

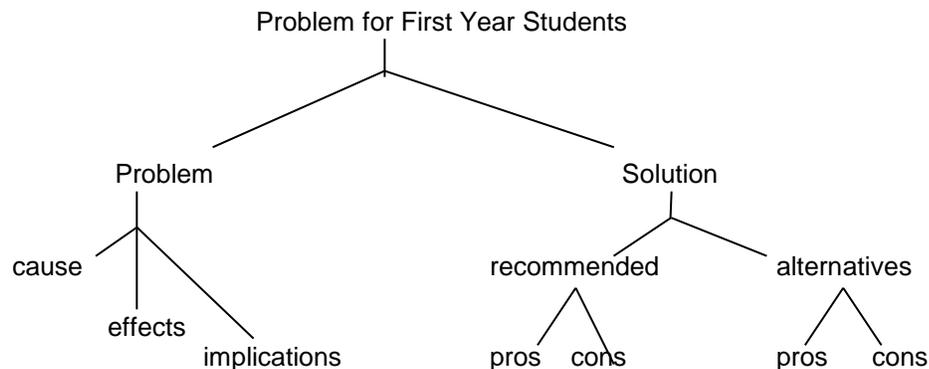
FINDING A PLAN FOR YOUR PAPER

If you have trouble finding a plan for your paper, try one or more of the methods described below.

METHOD 1: Check the directions the teacher gave you. Do they suggest a plan for your paper? Highlight the key words and consider how they can help you organize your ideas. Use them to sketch a tree that represents that plan. In the following exercise, the directions given by the teacher suggest a plan that the students might follow:

Student Services has decided to produce a series of self-help pamphlets, written by students for new applicants. The object of these pamphlets is to prepare first year students for university life. Your assignment is to write the text for one of these pamphlets. For next class, choose a topic for your pamphlet (**a problem that first year students are likely to face at Concordia**) and prepare a plan for your text.

Describe the problem, including such points as cause, effects, and implications; suggest a solution; and explain what steps a student must follow in order to carry out the solution. If you think there is more than one solution, describe the pros and cons of each one but recommend the one you think is most appropriate.



METHOD 2: Check your textbook. Does the chapter dealing with your topic suggest a plan for your paper? Sometimes a professor expects you to include in your paper the various points covered in your textbook. For example, if you are describing the development of a particular business venture, like a shoe store or a children's bookstore, the textbook might have outlined the usual phases a business must pass through on its way to success. In such a case, the plan the textbook follows might be a good one for you to follow.

METHOD 3: If you take the time to consider what the topic involves, you might find a plan. Does your topic involve any of the following elements?

Cause/Effect

Why have students' fees risen so sharply over the last decade?
How have students been affected by this increase in their fees?

Comparison/Contrast

Should women's athletics receive funding equal to men's?
What are the reasons for and against equal funding?

Definition/Example

What is a university co-op program?
Explain how such a program works by describing one with which you are familiar.

Categories/Explanation

List the different services offered by the various departments of Student Services and explain what each service entails.

Problem/Solution

Describe the problem students have when they combine full time study with part time work; suggest a solution.

Procedure/Step-by-step

List the steps a student must go through in order to obtain admission to a post-graduate program.

Narrative/Description

Tell the story of how Sir George Williams and Loyola became one university. Describe the layout of each campus.

METHOD 4: Develop a set of questions to help you formulate your plan. What question do you want your paper to answer? What question should each section answer? Sometimes the **journalist's questions** (*how, where, why, when, who, what*) help you generate questions around which you can plan your paper.

- When was there a dispute about tuition fees in Quebec?
- Who initiated this move?
- How did students react?
- How did this move affect higher education in Quebec that year?
- Where was the impact felt most?
- What was the outcome of this issue?