Cairo University Electronics and Communications Department

© Hossam A. H. Fahmy The paragraph	 17. In summaries, keep to one tense. 18. Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end. 1/13 Within the paragraph
	15. Express co-ordinate ideas in similar form.16. Keep related words together.
Hossam A. H. Fahmy	14. Avoid a succession of loose sentences.
Technical English, Lecture 5: Principles of composition	 9. Make the paragraph the unit of composition: one paragraph to each topic. 10. As a rule, begin each paragraph with a topic sentence; end it in conformity with the beginning. 11. Use the active voice. 12. Put statements in positive form. 13. Omit needless words.

- A subject requires subdivision into topics, each of which should be made the subject of a paragraph.
- The beginning of each paragraph is a signal to the reader that a new step in the development of the subject has been reached.
- As a rule, single sentences should not be written or printed as paragraphs. The possible exception is for sentences of transition that indicate the relation between the parts of an exposition or argument.

Do you remember what we said about speed reading?

- 1. The topic sentence comes at or near the beginning;
- 2. the succeeding sentences explain or establish or develop the statement made in the topic sentence; and
- 3. the final sentence either emphasizes the thought of the topic sentence or states some important consequence.

The relation of the paragraph to what precedes, or its function as a part of the whole, may need to be expressed.

Be active!

• The need to make a particular word the subject of the sentence often determines which voice you should use. • You should change weak negations. Compare: • The active voice is usually more direct and vigorous than the passive. He was not very often on time. • The active voice does not mean that you start every sentence with I or we. and The examples are the only passive voice sentences in this presentation. He usually came late. A common fault is to use as the subject of a passive construction a noun which expresses the entire action. Compare • You may change your choice of words. Remember: did not remember \Rightarrow forgot Confirmation of these reports cannot be obtained. did not pay any attention to \Rightarrow ignored • You may use the antithesis of negative and positive. Notice: and The right of return for Palestinians is not charity but sim-These reports cannot be confirmed. ple justice. 4/13 5/13 **Redundant words** A real example: discussion

- Every word, sentence, or paragraph should add something useful.
- A concise text is easier to read and understand.

Compare

he is a man who he call your attention to the fact that remind you

"I have recently graduated from the Electrical and Communications Engineering department at Cairo University where I completed a Bachelor program. My decision to pursue graduate studies in Wireless Communication Systems Engineering was the natural culmination of my undergraduate coursework in Electrical and Electronics Engineering where I majored in Communication Systems. Also, I wanted to broaden my horizons and gain relevant exposure in the field of Hardware Design." "I have recently graduated from the Electrical and Communications Engineering department at Cairo University where I completed a Bachelor program. My decision to pursue graduate studies in Wireless Communication Systems Engineering was the natural culmination of my undergraduate coursework in Electrical and Electronics Engineering where I majored in Communication Systems. Also, I wanted to broaden my horizons and gain relevant exposure in the field of Hardware Design."

"I received my bachelor degree in 2006, majoring in communications, from the Electronics and Communications Engineering Department of Cairo University. Graduate studies in Wireless Communication Systems Engineering is a natural continuation to my undergraduate coursework. It will also help me to gain relevant experiences in the field of Hardware Design."

∜

Related words

Keep the words related in thought together.

- 1. Cast iron, when treated in a Bessemer converter, is changed into steel.
- 2. By treatment in a Bessemer converter, cast iron is changed into steel.
- 3. By treatment in a Bessemer converter, cast iron transforms into steel.
- 4. By treatment in a Bessemer converter, cast iron becomes steel.

Use the same form for "parallel" structures.

In spring, summer, or in winter.

In spring, summer, or winter. (In spring, in summer, or in winter.)

This rule applies to itemizations and enumerations.

9/13



In technical papers:

- Keep to the present tense. The results of your past experiments are "facts" that are still true now.
- Avoid future and past!
- You may use present participle in conclusions. Often, you can still use the present tense.

This paper has shown \Rightarrow The results show

8/13

The proper place for "prominent" words is usually the end of the sentence. Compare

- 1. This steel is principally used for making razors, because of its hardness.
- 2. Because of its hardness, this steel is principally used in making razors.
- 3. Because of its hardness, the principal use of this steel is to make razors.

12/13

We may divide those rules in two groups depending on what they provide

ClarityStyle9. Write one paragraph to each topic.10. Begin each paragraph with a topic
sentence.12. Put statements in positive form.11. Use the active voice.13. Omit needless words.14. Avoid groups of loose sentences.15. Express parallel ideas in similar
form.14. Avoid groups of loose sentences.16. Keep related words together.18. Place the emphatic words of a

18. Place the emphatic words of a sentence at the end.

13/13