

Methods of Development

A logical method of development satisfies the reader's need for shape and structure in a document, whether it is an e-mail, a report, or Web page. It helps you as a writer move smoothly and logically from the introduction to a conclusion.

Choose the method or as it is often the case a combination of methods that best suits your subject, your readers, and your purpose. Following are the most common methods, each of which is described in further detail in its own entry.

- **Cause-and-effect method of development:** begins from either from the cause or the effect of an event.. The structure is more appropriate when the writer identifies and discusses conditions (causes) and a predicted outcome (effect) of those conditions. This structure is similar to the inductive structure since it moves from specific facts to generalizations based on those facts.
- **Chronological method of development:** chronological structure uses time order as the central organizational component of the message. This structure is appropriate when time is an essential ingredient for understanding the basis for the request or fulfilling that request
- **Comparison method of development:** comparison or contrast structure examines two or more items in terms of common criteria. Comparison implies examining the qualities of items to discover similarities and differences. Contrast focuses primarily on differences.
- **Definition method of development:** this method of development extends definitions with additional details, examples, comparisons, or other explanatory devices.
- **Division-and - classification method of development:** either separates or a whole into component parts and discusses each part separately (division) or groups parts into categories that clarify the relationship of the parts (classification).
- **Deductive (Direct) method of development:** this structure begins with the main points which is followed by supporting data. This style is more appropriate when the reader needs little psychological preparation for the main point because it is an expected or an-easy-to--accept message

- **Inductive (Indirect) method of development:** inductive structure provides specific facts before generalizations based on those facts. It is appropriate when the reader requires background details before being able to understand or accept the thrust of the message. Since the main point follows supporting details, this structure is also called the indirect structure.
- **Order- of- importance method of development:** presents information in either decreasing order of importance, as in a proposal that begins with the most important point, or increasing order of importance, as in a presentation that ends with the most important point.
- **Sequential method of development:** this method emphasizing the order of elements in a process and is particularly useful when writing step-by-step instructions.
- **Spatial method of development:** the special structure is appropriate any time your data can be presented logically in terms of geographic units. Those units may be as large as continents or nations or as small as areas of a parking lot or a room. The special structure would be appropriate for presentation of data analysis, conclusions, or recommendations for each of those reports.
- **Problem-solution method of development:** It presents a problem followed by a proposed solution. This structure is effective when the problem and proposed solution can be stated concisely and are likely to receive little objection. When dealing with a complex problem, you may find the inductive method more effective because it allows you greater latitude to describe the details of the problem and the reasons for the proposed solution. This approach can be used to develop a report that offers a solution to a problem beginning with the problem and moving on to the solution or vice versa.
- **Topical method of development:** In topical structure information is organized around major topics of discussion. A report divided into Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations is organized topically. To be more meaningful, however, topical headings should identify the factors or elements of analysis.