Suggested Steps for Building a Good Body Paragraph

❖ Build each paragraph around one main idea.
   "A good paragraph resembles a good essay: it has unity by virtue of being organized around a single major point... 'One main contention per paragraph' — it's a very sensible guideline to follow. If you don't follow it, your point will get lost, and so will your reader" (53-54).

❖ Start with an assertion — your topic sentence.
   It's the difference between saying, "Some ice cream is chocolate" and "Chocolate is the best kind of ice cream." Give yourself something to prove so the reader has a reason to continue.

❖ Use examples.
   "Assertions are fine, but unless you prove them with hard evidence, they remain simply assertions. So, assert, then support; assert, then support; assert, then support — and so on throughout your essay" (53).

❖ Analyze examples.
   SO WHAT? What do your examples prove? Why are they important? Make the connection between your example and your topic sentence explicit for your reader. Your reader cannot read your mind.

❖ Draw a conclusion.
   Super "so what"? How does ALL of your evidence relate to your topic sentence? What was the reader supposed to learn by reading your body paragraph? What have you just proved?

All quotes courtesy of...
Sample Body Paragraph

The atmosphere at Serendipity makes it the perfect place to gather with friends and family. The tables may at first seem small, but their size contributes to an intimate setting. The cozy tables allow patrons to sit closer to one another, easing the flow of conversation and making it easier to sample others’ desserts. The tables and chairs are mismatched antiques. The mismatched furniture is more comfortable; this is not a formal restaurant where one needs to use a proper fork, but a place where people can be themselves. Even the waiters’ station contributes to the cozy feeling. It is an old hutch, like the type one would expect to find in a country dining room rather than a Manhattan restaurant. The furnishings at Serendipity create a comfortable atmosphere where diners can focus on catching up with old friends instead of worrying about proper etiquette.