FIND YOUR VOICE! SPEAKING IN A DEMOCRACY



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Detailed Licensing

Detailed Licensing

Licensing

*A detailed breakdown of this resource's licensing can be found in **Back Matter/Detailed Licensing**.*

Using this Book

This project, Find Your Voice!, is a remix of the best available OER resources on Public Speaking. More specifically, it equips the student with effective ways to use their voice to make a change.

Disability Justice, Environmental Justice, LGBTQ Rights, Mass Shootings, Religious Freedom, Mental Health Care, Political Polarization, Foreign Relations—these are this generation of college students' problems to solve.

In one class, for example, students choose a significant social issue they'd like to impact. Throughout the semester, they craft a Problem speech, Policy speech, Motivational speech, and Commemorative speech, each of which is intended to foment real change in their democracy. The public speaking classroom is still the "real world" where social justice is pursued and change is made, and this particular course helps students show, argue, motivate, and honor as modes of speaking in a democracy, ways to "do" democracy.

· **Informative Speech** – A well-researched speech to inform your audience of a significant social problem (4-6 min.—100 pts.)

· **Persuasive Speech** – An argumentative speech designed and documented to persuade your audience to adopt a solution to that problem (6-8 min.—125 pts.)

· **Motivational Speech** – A speech intended to persuade individuals to take a specific action toward solving that problem (2-3 minutes—125 pts.)

· **Ceremonial Speech** – A speech where you'll honor someone important to that problem (2-3 min.—100 pts.)

The remixer of this project is especially grateful to Meade's *Advanced Public Speaking*, Barton & Tucker's *Exploring Public Speaking* (4e), and Larsen's *Stand Up, Speak Out*, all available on LibreText Commons. Additional materials come from Mapes' *Speak Out, Call In* and Misner & Carr's *Messages that Matter* (3e).

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

1: Why Speak?

1.1: The Value of Public Speaking in Your Life
1.2: Why Is Public Speaking Important?
1.3: Public Speaking--So What, Who Cares?

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1.1: The Value of Public Speaking in Your Life

Despite the long history of public speaking, dating back to at least 500 BCE, it is not unusual for students to question why this course is included in the curriculum of their major. You might have put it off or be taking it in your first semester. You might believe that it will have little use in your future career. The actual experience of completing the course may change your mind, and we would encourage you to do some research on our own about the question of how public speaking fits into your career. Perhaps you could talk to some professionals in your future career field, or perhaps your instructor will discuss this in class or assign a short speech about it.

However, here are three reasons why you can benefit from this course. First, public speaking is one of the major communication skills desired by employers. Employers are frequently polled regarding the skills they most want employees to possess, and communication is almost always in the top three (Adams, 2014). Of course, "communication skills" is a broad term and involves a number of abilities such as team leadership, clear writing in business formats, conflict resolution, interviewing, and listening. However, public speaking is one of those sought-after skills, even in fields where the entry-level workers may not do much formal public speaking. Nurses give training presentations to parents of newborn babies; accountants advocate for new software in their organizations; managers lead team meetings.

If you are taking this class at the beginning of your college career, you will benefit in your other future classes from the research, organizational, and presentational skills learned here. College freshmen enter with many expectations of college life and learning that they need to "un-learn," and one of those is the expectation that they will not have to give oral presentations in classes. However, that is wishful thinking. Different kinds of presentations will be common in your upcoming classes. In research done at the authors' college involving 341 graduating seniors' perceptions of the basic public speaking course showed that 72% of respondents agreed with the statement, "I feel that I used what I learned in the course in other courses I took towards my degree."

Another reason for taking a public speaking course is the harder-to-measure but valuable personal benefits. As an article on the USAToday College website states, a public speaking course can help you be a better, more informed and critical listener; it can "encourage you to voice your ideas and take advantage of the influence you have;" and it gives you an opportunity to face a major fear you might have in a controlled environment (Massengale, 2014). Finally, the course can attune you to the power of public speaking to change the world. Presentations that lead to changes in laws, policies, leadership, and culture happen every day, all over the world.

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1.2: Why Is Public Speaking Important?

Learning Objectives

1. Explore three types of public speaking in everyday life: informative, persuasive, and entertaining.
2. Understand the benefits of taking a course in public speaking.
3. Explain the benefits people get from engaging in public speaking.



Christian Pierret – Leader – CC BY 2.0.

In today's world, we are constantly bombarded with messages both good and bad. No matter where you live, where you work or go to school, or what kinds of media you use, you are probably exposed to hundreds. if not thousands, of advertising messages every day. Researcher Norman W. Edmund estimates that by 2020 the amount of knowledge in the world will double every seventy-three days (Edmund, 2005). Because we live in a world where we are overwhelmed with content, communicating information in a way that is accessible to others is more important today than ever before. To help us further understand why public speaking is important, we will first examine public speaking in everyday life. We will then discuss how public speaking can benefit you personally.

1.2.1 Everyday Public Speaking

Every single day people across the United States and around the world stand up in front of some kind of audience and speak. In fact, there's even a monthly publication that reproduces some of the top speeches from around the United States called *Vital Speeches of the Day* (http://www.vsotd.com). Although public speeches are of various types, they can generally be grouped into three categories based on their intended purpose: informative, persuasive, and entertaining.

1.2.2 Informative Speaking

One of the most common types of public speaking is **informative speaking**. The primary purpose of informative presentations is to share one's knowledge of a subject with an audience. Reasons for making an informative speech vary widely. For example, you might be asked to instruct a group of coworkers on how to use new computer software or to report to a group of managers how your latest project is coming along. A local community group might wish to hear about your volunteer activities in New Orleans during spring break, or your classmates may want you to share your expertise on Mediterranean cooking. What all these examples have in common is the goal of imparting information to an audience.

Informative speaking is integrated into many different occupations. Physicians often lecture about their areas of expertise to medical students, other physicians, and patients. Teachers find themselves presenting to parents as well as to their students. Firefighters give demonstrations about how to effectively control a fire in the house. Informative speaking is a common part of numerous jobs and other everyday activities. As a result, learning how to speak effectively has become an essential skill in today's world.

1.2.3 Persuasive Speaking

A second common reason for speaking to an audience is to **persuade** others. In our everyday lives, we are often called on to convince, motivate, or otherwise persuade others to change their beliefs, take an action, or reconsider a decision. Advocating for music education in your local school district, convincing clients to purchase your company's products, or inspiring high school students to attend college all involve influencing other people through public speaking.

For some people, such as elected officials, giving persuasive speeches is a crucial part of attaining and continuing career success. Other people make careers out of speaking to groups of people who pay to listen to them. Motivational authors and speakers, such as Les Brown (http://www.lesbrown.com), make millions of dollars each year from people who want to be motivated to do better in their lives. Brian Tracy, another professional speaker and author, specializes in helping business leaders become more productive and effective in the workplace (http://www.briantracy.com).

Whether public speaking is something you do every day or just a few times a year, persuading others is a challenging task. If you develop the skill to persuade effectively, it can be personally and professionally rewarding.

1.2.4 Entertaining Speaking

Entertaining speaking involves an array of speaking occasions ranging from introductions to wedding toasts, to presenting and accepting awards, to delivering eulogies at funerals and memorial services in addition to after-dinner speeches and motivational speeches. Entertaining speaking has been important since the time of the ancient Greeks, when Aristotle identified epideictic speaking (speaking in a ceremonial context) as an important type of address. As with persuasive and informative speaking, there are professionals, from religious leaders to comedians, who make a living simply from delivering entertaining speeches. As anyone who has watched an awards show on television or has seen an incoherent best man deliver a wedding toast can attest, speaking to entertain is a task that requires preparation and practice to be effective.

1.2.5 Personal Benefits of Public Speaking

Oral communication skills were the number one skill that college graduates found useful in the business world, according to a study by sociologist Andrew Zekeri (Zekeri, 2004). That fact alone makes learning about public speaking worthwhile. However, there are many other benefits of communicating effectively for the hundreds of thousands of college students every year who take public speaking courses. Let's take a look at some of the personal benefits you'll get both from a course in public speaking and from giving public speeches.

