

2018

## Controlling Flow in Writing

Ashton Cook

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/memorandum>



Part of the [Technical and Professional Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Cook, Ashton (2018) "Controlling Flow in Writing," *Memorandum*: Vol. 5: Iss. 1, Article 16.  
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.library.uab.edu/memorandum/vol5/iss1/16>

This content has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the UAB Digital Commons, and is provided as a free open access item. All inquiries regarding this item or the UAB Digital Commons should be directed to the [UAB Libraries Office of Scholarly Communication](#).

# Controlling Flow in Writing

By Ashton Cook

From news to fiction to blog posts, writers seek to grab attention with their work. It is one of the reasons why creators create: to express themselves in a way that leaves an impact. In writing, however, that impact can be heavily hampered by flaws in coherence and cohesion.

To keep the reader happily invested in whatever they are reading, the text must seem natural and accessible, or flow.

## COHERENCE AND COHESION

For readers to connect to a piece of writing, the text must be capable of comfortably communicating with them, which relates to coherence.

But to be coherent, the words themselves must be able to connect as seamlessly as possible, which is to be cohesive. It can be daunting to revise the flow of a piece. Sometimes, the issue with an article can come down to just one word choice, and finding that problematic phrase can feel similar to looking for a needle in a haystack. There are some ways to help make the process simpler.

## WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

First and foremost, to know if you're communicating fluidly with your audience, you must know who they are. If the article or story is meant for a younger audience, using complicated language won't be very effective.

If the target is an academic group, See Mike hike and similarly simple phrasing might come across too dull.

Another thing to consider is sentence length. While it is good to have some sentences that run for a decent amount of space, having too many can leave the reader feeling like they cannot breathe. Too many short sentences can be equally overwhelming. Utilizing a good mix of the two can help keep a reader from breaking away from the text.

Sometimes the issue with a piece of writing isn't in the sentences. Paragraphs can be

too lengthy or too brief, or they may introduce material at wrong times. Looking at how you could restructure what you're working on can lead to finding new ways of strengthening it.

## RESOURCES AROUND YOU

There is some writing that, no matter how much we rethink and revise and re-revise, we'll never be satisfied with. Something is forgotten, leaving the whole text feeling incomplete. Or, maybe, something is awkward, but you can't figure out what it is.

Times like these are when you should have someone review your work with you. Visiting the University Writing Center on campus, meeting with a professor or finding a good friend are all great solutions for when revision feels like hitting a wall.

