III. Motivation. Why We Cite: Analysis & Reflection

*For scholars, it’s more than defensive driving*

Citations are made for strategic reasons. Read the scholarly arguments below for sourcing and citing prior research. Discuss them, and rank the top 2 in order of importance for your field. Report out to the group. **Follow-Up:** Reflective free-write on personal concept of authorship.

1) “Citations are used to recognize and acknowledge the intellectual property rights of authors. They are a matter of ethics and a defense against plagiarism” (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 251).

2) Research writing is a conversational practice. “The researcher discovers or invents a claim, researches that claim, sees what others have said, and writes inclusively” (Yancey, 2008, p. 166).

3) “We make citations because we think our colleagues think they are important and we want to show that we know that. These works ‘should’ have a scholarly impact on us, whether or not they actually did” (Bavelas, 1978, p. 160).

4) Citations signal professional competence. “The ways writers present their topics, signal their allegiances, and stake their claims represent careful negotiations with, and considerations of, their colleagues so their writing displays a professional competence . . .” (Hyland, 2009, p. 88-89).

5) “Citations are used to create research space for the citing author. By describing what has been done, citations point the way to what has not been done, and so prepare a space for new research” (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 252).

6) To show respect, introduce the original source to the reader, and distinguish from “copying others’ writing as one’s own” (Liu, 2005, p. 235). “. . . the concept of ‘plagiarism’ as an immoral practice has existed in China for a very long time,” adds Liu, citing the Chinese term, “piao qie,” from AD 700.

**References**


**Note:** This activity was inspired by *Academic Writing for Graduate Students* (Swales & Feak, 2004, p. 251-252).