

PARALLELISM

What is parallelism?

Parallelism is the practice of using the same pattern of words, phrases, or sentences to show that the ideas presented have the same level of importance. An example of a pattern might be: adjective, subject, verb, object. This pattern would be repeated in a series of phrases or sentences to create parallel form. In other words, the ideas are expressed in the same grammatical structures to show that they are of parallel importance.

When is parallelism effective?

1. With Items in a Series

*Three ways to succeed in school are **practicing good time management strategies, cultivating efficient study habits and employing effective communication skills.***

*Three things that help a student succeed are **good time management strategies, efficient study habits and effective communication skills.***

*Three ways to succeed in school are **to practice good time management strategies, to cultivate efficient study habits and to employ effective communication skills.***

2. With Relationships of Contrast

*I thought that **I would fail the exam** but instead **I received a high mark.***

3. With Relationships of Alternation

*If a **high school education is no longer an adequate qualification for most jobs,** then **a university education is now a basic requirement for employment.***

When is parallelism required?

Parallelism is required whenever its absence interferes with clarity. When the phrase, sentence or paragraph sounds awkward, lacks flow and creates confusion, then parallelism is probably grammatically necessary. The following examples show a need to revise these sentences so that they follow parallel form.

*Three ways to succeed in school are **good time management strategies, to cultivate efficient study habits, and employing effective communication skills.***

*I thought **I would fail the exam** but instead **a high mark was given to me.***

*If a **high school education is no longer an adequate qualification for most jobs,** then **employment now requires education from a university.***