

# WRITING WITH A PURPOSE, WRITING WITH CONCEPTS

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# The purpose of an article

- **Fill a gap** in knowledge by providing new evidence on a topic that is little known
- Provide a new **interpretation** of existing knowledge
- Offer an **explanation** for a puzzle or something that seems counter-intuitive
- **Test** a proposition or **answer** a key research question
- Respond to a **policy problem**
- Introduce a new **concept**, framework or **theory**
- Propose a new **method**
- **Synthesize** or integrate information that has not been jointly analyzed before

# Two examples of purpose statements

## Explain a change

- In this paper we explain how a shift from culture of the native black tiger shrimp to the exotic Pacific white shrimp took place in the Thai shrimp industry between 2002 and 2006.

## Improve understanding

- The purpose of this study was to improve the understanding of how river-based cage fish farmers in northern Thailand perceive climate-related risks and understand climate change.

# Find the purpose statement

Source



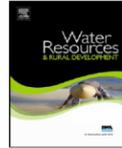
Water resources and rural development 4 (2014) 40–53



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Water resources and rural development

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Benefit sharing from Kamchay and Lower Sesan 2 hydropower watersheds in Cambodia

Prachvuthy Men <sup>a,\*</sup>, Vathana Thun <sup>b</sup>, Soriya Yin <sup>c</sup>, Louis Lebel <sup>d</sup>



Analyze

- Where is it?
- Is it clear ?

Source



Journal of Global Economics

<http://dx.doi.org/10.4172/2375-4389.1000150>

Research Article

Open Access

Integrated Water Resources Management of Maetang Sub Watershed, Chiang Mai Province

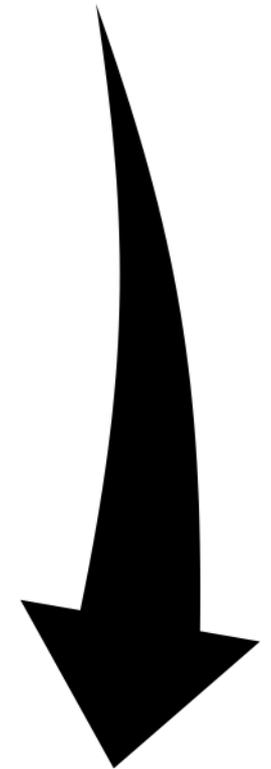
Thunyawadee Sucharidtham<sup>a\*</sup>, Thanee Sriwichailamphan<sup>a</sup> and Wichulada Matanboon<sup>a</sup>

Analyze

- Where is it?
- Is it clear ?

# Writing introductions

- Opening (teaser, compass)
- Context (very brief)
- Rationale
- **Identify relevant theory & define key concept(s)**
- Review what is known (and gap you will fill or task that needs to be done)
- **Statement of purpose**
- Last paragraph (with research questions)



Logical flow

# Introducing key concepts



- Look at the title: what might be the key concept?
- What are the key concepts explained in the introduction?
- What do expect the paper to focus on when you read the results and discussion?

## Deeper

- How are key concepts and rationale linked?

## Source

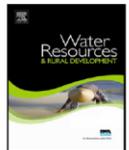
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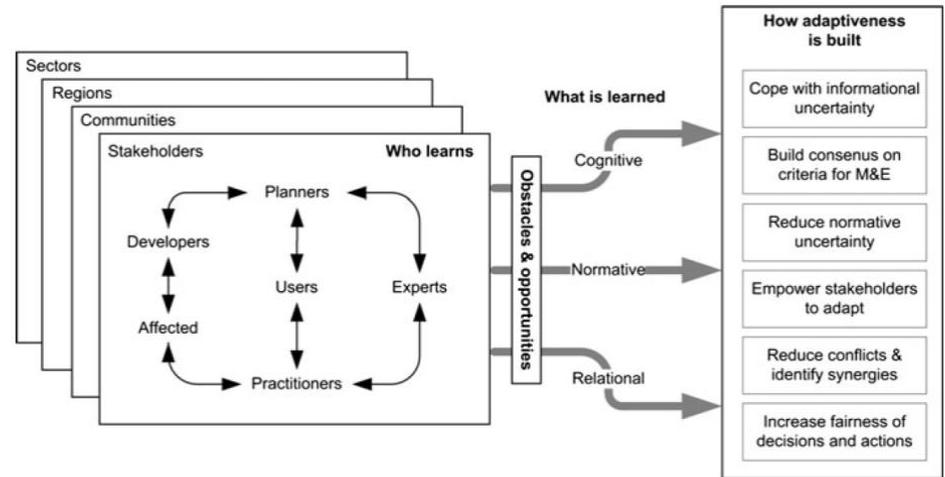
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# Draw pictures & make tables to help make your conceptual framework explicit