1.2.6 Benefits of Public Speaking Courses

In addition to learning the process of creating and delivering an effective speech, students of public speaking leave the class with a number of other benefits as well. Some of these benefits include

- developing critical thinking skills,
- fine-tuning verbal and nonverbal skills,
- overcoming fear of public speaking.

1.2.7 Developing Critical Thinking Skills

One of the very first benefits you will gain from your public speaking course is an increased ability to think critically. Problem solving is one of many critical thinking skills you will engage in during this course. For example, when preparing a persuasive speech, you'll have to think through real problems affecting your campus, community, or the world and provide possible solutions to those problems. You'll also have to think about the positive and negative consequences of your solutions and then communicate your ideas to others. At first, it may seem easy to come up with solutions for a campus problem such as a shortage of parking spaces: just build more spaces. But after thinking and researching further you may find out that building costs, environmental impact from loss of green space, maintenance needs, or limited locations for additional spaces make this solution impractical. Being able to think through problems and analyze the potential costs and benefits of solutions is an essential part of critical thinking and of public speaking aimed at persuading others. These skills will help you not only in public speaking contexts but throughout your life as well. As we stated earlier, college graduates in Zekeri's study rated oral communication skills as the most useful for success in the business world. The second most valuable skill they reported was problem-solving ability, so your public speaking course is doubly valuable!

Another benefit to public speaking is that it will enhance your ability to conduct and analyze research. Public speakers must provide credible evidence within their speeches if they are going to persuade various audiences. So your public speaking course will further refine your ability to find and utilize a range of sources.

1.2.8 Fine-Tuning Verbal and Nonverbal Skills

A second benefit of taking a public speaking course is that it will help you fine-tune your verbal and nonverbal communication skills. Whether you competed in public speaking in high school or this is your first time speaking in front of an audience, having the opportunity to actively practice communication skills and receive professional feedback will help you become a better overall communicator. Often, people don't even realize that they twirl their hair or repeatedly mispronounce words while speaking in public settings until they receive feedback from a teacher during a public speaking course. People around the United States will often pay speech coaches over one hundred dollars per hour to help them enhance their speaking skills. You have a built-in speech coach right in your classroom, so it is to your advantage to use the opportunity to improve your verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

1.2.9 Overcoming Fear of Public Speaking

An additional benefit of taking a public speaking class is that it will help reduce your fear of public speaking. Whether they've spoken in public a lot or are just getting started, most people experience some anxiety when engaging in public speaking. Heidi Rose and Andrew Rancer evaluated students' levels of public speaking anxiety during both the first and last weeks of their public speaking class and found that those levels decreased over the course of the semester (Rose & Rancer, 1993). One explanation is that people often have little exposure to public speaking. By taking a course in public speaking, students become better acquainted with the public speaking process, making them more confident and less apprehensive. In addition, you will learn specific strategies for overcoming the challenges of speech anxiety. We will discuss this topic in greater detail in Chapter 3.

1.2.10 Benefits of Engaging in Public Speaking

Once you've learned the basic skills associated with public speaking, you'll find that being able to effectively speak in public has profound benefits, including

- influencing the world around you,
- developing leadership skills,
- becoming a thought leader.

1.2.11 Influencing the World around You

If you don't like something about your local government, then speak out about your issue! One of the best ways to get our society to change is through the power of speech. Common citizens in the United States and around the world, like you, are influencing the world in real ways through the power of speech. Just type the words "citizens speak out" in a search engine and you'll find numerous examples of how common citizens use the power of speech to make real changes in the world—for example, by speaking out against "fracking" for natural gas (a process in which chemicals are injected into rocks in an attempt to open them up for fast flow of natural gas or oil) or in favor of retaining a popular local sheriff. One of the amazing parts of being a citizen in a democracy is the right to stand up and speak out, which is a luxury many people in the world do not have. So if you don't like something, be the force of change you're looking for through the power of speech.

1.2.12 Developing Leadership Skills

Have you ever thought about climbing the corporate ladder and eventually finding yourself in a management or other leadership position? If so, then public speaking skills are very important. Hackman and Johnson assert that effective public speaking skills are a necessity for all leaders (Hackman & Johnson, 2004). If you want people to follow you, you have to communicate effectively and clearly what followers should do. According to Bender, "Powerful leadership comes from knowing what matters to you. Powerful presentations come from expressing this effectively. It's important to develop both" (Bender, 1998). One of the most important skills for leaders to develop is their public speaking skills, which is why executives spend millions of dollars every year going to public speaking workshops; hiring public speaking coaches; and buying public speaking books, CDs, and DVDs.

1.2.13 Becoming a Thought Leader

Even if you are not in an official leadership position, effective public speaking can help you become a "**thought leader**." Joel Kurtzman, editor of *Strategy & Business*, coined this term to call attention to individuals who contribute new ideas to the world of business. According to business consultant Ken Lizotte, "when your colleagues, prospects, and customers view you as one very smart guy or gal to know, then you're a thought leader" (Lizotte, 2008). Typically, thought leaders engage in a range of behaviors, including enacting and conducting research on business practices. To achieve thought leader status, individuals must communicate their ideas to others through both writing and public speaking. Lizotte demonstrates how becoming a thought leader can be personally and financially rewarding at the same time: when others look to you as a thought leader, you will be more desired and make more money as a result. Business gurus often refer to "intellectual capital," or the combination of your knowledge and ability to communicate that knowledge to others (Lizotte, 2008). Whether standing before a group of executives discussing the next great trend in business or delivering a webinar (a seminar over the web), thought leaders use public speaking every day to create the future that the rest of us live in.

1.2.13.1 Key Takeaways

- People have many reasons for engaging in public speaking, but the skills necessary for public speaking are applicable whether someone is speaking for informative, persuasive, or entertainment reasons.
- Taking a public speaking class will improve your speaking skills, help you be a more critical thinker, fine-tune your verbal and nonverbal communication skills, and help you overcome public speaking anxiety.
- Effective public speaking skills have many direct benefits for the individual speaker, including influencing the world around you, developing leadership skills, and becoming a go-to person for ideas and solutions.

1.2.14 Exercises

1. Talk to people who are currently working in the career you hope to pursue. Of the three types of public speaking discussed in the text, which do they use most commonly use in their work?
2. Read one of the free speeches available at http://www.vsotd.com. What do you think the speaker was trying to accomplish? What was her or his reason for speaking?
3. Which personal benefit are you most interested in receiving from a public speaking class? Why?

1.2.15 References

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1.3: Public Speaking--So What, Who Cares?



If you can't communicate and talk to other people
and get across your ideas,
you're giving up your potential.
– Warren Buffet, American business magnate

? Try This

- Work in a group of 4-5 people.
- Make a list of all the possible ways you might use public speaking now and in the future.

Why Does Public Speaking Matter?

If you are a student, public speaking may be the most important class you take. Really! I believe it is the most important because it makes your other classes "work." Some of you expect public speaking will be part of your future–maybe you are going into sales, or teaching, or politics, or even ministry, and you will be expected to give speeches on a regular basis.

The rest of you may be thinking graduation will mark the end of your public speaking days. I doubt you will make it through life without giving speeches. After all, if you are good at your job, you will likely be asked to train others to do your job–that's public speaking. If you know a lot about your topic, you will likely go to a conference where you talk about what you know–that's public speaking. Many of you will find yourselves at a meeting in front of a group of colleagues explaining your proposal–that's public speaking. Others of you will be managers giving out awards to your associates as part of a ceremony–that's public speaking. All of you will likely be called on to give a toast at a wedding or retirement party–that's public speaking. All of you will likely speak at a funeral of a loved one—that's public speaking. In addition, you will have to do a job interview, and these days many of them are conducted as group interviews or even as presentations–that's public speaking.
Like it or not, most of you will do public speaking. It is for these reasons I say, your ability to give a speech well can make all your other training work for you. It can help you in your relationships as you use your skills to celebrate with others.

Let me remind you of a few more reasons having good presentation skills is important to you.

