




Micro-organization

Outlines, paragraphs and topic sentences



The following groups of sentences can be rearranged to form paragraphs. Make a note of the order in which they should be placed (e.g. b., d., c., a., e.) and put a ring around the letter that corresponds to what you think is the topic sentence.

Exercise 1

Paragraph 1

1. Next, add antifreeze to your windshield washer fluid; otherwise, the fluid will freeze and possibly break the container.
2. First, put on snow tires if you plan to drive on snowy, icy roads very often.
3. Driving in winter, especially on snowy, icy roads, can be less troublesome if you take a few simple precautions.
4. Finally, it is also a good idea to carry tire chains, a can of spray to unfreeze door locks, and a windshield scraper in your car when driving in winter weather.
5. Second, check the amount of antifreeze in your radiator and add more if necessary.




Paragraph 2

1. A breakthrough in one of these areas will hopefully provide a means of relieving both the overstretched oil market and the environment.
2. Researchers in the automobile industry are experimenting with different types of engines and fuels as alternatives to the conventional gasoline engines.
3. One new type of engine, which burns diesel oil instead of gasoline, has been available for several years.
4. Finally, several automobile manufacturers are experimenting with methanol, which is a mixture of gasoline and methyl alcohol, as an automobile fuel.
5. A further type is the gas turbine engine, which can use fuels made from gasoline, diesel oil, kerosene and other petroleum distillates.
6. The increasing depletion of oil reserves, along with environmental concerns, have prompted some radical developments in car design over the past few years



Paragraph 3

1. Later on, people began to write on pieces of leather, which were rolled into scrolls.
2. In the earliest times, people carved or painted messages on rocks.
3. In the Middle Ages, heavy paper called parchment was used for writing and books were laboriously copied by hand.
4. With the invention of the printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century, the modern printing industry was born.
5. Some form of written communication has been used throughout the centuries.




Write good topic sentences to begin each of the following paragraphs. Remember to include both a topic and a controlling idea.

Americans relaxing at home, for example, may put on kimonos, which is a Japanese word. Americans who live in a warm climate may take an afternoon siesta on an outdoors patio without even realising that these are Spanish words. In their gardens, they may enjoy the fragrance of jasmine flowers, a word that came into English from Persian. They may even relax on a chaise longue, while sipping a drink made with vodka, words of French and Russian origin, respectively.




Passage 2



In European universities, students are not required to attend classes. In fact, professors in Germany generally do not know the names of the students enrolled in their courses. In the United States, however, students are required to attend all classes and may be penalized if they do not. Furthermore, in the European system, there is usually just one comprehensive examination at the end of the students' entire four or five years of study. In the American system, on the other hand, there are usually numerous quizzes, texts, and homework assignments, and there is almost always a final examination in each course at the end of the semester.



Passage 3

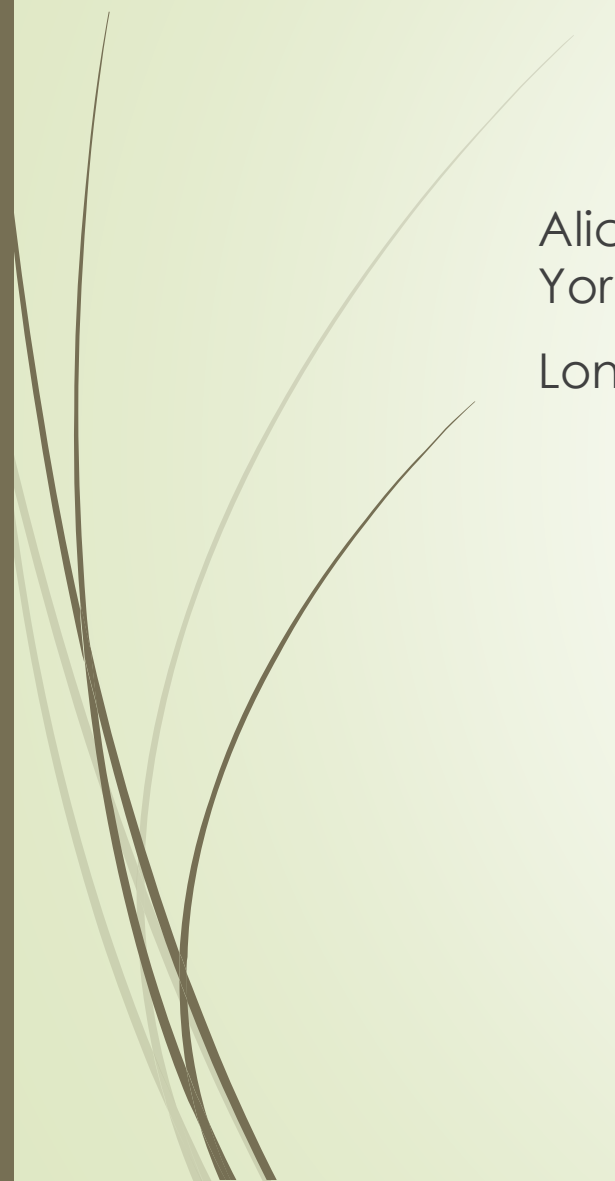


For example, the Eskimos, living in a treeless region of snow and ice, sometimes build temporary homes out of thick blocks of ice. People who live in deserts, on the other hand, use the most available material, mud or clay, which provides good insulation from the heat. In Northern Europe, Russia and other areas of the world where forests are plentiful, people usually construct their homes out of wood. In the islands of the South Pacific, where there is a plentiful supply of bamboo and palm, people use these tough, fibrous plants to build their home.



Source:

Alice Oshima and Ann Hogue, Writing Academic English, 2nd Edition (New York: Longman, 1991), pp.23ff.






Outline the supporting details from the following paragraphs

Linguistic noise. The writer can contribute noise to the report. He may become the victim of his own semantic inadequacy that allows misfit words, mangled metaphors, and deadwood to creep in. the writer might skip important logical steps in the development of ideas, leaving readers confused. The report itself may contribute typographic noise by printing errors, faulty reproduction, cluttered illustrations, and poor graphic design.

Topic sentence: Writers contribute noise to reports.

Supporting details:???

