

What is a purpose statement?

Your purpose statement is an explicit statement that is based on an argument or problem. It tells what your document or presentation will be about and is the foundation for everything you say, guides the examples you choose, and presents a possible answer to your argument/problem.

Tips for a strong purpose statement:

- Keep the focus positive
- Present a new idea
- Make sure the focus is on the subject of your research

Strong examples of purpose statements:

The purpose of my document is to persuade my audience that...

...re-engaging older workers into paid employment by just 5%, will boost the economy by \$48 billion each year.

...land use in urban environments significantly increases changes in the carbon cycle and raises the global warming potential of the humid subtropics.

...a model using ICP-MS and Chemometrics will identify heavy metal content in Brisbane water at times of changing climatic conditions such as drought and flood.

...small acts of volunteering create large waves of change in our community.

Questions to think about when you are formulating your purpose statement:

- What propositions have been generated about your subject?
- What new proposition have you generated?
- How does your argument relate to established propositions?
- How does your argument relate to current assumptions?
- What type of idea/information will you be present – is it in a new field or in an established one?
- Are you testing or building a new idea?

Your turn - start to write about your research by establishing the purpose for writing your document – thesis, article, report or anything.

Tip - Start by placing each idea on a new line

E.g. subject (key information – can be the method or the outcome) + what is does / achieves
+ for whom / what

For example:

The purpose of my research is to....

...argue that the tool X

(method or outcome)

....is a critical first step

(what about it)

...for educators of children aged birth to 3

(for whom)

...to enhance y

(so what / why we should care)

The purpose for writing this document is to argue (to my audience of X, Y and Z) **that**
