Avoiding Plagiarism with Correct Documentation

Dr. Karen Petit
Plagiarism in Communication mediums:

- paragraphs
- essays
- research papers
- visual aids
- business letters
- speeches
- poems
- conversations
- films
- reports
- songs
- novels
- newspaper articles
- Web sites
Plagiarism in Different Environments

Plagiarism can happen in different environments:

- Conversations at Work
- Published Communications
- Academic Settings
That’s a great idea of yours, Joe! I’ll tell our boss about it when I meet with her later today.

We could sell more of the new product if it were offered in really bright colors, like red.
We should make the new product in really bright colors, like red, yellow, or green.

That idea of yours is really great! You are one of our company’s most creative employees.

You stole my idea!!!
Joe suggested that we make our product in bright colors, like red. I love the idea of red, but we could use other bright colors, too.

Joe’s idea is really creative, and your summary of his idea is well done. I also like your added suggestion about the other colors.

Thanks for giving me credit for my idea.
“Plagiarism” is defined by Dictionary.com as “an act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author” (par. 1).

In this definition of “plagiarism,” quotation marks have been placed around the borrowed words. The source of the words, Dictionary.com, is stated at the end of the quotation in an in-text parenthetical citation.

Work Cited

In this example of a bibliography page, the additional information explains to readers and/or listeners about the “work” that has been “cited” in the parenthetical citation.
Employees who plagiarize in published communications, as well as in other mediums, will hurt their credibility and could be fired:

- A CBS news producer was fired ("CBS").
- An editor for a Florida magazine was fired (Stableford).
Academic Settings

The CCRI *Student Handbook* defines “plagiarism” as an act of dishonesty that can result in “disciplinary sanctions.” The first of the five dishonest acts listed in this handbook is: “Cheating, plagiarism, violations of testing protocols, or any other form of academic dishonesty that seeks to portray the work of others as your own to gain an academic advantage over others through the unacknowledged effort of others, or in any way benefit from anything not through your own scholarship” (“Student Conduct Code”).
Plagiarism: Wrong, Unethical, and Illegal

- Plagiarism is wrong, unethical, and illegal in work, academic, and other settings.
- Someone who plagiarizes can be sued, as illustrated by a case heard in the Court of Appeals in Connecticut (Coster v. Duquette).
Avoiding Plagiarism by Correctly Using a Documentation System

- Whenever we borrow words, ideas, pictures, symbols, musical notes, structures, or other items, we need to document (give credit to) the source of each borrowed item.
- A quotation, paraphrase, or summary is used to convey borrowed information or words.
- To connect borrowed information or words to a source(s), one of these documentation systems can be used:

  MLA  APA  Chicago  CSE
Plagiarism Practice Exercises

- New Mexico State University has quizzes and other resources.
- Penn State has a plagiarism quiz bank.
- Purdue University has information and a plagiarism exercise.
Works Cited


More Information

The Writing Center at the Community College of Rhode Island has more online resources.
Contact Information

This presentation is the creation of

Dr. Karen Petit
Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Avenue
Warwick, RI 02886
E-mail: kmpetit@ccri.edu
Phone: 401-825-2279