

# NEED TO KNOW

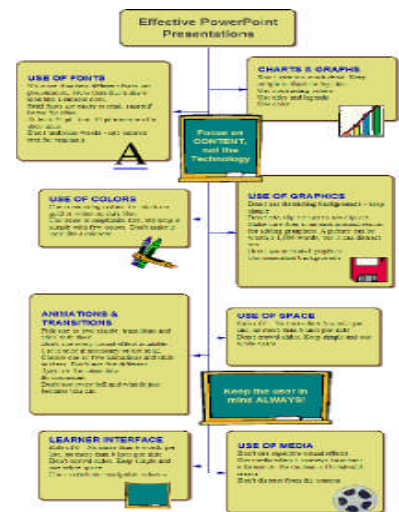
## Advance Organizers

### What Advance Organizers Are NOT:

- A review of what was covered in the previous class session
- A simple overview
- Recalling what was done last week or last year
- Telling the students about tomorrow
- Recalling a personal experience and relating it to what will be learned
- Stating the objectives of the lesson

### What Advance Organizers ARE:

- Organizational cues
- Tools that help connect the known to the unknown
- Frameworks for helping students understand what it is they'll be learning



An **advance organizer** helps to organize new material by outlining, arranging and sequencing the main idea of the new material based on what the learner already knows. **Advance organizers use familiar terms and concepts to link what the students already know to the new information that will be presented in the lesson**, which aids in the process of transforming knowledge and creatively applying it in new situations. This process helps to embed the new information into long term memory. Advance Organizers don't have to be lengthy or complex just clearly understood and related to the material.

**Advance organizers** place the most general and comprehensive ideas at the beginning of a lesson and progress to more structured and detailed information. They can be useful devices at the start of a unit, before a discussion, before a question-answer period, before giving a homework assignment, before a student report, before a video, before students read from their textbooks, before a hands-on activity, and before a discussion of concepts based on students' experiences.

### Six Easy Steps to Creating Your Own Advance Organizers

1. **Begin by describing the goal of the lesson.**  
Present students with the advance organizer. An advance organizer can be in the form of a handout, but you can also use charts, diagrams, oral presentations, or **concept maps**. (Graphic Organizers) For example, you can provide a concept map to illustrate the interrelationship between complex relationships among many parts. This helps put the new knowledge into context while helping the students relate the new material to previous knowledge.
2. **Present the material.**  
Maintain attention by presenting the material in a well-organized fashion. Make the order of learning the material explicit. The general ideas are presented first, followed by a gradual increase in detail and specifics.
3. **Use Integrative Reconciliation.**  
Make sure as you create your advance organizer that you remind students of the bigger picture, while relating new ideas to previously learned content. Repeat precise definitions, and encourage students to use the new vocabulary in discussion groups. Encourage students to think critically about the material by asking for a summary of the major attribute of the new material, and asking them to look for differences between aspects of the material.
4. **Promote active reception learning.**  
You may have provided students with a concept map or diagram -- now ask them to relate the new material to their prior knowledge. For example, have students generate new examples (different from what you've given them) and have them verbalize or write about what they've learned. To promote higher order thinking, ask students to examine material from other points of view and to relate the new material to contradictory material, experience, or knowledge.

5. **Elicit a critical approach to subject matter.**

Ask your students to look for assumptions that may have been made in the new material by reading between the lines. Require that they take an active role in their own learning by judging and challenging any assumptions or inferences to reconcile any contradictions.

6. **Clarify.**

Rephrase previous information as you add new information to clarify the concepts. Ask students to use the new information by applying it to new problems or examples.

**Examples:**

- Ask students to compare and contrast the new content based on what they know. For example, what can they tell about its color, shape, smell, feel, or taste? Demonstrate by using a related determinant. For example, use baseball to teach cricket, or ping pong to teach tennis.
- Give a scenario and ask students to infer rules based on their current knowledge.
- Have students identify the characteristics of a known quantity and then relate it to the new idea/concept. For example, offer renderings of different types of geometric forms before discussing their individual likenesses and differences. Identify a problem and ask for a reason why it may occur (before teaching the reason). For example, you might discuss the origins of a war before describing its major battles.