This is a Brief Online Learning Tutorial (or BOLT) brought to you by the LISTEN project, a HRSA funded project focusing on improving the information literacy competencies of nursing students and professional nurses.
In nursing practice it is imperative to be able to evaluate resources for evidence-based nursing practice (EBNP). The objectivity of a resource is very important to the reliability of evidence. In nursing practice reliability, safety, and quality are always important. This tutorial will provide guidelines and tips for evaluating the objectivity of a resource.
We can evaluate all resources for objectivity by asking questions about the resources. Resources can be books, journal articles, or online articles you obtained from a database.

Most importantly ask these questions: Is the author biased? Is the scope and purpose of the resource information provided? Is the information provided from the original author or is the resource a commentary or summary of another author’s work? Who is the author or organization affiliated with? Who is sponsoring the resource information and is this information provided? Who is the resource’s information intended for? In other words who is the audience the resource is intended for?
Is the statement of purpose and scope stated? What is the intent of the site?
How does the author or organization determine what information is included within the resource? Is any criteria for publication within the resource provided?
Who sponsored the study? Why would they sponsor the study? Does the organization have anything to gain from sponsoring the study? Does the information appear to be objective. Is it obvious who sponsored the study? Also determine if any obvious conflicts of interest between the organization or author of the resource.

It is also a good idea to determine if there is any financial support for the author’s findings? These are all considerations to be made when evaluating for objectivity. Always be cautious if the sponsorship is not obvious, or an attempt is not made to provide this information.
Who is the audience?

Who is this information intended for? Is it written for nurses? Is the site intended for administrators? It is important to know who the intended audience is for the on-line resource.
Continue to visit the LISTEN website, at listenuphealth.org, for more helpful tips on using technology and seeking, evaluating, and applying information in nursing to support evidence-based nursing practice.
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