**A Proper Introduction**

Things **NOT** to do in an introductory paragraph:

* **Personalize**: Never suggest that you are the only one who has this opinion or viewpoint. This gives the reader an opportunity to disagree and that will be his/her focus while reading. Be firm in your opinion. Avoid phrases like the following:

I think... I feel… You should…

* **Apologize.** Never suggest that you don't know what you're talking about or that you're not enough of an expert in this matter that your opinion would matter. Your reader will quickly turn to something else. Avoid phrases like the following:

In my [humble] opinion . . .
I'm not sure about this, but . . .

* **Announce your intentions**. Do not flatly announce what you are about to do in an essay.

In this paper I will . . .
The purpose of this essay is to . . .

Get into the topic and let your reader perceive your purpose in the topic sentence of your beginning paragraph.

* **Use a dictionary or encyclopedia definition.**

According to Merriam-Webster's Webster Dictionary,
a widget is . . .

Although definitions are extremely useful and it might serve your purpose to devise your own definition(s) later in the essay, you want to avoid using this hackneyed beginning to an essay.

* **Dilly-dally**. Get to it. Move confidently into your essay. Many writers find it useful to write a warm-up paragraph (or two, even) to get them into the essay, to sharpen their own idea of what they're up to, and then they go back and delete the running start.

Things **TO DO** in an introductory paragraph:

* Get the reader's interest so that he or she will want to read more.
* Let the reader know what the writing is going to be about.