**Evidence-Based Argument**

**Citation**

An argument without evidence is merely opinion; it is the evidence that makes the argument persuasive. However, audiences tend to mistrust or even disregard evidence that is not properly cited. Therefore, it is imperative that you cite your evidence thoroughly and precisely. Each piece of evidence, such as a quote, a statistic, or an anecdotal story, must be cited.

**A good citation will include:**

* a year of publication for the evidence, to show relevance and timeliness
* a source, to show authoritativeness of information (where was it published?)
* the author and his/her title, if that information will help your argument
* the title of the article or the book

**Note the following examples:**

* Michael Corleone, director of the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, argues in a May, 2006 *Virginian-Pilot* article entitled, “Commercial Driver’s Licenses: A Waste,” that "the issuance of Commercial Driver's Licenses is a waste of taxpayer money and DMV resources."
* In her 2007 article, “Threat to US Security” published in *The Economist*, author Jackie Lambert argues that "the rise of nuclear weapons on the Indian subcontinent is the biggest threat to our national security."
* A study by the American Plastics Council shows that between 1998 and 2001, curbside recycling rates rose by an astounding 49%, as detailed in Alfredo Garcia's 2002 book, *The Rise of Recycling*.

These examples include all parts of a good citation. They identify the speaker's name as well as his/her title (where available), which tells the audience the speaker is an expert. The citations also include the date and source of the quote, which tells the audience that the information is recent and from a reputable source.

**Citing the Databases:**

* **SIRS, ProQuest, eLibrary, and Pro & Con Online** are not adequate citations—they are merely databases of articles from other sources. Saying, “According to Benjamin McOllie’s 2005 ProQuest article...” is like saying, “According to Mark Twain’s Batten Library book”—it is inadequate.
* **CQ Researcher and CQ Weekly** both produce their own work, so citing an article as a “CQ Researcher” or “CQ Weekly” article is acceptable.