

Bracken Business Communications Clinic

STYLE

WRITING A GOOD INTRODUCTION

In business writing and presenting, a **good introduction** should tell your co-communicators three things:

1. The issue you plan to address with your document (the issue).
2. Your main purpose for communicating (your thesis or claim).
3. The key points you will discuss in your document (preview statement).

Most business communication should be direct, with the main idea (thesis or claim) stated clearly in the introduction. This allows your reader to determine the importance and relevance of your document or presentation quickly.

The Attention Getter

In business writing, it is generally acceptable to leave out an attention getter for the sake of being concise. **However, the attention getter is essential in business presentations.** Interesting facts, relevant quotes or stories, and demonstrations are just some of the many ways to get and keep your audience's attention. Be creative!

The Issue

Business writing should be concise, so determine your co-communicator's familiarity with the issue before writing. Do not include more information than necessary, but do give the reader a clear idea of the issue that has motivated you to write the document or create the presentation. Remember that your document may be distributed to a wider audience than you originally anticipated.

The Thesis/Claim

It is crucial that your co-communicator understands your purpose for communicating right away. A thesis or claim is an arguable statement that you plan to introduce and/or support in the rest of your document. When writing your thesis, think about the following questions:

- What goal do I hope to achieve by writing this document?
- What is my purpose for communicating?
- What is the main idea I am trying to convey?

The Preview Statement

A preview statement briefly outlines the key points you plan to use to support your thesis/claim. List the key points in your preview statement in the exact order they will appear in your paper or presentation using the same terms or phrases you will use in your paper or presentation. Tell your co-communicator what you plan to tell them before you go into detail. This lets readers know how to navigate your document and find the points that are most important to them. When giving a presentation, this preview lets your audience know the points you intend to cover, which makes keeping up with the speaker much easier for the listeners.