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## The Prospectus

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A prospectus, simply explained, is a rough proposal of what information might be covered in an essay.

In the business world and other professions, prospectuses are created for projects in order to gain clients, funding, and support. Writing a prospectus for your essay will help you gather information and articulate your argument, allowing for a more clear topic and presentation in the final draft. It will also enable you to begin thinking seriously about the proof and reasoning you will use to support your argument.

You do not need a specific thesis statement to start your prospectus. Simply have an idea in mind, and let the prospectus be a forerunner to your outline, but remember that this is not your outline. While the outline organizes the *specific* info you plan on using in an essay, the prospectus just begins the process of gathering and articulating your ideas.

Use the following guidelines to create your prospectus. Simply answer number one, then move on to number two. Do not write a prospectus in the form of an essay.

*Here are some guidelines for typing a 2-3 page prospectus:*

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1. **State your position.** In a sentence or two, state a position you might take on the topic at hand.
2. **List incidents.** List at least three instances about your topic that have made you respond in a bad way. List at least three instances about your topic that have made you respond in a favorable way. Discuss the reactions you had to each.
3. **List reasons.** List at least three reasons for taking your position seriously. Reasons explain why to take a position -- these reasons could end up being your topic sentences, support for your thesis. *(these reasons may end up becoming your topic sentences)*
4. **Identify one reading that supports your opinion.** Which single reading has been the most beneficial for providing support for your claim? Explain why it is so important. *(this sort of explanation can lead to effective "analysis" in your body paragraphs)*
5. **Anticipate your reader's questions or objections.** List at least three questions, objections, or reservations that you would expect from readers who oppose your stance. How might you refute these objections? *(this can end up in the essay's refutation paragraph)*
6. **Identify one reading that challenges your opinion.** Choose one article that is the greatest challenge to your argument. Why did it not change your mind?
7. **Try to support your argument.** Select one reason you listed in #3 and write at least a page supporting it and arguing for it using specific facts and support. Write quickly and do not stop to check for grammar or for mistakes until you are finished. Simply try out one part of your argument before you concern yourself with the entire essay. *(this usually ends up becoming a body paragraph in your essay)*