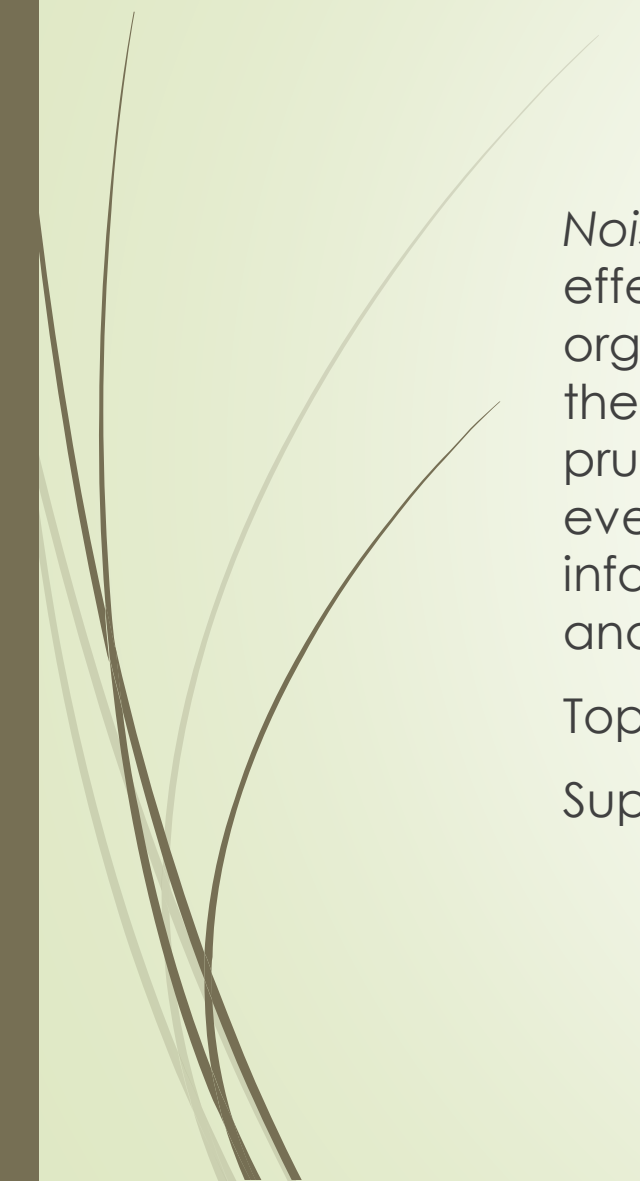



Outline the following paragraphs, listing the topic sentences and supporting details

Sources of noise. In face to face communication, noise can come from many sources. Speakers who mispronounce words cause listeners to stop listening briefly and mentally repronounce words correctly, possibly missing part of the message. Distracting mannerisms can interfere or conflict with the message. Inexperienced speakers might use esoteric vocabulary, those vague multisyllabic words, trying to impress listeners. Sometimes interference comes from environmental sounds, such as traffic, machines, ringing phones, or nearby conversations.

Topic sentence: _____


Supporting details:???



Noise abatement. Writers must filter out noise in technical reports. The most effective method to filter out noise is by writing an outline that clarifies the organization of the report. Writers must carefully edit their writing, evaluating the word choice, eliminating redundant terms and mangled metaphors, and pruning unneeded words. Writers should check the spelling of words because even one misspelled word can cause readers to mistrust the rest of the information. And the final draft needs special proofreading to catch mistakes and verify that the message is clear, substantiated, and grammatically correct.

Topic sentence: _____

Supporting details:???



Components of a report



Order of arrangement

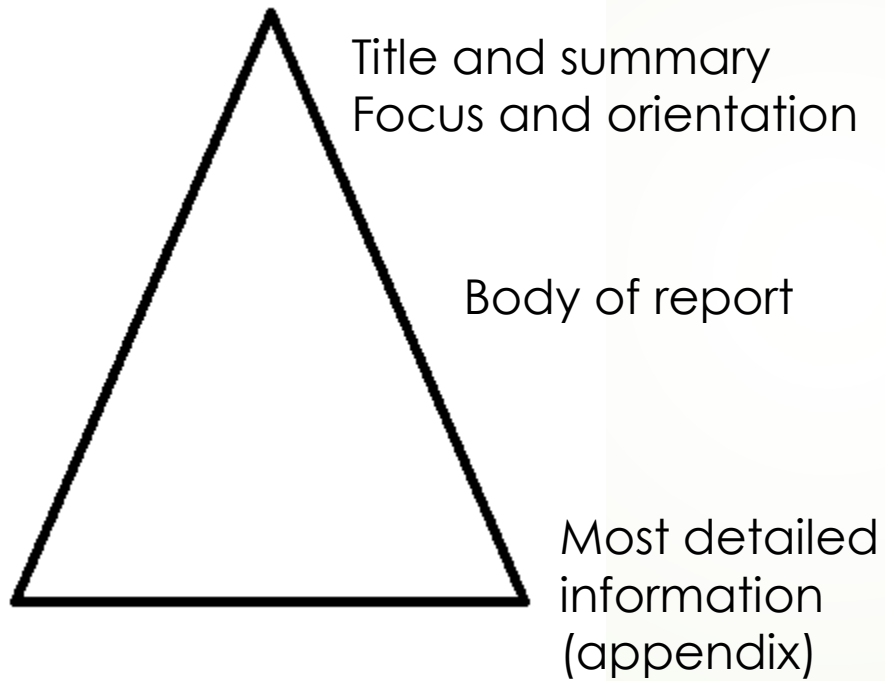
- Most important and newest information first
 - From reader's point of view
- Move from most important information to details and evidence
 - Make sure the reader knows what the evidence serves to prove



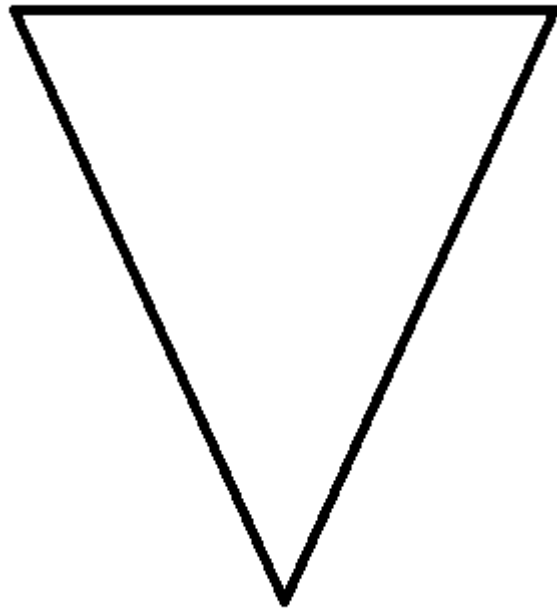
Pyramids of evidence

- Difference between order of discovery and order of announcement
- Explanation is different in the order of writing from the order of tasks discoveries and tests

Pyramids of evidence



Pyramids of evidence



Most readers

Few readers



Amount of detail

- ▶ What is your purpose?
 - ▶ Assemble and write about all available information?
 - ▶ Describe how you came to a particular conclusion?
 - ▶ Getting something done?
- ▶ Writing at different levels
 - ▶ Outline in summary
 - ▶ Evidence to support a conclusion in body
 - ▶ Detail in appendices



