



MicroModule: expertise

REVIEW Page

Below is the entire module on one page.

What is expertise? How do we know someone is an expert?

Expertise is observable accomplishment or skill in a specific field. An expert is someone we can trust to tell us the facts we need to know. Expertise means proficient at a skill. An expert can do something better than almost anyone else.



For example: LibrarySpot.com is described as a place where you can access reference books (e.g.: dictionaries, encyclopedias, journals) and the experts who write them. Thus people with expertise are those who write the information we view as evidence, peer-reviewed, accepted as true.

Another example: We know David Weil is an expert on the history of computers, because he runs the [Computer Museum of America](http://ComputerMuseumofAmerica.com) and publishes works that are verifiable. Other experts refer to him. Other experts say the same things he says.

Why should we check an expert's view?

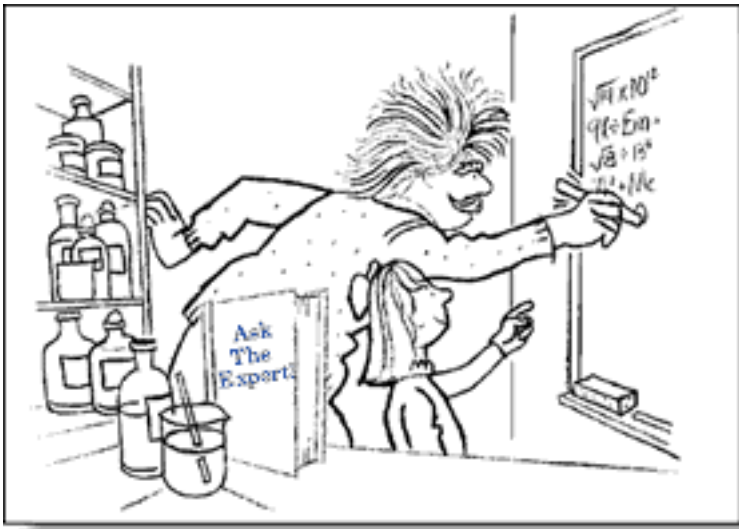
- Seeking multiple sources for information (sometimes called triangulation) is a dependable way to get the whole story and not just part of the story. Triangulating at least three solid sources of information is particularly important if the subject is a complex one.

- Experts have time to do more research than you can accomplish. Take advantage of their work; let them search for you.
- Try to find two experts with totally different opinions. If you can, then you must do some thinking. If you can not, then your decision will be easy.
- Citing an expert adds credibility to your work.

How can I find people with expertise in my subject?

- Search for authors who have written about your topic and contact them via email.
- Ask your librarian or teacher or someone else you know who is interested in the topic.
- Online libraries are offering reference librarian services virtually. These ask-the-librarian services work quite well.
- Search for Ask-the-expert services.
- There are many who swear that newsgroup and listserv connections give them the answer to any question they ask
- [Google Answers](#) provides a service that allows you to ask your question to a community of professional researchers.. who will then quote a price for a personalized response.

Ask an Expert!



Let's Try It!

Pick a topic of your own. Find a web page or service that allows you to ask an expert a question. Your question may already be answered by an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) the expert supplies. Or the expert may respond to you directly.

When expertise comes directly from the author who conducted the research it is called a *primary source of information*.

Here are some Ask the Expert Sites to get you started!

[Electronic Emissary Project](#)

The Electronic Emissary project is a 'connection center' for telementoring projects that helps teachers and students locate experts from all fields of learning. This resource has been online since 1993 and is based at the University of Texas's College of Education.

[Ask an Astronaut](#)

Here's a resource where you can pose questions to real Astronauts. Each month the site features a specific astronaut, providing significant biographical background. Related resource links, and many downloadable images are available for your projects. It can take a long time for students to get a response to a question, and not all questions are answered.

[The MAD Scientist Network](#)

Based in St. Louis, Missouri, the MAD Scientist Network is the gateway to more than 500 scientists from around the planet who can answers questions in almost any science related field.

[Ask a Geologist](#)

This is a site provided by the USGS (United States Geological Survey), a bureau of the Department of the Interior. You can ask questions about all aspects of Geology (volcanoes, mapping, stream erosion, plate tectonics, etc.) Your questions are routed to the appropriate USGS scientist. You should receive a response in a few days.

[MathForum - Ask Dr. Math](#)

This is a dynamic resource staffed by volunteer math educators that provides a comprehensive index of internet math resources. Materials are arranged by grade level and subject area. Dr. Math also includes asynchronous discussion forums that help you connect to like minded educators from around the world.

[Ask an Expert Page](#)

This site was compiled by the New Jersey Networking Infrastructure in Education Project (NJNIE). Students and teachers can click on a variety of topics, from science to literature, to ask questions of professionals in that particular field.

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End of Micromodule - expertise.

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