**How to Organize Content– Reading Material**

Content is an important component in Technical expositions and Discussions. This reading material is designed to help you organize content using different frameworks

**Objectives:**

This reading material is designed to help you:

* Classify and expand a topic
* Organize your explanations using a planned structure.

**Organize Ideas**

Why Organize?

When we talk about effective writing/speaking, we often think first about elements like word choice, grammar and mechanics, and content or evidence. But a really important part of effective writing—and effective thinking, too—is clear, logical organization. Thinking and acting are both harder when things are disorganized. When things are laid out in some sort of order, we can work with them more easily. If we can impose some kind of order on information, the information is easier to talk about, easier to understand, and easier to remember. If you choose a clear, recognizable pattern, you find it easier to select details and choose transitions, and you also help your reader discover relationships that connect things that make things seem more coherent.

To sum-up, when you structure your ideas meaningfully

* You can focus on the central idea
* Your listeners can easily follow
* You make it more memorable and credible

How to Organize Ideas

Step 1: Identify the central point

Main Idea &Central Point

The topic can be stated in a few words. Main Idea: The main idea and central point are so important because it is the key concept to a message. The main idea and central point are what ties your message together

The Main Idea: Who or what is the talk all about? What are the supporting details? - Based on the details what point is the speaker/writer trying to get across?

Step 2: Organize in a pattern or theme

**Principles of Organization:**

1. Chronological Order (order of Time)

In chronological order or time order, items, events, or even ideas are arranged in the order in which they occur. This pattern is marked by such transitions as next, then, the following morning, a few hours later, still later, that Wednesday, by noon, when she was seventeen, before the sun rose, that April, and so on. Chronological order naturally fits in narration, because when we tell a story, we usually follow the order in which events occur. Chronological order applies to process in the same way, because when we describe or explain how something happens or works, we usually follow the order in which the events occur. But chronological order may also apply to example, description, or parts of any other pattern of exposition.

1. Spatial Order

Another principle of organization is spatial order. In this pattern, items are arranged according to their physical position or relationships. In describing a shelf or desk, I might describe items on the left first, and then move gradually toward the right. Describing a room, I might start with what I see as I enter the door, then what I see as I step to the middle of the room, and finally the far side. This pattern might use such transitions as just to the right, a little further on, to the south of Karur, a few feet behind, in Chennai, turning left on the subway, and so on. Spatial order is pretty common in description, but can also apply to examples, to some comparisons, some classifications

1. Order of Importance

A third common principle of organization is organization according to the order of importance. In this pattern, items are arranged from least important to most important. Typical transitions would include more important, most difficult, still harder, by far the most expensive, even more damaging, worse yet, and so on. This is a flexible principle of organization, and may guide the organization of all or part of example, comparison & contrast, cause & effect, and description.

Other principles of organization based on emphasis include

1. general-to-specific order,
2. specific-to general order,
3. most-familiar-to-least-familiar,
4. simplest-to-most-complex,
5. order of frequency,
6. Order of familiarity, and so on.
7. Topical Order

A fourth broad principle of organization is called topical order .It refers to organization that emerges from the topic itself. For example, a description of a computer might naturally involve the separate components of the central processing unit, the monitor, and the keyboard, while a discussion of a computer purchase might discuss needs, products, vendors, and service. A discussion of a business might explore product, customer, and location, and so on. Topical order, then, simply means an order that arises from the nature of the topic itself. Transitions in this pattern will be a little vague—things like another factor, the second component, in addition, and so on.

You do need to see, though, that imposing order on information makes the information easier to talk about, easier to understand, and easier to remember. If you choose a clear, recognizable pattern you guide yourself in selecting details and choosing transitions, and you also guide your reader/listener in discovering relationships that connect things, that make things seem more coherent.

Step 3: Plan your delivery of content

The message refers to EVERYTHING a speaker does or says, both verbally and non-verbally. The verbal component may be analyzed in terms of 3 basic elements:

* Content
* Style
* Structure

Let's look at each of these elements.

a. Content - is what you say about your topic. The content is the MEAT of your speech or presentation. Research your topic thoroughly. Decide on how much to say about each subject. Then decide on the actual sequence you will use. It is important that you consider the audience's needs, time factors, and other items as the content of your speech or presentation is prepared and presented.

b. Style - The manner in which you present the content of your speech is your style. Styles can vary from very formal to the very informal. Most presentations fall between these two extremes and in EVERY case, the style should be determined by what is appropriate to the speaker, the audience, as well as the occasion and setting.

c. Structure - The structure of a message is its organization. There are many organizational variations, but in each case, the structure should include:

* An Introduction
* A Body
* A Conclusion

The introduction should include:

* + An opening grabber such as a quote or shocking statistic.
  + An agenda
  + The purpose or main message of your presentation.

The body should include:

* + Your main points or ideas.
  + Points which support your main message.

The conclusion should include:

* + A summary of your main points.
  + A closing grabber.
  + Time for questions & answers, if appropriate.

When speeches and presentations are poorly organized, the impact of the message is reduced and the audience is less likely to accept the speaker or the speaker's ideas.

Finally

* Recall Rule of 3
* Frame multiple simple sentences using transition words