Amount of detail

- Divide work into logically related and manageable sections
- Employ a signalling system
 - Use headings and subheadings liberally as signposts

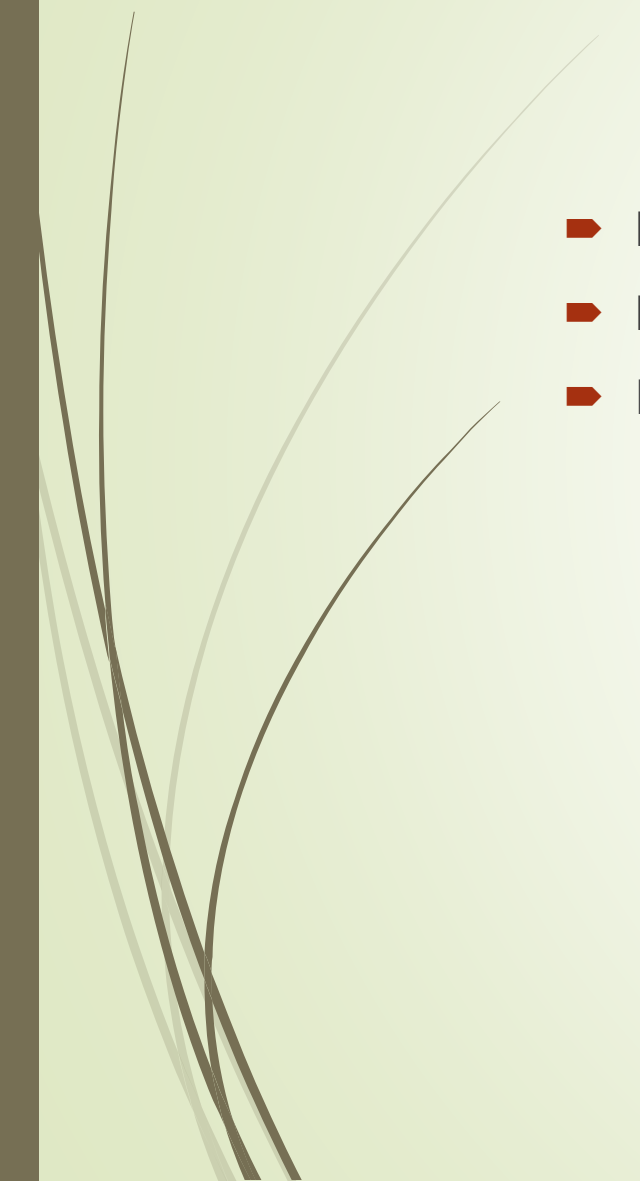


Results and findings

- Just the main facts and figures necessary to support and explain your argument
- Pieces of information necessary to make the argument logically acceptable and technically persuasive
 - Detailed findings should be left for the appendices
- Readers should not have to sift through the information in the same way as the researcher/writer



Discussion and analysis

- Implications of your findings
 - Inferences to be drawn from your observations
 - Discussion must refer to conclusions in order to be clear
- 

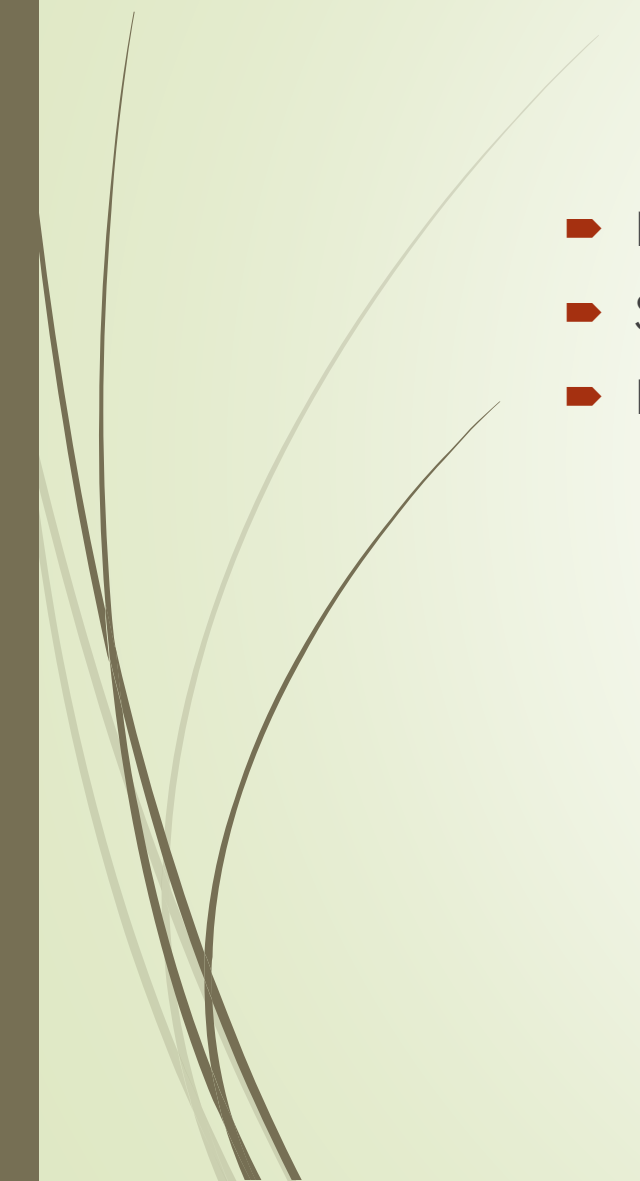


Conclusion

- “concluding remarks” or
- “a logical outcome”
- Must follow from the discussion logically
- Must not add anything that has not been mentioned in the report unless it is an afterword
- Different reports might require different types of conclusions



Recommendations

- No discussion
 - Should be clear-cut and succinct
 - Direct and to the point
- 



Acknowledgements

- Acknowledge those who are not within your working group
- And those in your working group who have gone beyond the call of duty to help you
- The acknowledgements section “is to help readers know where information came from, who are the experts in the field and where they can go for help” with their own investigations



References

- Be consistent

- CSE guide:

