

PARAGRAPHS

Similar to sentences, paragraphs follow a logical structure that is essential for a clear message. It is the structure that allows for easy reading. Information should be placed where your reader expects this.

A first rule is that, like a sentence, a paragraph should **only discuss one topic**.

A professional vocabulary, clear grammar **and** sentence structure won't be enough, if the paragraphs don't **have a logical flow**.

A well-structured paragraph is like a story on its own with a beginning, a middle and an end. It can be read and understood even out of the context of the larger story it is part of. However, you should also always reflect on how this paragraph fits into the whole manuscript.

Structure

In academic writing, everything is about order and structure. Paragraphs have a logical structure, and we advocate that paragraphs consist of three distinct elements.

1. The **topic Sentence** is the first element of your paragraph. The topic sentence is a signpost to your reader about what will be discussed in the subsequent sentences.
2. The second element is **the body**, also called the argumentation. This is where you provide your reader with the relevant information to support your argument, your narrative.
3. The third and final element is **the conclusion**. This sentence brings your paragraph to an end and should function as a link to the next paragraph.

Example

Last Wednesday we discussed where to go on holiday. My wife wanted to go to the mountains. I argued for sailing in the Mediterranean, while my youngest wanted to go horse riding. Jenny, our eldest, wanted to stay at home and party with her friends. In the end we decided to go to a beach in Greece.

Writing tip

- To test whether your paragraph structure is clear and logical you can “speed read” the paragraph. Read the first and the last sentence and see if they give you a condensed but comprehensive understanding.
- Linking terms are very useful to ensure flow in a paragraph.

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