> *If I went back to college again,*
> *I'd concentrate on two areas:*
> *learning to write and to speak before an audience.*
> *Nothing in life is more important*
> *than the ability to communicate effectively.*
> *President Gerald Ford*

Employers Seek Good Communicators

> *Getting ahead of the next curve requires courage and communication:*
> *Courage to determine the next bold move, and communication*
> *to keep the troops committed to the value of moving forward.*
> *Rallying stakeholders to move together in a common course of action*

> *is all part of the innovation and survival process.*
> *Leaders at every level in an organization*
> *need to be skillful at creating resonance*
> *if that organization is to control its own destiny.*
> *— Nancy Duarte, Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences*

Employers want to hire people who are good communicators. Learning to develop your public speaking skills will help you to be employable and to succeed in your future career. The National Association of Colleges and Employers does an annual survey of the top attributes employers want to see on resumes and communication skills are consistently high on the list.

ATTRIBUTE	% OF RESPONDENTS
Problem-solving skills	91.2%
Ability to work in a team	86.3%
Strong work ethic	80.4%
Communication skills (written)	77.5%
Leadership	72.5%
Communication skills (verbal)	69.6%
Initiative	69.6%
Detail-oriented	67.6%
Technical skills	65.7%
Flexibility/adaptability	62.7%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	62.7%
Computer skills	54.9%
Organizational ability	47.1%
Creativity	23.5%

Source: *Job Outlook 2020*, National Association of Colleges and Employers

Graduates Say Public Speaking Skills Helped with Career Improvement

Public speaking is not just essential to get the job but to keep and advance in a job. Surveys of college graduates reported oral and written communication skills, public speaking, group leadership, and motivating and managing others were most essential for career improvement. In a Gallup Alumni survey, graduates reported they wished they had more communication training to help them once they have graduated.

Public Speaking is a Part of Your Civic Responsibility

> *Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,*
> *concerned citizens can change the world.*
> *Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.*
> *Margaret Mead, American Cultural Anthropologist*

Speaking up for what you believe in is an important part of being in a democracy. This is not all about you. The opportunities you have been given and the education you are receiving can be used to help others. Boyer, in an article titled *Civic Education for Responsible Citizens*, suggests at the heart of a good education is civic engagement. Students should “develop responsible ways of thinking, believing and acting.”

You Can Make a Difference

Rather than tell you why you should speak up, I would rather show you how others have spoken out and made a difference.

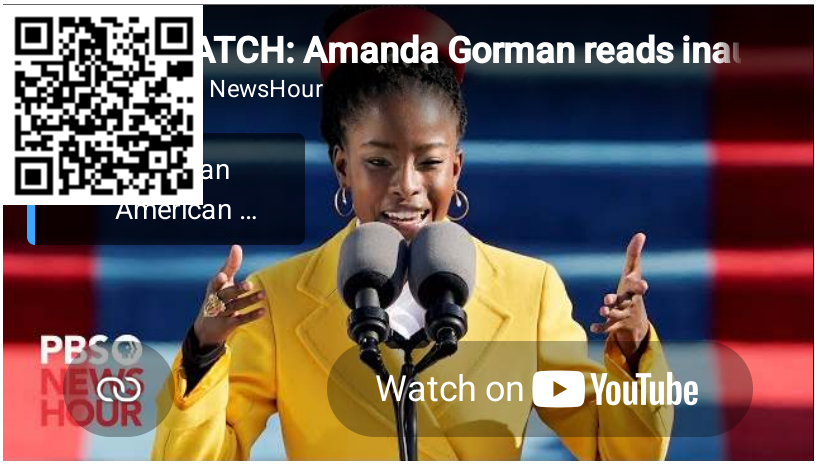
Watch this excerpt from Greta Thunburg. At age 16, she spoke at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019. To watch the full speech https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMrtLsQbaok



At age 19, Zach Wahls stood before the Iowa House Judiciary Committee to talk about his experience of growing up with same-sex parents.



Amanda Gorman at 22-years-old read her poem, *The Hill We Climb* at the inauguration of US President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.



Presentational Literacy Helps You Share Your Ideas

Chris Anderson, from TED Talks, reminds us of the campfires of old have become the fires of the internet where ideas can spread. More than ever presentational literacy is important.

(Heads up, there is an embedded ad in this video)



Public Speaking Allows You To Tell Your Story

Each of us has a story to tell.

Think about a tough time you went through and how you came out stronger having been through that experience.
What if you could take that experience and use it to help others push through?

Think about how you had to learn something the hard way.
What if you could tell others about what you learned so they don't make the same mistake?

Think about a historic event you witnessed: 911, Global Pandemic, Race Riots.
What if you could tell others what you witnessed so they could see history as more than words on a page?

A lot of public speaking is just people telling their stories. Here examples.

> Go to National Public Radio's This I Believe and find a story.
>
> Go to the Moth, the Art and Craft of Storytelling, and watch one of the speeches. This club in New York City had now gone international. (Think of a coffeehouse meets poetry slam meets comedy club.)

Professional Speakers Can Make Good Money

Some people make a career around public speaking. Just for fun, follow one of these links to a speaker bureau and see how some are using their public speaking skills and earning a substantial income in the process.

- *https://www.eaglestalent.com/*
- *https://www.executivespeakers.com/*

Public Speaking Can Help You Grow as a Person

When most people think about public speaking, they think about what they are giving to others. Very few people think of public speaking in terms of what they get. You will find when you deliver a speech, you gain knowledge, you gain confidence, and you gain a wonderful feeling of accomplishment.

Speech coach Martin McDermott helps his students think about what they will gain by asking them, "What will go right when you speak?"

- I will learn about public speaking, a workplace skill in great demand.
- I will stand up to one of the greatest fears human beings face.
- My audience will learn something valuable from me they can apply to their lives.
- I will experience power and self-confidence I didn't know I had.
- I will see myself in a new and more positive light.
- I will share interesting parts of myself, and others will come to know and like me.
- I will discover a hidden talent for speaking.
- I will grow as a person.

? What is the Purpose of Public Speaking?

The many fathers of rhetoric debated this heavily. Quintilian, a Roman rhetorician said citizens have five duties when it came to public speaking:

- Defend truth.
- Protect the innocent.
- Prevent criminal behavior.
- Inspire the military.
- Inspire the public.

Do you think this list is still applicable?

Are there any things you would add?

Are there any things you would take away?

So What Who Cares?

One of the things you should do as you write a speech is to ask, "So what who cares?" Who is going to listen to your speech and why they should care about what you are saying? When I wrote this book, I asked myself the same question. I asked, "Why would anyone care about public speaking."

So what, who cares? You should care because public speaking is not a class you take, it is what you do to get your message across. It is not about getting a grade or having a checkmark on your degree plan, it is about learning to develop important skills that will help you accomplish your goals. It is not about you as a professional, having to give a speech, it is about you having an opportunity to share your message. It is not about you as a teacher having to teach, but about students who need to learn.

So what, who cares. Hopefully, you care. Hopefully, you care enough about yourself to try to be the best version of yourself.

What happens from this point on, is up to you.

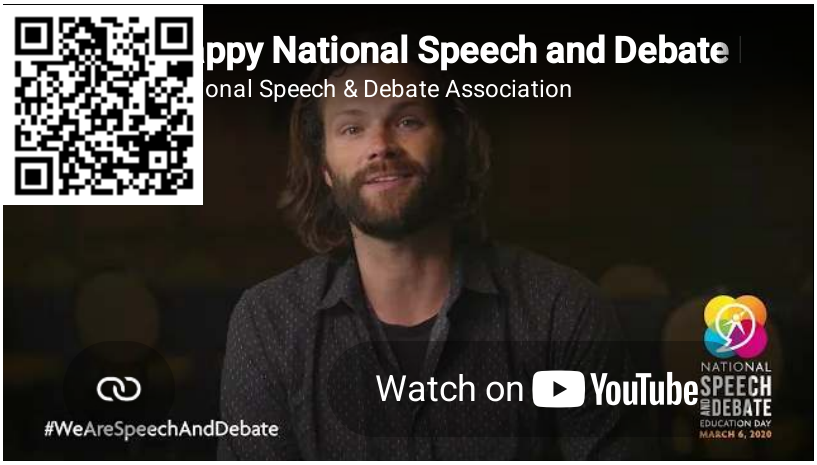
Be skillful in speech,
that you may be strong.
Merikare, Egyptian Pharoah

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- Public speaking is a skill that is not only helpful while you are in college but will likely be helpful in job attainment and career advancement.
- Doing public speaking will help you grow in knowledge and gain confidence.

