PADM 607 – Search Tips
These tips supplement and complement the demonstrations in class for searching databases

Tips for All Databases:
• Use quotation marks – “xxxxx xxxxx” – when you are searching for phrases.
• Look for a peer-reviewed or scholarly or academic link to limit to scholarly articles.
• Use the limiters and other tools within the database to save time and effort.
• Look at the abstract and search terms that are attached to promising references – you should discover additional vocabulary to try.
• Use navigation aids in the database, e.g., back to results, modify search, rather than using the browser back button.
• Search history is usually retained for the session; look for # recent searches or search history or previous searches.
• Look for links to articles that cite your article (e.g., cited by) and to sources used in your article (e.g., references). These will lead you forward and backward from your article.
• Look for the Get it @ VCU button or a PDF/Full Text link to lead you to the full article.

1. ABI/INFORM Collection (ProQuest) [NOTE: The other ProQuest databases, e.g., PAIS Index, are similar]

Example: Building a search and using database features to limit / expand
1st line – "competency model***" [NOTE: The * will pick up variations of the word 'model']
Select Anywhere except full text
Why? ABI/INFORM has much full text in it, and this choice will search just the important parts of the reference, i.e., title, abstract, subject terms, and ignore the irrelevant use of your terms in the last paragraph of a very long article.

2nd line – "public sector" OR government
There will be 40+ results.

Note the choices under Source Type and Document Type on the left. These can be very useful when you are looking for a particular type of material. Look at the Publication Date graph. It sometimes will provide clues as to when an issue became important. Note that you can enter date ranges if you wish.

Select Peer reviewed. The number of results will decrease to about 13.
Select **preview** for several of the references and note words and phrases such as human resource management, strategic management, core competencies. If you decide to add these to the search -- Select **modify search** and add those terms to your search. The 1st line might then look like this:

"competency model*" OR competencies

Check the peer-reviewed box

There should be about 80+ results from this particular search

Consider: limiting the date; selecting a subject or adding another term to the search

**Explore Cited by and References**

Select the clock icon in the colored bar at the top of the screen and click on the search described above that yielded the 13 results. The 7th result should be "Human resources management in the public sector." Select **preview** and note that this is the lead article in a special issue. The entire issue, v. 41.3 (Fall 2002) is available for browsing: Click on the title and then on the Human Resource Management link immediately above the PDF. Slide down, select in succession 2000 – 2009 | 2002 | Fall 2002; Vol. 41 (3)

The 4th article in the issue, "Developing competency models to promote integrated human resource practices" has both cited by and references links. Note especially #6 (by Shippmann, J.S.) on the list of 21 which has been cited 251 times. This may be a key article.

2. Business Source Complete (EBSCO) [NOTE: The other EBSCO databases, e.g., Academic Search Complete, are similar]

**Search Example:**

1. 1st line - "organizational justice"

There will be more than 1370 results

Limit to scholarly articles - Select scholarly (peer reviewed) from the limiters on the left

This will reduce the number of results to around 1185+

Look at the abstracts and the subjects being used to describe the records.

Revise the search to add a term and change the search type:

2. 1st line - "organizational justice"; change search type to 'subject terms'

2nd line – employees; change search type to 'subject terms'. Now there will be about 345+ results.
3. PsycINFO

Search Example
Check the word government in Term Finder

1st search box – "motivation"
2nd search box – "public sector" OR "government personnel"
There will be more than 405+ results, so look at the limiters on the left. Selecting peer-reviewed journal will result in about 315+ hits.
You may decide to add additional terms, e.g., job satisfaction, or job performance

4. Google Scholar - Tips
Deselect 'patents'
Configure Google Scholar for VCU Libraries: Select Settings
Get it @ VCU: Library Links | VCU – Get it @ VCU
Note: You may have to click on 'more' to see the Get it @ VCU link
5. **Cited Reference Search (Web of Science) – Finding articles citing an author**

   Select 'cited reference search' – link is below the row of tabs
   
   1st search box (cited author) – **schippmann j s**
   
   There should be about 12 cited references. Note that some appear to be duplicates with slight variations in journal and/or author name.
   
   Select the one cited reference from **Pers Psychol** and select **finish search**.
   
   There will be about 44 citing references. Some of these will be duplicates of those found in ABI/INFORM, but some will be unique to Web of Science.
   
   Cited reference searches work best when you have both author and article information.

6. **Advanced Search (VCU Libraries Search)**

   ![Advanced Search Screenshot]

   **Tips:**
   
   You may want to select a **Material type**, e.g., 'articles' or 'books'
   
   Use the limits on the left of the results as applicable
   
   Click on **view online** to reach the link(s) to ejournal articles or ebooks