Effective academic writing results from a “process”, which includes careful

- Topic exploration (careful reading and understanding of the assignment and course instructor’s expectations)
- Generation of ideas
- Planning
- Drafting
- Revising
- Editing

Consider using the “40/20/40” approach to managing your writing process.

The final written assignment includes the following

- An interesting, context-providing introduction
- A “clear” thesis statement (placed as the last sentence in the introduction)
- Strong paragraphs which
  - Contain topic sentences that support/connect to/develop the thesis statement
  - Contain supporting sentences that offer evidence/details/examples to support the topic sentence; information drawn from secondary sources is relayed in “writer’s words”, integrated into the flow of the paragraph, and cited accurately (style? In-text or footnotes or endnotes)
  - Are unified (all sentences stem from/connect to/develop the topic sentence
  - Contain a concluding sentence that restates the topic sentence and connects to the topic sentence in the next paragraph
  - Are coherent (logically organized)
  - Are cohesive (one sentence connects to the next sentence which connects to the next sentence and so on and so on)
- Strong sentences that
  - Have the main subject and main verb positioned close together
  - Have the main verb near the beginning of the sentence
  - Are concise (exclude unnecessary words)
  - Are varied (simple/compound/complex)
- A thought-provoking conclusion
- Carefully polished text that is grammatically accurate and correctly spelled/punctuated
- Effective formatting based on the course instructor’s requirements and in consideration of discipline-specific norms
- References
Strong paragraphs
Please read the following paragraph. Work together with your colleague to respond to the following questions:

1. Can you highlight
   - a topic sentence?
   - supporting sentences?
   - a concluding sentence?

2. What kinds of support does the writer include to develop/explain the main idea?

One problem with the notion of best practices is there are different conceptions of what criteria are to be used in defining a practice as a “best practice”. The term is sometimes criticized as being narrowly responsive to one or another ideological lens. Thus, what is identified as a key criterion for a best practice may differ, for example, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Stephen Cornell argues that the middle class dream of success in the U.S. is not necessarily the definition of success that most Native Americans hold (Cornell, 1987). Furthermore, some argue that best practices in adult education runs the risk of eroding its traditional grounding in an ethic of social justice and the common good (Bartlette, 2008). We cannot assume that what works in one situation, context or culture will not necessarily work in another (Krajewski and Silver, 2008).

- Best Practices in Aboriginal Community Development: A Literature Review and Wise Practices Approach by Cynthia Wesley-Esquimaux and Brian Strong

Strong sentences
Look at these sample sentences Please rewrite them, using the tips for “strong sentences” on the front of this handout.

1. Developing leaders, which many communities need to make a lot of effort to do given the economic and social changes that are occurring on a daily basis, is critical for community growth.
2. Nowadays, despite the focus on developing strong leaders who have solid training and education.
3. Leaders are important. Leaders need to support their communities. Their communities are struggling. The struggles are mainly due to economic downturn.

Compare your sentences with your colleague’s. How are they similar? Different?