Note that the *h* in *Running head* is lowercase. Also, the actual title appears in all uppercase lettering. Finally, after *Running head*: a total of 50 characters (including spaces) can be used. Therefore, if the title is less than a total of 50 characters, the entire title is provided. ...Otherwise, only the major words are included.

The page header begins on the title page and is placed on all subsequent pages. The running head should be flush left and the page number flush right. The header on every page after the title page does not include the words *Running head*.

**APA Sample Term Paper**

Oprah Winfrey

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All text is in the paper is double-spaced. Use 12 point font only – Times New Roman preferred

Leave 1 inch margins on the left, right, top, and bottom of every page.
Abstract

Oprah Winfrey is a world-renowned figure … basically a household name. The accomplishments earned throughout her lifetime are nothing less than stellar. Her die-hard followers and fans simply consider her a friend, someone they can relate with. They consider her to be a caring, loving, and compassionate individual. She had the conviction, desire, and ambition to overcome both childhood and professional obstacles that most would consider insurmountable. The chances of her succeeding in life were slim, to say the least. She not only beat the odds, she climbed to the top. Her celebrity status never reached her ego; and, to date, Oprah Winfrey is one of the most successful female entertainers/entrepreneurs in the world.
Oprah Winfrey was born January 29, 1954. Her name was actually Orpah, a name that came from the Bible's book of Ruth. Although her birth certificate reads Orpah, most people did not know how to pronounce it. People generally reversed two of the letters, thus creating the name Oprah (Brands, 1999).

Oprah's mother had multiple relationships throughout her lifetime. During some of these relationships, she would ask to have Oprah return to live with her. During one of her extended stays with her mother, Oprah's life would be scarred forever. When her mother left for work, Oprah was often left with an older male cousin. It was during one of these days, that her cousin would rape her. Oprah was told by the cousin never to say a word; if she were to say something, both of them would be in terrible trouble. Oprah agreed never to divulge anything. Unfortunately, this was not the only rape that would occur. Oprah was repeatedly raped in her own home by people who would visit her family. These terrible crimes resulted in Oprah possessing horribly low self-esteem ... something that has had a deep effect on her till this day (Brands, 1999).

Brands (1999) further noted that throughout her troubled youth, Oprah would always have a refuge. She would turn to books as a safe haven. Reading gave her hope and gave her the will to aspire to new goals. Oprah was exceptionally intelligent. Her strong intellect allowed her to skip both kindergarten and second grade. Oprah always praised her teachers for their guidance and support throughout her early years (1999).

According to Brands (1999), although Oprah lived with a myriad of people throughout her lifetime, she credits her grandmother for making her the success that she is today. It was her
grandmother, and later her father, who were the ones who expected the best out of her; they expected her to excel with everything she attempted. Time would prove this to be an expectation that was ultimately conquered (1999).

**Adolescent Problems**

Oprah's academic success was not enough to prevent personal struggles. In an effort to gain attention and affection, she became sexually active. This ultimately resulted in a teenage pregnancy; the baby was born prematurely and died shortly thereafter. Oprah would eventually end up moving back with her father and stepmother. They expected Oprah to study endlessly and allowed her to watch television for only one hour a day ... the local and national news (Raatma, 2001).

During her sophomore year at college, she was encouraged to apply for a position at WTVF, a CBS television station in Nashville. When it came time to audition, her strategy was to imitate her idol, Barbara Walters. The technique was a success, and she was offered the job (Raatma, 2001).

While in her senior year in college, Raatma (2001) noted that another position became available to Oprah. This job, a reporter and co-anchor for the evening news, would require her to move to Baltimore, Maryland. She decided to take the venture.

She had mixed reviews in her new position. Her critics said that she would sometimes mispronounce words because she preferred to report impromptu as opposed to following a script. Since the station had signed a long-term contract with Oprah, they felt that they would find a new position for her. In 1977, a new station manager approached Oprah with yet another proposition. He decided to start a talk show titled *People are Talking*. The format of the program
would allow members of the audience to participate in the show. It would be hosted by two individuals...a male and female (Brands, 1999).

*People are Talking* would eventually beat Donahue in the Baltimore television ratings. The show was soon picked up in other cities across the United States. Oprah was becoming a well-known television personality (Brands, 1999).

