

Revising for Coherence

Effective writing proceeds in some sensible order, each sentence following naturally from the one before it. However, organization is not sufficient; the prose must be coherent to be fully successful. To make your writing coherent, you can use a variety of devices that tie together words in a sentence, sentences in a paragraph, paragraphs into an essay.

Adding Transitional Words & Sentences

Integrate transitional words and phrases to signal connections. These transitional markers support the relationship between ideas or the movement to new ideas., i.e.:

- To summarize or restate: in fact, therefore
- Time markers: after, many years ago
- To relate cause & effect: therefore, thus, as a result, because
- To add or amplify: also, too, moreover, furthermore
- To compare: similarly, likewise
- To contrast: however, nevertheless, conversely
- To express condition: although, though, however
- To give example: for example, for instance, in particular

Using Transitional Sentences

Try repeating the key word of a previous sentence, especially in beginning a new paragraph to create continuity of thought.

Transitional Paragraphs

Use a transitional paragraph, especially in longer papers, when you feel readers might get lost or confused. Lead them/remind them of the purpose or focus of the discussion so far. Here's an example:

- *So far, the physical and psychological effects of driving in heavy traffic have been discussed. Now, the causes of traffic need to be explored. Why does traffic occur? What are traffic engineers planning for future highways?*

Using Repetition

Another way to develop relationship is to repeat words and phrases. Such purposeful repetition fosters the reader's understanding of the topic and the development of ideas. There are many ways repetition may be used toward clarity:

- Repeating exact words
- Reinforcing through synonyms
- Reintroducing earlier topics through summary

Strengthening Pronouns

Because they refer back to nouns, pronouns serve as transitional words by making readers recall the topic. However, pronouns must have antecedents, or nouns that they refer to, and these must be restated regularly to retain clarity of meaning.

Here's an example:

- *Especially during high volume travel times, traffic jams can be caused by the actions of a single driver. They can result from irregular breaking, slowing to look at something, or driving slowly in a faster lane. You have probably encountered a traffic jam at some point, only to have it melt away mysteriously after a few miles. Chances are, it was a result of one or more of these factors. Traffic engineers design roads to avoid traffic jams, but drivers will always bear some of the responsibility.*