

MLA Essay Format

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1" ← English 101
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Online Monitoring:
A Threat to Employee Privacy in the Wired Workplace

1/2" ← As the Internet has become an integral tool of businesses,
company policies on Internet usage have become as common as
policies regarding vacation days or sexual harassment. A 2005
study by the American Management Association and ePolicy
Institute found that 76% of companies monitor employees' use
of the Web, and the number of companies that block employees'
access to certain Web sites has increased 27% since 2001 (1).
Unlike other company rules, however, Internet usage policies
often include language authorizing companies to secretly monitor
1" ← their employees, a practice that raises questions about rights
in the workplace. Although companies often have legitimate
concerns that lead them to monitor employees' Internet usage—
from expensive security breaches to reduced productivity—the
benefits of electronic surveillance are outweighed by its costs to
employees' privacy and autonomy.

While surveillance of employees is not a new phenomenon,
electronic surveillance allows employers to monitor workers
with unprecedented efficiency. In his book *The Naked Employee*,
Frederick Lane describes offline ways in which employers have
been permitted to intrude on employees' privacy for decades,
such as drug testing, background checks, psychological exams,
1" ↓

Annotations: 1" (left margin), 1/2" (top right margin), 1" (right margin), 1/2" (left margin), 1" (right margin), 1" (bottom margin).

Title is centered.

Double-spacing is used throughout.

First line of each paragraph is indented.

Marginal annotations indicate **MLA-style formatting**.

Source: Hacker/Sommers (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011, 2007).

This sample follows the style guidelines in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (2009).

lie detector tests, and in-store video surveillance. The difference, Lane argues, between these old methods of data gathering and electronic surveillance involves quantity:

← 1" → Technology makes it possible for employers to gather enormous amounts of data about employees, often far beyond what is necessary to satisfy safety or productivity concerns. And the trends that drive technology—faster, smaller, cheaper—make it possible for larger and larger numbers of employers to gather ever-greater amounts of personal data. (3-4)

Lane points out that employers can collect data whenever employees use their computers—for example, when they send e-mail, surf the Web, or even arrive at or depart from their workstations.

Another key difference between traditional surveillance and electronic surveillance is that employers can monitor workers' computer use secretly. One popular monitoring method is keystroke logging, which is done by means of an undetectable program on employees' computers. The Web site of a vendor for Spector Pro, a popular keystroke logging program, explains that the software can be installed to operate in "Stealth" mode so that it "does not show up as an icon, does not appear in the Windows system tray, . . . [and] cannot be uninstalled without the Spector Pro password which YOU specify" ("Automatically"). As Lane explains, these programs record every key entered into the computer in hidden directories that can later be accessed or uploaded by supervisors; the programs can even scan for keywords tailored to individual companies (128-29).

Long quotation is indented in MLA style.

Works Cited

Heading is centered.

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Double-spacing is used throughout; no extra space between entries.

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