

<i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i>	<b>Notes for teachers</b>	<b>D3 / 22</b>
<i>General aim</i>	<b>D: Compose a written message</b>	
<i>Level of difficulty</i>	<b>3</b>	
<i>Intermediate aim</i>	<b>2. Organise and structure a message</b>	
<i>Operational aim</i>	<b>2. Construct a plan</b>	
<i>Pre-requirements</i>	<b>Ability to write complex sentences. D2 / 24</b>	
<i>Number of exercises</i>	<b>6</b>	
<i>Summing-up exercise</i>	<b>D3 / 22 – 1.7</b>	
<i>Comments</i>	The aim is just to make a plan. However, we also suggest writing the text based on the plan, if the teacher or the learner wish, as extra practice. The last example is intended for this purpose.	

*In module D2 / 24, we saw how important it was to structure a message in order to be understood.*

*We also looked at several ways of structuring a message. Of course, there are plenty more...*

*Here is a summary of the different structures:*

## **1. The structure of a text can consist in listing a succession of objects, events or facts.**

**Thus we have the events that will take place in a town in July:**

- cross country races
- circus
- concerts
- firework display
- etc.

The list might have a specific order. For example, from the least important to the most important (or the opposite), from the most expensive to the cheapest (or the opposite), from the simplest to the most complicated (or the opposite), etc.

## **2. A message can be intended as an argumentation or a demonstration.**

**For example, in the case of a letter of complaint, the structure of the message could be as follows:**

**Describing the situation:**

For example you have received an order

*“I have just received delivery of my order no. YP208.”*

**Describing the problem:**

The delivery does not correspond to the order

*“**However**, the goods I received are not the ones I ordered.”*

**Consequence:**

The error must be put right:

**« Therefore**, I would be grateful if you could send me the goods I ordered and take back those that were delivered by mistake.”

**Go to the next page**

The same structure can be used to put forward an idea, to make a suggestion, or a proposition:

Here is an example:

A shop puts a “suggestion box” at the disposal of its customers. You have an idea to suggest and you write a message to put in this “suggestion box”.

### **3. A message can follow an order of time.**

This time can be expressed by dates or hours in chronological order or inverse chronological order.

**Chronological order** (from the most recent to the oldest), for example when presenting events:

- June 11 ... talent show in the park, 6pm.
- September 16... vintage car rally, Parker Square, 2pm.
- October 26... treasure hunt, village green, 4pm.

**Inverse chronological order** (from the oldest to the most recent), for example, on a curriculum vitae:

- July 2005 – GCSEs
- July 2006 – First aid certificate
- July 2006 – NVQ level 1 tourist guide
- September 2006 to July 2008 – tourist guide in several cities in the south west

### **4. A message can indicate the order of actions to be followed.**

To explain how a machine works, from the beginning to the end of its use, you can proceed step-by-step. Similarly to explain a recipe, how to make up a bed, how to start up a computer, and many other things!

The order of the actions can be expressed using words to indicate time, such as:

*Before... now... afterwards*

*First... then... finally*

*At first, next, at the end*

*Etc.*

The choice of structure, when possible, allows you to understand exactly what is to be done.

**Go to the next page**

**5. A message can be structured to show the ideas for and against something, the advantages and disadvantages, the negative and positive points, the objective and subjective aspects, etc.**

Example:

You are doing a survey amongst your friends to find out if they would be willing to share the rent of a big house to spend the next summer holidays together.

YES: because it's cheaper when you share the rent amongst several of you, because it's fun to spend time together, because there is always someone to play a sport with, because some of them have a car and can take the others, etc.

NO: because it's a little difficult to live in close quarters with someone for any length of time, there can be arguments about sharing bathrooms, and so on, it would always be difficult to agree on what to eat and when, it would always be the same people doing the chores, etc.

Conclusion: as the opinions are very mixed, it would be better to find a smaller house just for those who are willing.