Bonus Features



Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: Me Nervous?

2.1: Anxiety and Public Speaking
2.2: Reducing Communication Apprehension
2.3: Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Brain
2.4: Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Body

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2.1: Anxiety and Public Speaking

Why are so many people afraid of public speaking? This is a complex question, and the answer is tied to many personal and psychological factors such as self-efficacy, self-confidence, past experience, training, culture, and context. The term "**glossophobia**," combining the two Greek words for "tongue" and "fear or dread," has been coined to refer to

> *…a severe fear of public speaking. People who suffer from glossophobia tend to freeze in front of any audience, even a couple of people. They find their mouth dries up, their voice is weak and their body starts shaking. They may even sweat, go red and feel their heart thumping rapidly. ("Do You Suffer From Glossophobia?," 2015)*

This fear may arise in situations such as responding to a professor in class, participating in a job interview, or having to interact with a stranger, not just giving formal speeches.

For many people, fear of public speaking or being interviewed for a job does not rise to the level of a true "phobia" in psychological terms. A phobia is defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV as a state where someone experiences "significant and persistent fear when in the presence of, or anticipating the presence of, the object of fear, which may be an object, place or situation" (Grohol, 2013). They are just uncomfortable in public speaking situations and need strategies for addressing the task.

2.1.1 Why Anxiety and Public Speaking?

Scholars at the University of Wisconsin-Stout ("Public Speaking Anxiety," 2015) explain that anxiety in public speaking can result from one of several misperceptions:

- "all or nothing" thinking—a mindset that if your speech falls short of "perfection" (an unrealistic standard), then you are a failure as a public speaker;
- overgeneralization—believing that a single event (such as failing at a task) is a universal or "always" event; and
- • fortune telling—the tendency to anticipate that things will turn out badly, no matter how much practice or rehearsal is done.

Likewise, many new college students operate under the false belief that intelligence and skill are "fixed." In their minds, a person is either smart or skilled in something, or they are not. Some students apply this false belief to math and science subjects, saying things like "I'm just no good at math and I never will be," or even worse, "I guess I am just not smart enough to be in college." As you can tell, these beliefs can sabotage someone's college career. Also unfortunately, the same kind of false beliefs are applied to public speaking, and people conclude that because public speaking is hard, they are just not "naturally good" at it and have no inborn skill. They give up on improving and avoid public speaking at all costs.



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Modern research by Stanford University psychologist Carol Dweck (2007) and others shows that intelligence and related skills are "malleable," meaning that they are open to change and growth. Understanding and accepting that your intelligence and skill in different areas is not fixed or "stuck," but open to growth, will have a significant influence on your success in life. It will also help you see that just because learning a subject or task is hard does not mean you are not or cannot be good at it. Obstacles and barriers that make learning hard are opportunities for growth, not "getting off places."

There is more to Dr. Dweck's research. We would recommend her book Mindset. Many students enter a public speaking class thinking "I'm just no good at this and never will be," just like some students feel about college algebra or science. Dr. Dweck and other learning psychologists show that learning a new skill might be hard work, but the difficulty is not a sign that learning is impossible.

Along with the wrong way of thinking about one's learning and growth, two other fears contribute to anxiety in public speaking. The first is fear of failure. This fear can result from several sources: real or perceived bad experiences involving public speaking in

the past, lack of preparation, lack of knowledge about public speaking, not knowing the context, and uncertainty about one's task as a public speaker (such as being thrown into a situation at the last minute).

It is not the goal of this book to belittle that fear. It is real and justified to some extent because you might lack understanding of the public speaking task or lack good speaking experiences upon which to build. One of the goals and fringe benefits of this course is that you are not just going to learn about public speaking, but you are going to do it—at least four or five times—with a real audience. You will overcome some of your fears and feel that you have accomplished something of personal benefit.

The second fear is fear of rejection of one's self or one's ideas. This one is more serious in some respects. You may feel rejection because of fear of failure, or you may feel that the audience will reject your ideas, or worse, you as a person. Knowing how to approach the public speaking task and explain your ideas can help. However, you should ask yourself deep and probing questions as to why you believe that your audience will reject you because this fear is rooted in a belief. You should ask yourself what possibly false belief is causing your anxiety.

One of the core attitudes an effective and ethical public speaker must have is respect for and empathy with the audience. Your audience in this class is your peers who want to learn and want to get through the class successfully (just like you do). Your audience also includes your instructor who wants to see you succeed in the course as well. Believe me, public speaking teachers get a lot of pleasure from hearing successful student speeches! Your audience wants you to succeed if for no other reason than a good speech is much easier and pleasant to listen to than a poor one. Again, gaining practice in this class with a real, live audience can help you work through the roots of your fear of rejection.

Beyond dealing with the root fears that may cause you to have a "fright or flight" response when it comes to public speaking, there are some practical answers to dealing with fears about public speaking. Of course, fear responses can be reduced if you know how public speaking works, as you will see throughout this textbook. But there are some other strategies, and most of them have to do with preparation.

2.1.2 Addressing Public Speaking Anxiety

2.1.2.1 Mental Preparation

If your neighbor's house were on fire, getting to the phone to call the fire department would be your main concern. You would want to get the address right and express the urgency. That is admittedly an extreme example, but the point is about focus. To mentally prepare, you want to put your focus where it belongs, on the audience and the message. Mindfulness and full attention to the task are vital to successful public speaking. If you are concerned about a big exam or something personal going on in your life, your mind will be divided, and that division will add to your stress.

The main questions to ask yourself are "Why am I so anxiety-ridden about giving a presentation?" and "What is the worst that can happen?" For example, you probably won't know most of your classmates at the beginning of the course, adding to your anxiety. By midterm, you should be developing relationships with them and be able to find friendly faces in the audience. However, very often we make situations far worse in our minds than they actually are, and we can lose perspective. One of the authors tells her students, "Some of you have been through childbirth and even through military service . That is much worse than public speaking!" Your instructor will probably try to help you get to know your classmates and minimize the "unknowns" that can cause you worry.

2.1.2.2 Physical preparation

The first step in physical preparation is adequate sleep and rest. You might be thinking such a thing is impossible in college, where sleep deprivation and late nights come with the territory. However, research shows the extreme effects a lifestyle of limited sleep can have, far beyond yawning or dozing off in class (Mitru, Millrood, & Mateika, 2002; Walker, 2017). As far as public speaking is concerned, your energy level and ability to be alert and aware during the speech will be affected by lack of sleep.

Secondly, you would be better off to eat something that is protein-based rather than processed sugar-based before speaking. In other words, cheese or peanut butter on whole grain toast, Greek yogurt, or eggs for breakfast rather than a donut and soft drink. Some traditionalists also discourage the drinking of milk because it is believed to stimulate mucus production, but this has not been scientifically proven (Lai & Kardos, 2013).

A third suggestion is to wear clothes that you know you look good in and are comfortable but also meet the context's requirements (that is, your instructor may have a dress code for speech days). Especially, wear comfortable shoes that give you a firm base for your posture. Flip- flops and really high heels may not fit these categories.

A final suggestion for physical preparation is to utilize some stretching or relaxation techniques that will loosen your limbs or throat. Essentially, your emotions want you to run away, but the social situation says you must stay, so all that energy for running must go somewhere. The energy might go to your legs, hands, stomach, sweat glands, or skin, with undesirable physical consequences. Tightening and stretching your hands, arms, legs, and throat (through intentional, wide yawns) for a few seconds before speaking can help release some of the tension. Your instructor may be able to help you with these exercises, or you can find some on the Internet.

2.1.2.3 Contextual preparation

The more you can know about the venue where you will be speaking, the better. For this class, of course, it will be your classroom, but for other situations where you might experience "communication apprehension," you should check out the space beforehand or get as much information as possible. For example, if you were required to give a short talk for a job interview, you would want to know what the room will be like, if there is equipment for projection, how large the audience will be, and the seating arrangements. If possible, you will want to practice your presentation in a room that is similar to the actual space where you will deliver it.

