

THE WRITING PROCESS

1. Review the Instructions
2. Outline main ideas of each section
3. Fill in outline content with bullet points of ideas or concepts
4. Re-write each bullet point as complete sentence(s)
5. Write topic sentences, transitions, and closings
6. Format for APA Style

STEP 1: REVIEW THE INSTRUCTIONS

Researcher Autobiography

Instructions:

Write and submit a short autobiographical essay describing your research interests in psychology. Essays should include:

- Some biographical information about yourself (what would you like colleagues to know about you)
- Topics in psychology that interest you (these may be broad or specific)
- An exploration of how your research interests relate to your own life experiences

Requirements:

- Minimum word count: 300 words (including cover page)
- *Essays must be written in APA style (no abstract or references required)*
- *Include a title page*
- *Submit as pdf or MS Word document (.doc or .docx)*

} Ignore for now

STEP 1: Start by carefully reading the assignment instructions. Identify the topics that should be included in the writing assignment. These may be clearly listed, or you may need to brainstorm the main ideas or topics you wish to cover. Pay attention to length requirements, but for now ignore formatting and style instructions. Formatting will be the very last step, after the writing is complete.

STEP 2: OUTLINE MAIN IDEAS OF EACH SECTION

About me (100 words)

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My research interests (100 words)

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-
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How my research interests relate to my life experiences (100 words)

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STEP 2: Begin your outline by listing the main topics in the order you intend to present them. Focus only on identifying the main ideas or sections of your paper, ignoring the specific details for now. Do the sections listed appear to cover everything required by the assignment? If there are length requirements for the assignment, you may note a target word length for each section, but don't worry too much about word count during this step.

STEP 3: FILL IN OUTLINE CONTENT WITH IDEAS OR CONCEPTS

About me (100 words)

- name: Kevin Tarlow
- psychologist and psychology professor
- from Maryland, Texas
- as a therapist, worked in many different settings
 - university counseling center
 - telepsychology clinic
 - free health clinic
- hobbies
 - baking
 - running
 - reading

My research interests (100 words)

- trauma
- health disparities
- telepsychology

How my research interests relate to my life experiences (100 words)

- research interests formed while I was working as a therapist
- lot's of clients struggled to heal from traumatic experiences
- saw how effects of racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty impacted mental health
- used telepsychology to reduce some health disparities

STEP 3: Fill in your outline with ideas or concepts. Include sources and citations where appropriate. After this step is complete, the outline can be easily adapted into presentation slides. Remember, presentation slides don't need to include everything. In fact, you shouldn't present by reading slides word-for-word. The outline of bullet points above will serve as a useful tool to remind you what to talk about. You can supplement your slides with your own written notes.

STEP 4: RE-WRITE EACH BULLET POINT AS COMPLETE SENTENCE(S)

About me (100 words)

- My name is Kevin Tarlow.
- I am a professor of psychology at Hampton University.
- Before moving to Virginia, I lived mostly in Texas. I completed my doctoral degree in counseling psychology at Texas A&M University, where I learned how to provide counseling services to many types of clients seeking professional help.
- As a therapist, I worked in many different settings, including a university counseling center, a free health clinic, and a telepsychology clinic (where I used videoconferencing technology to meet with clients living in rural parts of the state).
- I enjoy baking, reading, and running. Last year I started a “run streak,” and I have run at least one mile daily for almost 300 days in a row.

My research interests (100 words)

- I am very interested in studying trauma and understanding how people cope with stressful or overwhelming experiences.
- I am also curious about disparities in access to health care and in health outcomes. I think racial and geographic health disparities are especially important to understand and eliminate.
- Technology offers many new ways of providing health services, and I am also interested in studying how technology could be used in mental health care.

STEP 4: Rewrite each bullet point as one or more complete sentences. Each sentence should be clearly written and grammatically correct. However, don't worry about the overall organization or flow of the paper at this step. But each sentence should stand on its own. If you need to meet a minimum word count, check that your word count at this point is at least 75% of your minimum.

STEP 4: CONTINUED

How my research interests relate to my life experiences (100 words)

- Most of my research interests developed while I was working as a therapist. Seeing my clients struggle with mental health challenges made me feel personally motivated to understand how certain problems develop.
- Many of the clients I served struggled to heal from traumatic experiences that occurred earlier in life. Even among clients who sought counseling to address non-trauma-related concerns, many discovered they were still trying to cope with past trauma.
- I also saw how racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty impacted mental health and led to health disparities.
- When I worked as a therapist at a telepsychology clinic, I was able to use technology like Skype to provide therapy services to individuals from a distance. This led me to wonder about how telepsychology could be used to provide care to people who do not usually have access to health services, including those who faced discrimination that impacted their mental health.

STEP 5: WRITE TOPIC SENTENCES, TRANSITIONS, AND CLOSINGS

My name is Kevin Tarlow.

