drives management strategies.

Organizing information effectively is crucial because it allows you to:

Manage and retain the information more efficiently

Identify trends, clusters, and other patterns in the information gathered

Synthesize pieces of information into new knowledge

Recognize the need for further information and discard unneeded information

Communicate the information more effectively

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