

# Creating an Outline for an Interview Paper

You've finished your interview and have a bunch of notes on your subject. Before you start writing your paper, take time to create an outline. This will help you organize your information and make the writing process smoother.

You may well have done an outline before. If so, you probably remember that we use Roman numerals for an outline. Each Roman numeral stands for a paragraph:



- I. Introduction
- II. First subtopic
- III. Second subtopic
- IV. Third subtopic
- V. Conclusion

This is a good start, but it's even better if we can have a better idea of what will be in each paragraph. For the parts of each paragraph, such as details, we use capital letters. Here's an example outline for a report on an interview:

- I. Introduction
  - A. Tell the reader who the interviewee is
  - B. Introduce my focus (the interviewee's childhood)
- II. Family
  - A. Parents
  - B. Siblings
  - C. Grandparents
  - D. Uncle Rick and Aunt Betty
- III. School
  - A. Elementary school
  - B. Switching from public to private school
  - C. Winning the science fair

*[continued]*

- IV. Vacation to Mexico
  - A. Diving
  - B. Making new friends
  - C. Horrible sunburn
- V. Conclusion

Your outline may be longer or shorter than this; that's fine. This is just an example. Notice I don't need full sentences here. I just need notes to tell myself what information to put in what place. It's hard to tell from this, but I've also thought about how one topic flows to the next. I start with the interviewee's family, because family is central to our lives, especially when we're children. Also, many of these people will appear in stories I tell in the third and fourth paragraphs, so it's good to tell the reader who they are first. School is also an important part of childhood. It's something that happens year after year, so I make that my second paragraph. The third paragraph is about a particular time that was important to the interviewee. I can lead smoothly to this one from the paragraph about school by telling how the interviewee once got a break from school for three weeks for this vacation. It's important to think about how one subtopic leads to another when creating your outline.

Your turn! Take the information you've gathered from your interview and put it into an outline.

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