**Problems Associated with Success**

Oprah was becoming a true icon of success professionally, but her personal life suffered. She had serious problems with relationships that evolved throughout the years. When she developed a seemingly strong relationship with a member of the opposite sex, she felt obsessed with being with the person at all times. Her insecurity and lack of self-confidence clearly was due to her childhood experiences. Gayle King, her best friend and now editor of *O, The Oprah Magazine*, was always by her side offering words of encouragement.

**A.M. Chicago**

Oprah's newfound success was now receiving national recognition, and she was ready for a change. About that time, the general manager of *A.M. Chicago* had viewed one of Oprah's talk show tapes. Before long, Oprah was hired to be the new host of *A.M. Chicago*. Oprah's biggest challenge was the fact that Donahue was based in Chicago. The Chicago audience took an immediate liking to Oprah. So much so, that she eventually beat *Donahue* in ratings (Brands, 1999).

**Success comes quick.** Within 12 weeks, *A.M. Chicago* had more viewers than *Donahue*. Seven months later, her show was extended to one hour. She interviewed well-known celebrities such as Tom Selleck; Sally Field; Paul McCartney; and her personal idol, Barbara Walters (Brands, 1999).
The producer of the show, Debbie DiMaio, explained Oprah's secret of success in the following manner:

She's 100 percent the same off-camera as on. People like her because they can relate to her. She's got all the same problems — overweight, boyfriend troubles, she's been poor. So when people see her on television they can say, "That's my friend Oprah." (Raatma, 2001, p. 51)

Her forte, however, was interviewing the average person. She would get ordinary people to divulge their personal traumatic experiences. These conversations were almost therapeutic to Winfrey. In fact, it was during one of her ordinary interviews that she openly discussed her most horrifying personal experience... being molested by numerous relatives and friends. According to Brands (1999), she said:

I think it was on that day that, for the first time, I recognized that I was not to blame ... It happened on the air, as so many things happen for me. It happened on the air in the middle of someone else's experience, and I thought I was going to have a breakdown on television. (p. 298)

**The Food Battle**

Fear of failure was Oprah's greatest downfall. One way in which to deal with her mounting stress was food. Eating gave her comfort. Oprah would binge diet and lose substantial weight. This would work temporarily; but as soon as the pressure began to mount again, the eating would start as well (Lowe, 1998).

Due to a lawsuit hearing, Oprah was forced to tape her show from Texas for a period of time. Oprah spent many hours defending her actions in the courtroom. During her stay, she
actually gained 11 pounds. She noted, "I was strategizing with lawyers at night. I couldn't help but eat pie" (Lowe, 1998, p. 111).

**Oprah's Empire**

**The Oprah Winfrey Show**

Oprah Winfrey soon gained the reputation (and ratings) of being number one in the talk show business. She was able to sympathize and, quite literally, empathize with others in desperate need. She would recommend books for her guests and audiences to read. These books would soon become best sellers. Consequently, the publishing companies suddenly began knocking on her door. They deluged her with books to read, review, and, most importantly, potentially endorse on her television program.

**The classroom.** Having the urge to test her skills at teaching, Oprah and her fiancé, Stedman Graham, agreed to team-teach a course at the Northwestern University ... Bill Dedman (1999) writes in his article titled *Professor Oprah: Preaching What She practices* that Oprah described her success as coming from setting goals and from achieving them. She described the value of having an authentic leadership style that matched one's personality. Leaders must look inward, admit mistakes, and recognize their weaknesses (1999).

0, **The Oprah Magazine.** In 2000, Oprah attempted to conquer yet another goal. She took on the position as magazine founder and editorial director of 0, *The Oprah Magazine*. The magazine is published monthly and encourages readers to make the most out of life. It offers celebrity interviews, articles about health and nutrition, self-help columns, and much more (Raatma, 2001).

As noted in Raatma (2001), Oprah described the magazine's purpose in the following manner:
My hope is that this magazine will help you lead a more productive life, one in which you feel a sense of vitality, cooperation, harmony, balance and reverence within yourself and in your encounters. That doesn't mean living a life without frustration, anxieties and disappointments. It means understanding that your choices move you forward or hold you back. (p. 93)

After the first issue was ripped off the stands, Oprah still was not content with the magazine. Clemetson (2001) writes in her Newsweek article that Winfrey complained that the layouts were not lush enough and the writing was not smart enough. She ordered several re-shoots and revisions for the second edition. By the third issue, the editor in chief resigned. Oprah was able to secure a new editor who, like herself, is a perfectionist.

