

# Adapting structures of ideas

Thinking differently about our structure of ideas involves adapting it and seeing it from different perspectives. You can learn to do this quite simply by using the following four strategies.

## Adapting structures

- 1 Change the structure
- 2 Approach it from a different direction
- 3 Start from a different point
- 4 Create a new structure

### Strategy 1: Changing the structure

With this strategy we start with the ideas we have gathered and the structure into which they are organised, and we restructure them. We can do this in three ways:

- 1 Split it up
- 2 Rearrange it
- 3 Reinterpret it

### Strategy 2: Approaching it from a different direction

With some problems it's not necessary to change the structure at all, just approach it from a different direction, from a different point of view.

- 1 Turn it upside down  
*Reverse the relation between ideas*
- 2 Inside out  
*Reverse our intuitive assumptions*
- 3 Back to front  
*Reverse the order of things*

### Strategy 3: Starting from a different point

In contrast, this strategy works by focusing our attention onto different parts of the structure and starting from there. We might start at the end rather than the beginning, but wherever we start, our aim is not to take the ideas for granted but to see them from a different perspective.

### Strategy 4: Creating a new structure

In contrast to the others, this is a top-down strategy, in which a new theory is put in place of the ruling one. There are two ways of doing this:

- 1 Combine structures
- 2 Change the basic concepts

For more information, see *How to Write Your Literature Review*, Chapter 11.