Writing Workshop #10: Parallel Construction

Parallel construction is important in science writing because expressing ideas or items in parallel grammatical structures lets a reader know that they are of equal importance.

For example, in a series or list, begin each item with the same part of speech, e.g., noun + noun + noun or adverb-verb + adverb-verb +adverb-verb.

People are wired to be sensitive to change, and they are aware of even minor grammatical anomalies and expect them to mean something.

Some basic parallel construction rules:

(1). Words or phrases in a series that are separated by commas or conjunctions must all have the same grammatical form; and

(2). Words or phrases beginning each item in a bulleted list must all have the same grammatical form.

– Celia Elliott

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One Solution: The project will proceed in four stages: reviewing the literature, designing the optical trap, constructing the optical trap, and taking and analyzing data.

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Original: The research activities in this project are quite interdisciplinary in nature and are designed to stimulate interactions between condensed matter theory and other fields of academia, such as high-energy physics, numerical physicists, mathematicians and so on.

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One Solution: The research activities in this project are quite interdisciplinary and are designed to stimulate interactions among condensed matter theorists, high-energy physicists, numerical physicists, and mathematicians.