<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocCSE.html>



Illustrations and graphics

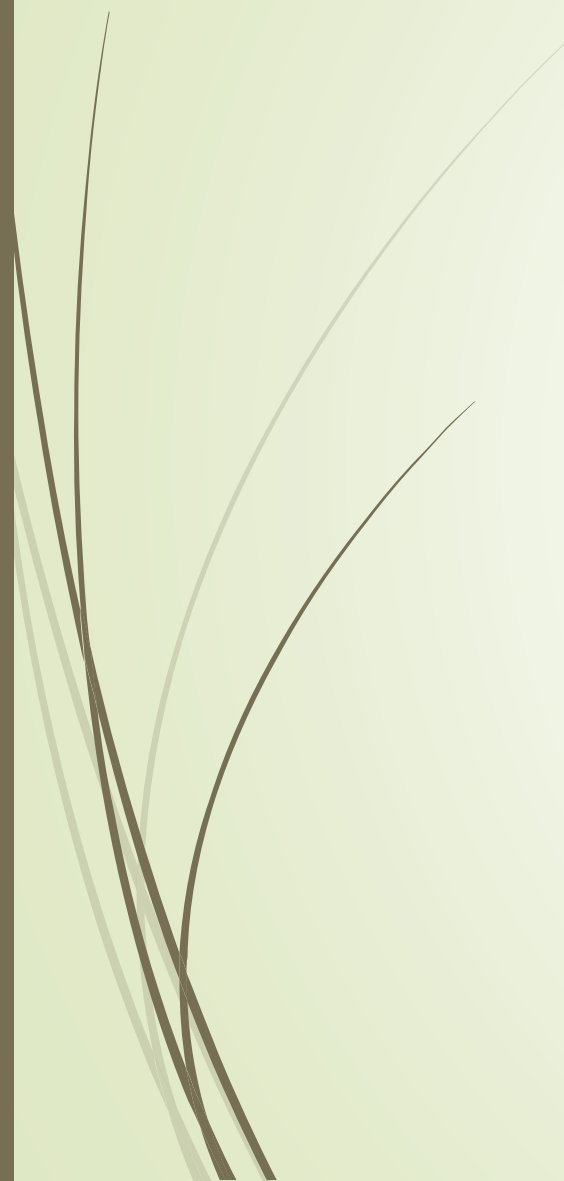
- May be vital to writer's argument
- Or may provide additional details and explanations
- Place as close to the relevant writing as possible
- Or in the appendix
- Best if they provide additional information rather than simply repeating the information given by the writing



Writing Instructions



Is this an instruction?



The computer and the external equipment are placed in operation by procedures which incorporate loading magnetic tape, making central manual selections , and starting the program. The operator first makes sure that all the equipment which is to be used by the program in store is properly prepared: that is to say that there is paper in the typewriter, that its margins are correctly adjusted, that its switch is set to COMPUTER, and that the power is on. If magnetic tape is to be used, the door of the tape handler is opened.



The difference between descriptions and instructions

Description

- How something is constructed
- How it works
- Why it is used
- Not necessarily how to use a particular machine/tool/device

Instruction

- How to operate something with minimum hesitation
- Not understand the operation



Instruction



- ▶ Selection, arrangement and presentation of information depend on aim and audience
- ▶ Must enable complete and correct operation
- ▶ It must provide complete instruction to do so
- ▶ Audience: the action may be routine and familiar to some but not others
- ▶ Layout must be convenient and sequential
- ▶ Correct tone so user feels comfortable carrying out the operations




Are the instructions complete?

- ▶ Incomplete instructions can be disastrous
- ▶ Do not leave out vital information
- ▶ Ask: what does the reader know and what does s/he need to be told?



Is this instruction complete?

The reactor jacket may need manual draining of the condensate during warming up.






Problems



- How to drain the condensate manually?
- Is it optional to drain it?
- How do we know if there is condensate?
- How much condensate is tolerable?



How about this?



Read the level of condensate, shown on the eye-glass. If it is above the 1.5 cm cubed mark, open valve 3 (diagram 2) and allow the condensate to drain away. Close the valve when, steam, not water, comes out.

- 
- 
- The inept beginner and not the bored expert should be the writer's target when writing instructions.



What assumptions do you make?

- ▶ Think about the level of detail required
- ▶ Put yourself in the reader's frame of reference
- ▶ What do you know and what the reader might know about the operation are two different things
- ▶ Test your instructions by asking someone to follow them with no other aid



Ambiguity

The domestic plug consists of two parts: the back part which is the main body of the plug and covers up the connections inside, and the front part which supports the three metal projections which fit into the socket.

In order to change the plug firstly unscrew the screw which enables the back part to be removed. Looking inside the plug, i.e. on the back part of the front part, one sees the back part of the projections.



Sources of ambiguity

- Relative words: front, back, top, bottom, hot, cold
 - “Select a suitable amount of choke for weather conditions and temperature of the engine.”



Sources of ambiguity

- Words with double meaning
 - “Set the temperature control to 20°C and run up the transmitter to normal working.”
 - “Check undercarriage locking pin. If bent, replace.”
 - “Check reading of thermocouple read-out.”



Sources of ambiguity

- Unusual words or unusual uses of familiar words
 - “Two or three wires can now be seen to be stemming from inside a wider tube.”
 - “After the program has been entered, the software pilot lights are displayed.”



Sources of ambiguity

- Ambiguous grammar

- The screws on the connection must be loosened to enable the cables to be entered.
- Cooking spaghetti: Put three pints of water on the cooker—drop in spaghetti—stir.





Check your instructions

- Accurate and complete and contain enough information for the user to do the job
- Comprehensible to every member of the likely audience, and contain no ambiguities of usage or grammar
- In correct and rigorous sequence, with no gaps and loops
- Safe and readable



Check your instructions

- Find a friend unfamiliar with the operation to test your instructions and go over them with a sense of humour to ensure they fulfill their purpose
- 



Correct sequence for faultless operation

- In order to be functional and successful instructions should follow exactly the order of the various operations required
 - Adjust flow through valve 4.23. this requires a check on temperature, and before adjusting the valve, opening briefly the cylinder drain valve.
- Here the operator has to remember three steps and do them in reverse order
- It is difficult to read and could lead to a mistake



Correct sequence for faultless operation

- ▶ Open the cylinder and drain the valve for five seconds.
- ▶ Is the temperature between 180 and 220 degree celsius? If not, adjust control 4.27 and pause until the temperature is within limits.
- ▶ Adjust the flow through valve 4.23 until the meter reads between 4350 and 4450 litres/minute.



Dangerous instructions

1. Start the vacuum pump from the START button local to the pump
2. Before starting, check that cooling water flow and return valves are open (CW1 and CW2) and that the trade water valve is open.
3. The trade water control valve is pre-set and should not be adjusted.




Which invites correct operation?

- Run in 900lbs of Chemical 1 into reactor until scale reading is 1100lbs.
- Repeat 11, 12, and 13.
 - Or
- Run in 900 lbs of Chemical 1 into reactor
- Note the scale reading. If it is less than 1800 lbs, repeat 11, 12 and 13. If it is 1800 lbs. or over, continue to 15.