The best advice for contextual preparation is to be on time, even early. If you have to rush in at the last minute, as so many students do, you will not be mindful, focused, or calm for the speech. Even more, if you are early, you can make sure equipment is working, and can converse with the audience as they enter. Professional speakers often do this to relax themselves, build credibility, and gain knowledge to adapt their presentations to the audience. Even if you don't want to "schmooze" beforehand, being on time will help you create a good first impression and thus enhance your credibility before the actual speech.



2.1.2.4 Speech preparation

Procrastination, like lack of sleep, seems to just be part of the college life. Sometimes we feel that we just don't get the best ideas until the last minute. Writing that essay for literature class at 3:00 a.m. just may work for you. However, when it comes to public speaking, there are some definite reasons you would not want to do that. First, of course, if you are finishing up your outline at 3:00 a.m. and have a 9:00 speech, you are going to be tired and unable to focus. Second, your instructor may require you to turn in your outline several days ahead of the speech date. However, the main reason is that public speaking requires active, oral, repeated practice before the actual delivery.

You do not want the first time that you say the words to be when you are in front of your audience. Practicing is the only way that you will feel confident, fluent, and in control of the words you speak. Practicing (and timing yourself) repeatedly is also the only way that you will be assured that your speech meets the assignment's time limits, and speaking within the expected time limits is a fundamental rule of public speaking. You may think your speech is five minutes long but it may end up being ten minutes the first time you practice it—or only two minutes!

Your practicing should be out loud, standing up, with shoes on, with someone to listen, if possible (other than your dog or cat), and with your visual aids. If you can record yourself and watch it, that is even better. If you do record yourself, make sure you record yourself from the feet up—or at least the hips up—so you can see your body language. The need for oral practice will be emphasized over and over in this book and probably by your instructor. As you progress as a speaker, you will always need to practice but perhaps not to the extent you do as a novice speaker.

As hard as it is to believe,

YOU NEVER LOOK AS NERVOUS AS YOU FEEL.

You may feel that your anxiety is at level seventeen on a scale of one to ten, but the audience does not perceive it the same way. They may perceive it at a three or four or even less. That's not to say they won't see any signs of your anxiety and that you don't want to learn to control it, only that what you are feeling inside is not as visible as you might think. This principle relates back to

focus. If you know you don't look as nervous as you feel, you can focus and be mindful of the message and audience rather than your own emotions.

Also, you will probably find that your anxiety decreases throughout the class (Finn, Sawyer, & Schrodt, 2009).



In her Ted Talk video, Harvard Business School social psychologist Amy Cuddy discusses nonverbal communication and suggests that instead of "faking it until you make it," that you can, and should, "fake it until you become it." She shares research that shows how our behavior affects our mindsets, not just the other way around. Therefore, the act of giving the speech and "getting through it" will help you gain confidence. Interestingly, Dr. Cuddy directs listeners to strike a "power pose" of strong posture, feet apart, and hands on hips or stretched over head to enhance confidence.

Final Note: If you are an audience member, you can help the speaker with his/her anxiety, at least a little bit. Mainly, be an engaged listener from beginning to end. You can imagine that a speaker is going to be more nervous if the audience looks bored from the start. A speaker with less anxiety is going to do a better job and be more interesting. Of course, do not walk into class during your classmates' speeches, or get up and leave. In addition to being rude, it pulls their minds away from their message and distracts the audience. Your instructor will probably have a policy on this behavior, too, as well as a dress code and other expectations on speech days. There are good reasons for these policies, so respect them.

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2.2: Reducing Communication Apprehension

Learning Objectives

1. Explain steps for managing anxiety in the speech preparation process.
2. Identify effective techniques for coping with anxiety during delivery.
3. Recognize the general options available for stress reduction and anxiety management.

Experiencing some nervousness about public speaking is normal. The energy created by this physiological response can be functional if you harness it as a resource for more effective public speaking. In this section, we suggest a number of steps that you can take to channel your stage fright into excitement and animation. We will begin with specific speech-related considerations and then briefly examine some of the more general anxiety management options available.



Figure 2.2.1: Freddie Pena – Nervous? – CC BY-NC 2.0.

2.2.1 Speech-Related Considerations

Communication apprehension does not necessarily remain constant throughout all the stages of speech preparation and delivery. One group of researchers studied the ebb and flow of anxiety levels at four stages in the delivery of a speech. They compared indicators of physiological stress at different milestones in the process:

- anticipation (the minute prior to starting the speech),
- confrontation (the first minute of the speech),
- adaptation (the last minute of the speech), and
- release (the minute immediately following the end of the speech) (Witt, et. al., 2006).

These researchers found that anxiety typically peaked at the anticipatory stage. In other words, we are likely to be most anxious right before we get up to speak. As we progress through our speech, our level of anxiety is likely to decline. Planning your speech to incorporate techniques for managing your nervousness at different times will help you decrease the overall level of stress you experience. We also offer a number of suggestions for managing your reactions while you are delivering your speech.

2.2.2 Think Positively

As we mentioned earlier, communication apprehension begins in the mind as a psychological response. This underscores the importance of a speaker's psychological attitude toward speaking. To prepare yourself mentally for a successful speaking experience, we recommend using a technique called **cognitive restructuring**. Cognitive restructuring is simply changing how you label the physiological responses you will experience. Rather than thinking of public speaking as a dreaded obligation, make a conscious decision to consider it an exciting opportunity. The first audience member that you have to convince is yourself, by deliberately replacing negative thoughts with positive ones. If you say something to yourself often enough, you will gradually come to believe it.

We also suggest practicing what communication scholars Metcalfe, Beebe, and Beebe call **positive self-talk** rather than **negative self-talk** (Metcalfe, 1994; Beebe, 2000). If you find yourself thinking, "I'm going to forget everything when I get to the front of the room," turn that negative message around to a positive one. Tell yourself, "I have notes to remind me what comes next, and the audience won't know if I don't cover everything in the order I planned." The idea is to dispute your negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones, even if you think you are "conning" yourself. By monitoring how you talk about yourself, you can unlearn old patterns and change the ways you think about things that produce anxiety.

2.2.3 Reducing Anxiety through Preparation

As we have said earlier in this chapter, uncertainty makes for greater anxiety. Nothing is more frightening than facing the unknown. Although no one can see into the future and predict everything that will happen during a speech, every speaker can and should prepare so that the "unknowns" of the speech event are kept to a minimum. You can do this by gaining as much knowledge as possible about whom you will be addressing, what you will say, how you will say it, and where the speech will take place.

2.2.4 Analyze Your Audience

The audience that we imagine in our minds is almost always more threatening than the reality of the people sitting in front of us. The more information you have about the characteristics of your audience, the more you will be able to craft an effective message. Since your stage fright is likely to be at its highest in the beginning of your speech, it is helpful to open the speech with a technique to prompt an audience response. You might try posing a question, asking for a show of hands, or sharing a story that you know is relevant to your listeners' experience. When you see the audience responding to you by nodding, smiling, or answering questions, you will have directed the focus of attention from yourself to the audience. Such responses indicate success; they are positively reinforcing, and thus reduce your nervousness.

2.2.5 Clearly Organize Your Ideas

Being prepared as a speaker means knowing the main points of your message so well that you can remember them even when you are feeling highly anxious, and the best way to learn those points is to create an outline for your speech. With a clear outline to follow, you will find it much easier to move from one point to the next without stumbling or getting lost.

A note of caution is in order: you do not want to react to the stress of speaking by writing and memorizing a manuscript. Your audience will usually be able to tell that you wrote your speech out verbatim, and they will tune out very quickly. You are setting yourself up for disaster if you try to memorize a written text because the pressure of having to remember all those particulars will be tremendous. Moreover, if you have a momentary memory lapse during a memorized speech, you may have a lot of trouble continuing without starting over at the beginning.

What you do want to prepare is a simple outline that reminds you of the progression of ideas in your speech. What is important is the order of your points, not the specifics of each sentence. It is perfectly fine if your speech varies in terms of specific language or examples each time you practice it.

