



### **Parallelism in Sentence Construction**

If you lost two blue buttons from your coat, you would probably not just sew on pink ones. You would want your coat to look balanced and harmonious, so you would want the new buttons to match the ones you lost. Similarly, parts of a sentence that have the same basic function should be balanced and harmonious. They should be in the same grammatical form. When two or more parts of a sentence have the same grammatical structure, they are considered **parallel**.

Consider the following examples:

INCORRECT Ex. I like to skate and reading.

CORRECT Ex. I like skating and reading. Or, I like to skate and to read.

INCORRECT Ex. That student has the ability, the desire, and should succeed in all his classes.

CORRECT Ex. That student has the ability and the desire to succeed in all his classes.

(Ability and desire are both nouns; should succeed is a verb phrase and does not match the list.)

INCORRECT Ex. The class is not interesting or a challenge.

(Interesting is an adjective, but challenge is a noun)

CORRECT Ex. The class is not interesting or challenging.

(Both are now adjectives)

INCORRECT Ex. The supervisor said he was a poor worker because he loafed around, took too many breaks, and he was not conscientious.

CORRECT Ex. The supervisor said he was a poor worker because he loafed around, took too many breaks, and lacked a conscientious attitude.

