Planning is the first step in composing a message. Plans should include a goal, what you want to get done. It also should include a list of the points you will use to convince the reader of your point of view or of the action you want taken. The list should be arranged in logical sequence.

The major idea behind your topic sentence is the goal. The topic sentence is often stated first, followed next by facts and ideas that support it. You may instead decide to work up to the main idea at the end. In either case, you itemize the information and tie it to the main thought.