The layout of instructions



Although removing power from the equipment is primarily a maintenance responsibility, the operator can ensure that the system is inoperative by taking several steps. Firstly the reader motor is turned off from the console, and then the magnetic tape is unloaded by pressing the REWIND UNLOAD button whereupon the tape reverses to a point where the tape can be removed. The tape leader is clamped, the door closed, and the power OFF switch pressed. Finally, the following switches are pressed in turn: typewriter OFF switch, MASTER CLEAR switch, and the computer OFF switch, and the computer and peripherals are now shut down.



Removing power from equipment

- Turn off the reader motor at the console READER switch
- Press the REWIND UNLOAD button to unload the magnetic tape (the tape will reverse to a point where it can be removed)
- Clamp the tape leader
- Close the door
- Press the power OFF switch
- Press the typewriter OFF switch
- Press the MASTER CLEAR switch
- Press the computer OFF switch



Group exercise

Write instructions for riding a motorcycle.





Sequence of sections

- Best arranged in sequence of sentences identified clearly by headings
- Headings should identify the purpose of the action, not just name the equipment/step
- Subheadings help readers divide a long sequence into smaller stages, and provide a resting place



Sequence of sections

- Introductory explanations
 - Provide over-view: purpose of actions, what will be achieved and why the result is useful. Short sentences.
- Tools required
 - Enables advanced selection of tools if special tools are required
- Materials required
 - List unusual material that need to be found in advance
- Definitions
 - Provide definitions for words that may not be understood
 - Ever-day words with special or restricted meanings

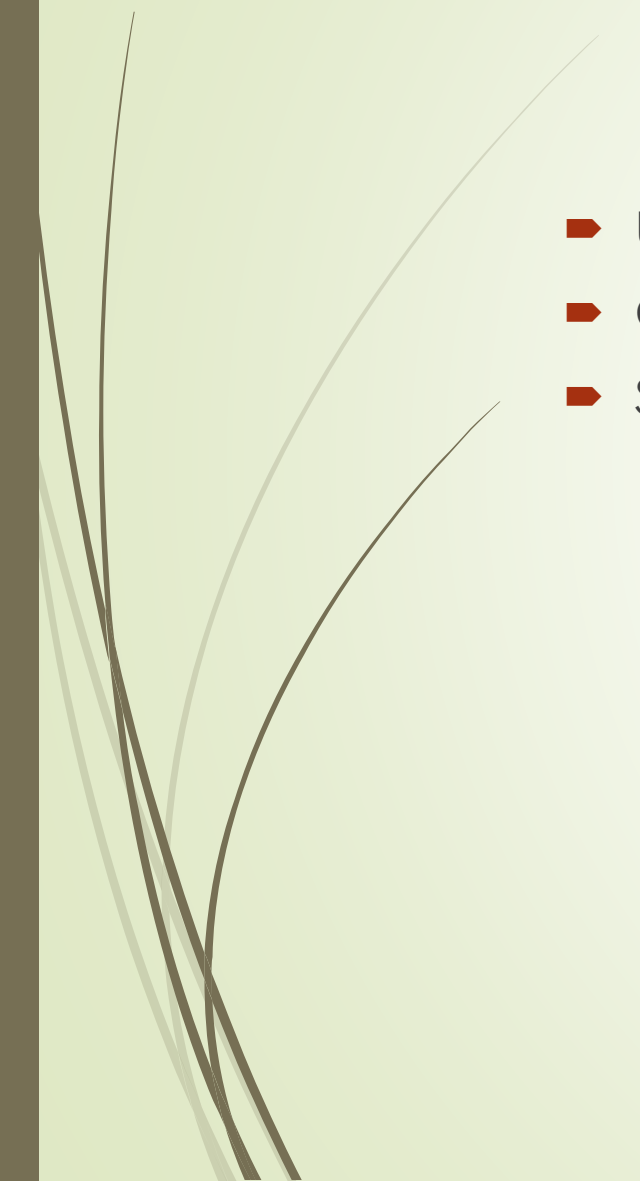


Sequence of sections

- Warnings
 - Writer of instructions is responsible for safety
 - Choose a sequence that is safe and provide warning appropriately
 - For a particularly dangerous process warning should be given in both the preliminary section and just before the instruction to which it relates
 - Use capitals, bold-type to make warnings stand out
 - Distinction between different levels of risk
 - Note, Caution, Warning, Danger
 - Use simple and clear commands/imperatives
 - Provide brief explanation: e.g. Keep naked flame away from evacuator pump: ammonia gas is explosive.



Numbering instructions

- Use a simple system
 - Continuous numbering that goes across sections is best
 - See p. 211 for example
- 



Style for operating instructions

Classwork:

Read the remaining sections of the chapter (p. 210-215)

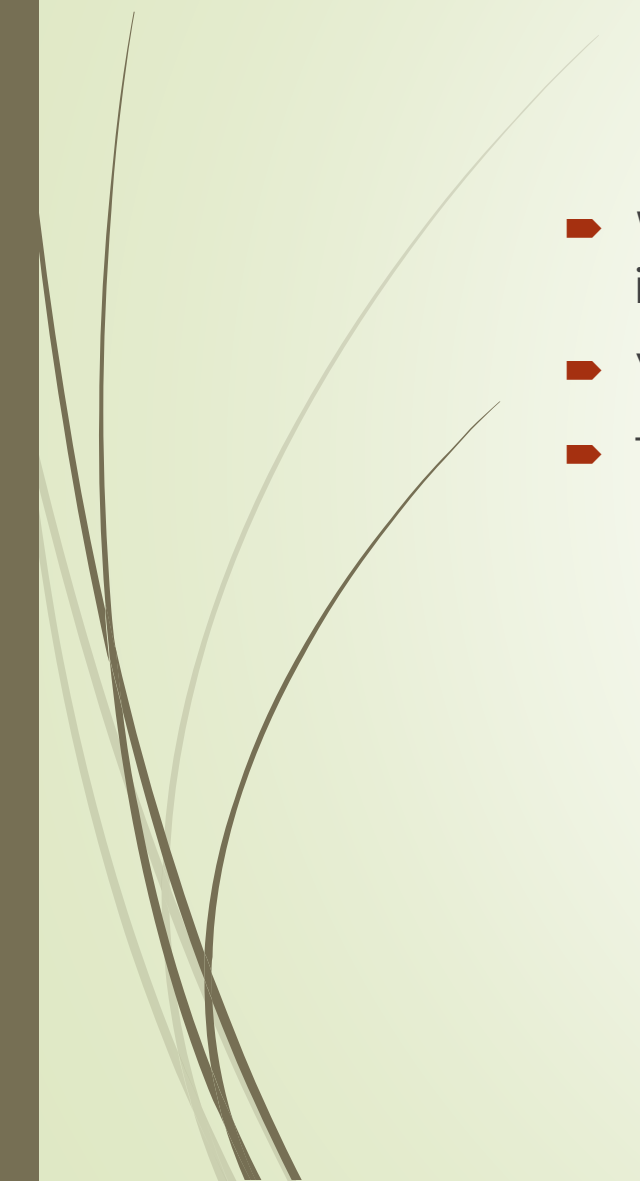
In groups of four make powerpoint slides to present the main points of these sections to the class



