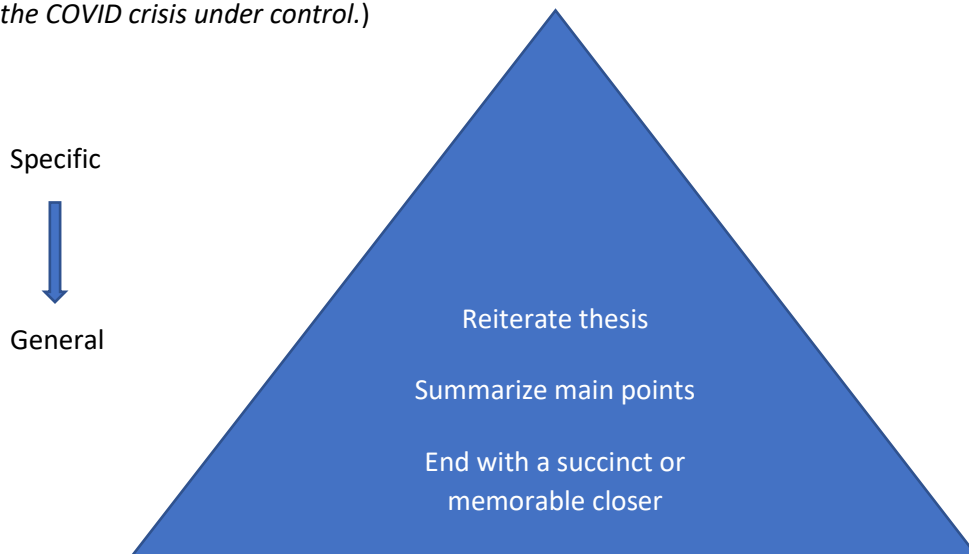# Writing Conclusions

Bringing a paper to a strong close can be challenging. You shouldn't add new evidence because the support for the main points belongs in the body of the paper; you shouldn't start a new topic because the paper will lose its focus, and you shouldn't repeat too much from the body because your conclusion will simply be too long and repetitive. Treat your conclusion as a final chance to highlight your main point(s)and leave your reader with a lasting impression.

What the Conclusion Does

The conclusion draws your most important ideas together and provides closure. It may present a more complex or developed view of your thesis or show why your ideas are important or actionable. A conclusion typically does three things:

• Reiterates the thesis/main idea (e.g., *To address the challenges posed by COVID, the government must _____*)
• Summarizes the main support for the thesis (e.g., *This response must include _____ *or* This response is necessary because _____*)
• Leaves the reader with something to think about (e.g., *While these proposed actions may seem daunting, without them, we will not get the COVID crisis under control.*)

Specific

↓

General

Reiterate thesis

Summarize main points

End with a succinct or memorable closer

As the diagram shows, the structure of a conclusion paragraph is a mirror image of the structure of an introduction paragraph (see the CBU Writing Centre's *Writing Introductions* handout). It moves your reader *out* of the specificities of your thesis and main points and back into the world again, hopefully having gained new insights into the topic.

Some Strategies for Leaving Your Reader with Something to Think About

• Show the importance of your ideas or findings by connecting them to a larger theme, issue, or context
• Make recommendations or predictions based on your research or analysis
• Describe the limitations of your research and indicate an area(s) for future development