- Guide and structure analysis
- Help make assumptions (of our internal model, hypotheses) explicit
- Help organize presentation of findings
- If keep, show readers how findings are organized
- If throw-away, no problem !



Int Environ Agreements  
DOI 10.1007/s10784-010-9142-6

ORIGINAL PAPER

## The role of social learning in adaptiveness: insights from water management

Louis Lebel · Torsten Grothmann · Bernd Siebenhüner

# Writing about findings

- **Stick to your purpose** (and the research questions)
- Organize sections around those questions
- Analyze don't just describe, **use key concepts as part of analytical framework to classify, measure and associate factors**
- Avoid statements not backed by evidence
- Make use of tables and figures, but don't then repeat detailed information in text
- Avoid long description of methods in results section

# Organize results around purpose or research questions

A

- *The purpose of this paper is to analyse how fish farmers **manage climate-related risks** and explore possible ways to **strengthen risk management** under current and **future climate**.*
- Sources of risk
- Farm-level management of climate-related risks
- River basin management
- Early warning, event preparation, and compensation
- **Risks and management practices**
- Risk management and adaptation

# Analyze this excerpt from results

E

- Is the organization clear?
- Is the evidence for key claims clear?
- Is the interpretation convincing?

Water management in each area differs according to area and people context. The factors or stimuli leading to integrated water management in Wiang Haeng are follows.

- With conditions and problems of the current global warming becoming more intense, rainfall pattern fluctuation, deforestation, lack of budget for problem solving and disaster prevention, these result in drought. Wiang Haeng district often suffer from water shortages both for agriculture and water consumption....

# Writing a discussion section

- Concisely synthesize findings responding to key research questions
- Explore alternative explanations or balance of evidence
- Have you achieved your **purpose?**
- State significance for understanding and scholarship (theory, **concepts**)
- Explore consequences for policy or practice
- Note new questions or hypotheses
- Critically evaluate limitations (or reviewer will do it for you)

## Do not

- Introduce a lot of new literature
- introduce new findings (unless it is a section combined with results)
- Repeat the results
- Go too far beyond your evidence

# Analyze this discussion

D

## Questions

- How are findings used?
- How are references used?

## Qualitative Papers

- How are they different?
- How similar?

The largest differences in temperature between surface and bottom layer were observed in integrated ponds during the hot season; whereas differences in the dry season were modest and in the wet season largely absent (Fig. 2). Four factors help explain these finding. First, the high load of nutrient and fertilizer inputs in integrated ponds caused phytoplankton blooms (Little and Edwards 2004; Szyper and Lin 1990).

In this study, concentrations of Chlorophyll-a and overall turbidity, were much higher in integrated ponds than the other two systems. Consequently, high biomass of plankton or suspended particles in the surface layer limits light penetration to the lower water layers (Litchman et al. 2004; Tadesse et al. 2004). Second, is that solar radiation in the hot season tends to be higher than in the other seasons of Thailand (Janjai and Wattan 2011). Factors one and two explain the high potential for thermal stratification to occur during the hot season...

# Write simply

- Keep sentences short and simple
- Use simple English
- Be specific
- Use topic sentences to start paragraphs
- Keep paragraphs short & focused
- Avoid jargon & abbreviations

**“If you can’t explain something simply, you don’t understand it well.”**

**- Albert Einstein**