Letters and Memoranda

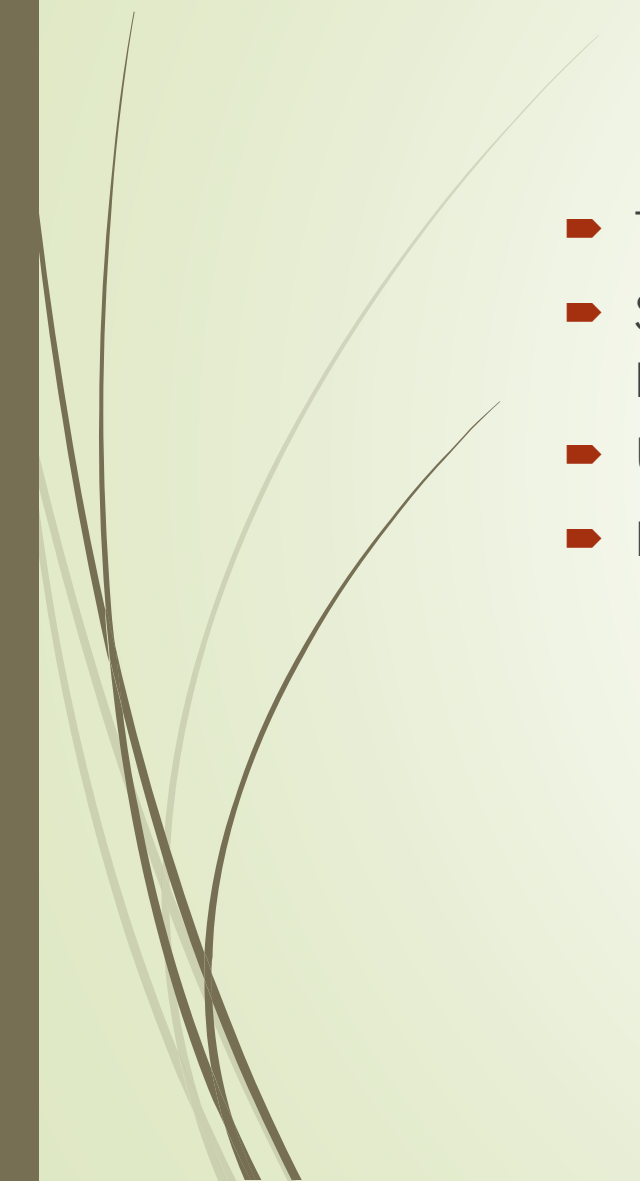


Communication is a relationship

- ▶ We make judgments about the person writing to us, even when the information conveyed is neutral
 - ▶ Verbal v. non-verbal communication
 - ▶ The importance of tone
- 



However

- This does not mean letters should be full of “racy mateyness” (p. 228)
 - Select from the resources of the language code carefully to eliminate possibility of misinterpretation
 - Use the language of everyday human contact
 - Do not be overly formal and impersonal
- 



Helpful clarity

- ▶ Choice of language affects the reader's response
- ▶ Using simple natural rhythms of everyday serious conversation is the best way to convey friendliness and helpfulness
- ▶ Precision and detail
- ▶ The aim should be to create an impression of an efficient but human organisation, which is interested in the reader's problem and wants to help



Use personal pronouns

- Use I rather than impersonal constructions
- Roundabout impersonal phrases reduce clarity
- However it is not necessary to repeat the personal pronoun all the time
 - I have the parts you ordered ready for collection
 - The parts you ordered are ready for collection
 - I am pleased to tell you that the tests were negative
 - You will be pleased to know the tests were negative



Avoid long formal words

- ▶ Do not rely on formality to convey respect and courtesy
- ▶ Simple phrases convey real helpfulness
- ▶ Use simple phrases that actually get something done rather than decorative and formal phrases meant to fulfill convention
 - ▶ Is it possible to use “about” instead of “with regards to” or “in connection with”



Layout of the letter


- Sender's address
- Date
- Recipient's address
- Salutation
- Heading or title line
 - Do not use Re
 - It adds nothing and most people don't know what it means
 - Examples
 - Cotton wool swabs: Order C.59487
 - Application update: Your letter of 28th November



Start with the important point

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter of 27th April, which we have received. Turning to the matter you mention in your first paragraph, you will be pleased to know that the Diesel generators are ready....





Important point first

Dear Mr. Smith

The diesel generators are ready.





Redundant opening lines

- With reference to your inquiry please find attached
- I am writing to tell you that
- We have received your letter
- Please find enclosed
 - Say instead: Here is the plan you wanted.



Organization

- Make sure you cover all the important information in the order that will make sense to the reader
- If the letter is long, subheadings are useful



Ending

- Stop
- Do not add pious and empty courtesies
 - Meanwhile we should be pleased to have your assurance of immediate delivery of a replacement supply and look forward to being advised of delivery on Monday or Tuesday or next week. Vs.
 - Please will you tell us by Tuesday next week when you can deliver.



Examples



- ▶ We should be pleased to have confirmation of your understanding of this purchasing agreement between us, which we are sure will be to our mutual advantage.
- ▶ Please confirm this agreement.
- ▶ The favour of a response in the near future would be appreciated.
- ▶ Please reply by the 25th because we make up our monthly orders then.



Signature



- ▶ Type your name below the signature
- ▶ If you're writing on someone's behalf, 'for' is sufficient
 - ▶ Make sure you tell the reader the capacity in which you are writing



Tactics

- If you are reporting failure, repeating a request, refusing information or confess to not having done something, say what you have been able to do first and then what you have not.



Finally...

- What results do I want from this letter?
- Who is my reader?
- How familiar is my reader with the topic?
- What does my reader need to know?
- What do I need to know?
- What relationship do I want with the reader?
- How do I expect the reader to react to what I am saying and how I am saying it?
- What impression am I making on the reader?



