Writer's Statement about "An Evaluation of Factors Leading to Successful Research"

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Before starting this assignment, I knew nothing about how researchers' success was measured. I was curious what indices were used to rank them, but looking into it was intimidating because there were many papers arguing over which best captured the researcher's work. After I did my research, my thoughts were still rather jumbled. If I started writing the paper then, I would have created an unfocused research paper that jumped around between different topics. However, we were also told to create a Research Dossier, which helped me to establish a focus for my paper before I even started writing it. I achieved this by creating the required questions that I was supposed to answer or address in my research paper. I used questions like "How do researchers in the field of Artificial Intelligence measure their success?" and "How can Artificial Intelligence researchers improve their chances of achieving success?" to set the focus. I used an inquiry-based research process to kick off the project, and it made the rest of the writing process much easier on me.

This paper was intended to be read by a variety of people with no particular common background. I wanted it to be understandable by all of my classmates of various majors. However, I also wanted it to seem professional so that a hypothetical researcher reading it would follow my points. This was kind of difficult at first because all the papers that I read to base mine on used very technical language, and I wanted to stay away from that. To integrate both, I mainly avoided the technical language seen in similar papers, but still followed their APA writing style in order to help standardize the format. I also think it made the paper seem more professional to a researcher reading it who wants to build on it.

One of the most beneficial techniques that I developed and integrated into my writing process for this paper was peer review. I previously thought of peer review as a waste of time and as unproductive. In high school, our teachers encouraged us to peer review to improve our papers. However, only writing five paragraph essays did not require much reviewing typically, and so it felt like a waste of time. If we did do a larger research paper, then nobody wanted to go through the effort of reading the entire thing when there was no apparent gain to the peer reviewer. In this class, we were required to go through a few assigned peer review phases. From this, I realized the enormous benefits that come from having multiple people peer review your work. It was much easier for me to identify things that didn't sound right or things that were unclear or even more important things like issues with my thesis. This also encouraged me to do my own proofreading and revising outside of the class's schedule. I realized that making different drafts that each showed improvement really made it much easier to improve the essay as a whole, and eventually if I (and others) cannot find any more issues to fix for a new draft, then I have reached a successful paper.

Revising the entire essay to perfection in one go is a very daunting task, but making it a recursive process simplified it for me.