It may be a good idea to reinforce this organization through visual aids. When it comes to managing anxiety, visual aids have the added benefit of taking attention off the speaker.

2.2.6 Adapt Your Language to the Oral Mode

Another reason not to write out your speech as a manuscript is that to speak effectively you want your language to be adapted to the oral, not the written, mode. You will find your speaking anxiety more manageable if you speak in the oral mode because it will help you to feel like you are having a conversation with friends rather than delivering a formal proclamation.

Appropriate oral style is more concrete and vivid than written style. Effective speaking relies on verbs rather than nouns, and the language is less complex. Long sentences may work well for novelists such as William Faulkner or James Joyce, where readers can go back and reread passages two, three, or even seven or eight times. Your listeners, though, cannot "rewind" you in order to catch ideas they miss the first time through.

Don't be afraid to use personal pronouns freely, frequently saying "I" and "me"—or better yet, "us" and "we." Personal pronouns are much more effective in speaking than language constructions, such as the following "this author," because they help you to build a connection with your audience. Another oral technique is to build audience questions into your speech. Rhetorical questions, questions that do not require a verbal answer, invite the audience to participate with your material by thinking about the implications of the question and how it might be answered. If you are graphic and concrete in your language selection, your

audience is more likely to listen attentively. You will be able to see the audience listening, and this feedback will help to reduce your anxiety.

2.2.7 Practice in Conditions Similar to Those You Will Face When Speaking

It is not enough to practice your speech silently in your head. To reduce anxiety and increase the likelihood of a successful performance, you need to practice out loud in a situation similar to the one you will face when actually performing your speech. Practice delivering your speech out loud while standing on your feet. If you make a mistake, do not stop to correct it but continue all the way through your speech; that is what you will have to do when you are in front of the audience.

If possible, practice in the actual room where you will be giving your speech. Not only will you have a better sense of what it will feel like to actually speak, but you may also have the chance to practice using presentation aids and potentially avoid distractions and glitches like incompatible computers, blown projector bulbs, or sunlight glaring in your eyes.

Two very useful tools for anxiety-reducing practice are a clock and a mirror. Use the clock to time your speech, being aware that most novice speakers speak too fast, not too slowly. By ensuring that you are within the time guidelines, you will eliminate the embarrassment of having to cut your remarks short because you've run out of time or of not having enough to say to fulfill the assignment. Use the mirror to gauge how well you are maintaining eye contact with your audience; it will allow you to check that you are looking up from your notes. It will also help you build the habit of using appropriate facial expressions to convey the emotions in your speech. While you might feel a little absurd practicing your speech out loud in front of a mirror, the practice that you do before your speech can make you much less anxious when it comes time to face the audience.

2.2.8 Watch What You Eat

A final tip about preparation is to watch what you eat immediately before speaking. The butterflies in your stomach are likely to be more noticeable if you skip normal meals. While you should eat normally, you should avoid caffeinated drinks because they can make your shaking hands worse. Carbohydrates operate as natural sedatives, so you may want to eat carbohydrates to help slow down your metabolism and to avoid fried or very spicy foods that may upset your stomach. Especially if you are speaking in the morning, be sure to have breakfast. If you haven't had anything to eat or drink since dinner the night before, dizziness and light-headedness are very real possibilities.

2.2.9 Reducing Nervousness during Delivery

2.2.10 Anticipate the Reactions of Your Body

There are a number of steps you can take to counteract the negative physiological effects of stress on the body. **Deep breathing** will help to counteract the effects of excess adrenaline. You can place symbols in your notes, like "slow down" or ☺, that remind you to pause and breathe during points in your speech. It is also a good idea to pause a moment before you get started to set an appropriate pace from the onset. Look at your audience and smile. It is a reflex for some of your audience members to smile back. Those smiles will reassure you that your audience members are friendly.

Physical movement helps to channel some of the excess energy that your body produces in response to anxiety. If at all possible, move around the front of the room rather than remaining imprisoned behind the lectern or gripping it for dear life (avoid pacing nervously from side to side, however). Move closer to the audience and then stop for a moment. If you are afraid that moving away from the lectern will reveal your shaking hands, use note cards rather than a sheet of paper for your outline. Note cards do not quiver like paper, and they provide you with something to do with your hands.

Vocal warm-ups are also important before speaking. Just as athletes warm up before practice or competition and musicians warm up before playing, speakers need to get their voices ready to speak. Talking with others before your speech or quietly humming to yourself can get your voice ready for your presentation. You can even sing or practice a bit of your speech out loud while you're in the shower (just don't wake the neighbors), where the warm, moist air is beneficial for your vocal mechanism. Gently yawning a few times is also an excellent way to stretch the key muscle groups involved in speaking.

Immediately before you speak, you can relax the muscles of your neck and shoulders, rolling your head gently from side to side. Allow your arms to hang down your sides and stretch out your shoulders. **Isometric exercises** that involve momentarily tensing and then relaxing specific muscle groups are an effective way to keep your muscles from becoming stiff.

2.2.11 Focus on the Audience, Not on Yourself

During your speech, make a point of establishing direct eye contact with your audience members. By looking at individuals, you establish a series of one-to-one contacts similar to interpersonal communication. An audience becomes much less threatening when you think of them not as an anonymous mass but as a collection of individuals.

A colleague once shared his worst speaking experience when he reached the front of the room and forgot everything he was supposed to say. When I asked what he saw when he was in the front of the room, he looked at me like I was crazy. He responded, "I didn't see anything. All I remember is a mental image of me up there in the front of the room blowing it." Speaking anxiety becomes more intense if you focus on yourself rather than concentrating on your audience and your material.

2.2.12 Maintain Your Sense of Humor

No matter how well we plan, unexpected things happen. That fact is what makes the public speaking situation so interesting. When the unexpected happens to you, do not let it rattle you. At the end of a class period late in the afternoon of a long day, a student raised her hand and asked me if I knew that I was wearing two different colored shoes, one black and one blue. I looked down and saw that she was right; my shoes did not match. I laughed at myself, complimented the student on her observational abilities and moved on with the important thing, the material I had to deliver.

2.2.13 Stress Management Techniques

Even when we employ positive thinking and are well prepared, some of us still feel a great deal of anxiety about public speaking. When that is the case, it can be more helpful to use stress management than to try to make the anxiety go away.

One general technique for managing stress is **positive visualization**. Visualization is the process of seeing something in your mind's eye; essentially it is a form of self-hypnosis. Frequently used in sports training, positive visualization involves using the imagination to create images of relaxation or ultimate success. Essentially, you imagine in great detail the goal for which you are striving, say, a rousing round of applause after you give your speech. You mentally picture yourself standing at the front of the room, delivering your introduction, moving through the body of your speech, highlighting your presentation aids, and sharing a memorable conclusion. If you imagine a positive outcome, your body will respond to it as through it were real. Such mind-body techniques create the psychological grounds for us to achieve the goals we have imagined. As we discussed earlier, communication apprehension has a psychological basis, so mind-body techniques such as visualization can be important to reducing anxiety. It's important to keep in mind, though, that visualization does not mean you can skip practicing your speech out loud. Just as an athlete still needs to work out and practice the sport, you need to practice your speech in order to achieve the positive results you visualize.

Systematic desensitization is a behavioral modification technique that helps individuals overcome anxiety disorders. People with phobias, or irrational fears, tend to avoid the object of their fear. For example, people with a phobia of elevators avoid riding in elevators—and this only adds to their fear because they never "learn" that riding in elevators is usually perfectly safe. Systematic desensitization changes this avoidance pattern by gradually exposing the individual to the object of fear until it can be tolerated.

First, the individual is trained in specific muscle relaxation techniques. Next, the individual learns to respond with conscious relaxation even when confronted with the situation that previously caused them fear. James McCroskey used this technique to treat students who suffered from severe, trait-based communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1972). He found that "the technique was eighty to ninety percent effective" for the people who received the training (McCroskey, 2001). If you're highly anxious about public speaking, you might begin a program of systematic desensitization by watching someone else give a speech. Once you are able to do this without discomfort, you would then move to talking about giving a speech yourself, practicing, and, eventually, delivering your speech.

