# Information Literacy: A Brief Introduction

Carol Kunzler

**Learning Objective**: After reading this chapter, students will be able to define information literacy and explain why being information literate is relevant in our current information society.

## Why is Information Literacy Important?

In the next section you will learn what information literacy is. But, first, it is important to understand why a person should learn, develop and master information literacy skills.

Developing information literacy in our current digital information society is critical to your personal, work and academic prosperity.  In college, work and individual situations you will be required to find, effectively evaluate and use information in ethical ways. Learning, practicing, refining and mastering information literacy skills will help you:

- identify real and relevant information
- identify bias in information
- develop trust in information
- ask questions and seek answers
- find information effectively
- form your own opinions
- evaluate sources
- make decisions
- become an ethical creator of information
- be a successful lifelong learner
- increase confidence

- be a responsible citizen

- make informed decisions

**Becoming Information Literate**

As a college student, a consumer and a creator of information, it is important to develop information literacy skills and abilities. It is probable you have already started to develop and master some of the skills and abilities without realizing. This is because information literacy is a way of being or a process of becoming. To become information literate, you will need to develop the skills and abilities in personal, academic and work environments. Information literacy is a skill to be used in all areas of life because we interact with information everywhere.

**What is Information Literacy?**

Information literacy, also referred to as information competence, is a set of integrated skills and abilities that enables a person to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve personal, social, occupational and educational goals.  Information literacy is a basic human right in our digital world and promotes social inclusion around the globe (UNESCO, 2017).

Being an information literate person empowers an individual to reflectively discover information, understand how information is produced and valued, and use information to ethically create new knowledge ("Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education").

An information literate individual has the following skills and abilities:

- Research Skills

- Critical thinking

- Media literacy

- Digital literacy

- News literacy

- Algorithmic literacy

- Ethical reasoning

- Civic engagement

- Research (Butler, et al., 2021)

An information literate individual uses these skills and abilities in many situations such as college learning and research, identifying fake news, workplace environments and personal lives. Information literacy is a lifelong skill. Learning and practicing these skills will help you on your journey to becoming an information literate person.

**Bibliography**

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