

Barriers to Finding – Session 1

Require: Flip Chart & Pen

(Prompt for GT: Ask delegates to suggest barriers and then list constituent factors)

My thoughts (as guidance or prompt)

3 main barriers.

- 1) Ourselves and our techniques
- 2) Limitations of the resources we use
- 3) Not everything is 'out there' to find!

1) ... Factors

- Our skills are usually learnt not taught
- Bad habits are the norm
- The comfort factor often dictates action
- Limited by time pressures – so “speed over recall” norm
- Mostly generalists – don't always know the best resource to use

2) ... Factors

- Resources we use have limitations in:
 - indexing quantity and quality (automated versus human)
 - terminology used and form of words (automated, human or thesaurus-based; natural or reversed language; US versus UK English)
 - material included (even between those that cover same subject)

All the above applies to LMS's, Resources, Search Engines, and the internet!

- but do we know or realise this when searching?

- Different searching strategies are needed for different products because not built on 'commonality'
- Competitive market means multiple products to cover a subject (PubMed + Cinahl + BNI + ASSIA and even then not all health covered!)

3) ... Factors – It is difficult to find it when it is...

- Older material (on Internet, usually rely on someone else referencing; in a database depends on when indexing started)
- More obscure material, especially “Grey Literature” (trend is speculative searching rather than knowledge)
- Obscure or small or defunct or ‘bought out’ publisher (very hard if no internet presence, even Amazon isn’t comprehensive!)
- Conference proceedings – always a difficult area
- Anything other than a book or journal article!
- From a website that isn’t ‘crawled’, eg: .gov.uk Government publications are always obvious as to department, eg: “Thinking Green” could be Education or Environment or Home Office or Prime Minister’s Office or even Trade & Industry!
- On the cached image but not on the current website!

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Task. (using a web search to demonstrate 2 – limitations of, and differences between, search engines)

Split into groups (1 group per computer)

Target to find: Beck, U. “Risk society: toward a new modernity” Sage, 1992 (for sale at Tesco.com)

search on:- google.co.uk; uk.yahoo.com; uk.msn.com (bing); ask.com; uk.altavista.com; search.com; ukcrawler.co.uk; duckduckgo.com; dogpile.com; lexxe.com; turbo10.com; leapfish.com

1. search for: risk society (2 words no phrase markings)
2. add beck to search
3. search for: “risk society” beck
4. report back on search engine, it’s usability, and results at each stage – did Tesco site appear in first page of results?

(prompt for GT - now go to “Searching” and “Boolean”)