The success of techniques such as these clearly indicates that increased exposure to public speaking reduces overall anxiety. Consequently, you should seek out opportunities to speak in public rather than avoid them. As the famous political orator William Jennings Bryan once noted, "The ability to speak effectively is an acquirement rather than a gift" (Carnegie, 1955).

2.2.13.1 Key Takeaways

- There are many steps you can take during the speech preparation process to manage your communication apprehension, including thinking positively, analyzing your audience, clearly organizing your ideas, adapting your language to the oral mode, and practicing.
- You can employ a variety of techniques while you are speaking to reduce your apprehension, such as anticipating your body's reactions, focusing on the audience, and maintaining your sense of humor.

- Stress management techniques, including cognitive restructuring and systematic desensitization, can also be helpful.

2.2.14 Exercises

1. Go to http://www.hypknowsis.com and practice a few of the simple beginning visualization exercises presented there.
2. Make a plan for managing your anxiety before and during your speech that includes specific techniques you want to try before your next public speaking assignment.

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2.3: Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Brain



Face your fears!

There are two types of speakers:
Those that are nervous and those that are liars.
Mark Twain

Normal People Get Nervous

Most people will tell you the thought of making a speech makes them apprehensive. In fact, a poll by the National Communication Association found that only 24% of Americans are very comfortable giving a speech. You may be part of the 24%, or you may be like the rest of the population–uncomfortable at the thought of speaking in front of others. “According to most studies, people’s number one fear is public speaking. Number two is death. Death is number two. Does that sound right? This means to the average person, if you go to a funeral, you’re better off in the casket than doing the eulogy.” This quote from actor and comedian Jerry Seinfeld is funny because it is true. Researchers at the University of Nebraska conducted research to see if indeed students feared public speaking to that extent, so they surveyed 2,543 college students. The answer was “yes.” Public speaking ranked up there with death as the most common fear.

So, there you have it. If the thought of a speech makes you feel apprehensive, you are Normal. Normal people have all kinds of physical reactions when delivering a speech or even thinking about delivering a speech:

- Sweaty palms
- Accelerated heart rate
- A knotted stomach
- Dry mouth
- A lump in the throat
- Shortness of breath

Can you relate to any of these feelings? If you have any of these, you are not broken, you are not doomed for speech failure, quite the contrary. If you experience any of these, you are NORMAL.

At this point, you may be thinking pointing out your anxiety does not make you feel any better. Hang in there and keep reading. The goal of this chapter is threefold. It is to help you to realize that if you are anxious, apprehensive, or nervous about public speaking, then you are normal. It is to help you understand most people will have some physical responses to being anxious and it is how you think about these responses that make a difference. The biggest takeaway of all is for you to learn to be intentional with your thoughts and to change your mindset. In doing these things, you will prepare the path for future speaking success.

Time to Check Your Brain’s Check Engine Light



A man's life
is what his thoughts
make of it.
Marcus Aurelius

There is a dashboard warning light in my car that lets me know something is wrong. When I take it to specialists, they plug in my car and "read the code" and they tell me exactly what the problem is. Let's assume, your brain's dashboard warning light is on and letting you know you may have a thinking problem. Let's "read the code" to see what the issue is so we can fix it. You may have some faulty reasoning happening that is causing your speech anxiety. Time for a diagnostic. See how many of these relate to you.

All or Nothing Thinking:

All or nothing thinking assumes your self-meter has two options: all perfect or total failure. If you have ever given a speech and forgotten a part or misspoke a word and then declared the speech a disaster, you might have all or nothing thinking. A speech can be good- even great-and still contain speech mistakes. In fact, most speeches contain at least one mistake.

> ***What's the Fix for All Or Nothing Speaking?*** *The fix for all or nothing thinking is to realize a perfect speech rarely exists. A great speech is one that communicates an idea to an audience. If you do that, you have accomplished the goal. If you mess up, or should I say when you mess up (because normal people make mistakes), then all is not lost. Recognize that the speech can be good and contain mistakes. You might say, "Overall the speech was great, I just wish I would have had a stronger ending. I will write it out next time."*

Overgeneralization:

Overgeneralization is the belief that a single failure is a universal sign of failure. If you are on a diet and you eat a cookie and then declare yourself a diet failure, you have overgeneralized. If you *have* a failure, it doesn't mean you *are* a failure. If you have ever had a less than perfect speech moment, and then declared yourself a bad speaker, you have overgeneralized.

> ***What's the Fix for Overgeneralization?*** *The fix is to recognize that one mistake does not make you a mistake. One failure, does not make you a failure. If you make a mistake, recognize it and make a plan to correct it in the future. The most important thing of all is to realize you are not defined as a failure because you made a mistake.*

Fortune Telling:

Have you ever told yourself, "I know this is going to be a disaster?" If you predict your speech will go badly, then you have a fortune-telling problem. The more you fortune tell your speech will be a disaster, the more you undermine your own success. By fortune-telling (also known as self-fulfilling prophecy), you are wishing you will fail and then you will make your own negative predictions come true. Some people even delight in their own misfortune, "See, I told you I wasn't cut out for public speaking."

> ***What's the Fix for Fortune Telling?*** *The fix to the fortunetelling problem is to take control and to stop. Predicting your own failure is just your own way of not trying. If you*

> *want to predict something, predict that if you practice, you will get better. If you focus on the needs of the audience, you will connect with them. If you do vocal exercises, you will strengthen your voice. Throw the darn crystal ball away, it was negative, unreliable, and you have outgrown it now.*

Reality Check

At one time or another, most of us have gotten caught up in our failures or we have created scenarios in our head about the terrible things that may happen. It is just plain silly the way we torture ourselves. Most of us get worked up and miss out on sleep worrying about things that never even happen. Sometimes you just have to have a reality check.

> *So, what if you say the wrong word and they laugh….*
> *Will they fire you—probably not.*
> *Will they walk out—unlikely.*
> *Will they hate you—not likely*
> *Will your face turn red—maybe, but so what?*
> *Is it really that awful? ——no*

One professional speaker commented no matter what happens in a speech that she can turn it into something good. She suggests if everyone walks out on her, she can still use that. Next time I speak, I can say, "Last time I gave this talk the whole room walked out on me."

Change Takes Effort

Whether you are a seasoned speaker or just getting started, it is important to realize everyone's mind and motivation need a tune-up from time to time. It is difficult to break out of faulty patterns of thinking and it is not enough to just recognize it, you have to do something about it. Motivational speaker, Mel Robbins, illustrates this in a talk to executives. After reminding them that they came to the conference to network and to make new connections, she asks each of them to raise a hand if they sat by someone they already know. Most people laughed and raised their hands because they know they are supposed to network and yet most of them are playing it safe and sitting with friends. They, like us, were motivated to change, and yet they fell back on old patterns of behavior. As a conference activity, Robbins then proceeded to make them change seats and sit by someone new. They looked uncomfortable, grumbled a bit, and then changed seats. She reminded them we want to change, but change is hard and change is uncomfortable.

It is one thing to be motivated to think about change and it is another thing to be motivated to actually make the change. Making the change causes discomfort and leads to resistance, even if you are the one telling yourself the do it. Change is uncomfortable, but growth is worth it.

What's the point? The point is you likely recognize that there are areas you need to work on. You likely already know what you need to do. You are already motivated to think about improving (that is why you are reading this book or taking a speaking class). It is not enough to want to change, you have to act on it. To do the next step, you must recognize that change causes discomfort. You are going to have to be vigilant to begin making those changes. Change is uncomfortable, make a plan, and stick to it.

Choose Which Self to Wear to Your Speech



In the morning, I go into my closet and I look at all the clothes that I have to wear. I pick out which ones to put on for the day. I decide whether to dress like *casual Lynn* or *professional Lynn.* I make a decision on how to dress each day. In the same way, I decide which self to wear each day. I decide who to be each day. One of the most powerful things I learned about identity is that I don't have one identity, I have many to pick from. Just like picking which outfit to wear for the day, I pick which "me" to be for the day.

