

How to Organize a Paper: A Framework for Success

Title: The title should express the main idea of the paper in a specific and concise manner. A two-part title with an introductory phrase, a colon, and an explanatory phrase is effective, for example: "Time Management: The Keys to Success."

I. Introduction

A. Draws the reader in with a hook:

1. An anecdote or story that illustrates the thesis OR
2. A quotation that gets to the heart of the topic (and relates to the thesis)

OR

3. A definition of the topic (NOT from the dictionary).

B. Moves from the "hook" to a general statement that includes the topic.

C. Establishes context & provides a lead-in to thesis.

D. Provides a clear, concise, and ordered **thesis**:

1. Provides clear indication of **focus** (topic) and **purpose** (explaining, arguing, comparing & contrasting, etc.)
2. Establishes **organization** of paper by specifying key points. Order of points presented in thesis should be followed in body paragraphs.

II. Body Paragraphs

A. Body Paragraph 1

1. Opens with a **topic sentence** that focuses paragraph and provides main idea.
2. Provides sentences that develop and support the topic.
3. Uses outside sources to define concept or offer expert testimony about subject.
 - a. Uses a signal phrase to introduce a quotation or a paraphrase.
 - b. Follows APA in-text citation format by providing author's name, year of publication, and page number.
 - c. For paraphrase, explains idea in your own words.
 - d. For quotation, reproduces quotation exactly as it was written.
 - i. Uses short, clear, and powerful quotations.
 - ii. Encloses quotations with quotation marks.
 - iii. Sets off quotations of 40 words or more in block.
4. Follows use of source with evaluative sentences.
5. Closes with a sentence that reiterates focus of paragraph and may forecast topic of the next body paragraph.

B. Body Paragraph 2

1. Opens with a transitional phrase or sentence.
2. Follows pattern described above.

C. Body Paragraph 2

1. Opens with a transitional phrase or sentence.
2. Follows pattern described above.

III. Conclusion

- A. Wraps up the paper by summarizing the main points.
- B. May make a connection between thesis and the reader's life.
- C. Ends with a bang, not with a whimper!