

General

Academic writing can be like making a wall - start with one brick (the main sentence) then add to it.

'Building' sentences

You can use parts of speech like below to build up your sentences. Use commas round the main parts so the sentence is easier to read.

prepositions¹ adverbs² adjectives³
linking words⁴ (see complex. 1)

Mix all these things together to add information to your subject, verb and object.

Transformation

Look at two versions of a paragraph. The first one is very repetitive – the sentences all have a subject/verb pattern, they are all the same length, and the word 'he' appears a lot. The one underneath in *italics* is much more varied and academic. Here are the things which are different;

who = relative clause⁵

The writer joins the first 2 sentences with 'who'.

Opening = participle⁶

The writer joins the next 2 sentences with a participle, and so avoids repeating 'he'.

business = synonym⁷

The writer uses this instead of repeating 'travel agency'.

when = relative pronoun⁸

The writer uses this instead of repeating the idea of 'year'.

Despite = contrast link⁹

The writer makes a clearer contrast between '£4 million' and 'small four bed-room house', and joins another two sentences.

which = relative pronoun¹⁰

The writer uses this instead of repeating 'house'.

However = contrast link¹¹

The writer makes a clearer contrast between the past situation (old house) and the possible future one (new house).

because of = cause/effect link¹²

The writer uses a complex linking word rather than a short one, and so avoids repeating 'he' again.

Building sentences

Susan Thompson recruited staff.

Susan Thompson **from**¹ Human Resources recruited staff.

Susan Thompson from Human Resources **normally**² recruited staff.

Susan Thompson from Human Resources normally recruited the **part time**³ staff.

Susan Thompson from Human Resources normally recruited the part time staff **who**⁴ worked in the call centres.

Given her background in telesales⁴, Susan Thompson from Human Resources, normally recruited the part time staff who worked in the call centres.

Transformation

Ken Donaldson is a successful businessman. He runs a travel agency. *Ken Donaldson is a successful businessman **who**⁵ runs a travel*

agency. He opened his first shop in 1998. He then expanded his agency. *Opening*⁶ his first shop in 1998, he then expanded his

travel agency rapidly with four more shops in 2001. In this year, *business*⁷ rapidly with four more shops in 2001 **when**⁸

cheap airlines transformed the travel industry. He made *cheap airlines transformed the travel industry. **Despite**⁹ making*

£4 million last year. He still lives in a small four-bedroom house. *£4 million last year, he still lives in a small four-bedroom house,*

His father built this house. Now he wants to move. This is *which*¹⁰ his father built. **However**¹¹, now he wants to move

because he has business interests in London. *because of*¹² business interests in London.