

DEVELOPING AN OUTLINE

An outline is :

- 1 - A logical, general description
- 2 - A schematic summary
- 3 - An organizational pattern
- 4 - A visual and conceptual design of your writing
- 5 - An outline reflects logical thinking and correct classification.

Functions

Helps you in the process of writing, particularly

- 1 - Helps organize your ideas
- 2 - Presents your material in a logical form
- 3 - Shows the relationship of ideas in your writing
- 4 - Constructs an ordered overview of your writing
- 5 - Defines boundaries and groups

Process

Before you begin :

- 1 - Determine the purpose of your paper.
- 2 - Determine the thesis of your paper.
- 3 - Determine the audience you are writing for.

Then :

- 1- Brainstorm - List all the ideas you want to include in this writing.
- 2- Organize - Group ideas together that are related to each other.
- 3- Order - Divide this material into groups arranging from the general to the specific, or from abstract to concrete.
- 4- Label - Create main and subtopic headings and write coordinate levels in parallel form.

Theory

An outline has a balanced structure which uses the principles of :

1. Parallelism

Whenever possible, in writing an outline, coordinate headings should be expressed in parallel form. That is, nouns should be made parallel with nouns, verb forms with verb forms, adjectives with adjectives, etc. (Example : Nouns - computers, programs, users; Verbs - to compute, to program, to use; Adjectives - home computers, new programs, experienced users.)

2. Coordination

In outlining, those items which are of equal significance have comparable numeral or letter designations; an A is equal to a B, a 1 to a 2, an a to a b, etc. Coordinates should be seen as "having the same value." Coordination is a principle that enables the writer to maintain a coherent and consistent document.

Correct coordination

- A. Word processing programs
- B. Data base programs
- C. Spreadsheet programs

Incorrect coordination

- A. Word processing programs
- B. Wordstar
- C. Thinktank

3. Subordination

In order to indicate relevance, that is levels of significance, an outline uses major and minor headings. Thus in ordering ideas you should organize material from general to specific or from abstract to concrete - the more general or abstract the concept, the higher the level or rank in the outline. This principle allows your material to be ordered in terms of logic and requires a clear articulation of the relationship between component parts used in the outline.

Correct subordination

- A. Word processing programs
 - 1. Applewriter
 - 2. Wordstar
- B. Thought processors
 - 1. Thinktank
 - 2. THOR

Faulty subordination

- A. Word processing programs
 - 1. Applewriter
 - 2. Useful
 - 3. Obsolete

There is an A without a B. Also 1, 2, 3 are not equal; Applewriter is a type of word processing program, and useful and obsolete are qualities. One way to correct this faulty subordination is :

- A. Applewriter
 - 1. Positive features
 - 2. Negative features
- B. Wordstar
 - 1. Positive features
 - 2. Negative features

4. Division

To divide you always need at least two parts; therefore, there can never be an A without a B, a 1 without a 2, an a without a b, etc. Usually there is more than one way to divide parts; however, when dividing use only one basis of division at each rank and make the basis of division as sharp as possible.

Example 1:

- A. Microcomputers hardware
 - 1. Types
 - 2. Cost
 - 3. Maintenance
- B. Microcomputers software

Example 2

- A. Computers
 - 1. Mainframe
 - 2. Micro
 - a. Floppy Disk
 - b. Hard disk
- B. Computer Uses
 - 1. Institutional
 - 2. Personal

Form

The most important rule for outlining form is to be consistent!! An outline can use TOPIC OR SENTENCE STRUCTURE

- A TOPIC outline uses words or phrases for all entries; uses no punctuation after entries (Advantages - presents a brief overview of work; is generally easier and faster to write than a sentence outline)

- A SENTENCE outline uses complete sentences for all entries; uses correct punctuation (Advantages - presents a more detailed overview of work including possible topic sentences; is easier and faster for writing the final paper.)

Exercise : Write an outline for the following topic :

Negative effects of divorce on adolescents

Outlining Practice : Write a formal outline for the following texts:

I arrived in America from India four years ago. I didn't know that I would be joining a high school in a week. Not knowing anything about the American educational system and culture, a state of panic filled me when my father drove me to school. I tried to tell myself that everything would be all right. But my experience at school became a disaster as I came face to face with several serious problems : the difficulty in communicating, my way of dressing and responding to the teacher and my classmates.

My most important trouble was my inability to communicate with people at school. Then, I spoke English with a strong accent that was mixed up British and Indian English. I spoke very fast in comparison with Americans who, I thought spoke very slowly. A main problem was the pronunciation of the letter 't' by Americans. When this letter was used in a word such as 'atom', it sounded to me like 'adam'.

What also bothered me was the way I responded to both the teacher and my classmates. I came from a religious school in India where I was taught to stand up and greet the teacher when she came into the classroom. Here, whenever the teacher came in, nobody stood up and all the pupils went on talking. As I always sat in the back of the classroom, nobody noticed me, for which I thanked all the gods that came to my mind. Moreover, when the teacher started taking attendance, I noticed that the students said 'here', without standing up. But when my name was called, I got up and said 'present'; they all stared at me and I smiled and sat down. This was repeated whenever I was asked a question until the end of the class.

