Easy Guide to Thesis Writing

Name

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree

Master of Arts

Organizational Leadership

Siena Heights University

Adrian, Michigan

Date of anticipated graduation

(The date on your theses should be December, May, or August of the year you intend to graduate. Then, put the date of your current draft as a running footer.)
Acknowledgements

Saying thank you to those who have fundamentally helped in the creation of this thesis.
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Abstract

This is an executive summary of the research project. Start by putting in one sentence synopsis of each of the chapters. **An abstract needs to specify how many subjects were included, the response rate if the study was a survey, the sampling procedure, the statement of the hypothesis, a summary of the findings, a summary of the statistical analysis (if any), an appropriate interpretation of the results - including a statement as to whether or not the data support the hypothesis, a summary of the limitations, a summary of the recommendations for further research, and a summary of the recommendations for use of the findings.** The entire abstract should be one block paragraph-with no tab for the first line.
Introduction

Set the stage by describing the big picture of what you are researching and why the study is important.

The problem needs to be documented by theorist and/or empirical studies, not just an idea of that researcher wants to study.

Statement of the Problem

Gives direction to the entire study. It should explain the purpose of the study and describe all the key variables. One sentence to start.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to research the problem in some way.

Definitions

Performace appraisal. Italicized, indented, first letter only capitalized, period at end.

360 degree evaluations.
Review of Related Literature

Cite at least five sources that explain how your topic has evolved over a period of at least 25 years and will compose the study’s theoretical base. Additional sources will be needed for the base of empirical data. Avoid using secondary sources when possible. Organize your review by topics (use of subheading is recommended). A satisfactory literature review should be about ten pages in length.

Statement of the Hypothesis (or Research Questions)

What are you predicting the outcomes of your study will demonstrate? (hypothesis)

Use open ended research questions (What or How).
Method

Write a short paragraph telling (or reminding) the reader what your study is about. Many readers will read selective chapters so you cannot count on them reading from cover to cover. You need to guide them at the beginning of each chapter. The paragraphs can be exactly the same for each chapter. (Nothing new goes into the method chapter that you did not know before you began to collect your data.) (If you are collecting data or using existing data, YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST GET WRITTEN PERMISSION IN ADVANCE FROM THE ORGANIZATION IN QUESTION.)

Participants

(When you say you intend to "randomly sample" you need to explain your sampling procedure and be certain that you are drawing a truly random sample.) Answer the question why these subjects? Then sketch such variables as age, gender, number, sampling techniques, setting, etc.

Instrument(s)

Will standardize or self-designed test be administered and why the choice. (If you don't do a pilot study, you will need to explain why not.) (The validity and reliability of your instrument(s) needs to be established. If you are using an instrument for which validity and reliability has been established previously, you need to report this fact. If you develop your own instrument, you need to make an argument that the instrument is solidly grounded in your Review of Related Literature.)

(The term "survey means the process of collecting data. The term does not mean the actual instrument you use to collect data. That is called the instrument or
questionnaire. In other words, you survey your subjects by asking them to respond to your instrument.

Design

Describe how you designed your study and what type of design it is (See appropriate chapter in research text)

Procedure

How will you collect the data? (When describing your procedure, remember that you are giving directions that another researcher should be able to replicate. Hence, you must be very precise. Think of this step as writing a recipe for cooking a dish. All the ingredients, all the variables like time and temperature, and all the steps need to be described exactly.)
Results

This area is where you will present the findings. It is recommended that a software package be used to tabulate the results. These are just the facts in the order chosen to lay them out to flow with the project. Write a short paragraph telling (or reminding) the reader what your study is about. Many readers will read selective chapters so you cannot count on them reading from cover to cover. You need to guide them at the beginning of each chapter. The paragraphs can be exactly the same for each chapter.

Quantitative Findings

Any of numerical data you are reporting.

Qualitative Findings (if any)

Any non-numerical data you are reporting. If you have an open ended questionnaire, this is your qualitative findings.
Discussion

This chapter is divided into a discussion about the results including whether or not the hypothesis is supported, how the findings relate to previous studies, limitations of the study and recommendations for further research. The introduction includes the quantitative results of the hypothesis and qualitative of unexpected occurrences. This is followed by limitations of the study, recommendations for use and future study. Write a short paragraph telling (or reminding) the reader what your study is about. Many readers will read selective chapters so you cannot count on them reading from cover to cover. You need to guide them at the beginning of each chapter. The paragraphs can be exactly the same for each chapter. (No new references should be mentioned in the Discussion chapter that have not already been mentioned in the Introduction or Review of Related Literature.)

Interpretation of Findings

Explain what data are saying. What is the meaning of numbers and writings?

Limitations

Includes sample size, often include design problems in instruments (wacky answers)

Recommendations for Use

How could the findings be of use to organization where data were collected at or to anyone else?

Recommendation for Further Research

What further research related to your topic should be conducted?

Conclusion
You set out to do the study, this is what you learned, and it is summarized. (Your data do not PROVE your hypothesis. They only SUPPORT your hypothesis or FAIL TO SUPPORT your hypothesis. One hundred lashes!)
References

Authors actually quoted and work referenced in the research proposal.

(Have your external reader frequently check your references to make sure: 1) you used APA properly; 2) you actually cited those references you say you did; 3) you did not cite references that are not in your References.)

APA 5th edition uses hanging indents, double spaced, alphabetical by author.
Appendix A

Title of Appendix

Appendices are information needed to support the study. Letters, consent forms, questionnaires, unpublished test instruments, and other data referred to in the study.

(Appendices are in the order in which they are referenced in the body of your study.)
Appendix B

Title of Appendix