

The following undeveloped paragraph barely outlines one of four types of ex-smokers:

The second group, evangelists, does not condemn smokers but encourages them to quit. Evangelists think quitting is easy, and they preach this message, often earning the resentment of potential converts.

Contrast the preceding bare-bones adaptation with the actual paragraphs written by Franklin E. Zimring in "Confessions of a Former Smoker":

By contrast, the antismoking evangelist does not condemn smokers. Unlike the zealot, he regards smoking as an easily curable condition, as a social disease, and not a sin. The evangelist spends an enormous amount of time seeking and preaching to the unconverted. He argues that kicking the habit is not *that* difficult. After all, *he* did it; moreover, as he describes it, the benefits of quitting are beyond measure and the disadvantages are nil.

The hallmark of the evangelist is his insistence that he never misses tobacco. Though he is less hostile to smokers than the zealot, he is resented more. Friends and loved ones who have been the targets of his preachments frequently greet the resumption of smoking by the evangelist as an occasion for unmitigated glee.

In the second sentence of both paragraphs, Zimring explicitly contrasts evangelists with zealots, the group he previously discussed. And he does more as well: he provides specific examples of the evangelist's message (first paragraph) and of others' reactions to him (second paragraph).

Development begins in sentences, when you use the most concrete and specific words you can muster to explain your meaning. (See p. 56.) At the level of the paragraph, these sentences develop the paragraph's topic. Then, at the level of the whole essay, these paragraphs develop the governing thesis.

Sometimes, you may discover that the most effective way to develop an idea is through visuals. For instance, if you support a point with numbers or statistics, presenting them in a chart or graph can make the information easier for readers to grasp. Similarly, a photograph may help to illustrate an idea or create an emotional response in your readers. If you decide to add a visual element to your draft, be sure that you have a purpose for using the image, that you provide a caption to clarify that purpose, and that you credit the source of the image. (For an effective use of a visual in a student essay, see Grace Patterson's "A Rock and a Hard Place" on p. 59. For information on crediting visual sources, see p. 379.)

The key to adequate development is a good sense of your readers' needs for information and reasons. The list of questions on page 21 can

help you estimate these needs as you start to write; reconsidering the questions when you revise can help you see where your draft may fail to address, say, readers' unfamiliarity with your subject or possible resistance to your thesis.

The introduction to each method of development in Chapters 5–14 includes specific advice for meeting readers' needs when using the method to develop paragraphs and essays. When you sense that a paragraph or section of your essay is thin but you don't know how to improve it, you can also try the discovery techniques given on pages 21–25 or ask the questions for all the methods of development on page 24–25.

Tone

The tone of writing is like the tone of voice in speech: it expresses the writer's attitude toward his or her subject and audience. In writing we express tone with word choice and sentence structure. Notice the marked differences in these two passages discussing the same information on the same subject:

Voice mail can be convenient, sure, but for callers it's usually more trouble than it's worth. We waste time "listening to the following menu choices," when we just want the live person at the end. All too often, there isn't even such a person!

For callers the occasional convenience of voice mail generally does not compensate for its inconveniences. Most callers would prefer to speak to a live operator but must wait through a series of choices to reach that person. Increasingly, companies with voice-mail systems do not offer live operators at all.

The first passage is informal, expresses clear annoyance, and with *we* includes the reader in that attitude. The second passage is more formal and more objective, reporting the situation without involving readers directly.

Tone can range from casual to urgent, humorous to serious, sad to elated, pleased to angry, personal to distant. The particular tone you choose for a piece of writing depends on your purpose and your audience. For most academic and business writing, you will be trying to explain or argue a point to your equals or superiors. Your readers will be interested more in the substance of your writing than in a startling tone, and indeed an approach that is too familiar or unserious or hostile could

put them off. Following these guidelines will help ensure that your tone is effective:

- State opinions and facts calmly:
 - OVEREXCITED** One clueless administrator was quoted in the newspaper as saying she thought many students who claim learning disabilities are faking their difficulties to obtain special treatment! Has she never heard of dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, and other well-established disabilities?
 - CALM** Particularly worrisome was one administrator's statement, quoted in the newspaper, that many students who claim learning disabilities may be "faking" their difficulties to obtain special treatment.
- Replace arrogance with deference:
 - ARROGANT** I happen to know that many students would rather party or just bury their heads in the sand than get involved in a serious, worthy campaign against the school's unjust learning-disabled policies.
 - DEFERENTIAL** Time pressures and lack of information about the issues may be what prevent students from joining the campaign against the school's unjust learning-disabled policies.

- Replace sarcasm with plain speaking:
 - SARCASTIC** Of course, the administration knows even without meeting students what is best for every one of them.
 - PLAIN SPEAKING** The administration should agree to meet with each learning-disabled student to learn about his or her needs.
- Choose words that convey reasonableness rather than negative emotions:
 - HOSTILE** The administration coerced some students into dropping their lawsuits. [*Coerced* implies the use of threats or even violence.]
 - REASONABLE** The administration convinced some students to drop their lawsuits. [*Convinced* implies the use of reason.]