*There follows a series of exercises to practise constructing a plan.*

*Each type of structure will be practised and you will have the choice of several subjects.*

*Choose a subject from those given and construct a plan.*

*If you do not think your plan is satisfactory, you can always choose another subject from those given and continue the practice.*

*Afterwards, you can also use your plans to develop them in the form of a text written with complete sentences.*

*On the next page you will find an example of the task to be done.*

**Go to the next page**

You appreciated the fact that the County Council has built a cycle path in your town on the avenue where you live. You also like the big flower beds placed in the square. To further improve your neighbourhood, you suggest changing the direction of the traffic in one street as 4 roads end up in one crossroads, which leads to constant traffic jams. You also suggest that they redo the surface of the pavement in Chestnut Avenue and you give your reasons.

The plan that seems most appropriate to our subject is that of demonstration (no. 2 in the list of examples)

Here is a possible plan:

Congratulate the County Hall for the recent work:

- cycle paths
  - . cyclists are safer
  - . accessible to roller skaters and scooters (avoids them going on pavements)
- flower beds
  - . well placed
  - . well decorated

Suggestions:

- change the direction of the traffic in Blackhill Road
  - . would ease traffic at the crossroads where 4 streets arrive at present
  - . would avoid traffic jams and horn blowing
- redo the pavement in Chestnut Avenue
  - . holes and bumps can cause people to fall (especially the elderly)
  - . pushchairs and prams are shaken about (bad for the children and infants)

In this example you notice that:

- You can clearly see the different sections and sub-sections of the plan thanks to the layout: indentations, dashes, points
- Not many words are used and the sentences are not complete.

The plan allows you to set out your ideas in an organised way, and stops you forgetting anything when writing the text. The text in question is in fact only the development of the into complete sentences using the layout which is most suitable to the type of message: letter, email, speech, petition, article for a local newspaper, etc. On the next page you will find the development of this plan with the letter sent to the County Hall.

**Go to the next page**

6 October 2007

14, Larkspur Avenue  
Sherton AL6 5BZ

County Hall  
Sherton AL4 3LT

To the attention of the Mayor

Dear Sir,

*I was pleasantly surprised by the recent improvements in my neighbourhood, and I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations.*

*The cycle paths installed in Larkspur Avenue mean that cyclists are much safer on an avenue where there is considerable traffic, sometimes driving at speed.*

*In addition, this path means that other non-motorised two-wheel users, roller skaters and scooters, do not have to take over the pavement, to the extreme annoyance of the pedestrians, only have the pavement, which is supposed to keep them safe.*

*I also very much appreciated the flowerbeds installed in Elm Square. They are extremely well placed so as not to hinder the pedestrians and at the moment they are beautifully decorated with flowers and plants of different textures and colours.*

*However, I have two suggestions that I would like to make to the County Council.*

*The first concerns Blackhill Street, where the direction of the traffic would gain by being reversed. At the moment, four roads lead to the same crossroads, which therefore quickly becomes very congested. The resulting traffic jams cause a lot of horn blowing, which in turn disturbs the peace and quiet of the inhabitants.*

*The second suggestion concerns the safety of pedestrians who use the pavement in Chestnut Avenue. The pavements, which are already very narrow, are more and more damaged. The bumps and holes could easily make people fall, especially older people. A woman of 70 sprained her ankle this very morning. The state of the pavements also makes it difficult to walk with pushchairs, because of the shaking they receive, caused by the same bumps and holes. This can hardly be good for the children.*

*Thank you for your attention.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*William Dimpton*

**Go to the next page**

*Here are several possible subjects for an “enumeration” type plan.*

*Choose one and make the plan. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan.  
You can do this task on the next page.*

1. Make a list of the main events of the current year (or the previous year if this is the beginning of the year). Start from the least important to the most important.
2. What are the most memorable events from your childhood (or the childhood of an imaginary person), from the most important to the least important?
3. What are the most important qualities that you would like to see in a life partner, from the least important to the most important.
4. What makes a job a “good job”? Start with what is most important and go towards the least important.
5. What do you think are the most important features in your ideal home? (from the most important to the least important)