Technical Descriptions



Technical descriptions




Descriptions of an object or tool

Descriptions of processes

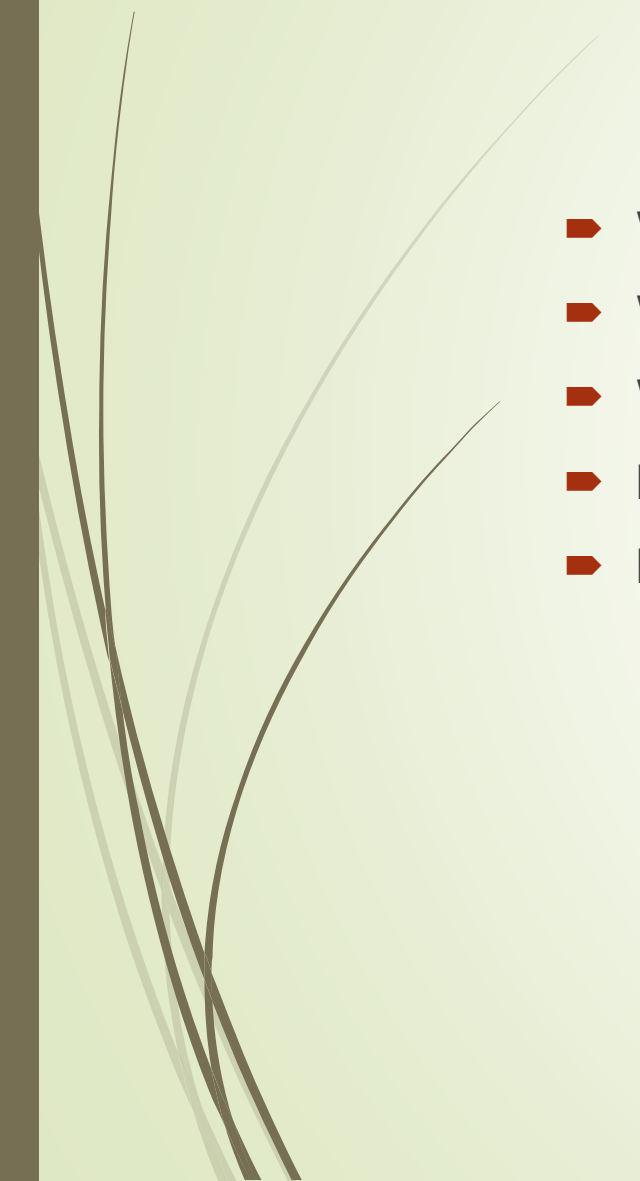


Logical order in descriptions

- Move from
 - General to particular
 - Familiar to new
 - Obvious to surprising
 - Distant to close-up
 - One idea at a time
 - Have in mind the image of a reader's dawning understanding, not an imitation of the system/product described
- 



Answer these questions

- What is it like?
 - What is it used for?
 - What does it consist of?
 - How does it operate?
 - How do you use it?
- 

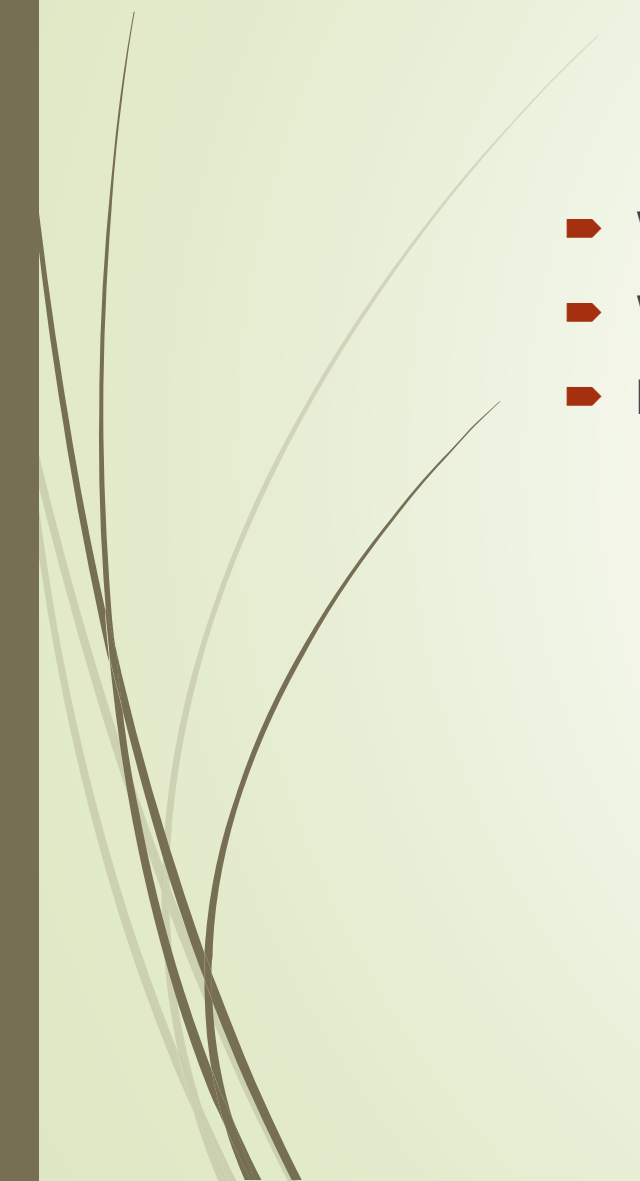


Techniques in writing descriptions

- Comparisons
 - It may be helpful to compare an unfamiliar object to a familiar one
- Analogies
 - A formal comparison based on resemblances of two unrelated objects or ideas
 - E.g. current flow and water flow
- Avoid technical slang
 - What are some slangs used in your area?
- Think about your use of cliches
 - The blade is as sharp as a knife
 - It operates at lightning speed
- Use precise terminology
 - Avoid vague and subjective terms like nice, good, a lot, really
 - When necessary use modifiers/adjectives that actually add meaning to the reader



Explanations

- What is there
 - Why it is there
 - How it works
- 



Steps to follow in writing explanations

- Give a general definition
 - Aim, purpose or result of the process/system
 - Why is it being done
 - Comparison to a familiar process
- General statement of the theory that lies behind the process
- General statement of how it is operated
- Over-view of components
- Details of individual elements in the system and the way they operate
- Fit the details into the larger pattern: repeatedly stress sequence and aim



Formal assignment

due: 17th November (no extensions)

Marks: 10

- Following today's lesson, write a description of your favourite software in around 250 words.



WARNING

WARNING: YOU MAY DO RESEARCH ON THE WEB BUT EVERYTHING YOU WRITE MUST BE THE PRODUCT OF YOUR OWN THINKING AND WRITING: NOTHING SHOULD BE SIMPLY A COPY OF SOMEBODY ELSE'S WORK. THIS MEANS YOU WON'T REARRANGE OR CHANGE A FEW WORDS TO PASS OFF SOMEBODY ELSE'S WRITING AS YOUR OWN. YOU WILL ONLY USE EXTERNAL SOURCES FOR OBTAINING FACTUAL INFORMATION. EVEN A SMALL VIOLATION OF THIS RULE MEANS YOU GET NO MARKS FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.



