

***The following is based on a true story. The names have been changed to protect the innocent. :) The client gave us permission to write this description of how we helped her.***

- ***This story demonstrates the importance of completing a full literature review BEFORE choosing research method.***
- ***This story also shows how the real demands of your career can make it absolutely necessary to manage your time by delegating some tasks to academic writing professionals (like us).***

# Manager Mary

Manager Mary was starting her dissertation, and we recommended starting with a strong Literature Review.

“Mary” enrolled in graduate school because she hoped to improve her credentials and get a promotion at work. When her graduate program began, she got the promotion at work! Apparently, they saw that she was very effective in managing and motivating others. So, we will call her “Manager Mary.”

Manager Mary was elated, but she suddenly was working 60 hours per week and learning her new responsibilities. It was extremely important to her that she prove to upper management they had made a good decision by promoting her. She sent us a message that said something like this:

*Now that I am being observed in my new role as a manager, I feel that I have a responsibility to myself and my children to give it 100% of my attention. Grad school is important to me, but it defeats its own purpose if it interferes from my performance at work.*

We discussed the issue with Manager Mary and she agreed to let us write a Literature Review. Her graduate program actually recommended choosing a research method before writing the Literature Review, and that would be a big mistake. It just goes to show you how easy it is for one professor’s misconception to make life very difficult for all the students in the program.

We told her:

*Your program is designed backwards. The FIRST thing to do is a thorough Lit Review. No one even really has the right to propose any kind of research unless they have done a thorough Lit Review. It is the foundation. We will choose a method by looking at what other researchers have done recently and deciding how to intelligently contribute to the “conversation” that is taking place in the scholarly discourse.*

*That is why we need to write a thorough Lit Review before working on the Methods chapter and before writing the Introduction chapter. All researchers are participating in a kind of conversation, and we can only contribute to the conversation about this research topic after we look carefully to see what others have said about it in recent years. That’s what the Literature Review is all about.*

Manager Mary worked on improving outcomes in her department at work, and we worked on a killer Literature Review. When we had finished, the way to design her research study was obvious. We suggested three different options – two quantitative, and one qualitative.

Mary chose a longitudinal study (correlational design), and she ended up spending literally years to collect the data. We told her we could recommend an easier way, but she was so passionate about the topic that she wanted to do what she thought would be most effective.

We didn’t hear from Manager Mary for a few weeks while she began to collect data. Then, she sent us an extremely nice message:

*I have decided to continue collecting data for my longitudinal study of ... and I cannot complete the study for several years. However, I wonder how long it would take you to suggest some other topics for me and write a new proposal. I am prepared to order a whole new dissertation from you on the same topic. You have made it possible for me to stay focused on work while continuing to make progress as a scholar. For this I am extremely grateful, and you probably already know what a difference this makes in my personal and professional life.*

How does the story end? We wrote another Lit Review in one week, and then we wrote an entire proposal. Manager Mary completed her program in less than a year, but she

also continued her longitudinal study as a part-time “labor of love” and when she was ready for data analysis she came back to us and supported us with another order.

This is an example of a client enjoying excellent efficiency because we know how to best approach the process of writing a research proposal, and when necessary we can provide options and alternatives. Manager Mary continues to contact us now for reports, presentations, and updates to her resume.