**How can I write more objectively?**

In your writing at university you are often expected to **give your view**. For example:

* Interpreting findings
* Evaluating a theory
* Developing an argument
* Critiquing the work of others.

However, the style of academic writing is usually still quite **objective and impersonal**, which means that it avoids mentioning personal feelings. In order to express your point of view and still write in an objective style, you can use some of the following language strategies:

* *Move information around* in the sentence to emphasize *things and ideas*, instead of people and feelings. For example, instead of writing "I believe the model is valid, based on these findings", write "These findings indicate that the model is valid" or "The following section will show how the model is validated by the findings".
* Avoid evaluative words which are based on non-technical judgements and feelings, such as "badly", "disappointment", "amazing", etc. Instead use *technical evaluations* which related to academic or discipline-specific criteria and values - such as "valid", "inaccurate", "reliable", "clearly demonstrates", "rigour", "out-dated", etc.
* Avoid intense or emotional evaluative language. Instead, use more *moderate and graded* evaluative language. For example, instead of writing "Parents who smoke are obviously abusing their children", write "Second hand smoke has some harmful effects on children’s health."
* Use modality to *show caution* about your views, or to allow room for others to disagree. For example, instead of writing "I think second-hand smoke causes cancer", write "Second-hand smoke may cause cancer", or "There is evidence to support the possibility that second-hand smoke increases the risk of cancer."
* Find *authoritative sources* (i.e. authors or researchers in books or articles) who support your point of view, and refer to them in your writing. For example, instead of writing "Language is, in my view, clearly something social", write "As Halliday (1973) shows, language is intrinsically social."

Different disciplines often have quite **different expectations** about how objective or subjective your writing can be. In the discipline of Education, for example, it is often acceptable to refer to your experiences directly through pronouns (e.g. I, me, my). On the other hand, in many science disciplines, this would usually *not* be acceptable. It is wise to find out about the writing style expected in your discipline(s) by browsing recent articles in some authoritative journals in the field. (Ask your lecturer or tutor which journals, or check the reading list.)