The Job Search



Resume

- Job objective: Desired job title in one abbreviated sentence
 - Technical support and computer networking
 - Position in technical support and computer networking
 - A challenging position in technical support and computer networking



Skills related to job objective

- What skills do you have that are applicable to the job you are applying for?
- Be specific
- You could have a separate list for hardware and software you can use

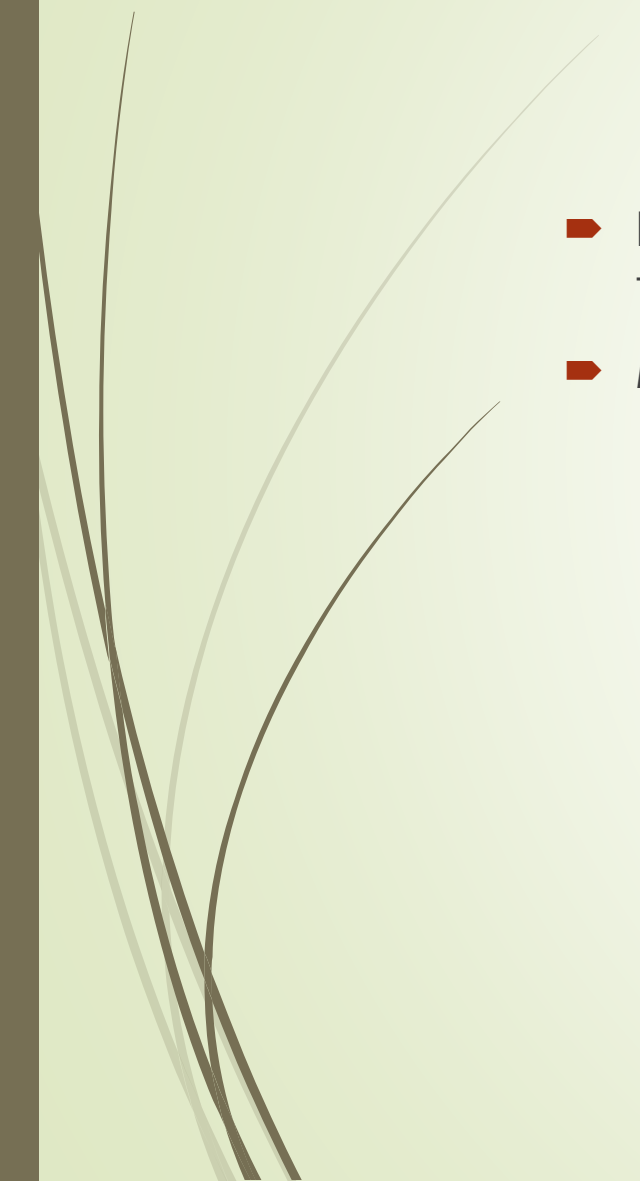


Work experience

- Beginning with the most recent, list the positions you have held and a brief description
- You may only include the jobs or internships or volunteer positions that are directly related to the job
- You may include jobs that showcase your strengths and transferrable skills if you do not have related work experience
- Be specific
 - Trained new co-workers to open and close the cash register, rather than
 - Demonstrated leadership with co-workers

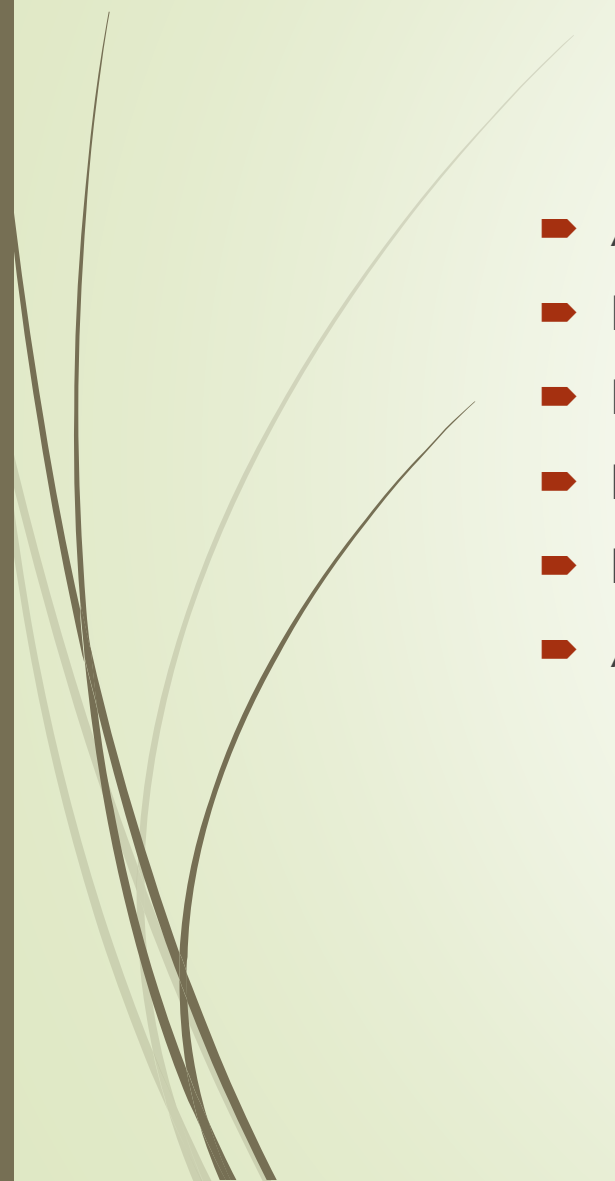


Education and training

- Beginning with the most recent, list your educational qualifications and any training and certification you have received
 - Mostly you list your college qualifications but pay attention to the context
- 



Do not include

- Age
 - Religion
 - Race or ethnicity
 - Family or marital status
 - Health, physical appearance or marital status
 - Are these instructions viable in Nepal?
- 



References

- References should not be related to you
- Professional reference
- Character references
- Before using a person's name as a reference, ask permission



Application letter

- First paragraph
 - State the purpose of the letter in the first paragraph.
 - In the body paragraphs, highlight the accomplishments in your work history or education that make you especially suited for the job. For example, describe a specific project you completed that relates to the job opening.
 - End the letter with a statement of your next action.



Job interviews

- What are your short and long-term career goals?
- 



Job INterview

- Keep up with trends and developments in the industry. Show that you have an interest in the field and keep abreast of current issues.



Job interview

- Research each top company in the industry. Find out about its history, origin, and company structure. Identify their main business. Make sure your qualifications are in line with the mission of the company and that you are motivated to join the company.



Job interview

- Providing informed and thoughtful answers establishes you as a serious candidate



Write answers to the following questions

- What are your short-term career goals?
- What are your long-term career goals?
- What motivates you?
- What type of company are you most interested in working for? Discuss why.
- What resources can you use to research companies?



Write answers to the following questions

- Tell me about yourself.
- Why are you interested in this job?
- Why should we hire you?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?