Tone is something you want to evaluate in revision, along with whether you've achieved your purpose and whether you've developed your thesis adequately for your audience. But adjusting tone is largely a matter of replacing words and restructuring sentences, work that could distract you from an overall view of your essay. If you think your tone

is off base, you may want to devote a separate phase of revision to it, after addressing unity, coherence, and the other matters discussed in this chapter.

For advice on sentence structures and word choices, see Chapter 4 on editing.

Using a Revision Checklist

The following checklist summarizes the advice on revision given in this chapter. Use the checklist to remind yourself what to look for in your first draft. But don't try to answer all the questions in a single reading of the draft. Instead, take the questions one by one, rereading the whole draft for each. That way you'll be able to concentrate on each element with minimal distraction from the others.

CHECKLIST FOR REVISION

- What is your purpose in writing? Will it be clear to readers? Do you achieve it?
- What is your thesis? Where is it made clear to readers?
- How unified is your essay? How does each body paragraph support your thesis? (Look especially at your topic sentences.) How does each sentence in the body paragraphs support the topic sentence of the paragraph?
- How coherent is your essay? Do repetition and restatement, pronouns, parallelism, and transitions link the sentences in paragraphs?
- Does the overall organization clarify the flow of ideas? How does your introduction work to draw readers in and orient them to your purpose and thesis? How does your conclusion work to pull the essay together and give readers a sense of completion?
- How well developed is your essay? Where might readers need more evidence to understand your ideas and find them convincing? Would visual images help?
- What is the tone of your essay? How is it appropriate for your purpose and your audience?

Note that the introductions to the methods of development in Chapters 5–14 also have their own revision checklists. Combining this list with the one for the method you're using will produce a more targeted set of questions. (The guide inside the back cover will direct you to the discussion you want.)

Grace Patterson's Revised Draft

Considering questions like those in the revision checklist led the student Grace Patterson to revise the rough draft we saw on pages 31–32. Patterson's revision follows. Notice that she made substantial cuts, especially of digressions near the end of the draft. She also revamped the introduction, tightened many passages, improved the coherence of paragraphs, decided to look for a photograph to illustrate one idea, and wrote a wholly new conclusion to sharpen her point. She did not try to improve her style or fix errors at this stage, leaving these activities for later editing.

Title? A Rock and a Hard Place

In the essay "The Box Man" Barbara Lazear Ascher says that a

homeless man who has chosen solitude can show the rest of us how to
"find . . . a friend in our own voice." Maybe. But her case depends on the

Ascher's

Box Man's choice, her assumption that he *had* one.

Discussions of the homeless often use the word *choice*. Many people with
homes would like to think
enough money can accept the condition of the homeless in America when

they tell themselves that many of the homeless chose their lives. That the

streets are in fact what they want. But it's not fair to use the word *choice*

here: the homeless don't get to choose their lives the way most of the rest of
us do. For the homeless people in America today, there are no good choices.

But

A good choice is

What do I mean by a "good choice"? One made from a variety of options
determined and narrowed down by the chooser. There is plenty of room for

the chooser to make a decision that he will be satisfied with. When I choose a career, I expect to make a good choice. There is plenty of interesting fields worth investigating, and there is lots of rewarding work to be done. It's a choice that opens the world up and showcases its possibilities. If it came time for me to choose a career, and the mayor of my town came around and told me that I had to choose between a life of cleaning public toilets and operating a jackhammer on a busy street corner, I would object. That's a lousy choice, and I wouldn't let anyone force me to make it.

When the mayor of New York tried to take the homeless off the streets, some of them didn't want to go. People assumed that the homeless

They could

people who did not want to get in the mayor's car for a ride to a city or they could stay. People assumed that the homeless people shelter chose to live on the street. But just because some homeless people who refused a ride to the shelter wanted to live on the street. But that chose the street over the generosity of the mayor does not necessarily mean assumption is not necessarily true.

that life on the streets is their ideal. We allow ourselves as many options as we can imagine, but we allow the homeless only two: go to a shelter, or stay where you are. Who narrowed down the options for the homeless? Who benefits if they go to a shelter? Who suffers if they don't?

Last Sunday,
He
I had a

Homeless people are not always better off in shelters, a conversation with a man who had lived on the streets for a long time. The

man said that he had spent some time in those shelters for the homeless, and he told me what they were like. They're dangerous and dehumanizing. Drug dealing, beatings, and theft are common. The shelters are dirty and crowded, people have to wait in long lines for everything. People are constantly being so that residents have to wait in long lines for everything and are constantly herded around and bossed around. It's dangerous—drug dealers, beatings, theft. Dehumanizing. It matches my picture of hell. From the sound of it, I