The Seven Steps to Web Evaluation (A-G)

STEP e

EFFECTIVENESS FOR PURPOSE

Does author's motivation complement your purpose?

Motivation

E. Purpose

What is the purpose of the site?

What is your purpose?

Do they complement each other?

21 st Century Educational Technology and Learning

http://21centuryedtech.wordpress.com/

With Michael Gorman

The Seven Steps To Web Site Evaluation

abc defg

Graphics from Microsoft Word 2007

The Seven Steps to Web Site Evaluation – Step E

E Is For Effectiveness For Purpose

Good research depends on the ability of the researcher to know exactly what the purpose of his research is. One must determine if the website being evaluated provides for the needs of that purpose. A biased site could be useful if it provides valuable arguments and defendable facts that assist the researcher in his mission. Writing a fair and balanced paper may require quotes that represent both sides of an issue. Knowing one's purpose is possibly the most important idea to investigate before seeking information from the internet.

1. **What Is The Purpose Of The Site** – Most websites exist on the internet for a specific purpose. This could be to sway opinion, propagate a movement, make money, provide educational material, disperse information, or to genuinely share with others. Regardless of the purpose for researching a topic, a good researcher must always be aware of the need to unveil the purpose of the website being evaluated. Determining this may mean getting more information about the author/sponsor. It may also demand that the researcher dissect the domain URL seeking information regarding sponsorship, website type, and country of origin. Detecting bias or sensing commercial activity does not automatically mean that a website is not proper for research. The important point is that the researcher becomes aware, as much as possible, of the purpose and reason for a website's existence.

2. **What Is Your Purpose** – Along with determining what may either be an obvious or hidden reason for a website's existence, good researchers must also be aware of their own research related needs. Whether it be for personal satisfaction, or an assigned task at school or work, the goal of intended research must be clear. The vision created for research must be kept in mind and be the object of constant focus. By practicing this, a researcher will keep on a straight path toward the targeted vision of purpose. This allows the researcher to avoid the pitfall of a lack of productivity that comes from distraction by websites that could be interesting, filled with information, and enjoyable to investigate, but do not satisfy the researcher's purpose.

3. **Do They Complement Each Other?** – This is the all important concept that guides a researcher through the idea of "effectiveness for purpose." Being aware of one's research needs and weighing those needs with the perceived purpose for a webpage's existence is a key to proper research. Even an opinionated or biased page may assist a researcher. Such a website could be valuable in the pre-search stage as the researcher is beginning to learn more about a subject. It can provide information for further verification of information, supply arguments that allow two sides of an issue to be debated, or possibly giver the researcher concepts that can be supported or rebutted. It is still important to use other reputable sites to verify facts. Understanding the power of using a website that complements research needs and gauging "Effectiveness for Purpose" will bring success to any research effort.