

Conclusions

Your writing is organized much like an event in your life: it has a beginning, a middle, and an end. An effective ending, or conclusion, is essential for your paper's success. It will tell your readers that you are finished dealing with your subject. Additionally, a conclusion will put your ideas in perspective, allow your readers to re-focus on your main idea, and perhaps even stimulate your readers to follow you in your belief or option. A conclusion should satisfy your readers and give them a feeling of completeness.

Although conclusions are essential to a paper's success, they aren't always easy to craft. One way to get at your conclusion about your subject is to pre-write about your introduction and body paragraphs, re-read what you have written, then ask yourself this question: "So what?" Your response to this question can lead you to the powerful conclusion you are seeking.

Here are some suggestions you might consider when thinking about crafting your conclusion:

1. Say to yourself, "My subject is important because..." Write down your answer. In your conclusion you can then stress the importance of your subject.
2. Ask yourself if you can paraphrase the main idea you set forth in your introduction. Sometimes you can match the introduction to the conclusion to envelope the body of your paper.
3. If you have written a paper of some length, you may want to summarize the main points of the paper in your conclusion in addition to restating or paraphrasing your main idea.
4. Often writers begin an essay with a brief anecdote or a little story. You might want to vary this practice and end your paper with an anecdote or story that illustrates your main idea.
5. Sometimes you may want your readers to see the implications of the ideas you presented. In this case, you may want to conclude your essay by asking your readers one or more questions that will force them to continue thinking about specific issues.
6. At other times, you might not want to leave your readers wondering about solutions or answers but will want to supply them yourself. For example, if your paper describes or exposes a problem, you may want to offer a solution in the conclusion of your paper.
7. Occasionally, writers begin their papers with a quote. You may choose to end your paper with a quote instead. An appropriate quote from an authority on your subject can be one way to give your paper, and your ending, greater significance.
8. Once in a while, a writer explores a subject and finds something almost frightening or disgusting about the outcome of his or her discovery. If you find this happening to you, you may want to use your conclusion as place to warn your readers if what could be in store for them.
9. And sometimes you feel so strongly about your subject that you want to enlist the help of your readers to bring about an event, to take a stand on an issue, or to fight for a cause. In this case, you might conclude your paper by challenging your readers to do or to believe something.
10. Don't forget: Never bring in a new topic/idea in your conclusion.