

# Communicating as a Professional

Stats 36-701

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## Communicating rather than Reporting

- Your job:
  - Developing, Analyzing, Translating and Explaining rather than simply Supplying Information
  - Avoid Writer-based Prose (Initial Drafts)
    - Focused on writer's rather than reader's needs
  - Goal: Reader-based Prose
    - Responds to readers needs for explicit organization, coherence and clarity

## Reader defines Purpose

- Question your reader to get as much information as possible about what he/she needs from the document
- What information must you provide?
- What can you assume/leave out?

## Reader defines Organization

- You must choose an appropriate organizational strategy based on your reader's needs
- Global Organization
- Local Organization

## Global Organization: Reader's Expect Coherence

- Academic Standard  
Introduction, Body, Conclusion
- Scientific Standard  
IMRAD:      Introduction  
                 Methods & Materials  
                 Results  
                 Analysis/Discussion

## The Introduction

- Four Moves:
  - Establish Topic & its Significance
  - Summarize previous knowledge and research
  - Prepare for present research by:
    - Indicating gap in previous research/knowledge
    - Raising a question about previous research/knowledge
  - Introduce the present research/document by:
    - Stating the purpose of the research and the document
    - Providing an outline of the research and the document

## Local Organization: Developing Coherence

### Coherence: General Guidelines

- Explicitly connect Known (old) information with Unknown (new)
- Each section/element of report is informed by the whole project
- Management of Topics
  - In Paragraphs: The author clearly introduces and then develops one point about one topic
  - In Sentences: the Grammatical subject (doer of the action) is also the topic about which a point is being made

## Reader expects Clarity #1: Paragraph

- 5 elements/moves
  1. Introduce (A) a topic and (B) a point about the topic
  2. Provide statements in support of the point
  3. Supply evidence/examples or other information in support of your point
  4. Explain/analyze/evaluate your supporting information
  5. Connect the point of each paragraph to a larger unit of the paper you are working on (e.g., overall argument or connect a sub-point explicitly to a developing major-point within a section of the paper)

## Reader expects Clarity #2(a): Sentence

- Order of English Sentences:
  - Subject-Verb-Object
    - Patients at Hospital #1 responded well to either drug.  
S V O
  - Subject is topic about which point is being made  
Patients at Hospital #1  
vs.  
Each drug encountered a similar response from the patients  
at Hospital #1.

## Reader expects Clarity #2(b): Sentence

- Subject is flesh and blood rather than abstraction (i.e., freedom) or nominalization
- Subjects should be doing something rather than having something done to them or them being described (Active vs. Passive sentences)
  - She shops at the mall frequently. (Active)
  - She is a frequent visitor to the mall. (Passive/Description)
  - The mall is where she frequently goes. (Passive/acted upon) --note topic shift

## Reader expects Clarity #2(b): Sentence

- Nominalization (verb changed to noun)
  - (a) Introduction of new terminology should be done at the end of a sentence.
    - » (Nominalized verb: introduce)
  - (b) New technical terminology should be introduced at the end of a sentence.

## Reader expects Clarity #2(b): Sentence

- Abstractions:
  - Often lead to convoluted or passive sentences

Freedom is what Americans love.

vs.

Americans love freedom.

## Reader expects Clarity #2 (c): Sentence

- Remember Known to Unknown/Old to New
  - Known/Old information should be at the beginning of a sentence(topic cohesion), new information should be at end (rhetorical emphasis)
  - Points you wish to emphasize should occur at the end of a sentence
  - Complex phrases and clauses should occur after known information has been introduced
  - New technical terminology should be introduced at the end of a sentence