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Planning is the essence of life. A well thought out plan for every action makes life smooth and systematic. Spontaneity is a trait best suited for a debate, composition of a poem, or faced with a unique or awkward situation all of a sudden. One cannot live in the present without caring for the future. When one cares for the future, he has to plan his future actions and reactions. As for a research work planning is quintessential.   
A research paper is undertaken with a goal in mind, and one must plan to achieve that goal. Planning involves carrying out necessary steps chalked out in advance. Research involves creative work undertaken systematically to enhance knowledge about anything under the sun including man, culture, and society, and using the newly gained knowledge for new applications. It should be well directed and goal-oriented and needs to be planned. One cannot take a turn in a research work on the spur of the moment. This is well said that well begun is half done. Hence, planning deftly, and executing the plan meticulously are the significant keys to the success of any research or work. When one plans, he knows what the process is and also the path he has to proceed to. There can simply be no research without planning.   
I would caution my friend at the outset for his being a spontaneous person. This is because the entire life and every aspect of it have to be planned whether it is education, career, job, marriage, house, research paper and so forth. Nothing can take one to his cherished goal unless he plans and strives to achieve it. One cannot simply stumble upon success. Success comes on meticulous execution of plans. Similarly one need to make a well-defined outline for writing a paper. One cannot be spontaneous in case of writing a paper or one’s career or acquisition of earthly assets. One has to dream and plan for every step he takes in his research work or writing. Specific and general objectives with clear thesis statement as well topic sentences are unavoidable in the form of the outline to write an effective paper or essay.