# Organizational Patterns for Informational Reports

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| Characteristic | Chronological | Topical | Comparative | Cause & Effect | Problem & Background |
| Definition | Presents information in the order events happened or steps occur. | Groups information by category or theme. | Shows similarities and/or differences between items. | Explains reasons and results. | Explains a problem and provides background before solutions. |
| Use When | When describing a process, history, or sequence of events. | When grouping information by theme or category. | When evaluating similarities and differences between items. | When explaining reasons and their results. | When providing context before suggesting solutions. |
| Example Topic | History of Renewable Energy in the U.S. | Major Types of Cybersecurity Threats | Electric Cars vs. Hybrid Cars | Urban Air Pollution | Decline in Bee Populations |
| Outline Example | 1970s – Early adoption and policy beginnings 1980s – Growth in wind energy 1990s – Advances in solar technology 2000s – Federal incentives and expansion 2010s–present – Current innovations | Malware (viruses, ransomware) Phishing attacks Denial-of-service attacks Insider threats | Performance and range Environmental impact Cost of ownership Charging/refueling infrastructure | Causes: industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, lack of green spaces Effects: respiratory illnesses, reduced visibility, environmental damage | Description of the problem (population statistics, global impact) Background: history, role in pollination, early warning signs Factors contributing to the decline |