



Organizing Evidence by Putting it in Order

Task: Consider the order in which you will present your evidence so that it makes sense to your audience.

Instructions:

There isn't a right way or a wrong way to put your evidence in order. Some people present their strongest pieces of evidence first and follow with evidence that is still supportive, but slightly less powerful.

Others begin with supportive evidence but save their hard-hitting, super-strong evidence for the end.

Both ways work.

Before you can do anything with your argument, though, you should have a plan for the order in which you'll present your evidence. This plan is flexible – it can definitely shift and change – but it provides a roadmap for your argument.

To order your evidence, ask yourself:

- What evidence would a reader need to understand before the others make sense?
- Which evidence is my strongest, and do I want to lead with it or build toward it?
- Is there a natural sequence here – chronological, cause and effect, simple to complex – that the reader would expect? If my evidence follows a timeline or a logical progression, does my order match it?
- If I swapped two of my pieces of evidence, would the essay still make sense, or would something feel lost? (If nothing changes, that pair wasn't in a meaningful order yet.)

Consider these questions while you play around with the order of your evidence until you find the right fit. (Remember, you can add rows to this table as needed!)



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