LEVELS OF HEADING, LEADERS, AND AUTOMATED CONTENTS

Formatting Within The Document

Headings are used to effectively organize ideas within a study and concise headings help the reader anticipate key points and track the development of your argument. Levels of heading establish the hierarchy of sections via format or appearance. All topics of equal importance have the same level of heading throughout the manuscript. Avoid having only one subsection heading and subsection within a section. Use at least two subsection headings within any given section or use none.

The heading style recommended by your chosen style guide should be followed for formatting arrangements.

However if you are unsure what to use, the Graduate School recommends that you use the heading style from the APA manual sixth edition adapted as shown below. This consists of five possible formatting arrangements, according to the number of levels of subordination. Each heading level is numbered for arrangement purposes only; do NOT label headings with numbers or letters.

The number of levels of heading needed for your paper will depend on its length and complexity. If only one level of heading is needed, use Level 1; for a paper with two levels, use Levels 1 and 2.

Table: Format for Five Levels of Heading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Heading</th>
<th>Format</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>CENTERED, BOLDFACE, UPPERCASE HEADING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Flush Left, Boldface, Uppercase and Lowercase Heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Indented, boldface, lowercase paragraph heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Indented, boldface, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Indented, italicized, lowercase paragraph heading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: APA Sixth Edition
Regardless of the number of levels of subheading within a section, the heading structure for all sections follows the same top-down progression. Each section starts with the highest level of heading, even if one section may have fewer levels of subheading than another section.

For example, the Method and Results sections of a paper may each have two levels of subheading, and the Discussion section may have only one level of subheading. There would then be three levels of heading for the paper overall; the section headings (Method, Results, and Discussion) and the two levels of subheading.

This is how it would look:

Figure: Three-level Format

METHOD

Sample and Participant Selection

Assessments and Measures

Q-sort measures of inhibition and aggressiveness

Life History Calendar

RESULTS

Outcome of Inhibited Children at 23 Years

Personality and self-esteem

Social network

Life history and IQ

Outcome of Aggressive Children at 23 Years

DISCUSSION

Inhibited Children: Delayed Social Transitions During Emerging Adulthood

Inhibited Children: Weak Evidence for Internalizing Difficulties

Limitations of the Present Study

Conclusions and Future Prospects
Table of Contents

In the Table of Contents the formatting must follow the capitalization of the main document but do not use boldface in the Contents. As indicated above, do not label headings with numbers or letters.

For clarity of presentation, the Graduate School that at least 1 and no more than two levels of heading are displayed in the Contents.

For best organization, all level 1 headings should be flush left in the Contents; subsequent levels should be indented – thus, level 2 is indented one space, level 3 is indented two spaces.

So, here is how the above example would appear in Contents:

METHOD......................................................................................................................................................

Sample and Participant Selection .................................................................................................................

Assessments and Measures.............................................................................................................................

Q-sort measures of inhibition and aggressiveness .........................................................................................

Life History Calendar .....................................................................................................................................

RESULTS......................................................................................................................................................

Outcome of Inhibited Children at 23 Years .................................................................................................

Personality and self-esteem ...........................................................................................................................

Social network ................................................................................................................................................

Life history and IQ .........................................................................................................................................

Outcome of Aggressive Children at 23 Years ..............................................................................................

DISCUSSION..............................................................................................................................................

Inhibited Children: Delayed Social Transitions During Emerging Adulthood ..............................................

Inhibited Children: Weak Evidence for Internalizing Difficulties ................................................................

Limitations of the Present Study .....................................................................................................................

Conclusions and Future Prospects ...............................................................................................................
Using Leaders Function

Most word processing software systems offer a “leaders” function which can help you align the Contents properly. Leaders are the dotted lines which link the heading to its page number.

To use this function in Word, here is what you do:

1. Highlight the section(s) you wish to format.
2. Select “Paragraph” from the Home functions.
3. Select the tab “Indents and Spacing”.
4. Then click on the “Tabs” button at the bottom of the window.
5. In the “Tab stop position” window enter 6.5.
6. Under “Alignment” click “Right”.
7. Under the Leader section choose which leader type you wish to use – normally, number 2.
8. Finally, click the “Set” button at the bottom followed by the “ok” button.

When you next insert the heading just press the Tab button and the software will jump across to the right side position for you to insert the page number and automatically drop in the dotted line. As you enter the number, the system will align right the page numbers.

Automated Contents

Microsoft Word offers a very useful automatic heading and contents function.

Basically, you may select up to three levels of heading, choose the format from the template options, and then each Level 1 heading you simply highlight in the document and click on “References”, “Table of Contents”, then click the drop-down menu for “Add Text”. Click on “Level 1” and this tags that heading as a level 1 heading. You then need to format the heading according to your style guide for capitalization and position in the document. Repeat for all level 2 headings and then level 3.

Then, go to the page in the preliminaries section where you wish to insert your Table of Contents, click on the line where the table will start, and then click as follows:
- References
- Table of Contents
- Built-In Automatic Table 1.

The software will create an automatic TOC for you. Each time you make adjustments to your manuscript – add or delete pages, add or delete sections with headings, etc., if you then run the “Update Table” function the system will update the TOC.

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