IGI Authors' Guide to Choosing Key Index Words

The index is a key component to any research publication. It helps a reader identify and locate important information within a publication by displaying index words and concepts in a systematic order for quick reference. In order to provide your readers with the most comprehensive and useful index possible, IGI would like to request your assistance in choosing appropriate index words from your manuscript.

Step 1- Highlighting
You should go through your manuscript and highlight words you believe are important to the main topic and scope of your material. You should only highlight the word each time you believe it is used relevantly. **If a key word is arbitrarily used in passing, it should not be highlighted.**

Step 2- Reference List
Once the words are highlighted you should make a "reference list", in a separate document, for the indexer. This list should list other possible synonyms or variations for these terms. It should also note what pages the chosen terms fall on, with the context in which they are used. An example of this step is provided on the last page of this guide.

Before you can do these steps, it is important for you to know what information is indexable and what information should be excluded.

What is NOT indexable?
Footnotes and Endnotes- Unless the information contained in these sections is vital to the manuscript and does not appear anywhere else, it should not be indexed.
Supplementary material- Any extra information at the beginning or end of the manuscript is not indexed. For example, abstracts and key terms should not be indexed.
Tables/Figures- Information from the tables and figures should not be included in the index.
Back material- No material from the end of the manuscript should be indexed. This includes the references, appendices, etc.

What is Indexable?
Words should only be included in the index when they are directly relevant to the subject matter, scope and audience of the book. If a key word is arbitrarily used in passing, it should not be indexed. This is a common issue with indexers who use a computer to scan the text for every occurrence of a specific word. Just because a term is mentioned does not necessarily mean that it is worth mentioning in the index.

- **Vocabulary**

Where possible, authors should use the same term consistently throughout the chapter.
-Any terms that have commonly used synonyms, should be listed in the reference list for the indexer.

Ex. The term "Electronic Commerce" may also be known as "e-commerce". Both terms should be listed in the reference list for the indexer, with the one used in the chapter listed first. This will help the indexer keep all similar terms under one general term.

-If the term you choose is a specific type of a more generic term, this should also be noted in the reference list.

Ex. If you choose the term "object-oriented", you should also note the word "database" in the reference list, so the indexer knows what main heading to place it under.

-For cross referencing purposes, it would also be helpful to the indexer if you note any similar terms, or terms that can be associated with your term. With this information, they can send readers to other terms of interest.

- **<u>Names of People</u>**

When citing an individual in the index, the index must cite the most complete name used in the text. The individual's complete name should be provided when the person is first mentioned in the text.

Ex. Abraham Lincoln may appear on page 1 and then appear as Abe Lincoln or "Honest Abe" on page 4.

*All variations that appear in your text should appear on the reference list for the indexer.

- **<u>Names of Organizations</u>**

Names of Organizations should be cited in full in the index. When the organization name is first mentioned in the text, the complete name should be provided, along with any acronyms, and or abbreviations associated with it.

*All variations should appear on the reference list for the indexer.

<u>Example Reference List</u>

Indexer Reference List for: BOOK TITLE HERE
Editor: EDITOR NAME HERE
Chapter Title: YOUR TITLE HERE
Author: YOUR NAME HERE

Term 1 –*Write highlighted index word here*
- **Also known as:** *List other synonyms for your word here, including all terms that your word may be known as. This allows the indexer to place your term appropriately and cross-reference where necessary.*
- **Similar to:** *List other terms that your word is similar to, but NOT also know as. This is where you would list a generic term if your term is specific. For example, if your term is MS Excel, you would list "database" or "spreadsheet" here, so the indexer knows where to place it in the index.*
- **Associated in the manuscript with:** *List terms here that your term is often associated with. This allows the indexer to cross-reference your term to other terms.*
- **Notable appearances of this term can be found on:**
  Page #: *Write the page number the term can be found on, as well as how it is used*
  Page #: *Write the page number the term can be found on, as well as how it is used*
  Page #: *Write the page number the term can be found on, as well as how it is used*

Term 2- Distance Learning (EXAMPLE 1)

- Also known as: "E-Learning", "Distance Learning", "Virtual Learning" and "Online Learning"
- Similar to "Distance Education"
- Associated in the manuscript with: "Virtual Schools" and "Collaborative Learning"
- Notable appearances of this term can be found on:
  Page 1 -distance learning definition
  Page 2 -refers to collaborative learning in distance education
  Page 3 –refers to the challenges of distance learning

Term 3- Data Mining (EXAMPLE 2)
- Also known as: n/a
- Similar to "Data Warehousing" and "Information Modeling"
- Associated in the manuscript with: "Intelligent Agents" and "Object Oriented Databases"
- Notable appearances of this term can be found on:
  Page 1 –what is data mining?
  Page 2 –Object-Oriented databases for data mining
  Page 3 –intelligent agents in data mining

Term 4- Abraham Lincoln (EXAMPLE OF A NAME)
- Also appears in text as: Abe Lincoln
- Notable appearances of his name can be found on:
  Page 1- Abraham Lincoln
  Page 4- Abe