My third problem was worrying about the dress code. Students at this school did not wear a uniform, and I dressed in a long blue dress with white laced stockings and with my hair tied in a ponytail. This was just a small variation from the school uniform I wore in India. There, the smallest change from the regular school uniform meant being dismissed from school. To my surprise, the students in this school wore jeans, shorts, T-shirts and short tops, which I only later realized was not considered offensive as this was the normal way of dressing in summer.

In spite of all these problems, I soon adapted to the system and all my troubles were no more than a bad memory. This gave me a sense of achievement and self-confidence and marked the beginning of my new life in America.

'Witchdoctors and the universality of healing'

Witchdoctors and psychiatrists perform essentially the same function in their respective cultures. They are both therapists; both treat patients, using similar techniques; and both get similar results. Recognition of this should not downgrade psychiatrists-rather it should upgrade witchdoctors.

The term 'witchdoctor' is Western in origin, imposed on healers of the Third World by 18th and 19th century explorers. The world was simpler then, and the newly discovered cultures were quickly assigned their proper status in the Order of Things. We were white, they were black. We were civilized, they were primitive. We were Christian, they were pagan. We used science, they used magic. We had doctors, they had witchdoctors.

American psychiatrists have much to learn from therapists in other cultures. My own experience observing and working with them includes two years in Ethiopia and briefer periods in Bali, Hong Kong, Columbia, and with Alaskan Indians, and Mexican-Americans in this country. What I learned from these doctor-healers was that I, as a psychiatrist, was using the same mechanisms for curing my patients as they were-and, not surprisingly, I was getting about the same results. The mechanisms can be classified under four categories.

The first is the naming process. A psychiatrist or witchdoctor can work magic by telling a patient what is wrong with him. It conveys to the patient that someone -usually, a man of considerable status- understands. And since his problem can be understood, then, implicitly, it can be cured. A psychiatrist who tells an illiterate African that his phobia is related to a fear of failure, or a witchdoctor who tells an American tourist that his phobia is related to possession by an ancestral spirit, will be met by equally blank stares. And as therapists they will be equally ineffective. This is a major reason for the failure of most attempts at cross-cultural psychotherapy. Since a shared world-view is necessary for the naming process to be effective, then it is reasonable to expect that the best therapist-patient relationships will be those where both come from the same culture or subculture. The implications for our mental health programs are obvious.

The second healing component used by therapists everywhere is their personality characteristics. An increasing amount of research shows that certain personal qualities of the therapist -accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, genuineness- are of crucial importance in producing effective psychotherapy. Clearly, more studies are needed in this area, but if they substantiate the emerging trend, then radical changes in the selection of therapists will be in order. Rather than selecting therapists because they can memorize facts and achieve high grades, we should be selecting them on the basis of their personality. Therapists in other cultures are selected more often for their personality characteristics; the fact that they have not studied biochemistry is not considered important.

The third universal component of the healing process is the patients' expectations. Healers all over the world use many ways to raise the expectations of their patients. The first way is the trip itself to the healer. It is a common observation that the farther a person goes to be healed, the greater are the chances that he will be healed. This is called the pilgrimage. Thus, sick people in Topeka go to the Leahy Clinic in Boston. The resulting therapeutic effects of the trip are exactly the same as have been operating for centuries at Delphi or Lourdes. The next way to raise patients' expectations is the building used for the healing. The more impressive it is, the greater will be the patients' expectations. This has been called the edifice complex. Therapists in different cultures use certain paraphernalia to increase patient expectations. In Western cultures non psychiatric healers have their stethoscope and psychotherapists are supposed to have their couch. Therapists in other cultures have their counterpart trademark, often a special drum, mask or amulet. Another aspect of patients' expectations rests upon the therapist's training. Some sort of training program is found for healers in almost all cultures. Blackfoot Indians, for instance, had to complete a seven-year period of training to qualify as medicine men.

Finally, the same techniques of therapy are used by healers all over the world. Let me provide a few examples: Drugs are one of the techniques of Western therapy of which we are most proud. However, drugs are used by healers in other cultures as well. Rauwolfia root, for example, which was introduced into Western psychiatry in the 1950's as reserpine, a major tranquilizer, has been used in India for centuries as a tranquilizer, and has also been in wide use in West Africa for many years. When electric shock therapy was introduced by Cerletti in the 1930's, he was not aware that it had been used in some cultures for up to 4000 years. The techniques of applying electric eels to the head of the patient is referred to in the writings of Aristotle, Pliny, and Plutarch.

What kind of results do therapists in other cultures -witchdoctors- achieve? A Canadian psychiatrist, Dr. Raymond Prince, spent 17 months studying 46 Nigerian witchdoctors, and judged that the therapeutic results were about equal to those obtained in North American clinics and hospitals. It would appear, then, that psychiatrists have much to learn from witchdoctors. We can see the components of our own therapy system in relief. We can learn why we are effective-or not effective. And we can learn to be less ethnocentric and arrogant about our own therapy and more tolerant of others. If we can learn all this from witchdoctors, then we will have learned much.