**Go to the next page**

<i>900 exercises in vocational communication</i>	<b>Exercise</b> (Page 2)	<b>D3 / 22 - 1.2</b>
		<b>Eval.:</b>

**Show your work to the teacher**



*Here are several possible subjects for an “argumentation, demonstration” type plan.*

*Choose one and make the plan. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan.  
You can do this task on the next page.*

1. You have received a letter requiring you to pay your Council tax, with a 10% increase due to delay in payment, but you have already paid it. What is more, this tax is in your name, but for your brother’s address, and he too has already paid.
2. You want to suggest that they install a covered refreshment stall and public toilets in the beautiful park in your town.
3. You have had the idea to collect a small tax on the highest salaries to pay for an association which would send young delinquents on humanitarian missions to Africa.
4. You have some ideas to put forward about the renovation of your neighbourhood to make it more pleasant to live in.
5. You are quite pleased with your establishment (school or workplace) but you have several ideas to put forward to improve it still more.

**Go to the next page**

**Show your work to the teacher**

*Here are several possible subjects for “chronological” type plan. The chronology can go from the oldest to the most recent, or the opposite.*

*Choose one and make the plan. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan. You can do this task on the next page.*

1. You are working with Detective Superintendent Christie and you have to write down the timetable of the main suspect in an attempted murder case.
2. You are writing down the plan for your Curriculum Vitae, in inverse chronological order (starting from the most recent).
3. An incident or accident has occurred at your place of work. Write the facts down in chronological order.
4. You are going to tell someone close to you the main events that took place during your adolescence and that influenced you. Write these events down so that you do not forget anything, in chronological order.
5. Tomorrow you have a very busy day. Make a list in the form of a plan of what you have to do.

**Go to the next page**

**Show your work to the teacher**

*Here are several possible subjects for a “step-by-step” type plan.*

*Choose one and make the plan. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan.  
You can do this task on the next page.*

1. Make a step-by-step plan of a recipe that you do well.
2. You want your friend to try your favourite sport. Give him step-by-step explanations on how to play it.
3. Write down the procedure for accessing your electronic mail. Proceed step by step so that you can then explain it to a friend.
4. What are the different steps to follow before being able to drive a car?
5. You are very talented or skilled in a certain domain (whatever you like!). You would like to initiate a friend by explaining each step so that he or she can do it too. Take notes on what you are going to say by making a step-by-step plan.

**Go to the next page**

**Show your work to the teacher**

*Here are some possible subjects for a plan using “for/against, advantages/disadvantages, positive/negative, objective/subjective”.*

*Choose one and make the plan. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan. You can do this task on the next page.*

1. Only let cars using low-pollution fuel into town centres... For or against?
2. Advantages and disadvantages of air conditioning at home and in public places...
3. Positive and negative aspects of computer-aided teaching...
4. Buying rather than renting accommodation... objective and subjective arguments ...
5. For or against organic food.

**Go to the next page**

**Show your work to the teacher**



*Here are some possible subjects. Choose one and decide on the plan you will follow.*

*Write your plan on the next page. You can then, if you wish, write the text based on your plan.*

1. Your brother is not a very good pupil, but today he was suspended for 3 days for something he did not do ... Write the plan of the letter you would write to the head teacher.
2. You know almost by heart all the most important facts in the life of your favourite singer or actor. Before you tell his or her life story, make a plan...
3. Your best friend has just broken down on his moped. It just so happens that mopeds are your speciality! But rather than repairing it yourself, you are going to explain to him how to do it... jot down a few notes organised into a plan so that you do not forget anything.
4. Your Internet friend in Brazil asks you what you think of space research... He has an interruption and says he will come back to the discussion later on in the evening. While waiting, you think about it and make a plan before starting the discussion with your friend.
5. What sort of qualities do you think the people who govern us should have?

**Go to the next page**