

APA In-Text Citations for Personal Communications: Interviews, Personal Letters, E-Mail Messages, Text Messages, and Class Lectures

Handout courtesy of Angela Gulick

Important Note

In the APA system, personal communications are mentioned in the document itself, but **they are not included on the References page**. Therefore, it is important IN the document to establish the credibility of the personal communicator since this is your only opportunity to do so. Consider what the reader needs to know in order to trust the source: the communicator's name, job title, years of experience, workplace, educational level, specialized skills or experience.

According to the *Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association* (7th edition), "Personal communications include emails, text messages, online chats or direct messages, personal interviews, telephone conversations, live speeches, unrecorded classroom lectures, memos, letters, messages from nonarchived discussion groups or online bulletin boards, and so on" (p. 260)

In-Text Citation: An in-text citation for a personal communication includes 1) a signal phrase, 2) an action verb, and 3) a parenthetical citation.

- **Signal Phrase:** Provide the communicator's first two initials and last name, like this: A. M. Gulick. You also need to provide the words "personal communication" and the date of the communication either in the sentence itself or in (parentheses) at the end of the sentence.
- **An action verb** is a word such as stated, commented, questioned, argued, claimed, mentioned, said. Another option is to begin your signal phrase with **According to...**
- **A parenthetical citation:** Put whatever of the three details (communicator's name, the words "personal communication," date of the communication) in the parentheses at the end of your borrowed information if you haven't already presented it in the sentence.

Here are some sample signal phrases in different styles.

- J. S. Saylor, a registered nurse at Carle Clinic for eleven years, stated _____ (personal communication, May 15, 2022).
- As Carle Clinic registered nurse for eleven years J. S. Saylor stated, _____ (personal communication, May 15, 2022).
- According to J. S. Saylor, a registered nurse at Carle Clinic for eleven years, _____ (personal communication, May 15, 2022).
- As one registered nurse at Carle Clinic for the past eleven years stated, _____ (J. S. Saylor, personal communication, May 15, 2022).

Remember, personal communications do not appear on the References page.