

How to

...structure information

When you give information to someone else, verbally or in writing, they will understand it better if you structure it well. If you are not clear and logical in what you say or write, it will be difficult for other people to understand you.

When you order the stationery get me some more white 80 gram, no make that 90 gram. Perhaps I could do with yellow, no I mean buff – we need that in 120 gram. I'd like to take a break soon. Don't forget the pencils. Oh, I will have 80 gram white.

You need to group similar types of information together. When writing, you can do this with headings or numbered items. This helps your reader or listener follow your line of thought or description of events, and understand the main points.

Ways to structure information

You may need to group information from many sources, for example different types of stationery and equipment used in the office.

Try this!

Organise the objects shown below. What headings would you use?



Sometimes you need to break something down into sections or parts. A file might be broken down into the cover and the rings that hold paper. You could divide the description of an event into different stages, starting with what happened first. In the same way you could break down into stages a process, such as how to use the photocopier, starting with what you must do first.

Try this!

List the different parts of a mobile phone.



What goes first?

You need to decide which information is going to come first. Think about:

- **purpose:** what am I trying to achieve?
- **audience:** what do they know already? What do they need to know? How easily can they understand me?
- **what would be most appropriate?**
 - most important points first
 - easiest points first
 - logical steps in a process
 - order of time
 - working left to right, top to toe, north to south, front to back.

Try this!

Organise these points about how to use a comb binder so that they make sense.

- 1 Close the comb by releasing the comb opener.
- 2 Connect the machine to the power supply and turn it on.
- 3 How to use the comb binder
- 4 Open the comb by placing it in the comb opener.
- 5 Open the lid of the machine.
- 6 Place the punched papers onto the opened comb.
- 7 You now have a comb-bound booklet.
- 8 Punch the papers.
- 9 Select a comb of an appropriate size.
- 10 Take the papers that you want to punch and put them into the punch slot.