**A day with Oprah.** Oprah Winfrey is a dedicated, die-hard professional. People who worked for Oprah do so with extreme loyalty. They work long hours and put forth great sacrifice to keep up with Oprah's demands. One former producer noted the following, "People adore her. They give up their lives for her. People who work [at Harpo] get divorced, put off having kids, have no outside lives. Because everything, all your time and energy, is given to Oprah" (as cited in Raatma, 2001, p. 80).

Oprah attempts to bind all employees to strict, lifelong confidentiality agreements. She keeps a keen eye on her personal ventures as well. In the past, she barred the press from the course she taught with Stedman Graham at Northwestern University's business school. Students who chose to talk to reporters could face disciplinary action from the school (Clemetson, 2001).

Down-to-earth diva... control freak... silly... caring ... perfectionist ... optimist. These are all words that accurately describe Oprah Winfrey. Clemetson (2001) describes a typical day with Oprah:
It's Friday afternoon, and Oprah Winfrey is in an otherworldly state of
calm. Her staff, however, is frantic. Nelson Mandela is about to arrive for a TV
interview, and producers are rushing through set-checks, tightening security and
prepping audience members. Behind the closed double doors to her Chicago
office, Winfrey is plopped down in a cushiony armchair, a candle burning at her
side, talking about the past year, when an assistant calls in a panic. Mr. Mandela
is 30 minutes early, and Winfrey is still in her off-air gear—a baggy sweater and a
well-worn pair of pants. "He'll just have to see me with no makeup on," says
Winfrey, raking a hand through her unstyled hair. At least a little foundation and
powder? The caller pleads. "Look," Winfrey replies before hanging up the phone,
"he's seen a woman with no makeup on before." Her instincts are right. Mandela
is charmed by the casual welcome.

Four days later, Winfrey is in perfectionist mode. Looking back at the
December issue of her new magazine, 0, she holds up the cover and winces.
"Ooh, there's a mistake!" she says, pointing to the word "generosity," which she
thinks should have bigger type. Annoyed with herself for not spotting it sooner,
she grabs a stack of past issues and starts flipping. "Didn't like that." Flip. "Nope.
Never got that right." Flip. Flip. Realizing that she's obsessing, she blows out a
whoosh of breath and refocuses her energy on pages she likes. After several
satisfied nods, she returns to the December issue and declares: "I love everything
in this!" Then she turns a page, spots another imperceptible glitch and adds
sheepishly: "Except this. We should have moved this." (pp. 43-44)
It is clear that, as Winfrey's assets continue to grow at exponential rates, micromanaging will not be a feasible option for the multimillionaire. She will simply have to give up some amount of control in some areas.

**Oprah's ten commandments.** Writers have dissected Oprah as an actress, an entertainer, a counselor, a business leader, and as a female success in a male-dominated world. Readers can gain some extremely valuable insight into her inner feelings from a set of 10 commandments that she says guide her success (Lowe, 1998, pp. 168-169). They include the following:

1. Don't live your life to please others.
2. Don't depend on forces outside of yourself to get ahead.
3. Seek harmony and compassion in your business and personal life.
4. Get rid of the back-stabbers—surround yourself only with people who will lift you higher.
5. Be nice.
6. Rid yourself of your addictions—whether they be food, alcohol, drugs, or behavior habits.
7. Surround yourself with people who are as smart or smarter than yourself.
8. If money is your motivation, forget it.
9. Never hand over your power to someone else.
10. Be persistent in pursuing your dreams.
Conclusion

Winfrey is a tireless businesswoman with endless energy. She is a philanthropist who has donated millions to various charities. She is also an actress, television producer, CEO, and educator with a personal fortune estimated in excess of $800 million. Oprah Winfrey was named one of the 100 Most Influential People of the 20th Century by *Time* magazine, and in 1998 received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (Academy of Achievement, 2006). There is no question about the fact that she is a leader - but the thing she is most proud of is the fact that the American people relate to her and consider her their good friend.
References


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