

## Bulleted Lists

Like section headings, bulleted lists make the information easier and quicker to read and understand.

A bulleted list should:

- Begin with a stem or introductory sentence,
  - Contain one blank line before and after the list,
  - Begin with the bullet two spaces to the right of the left margin,
  - Begin the text two spaces from the bullet,
  - Practice consistency in capitalization,
  - Incorporate standard bullets,
  - Contain at least three bullets,
  - Be short phrases or short sentences,
  - Be no longer than 1 ½ lines,
  - Maintain parallel structure,
  - Include all bullets on the same page, and
  - Use the same logic for punctuation as in a sentence.
- Some exceptions may be allowable for business documents because the punctuation begins to look cluttered.

This list begins with a **stem sentence**, a sentence that, when combined with the bulleted statements, composes a complete sentence. In such cases, APA requires the list to be punctuated the same as a sentence in a paragraph – here with commas and an ending period.

An **introductory sentence** would be a complete sentence followed by a period instead of a colon. Then, the bullets would have no punctuation at the end unless they were complete sentences.

## Parallel Structure

Each item in the list must have the same grammatical structure. If one bullet is a complete sentence, all bullets must be complete sentences. If one bullet begins with a present tense verb, all the bullets must begin with a present tense verb. If one bullet begins with a noun, all the bullets must begin with a noun. For business writing, it is sometimes acceptable to put an adjective in front of a noun if necessary.

## Written Documents VS. Slides

A written document, without the verbal input, may require more information in the bullets. For slides, however, only include enough information to catch the listeners' attention and remind you what to say. Otherwise, they will try to listen to you while reading the slide, and they will retain little information.

## Revision Practice

*Which bulleted list rules does the following list NOT observe? After identifying the broken rules, revise for correctness and conciseness that is appropriate for a slide. Remember – less is more in a slide!*

Effective presentations require the following skills:

- Practice Verbal Delivery.
- Using effective nonverbal communication skills.
- Incorporating attention-grabbing visuals.
- A 'less is more' concept should be in the Text.