



Conclusions

The conclusion of a paper serves two functions: it signals the end of the work, and it leaves readers with a final impression. The first is necessary for the reader's closure, and the second leaves the reader to think about why your subject is important.

In your conclusion, you may look either backward or forward. By looking forward, you point to the further implications of what you have written. Looking backward, you bring together your key points to paint one last picture before the reader is finished.

The following examples come from student essays on securing a summer job and exhibit the different ways you can use a conclusion effectively.

Looking Backward: Returning to Your Intro

Despite all these suggestions, finding a summer job may still be as difficult as locating an inexpensive apartment near campus. But you can be confident that you have gone about it efficiently and looked into all the possibilities. The rest is up to luck.

Looking Backward: Restating Your Thesis

You can see that looking for a summer job need not be a hit-or-miss process. It can be conducted in a systematic, efficient manner that should procure results.

Looking Backward: Summarizing Your Main Points

What is important is to start looking for a summer job early and to follow the specific suggestions noted here. You may not want to investigate all the possibilities: overseas employers, federal agencies, local or state government, and local businesses. But you should realize that it is better to have too many opportunities than too few.

Looking Forward: Forecasting the Future

Despite these suggestions, you may not find summer work. The growing demand for these positions and the diminishing supply of them means that many young people will wind up unemployed. Therefore, you may find yourself volunteering for a community service organization or returning to campus to attend summer sessions. So while you're working hard to find a summer job, think about a back-up plan, so that you will be sure to make valuable use of your time.

Looking Forward: A Call for Action

The important point to remember is to get started early. You can write letters to federal agencies, check into local and state government possibilities, get a copy of the Summer Employment Directory, and follow my suggestions about seeking a position in local business. Those who hesitate may be lost this summer.

As you can see, each of these students took a different approach to concluding, yet each wound up with a strong ending. Never leave your reader hanging, or merely add a line or two to simply finish the paper. The key thing to remember is to choose a conclusion that not only closes your work, but also leaves an impression in your reader's mind that will remain even after they have put your paper away.