- I am a professor of psychology at Hampton University, *in Hampton, Virginia*.
- Before moving to Virginia, I lived mostly in Texas. I completed my doctoral degree in counseling psychology at Texas A&M University, where I learned how to provide counseling services to many types of clients seeking professional help.
- As a therapist, I worked in many different settings, including a university counseling center, a free health clinic, and a telepsychology clinic (where I used videoconferencing technology to meet with clients living in rural parts of the state).
- *When not at work*, I enjoy baking, reading, and running. Last year I started a “run streak,” and I have run at least one mile daily for almost 300 days in a row.
- *While I make time for recreation, I spend a lot of time thinking about my job as a psychologist and considering different research topics.*

There are several topics in psychology that interest me.

- I am very interested in studying trauma and understanding how people cope with stressful or overwhelming experiences.

STEP 5: Replace each section heading with a topic sentence. The topic sentence should tell the reader what to expect in the paragraph that follows; rather than report information, a topic sentence should communicate to the reader what information they should expect in the following paragraph. After writing a topic sentence, reread each bullet point under it to confirm that every bullet point relates back to the topic sentence. If a bullet point doesn't match the topic sentence, you should either (a) rewrite your topic sentence to be more broad and less specific, or (b) delete or move the bullet point to a more relevant section (or create a new section if necessary). After your topic sentences are finalized, read each section and add words or phrases as necessary to improve flow; following the topic sentence, each bullet point should flow naturally into the next one. You may want to rearrange the order of bullet points within each section to improve the flow. Finally, create a new bullet point at the end of each section and write a transition sentence that links that section to the next one; write a conclusion sentence at the end of the last section that wraps up the assignment. Now do one more read-through, from beginning to end, and confirm that the writing flows smoothly from sentence to sentence and section to section. Check your word count to confirm you have met any length requirements.

STEP 5: CONTINUED

- I am also curious about disparities in access to health care and in health outcomes. I think racial and geographic health disparities are especially important to understand and eliminate.
- Technology offers many new ways of providing health services, and I am also interested in studying how technology could be used in mental health care.

Most of my research interests developed while I was working as a therapist.

- Seeing my clients struggle with mental health challenges made me feel personally motivated to understand how certain problems develop.
- *For example*, many of the clients I served struggled to heal from traumatic experiences that occurred earlier in life. Even among clients who sought counseling to address non-trauma-related concerns, many discovered they were still trying to cope with past trauma.
- I also saw how racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty impacted mental health and led to health disparities.
- When I worked as a therapist at a telepsychology clinic, I was able to use technology like Skype to provide therapy services to individuals from a distance. This led me to wonder about how telepsychology could be used to provide care to people who do not usually have access to health services, including those who faced discrimination that impacted their mental health.
- *In the future, I hope to use these practical experiences to guide my work as a researcher, and I look forward to collaborating with other psychology researchers who share similar interests.*

STEP 6: FORMAT FOR APA STYLE

Researcher Autobiography

My name is Kevin Tarlow. I am a professor of psychology at Hampton University, in Hampton, Virginia. Before moving to Virginia, I lived mostly in Texas. I completed my doctoral degree in counseling psychology at Texas A&M University, where I learned how to provide counseling services to many types of clients seeking professional help. As a therapist, I worked in many different settings, including a university counseling center, a free health clinic, and a telepsychology clinic (where I used videoconferencing technology to meet with clients living in rural parts of the state). When not at work, I enjoy baking, reading, and running. Last year I started a “run streak,” and I have run at least one mile daily for almost 300 days in a row. While I make time for recreation, I spend a lot of time thinking about my job as a psychologist and considering different research topics.

There are several topics in psychology that interest me. I am very interested in studying trauma and understanding how people cope with stressful or overwhelming experiences. I am also curious about disparities in access to health care and in health outcomes. I think racial and geographic health disparities are especially important to understand and eliminate. Technology offers many new ways of providing health services, and I am also interested in studying how technology could be used in mental health care.

Most of my research interests developed while I was working as a therapist. Seeing my clients struggle with mental health challenges made me feel personally motivated to understand how certain problems develop. For example, many of the clients I served struggled to heal from traumatic experiences that occurred earlier in life. Even among clients who sought counseling to address non-trauma-related concerns, many discovered they were still trying to cope with past

STEP 6: Now that the content of the writing assignment is complete, you can focus on style and formatting. Edit each section of bullet points into one paragraph. You may want to insert headings in longer papers—if so, refer to the earlier version of your outline. Reread the final draft out loud and correct any errors.

STEP 6: CONTINUED

trauma. I also saw how racism, sexism, homophobia, poverty impacted mental health and led to health disparities. When I worked as a therapist at a telepsychology clinic, I was able to use technology like Skype to provide therapy services to individuals from a distance. This led me to wonder about how telepsychology could be used to provide care to people who do not usually have access to health services, including those who faced discrimination that impacted their mental health. In the future, I hope to use these practical experiences to guide my work as a researcher, and I look forward to collaborating with other psychology researchers who share similar interests.