Think about the "self-clothes" you wear every day. If you are like me, there are times when you have felt unsure of yourself, maybe you lowered your eyes when people looked at you, maybe you talked in a powerless voice–on that day, you were wearing your shy self. On a different day, you felt like the expert, you were able to tell people how to accomplish a task, and you used your assertive voice–on that day, you were wearing your powerful self. Which was the real you? They both were. The people around you, the situation you were in, your mood at the moment, all contributed to which self you brought out for the day.

This is also true for which speaker you will be. You make the decision about which self you bring to your speech. You can bring the brave, outspoken "you" that has great things to say or you can bring the "you" that decides to play small.

A lot of growth can happen when you learn you are *not* an attribute, but rather you *act* out an attribute. You are *not* shy, you *act* shy. You are *not* bold, you *act* boldly. You are *not* nervous, you *act* nervous. Once you realize you are not going against your biology or against your personality to be a powerful, confident speaker, then you can give yourself permission to wear a powerful self to your speech. That "power self" outfit will look good on you, so try it on!

Consider This

I often have students play a game where they stand up in groups and each group talks at the exact same time as the other group with the goal of competing for the audience's attention. In this game, students wave their arms, make direct eye contact, and raise their voices. They laugh and they have fun. I do this to let them know that they can speak loudly, use gestures, and have fun in front of an audience. I remind them they have just demonstrated to me they are capable of expressive movement and dynamic voice projection. Later when they tell me, they "just can't project their voice" or they "just aren't a person who gestures," I remind them of the exercise where they demonstrated to me they can do both. I let them know they are capable of it; sometimes they decide to do it and other times they decide not to do it but they must own the fact that it is a choice they made.

Even after this activity, an occasional student will try to tell me, "I can't project my voice" or "I'm just not assertive." I never argue, I ask them if they have siblings. If they answer, "yes," I ask them if they have ever yelled at their sibling to get out of their stuff. They usually laugh and say, "Oh, yes." I then ask them to tell me of places they feel comfortable, and they act assertively. They tell me of a club they are in, a friend pack they hang out with, or a role where they feel confident. I remind them that clearly, they know how to project their voice because they have done it before. Clearly, they know how to be assertive because they have been assertive before. I remind them they know how to talk to others and be confident because they have acted confidently before. They have the ability; they just choose when to use that ability.

Now, I want you to think of a time you have chosen to define yourself as weak, shy, or unassertive. I want you to ask yourself why did you decide that for yourself? Think of at least three settings where you brought your "big self" to the situation. Think about a time, you have projected your voice. Think about a time you felt the power of your own words. You know you have the ability, what causes you to not want to bring it out?



We All Feel Like Imposters

Feel powerless or insecure? You are not alone. When interviewed, top executives, college professors, leaders of all kinds admit they often feel powerless. They often feel like they don't belong, they aren't smart enough, they are not good enough, and they don't speak clearly enough. And yet, they put on their assertive selves and act the part until they begin to fully feel the part. They

decide just because they have feelings of smallness does not mean they should act small. They have the choice not to act on the powerlessness they feel. In fact, for most, it pushes them to try harder. These leaders decide even if they sometimes feel like an impostor, they can still act the part and be powerful. They can put on their "big self" and so can you.

What's the point? You decide how you are going to act in a speech. You control which you to wear for the day, you control whether you act powerful, and you control whether you bring your "big self" to the presentation. I hope you decide to try on the powerful you. You owe it to yourself to see what you can do. You might just decide it is a good fit.

? Who Will You Decide to Be?

Don't Do This	Do This Instead
Awfulizing Me "What if I mess up? I always mess things up."	**Overcomer Me** "I'm tough and can take on any challenge." "It may not be easy, but I can do it."
Insecure Me "What if they don't like me? They will hate me."	**Confident Me** "I've got this because I have practiced and I know my stuff."
Hater Me "Speech is stupid. I can't believe I have to do this."	**Powerful Me** "I've got great things to say, and I know it will cause them to think."
Downer Me "I know I'm going to mess it all up. I always do. Why even try?	**Optimistic Me** "I may not be perfect, but I have something important to share." "I've been given this opportunity to speak, I'm going to make the most of it."

You are capable of being all these.
Which one will you pick on your speech day?

What's the Worst That Could Happen?

Sometimes, you can create fears to keep yourself from fully trying. If that happens, the best thing you can do with your fear is to take it to its logical absurdity.

> *What if I mess up?*
>
> *So what?*
>
> *People will laugh at me!*
>
> *So what?*
>
> *They won't like me!*
>
> *So what?*
>
> *No one will be my friend.*
>
> *Really, So what?*

> *If no one in the class will be my friend, then I will be lonely.*
>
> *So what?*
>
> *No one will talk to me outside of class and I will be so lonesome I will drop out of college.*
>
> *Are you sure? So, then what?*
>
> *I will drop out of college, never have good relationships which means I will never get a job.*
>
> *So what?*
>
> *I will be homeless living under a bridge with a stray dog.*
>
> *All that because you messed up on your speech in college. Really?*

As I said, we take it to its absurdity. So, what if you mess up. Usually, the worst that can happen is you get a little embarrassed at the time and have a good story to tell for a lifetime.

Use the A.W.A.R.E Method to Beat Anxiety

If you feel anxiety is getting too much, do what nurses are trained to do and be aware. The **A.W.A.R.E.** method can help:

Accept that you feel anxious. Fighting it will not take away the anxiety.

Watch your anxiety. What changes are you noticing in your body, your thoughts, and your perception?

Act normal. Breath normally and act as if you feel confident and calm. This will pass and your anxiety will fade away.

Repeat the three steps above until your anxiety reduces to an acceptable level.

Expect the best. Invest your time and energy in what can help you, don't worry about what might go wrong.

Day-Calder, M. (2017). Conquer your fear of public speaking. *Nursing Standard (2014+)*, *32*(3), 37.

I was once given the advice to think of emotions like a river. Emotions flow into us and will flow through us and out of us as long as we don't try to dam them up.

Know That They Can't Tell How Nervous You Are

You know the feeling that goes through your mind: "I'm so nervous. I bet everyone can tell"? Well, guess what—they can't. At least this is what research suggests. If you have felt like people could peer into your very soul and see your insecurity, you are not alone. The illusion of transparency is the tendency for people to overestimate the degree to which their personal mental state is known by others. Because our emotions feel so strong to us, we are sure that they "leak out" and that everyone can tell just how we feel. When researchers put it to the test, they found that observers just are not very good at picking up on a speaker's emotional state. The speakers thought the audience could sense their insecurity and could see their hands shaking and could hear their voice shaking, but the audience noticed very little or not at all. Researchers in an article titled, *The Illusion of Transparency and the Alleviation of Speech Anxiety*, suggest:

> *What's inside of you typically manifests itself too subtly to be detected by others. You should just relax and try to do your best. Know that if you become nervous, you'll probably be the only one to know.*

The researchers found simply telling people the audience could not see through them made them less anxious as speakers. The bottom line is this: speaker anxiety is not very accurately detected by audiences. Simply knowing this can help set you free. Do not worry, they can't see through you. Now you know, you can let it go.

Know That You Are Likely Misinterpreting Cues

"I saw that guy in the back make an angry face, I know he hated my speech." It is easy when you are nervous to look at the audience and the looks on their faces as hostile. I once got a note from a student who told me he thought I hated his speeches because I gave him mean looks. I thought about it long and hard because I really liked the student, and I really liked his speeches. Maybe it was because I had been wearing the wrong glasses and squinted a little, maybe it was because the room and windows created weird light streaks that made it hard to see his slides, maybe it was because I had a headache that day, or maybe it was because I just make weird facial expressions (my kids tell me this one is true). The problem is I liked his speeches and he thought I hated them.

I found an article in the *Psychophysiology Journal* that might explain what happened. In this study, researchers told participants that they would have to give a speech. While waiting for their turn to give the speech, participants looked at a series of facial expressions and were tested by an electroencephalogram. The researchers found that participants who thought they were fixing to give a speech were more likely to judge the faces they saw as angry.

Think about it. This implies that when you are ready to give a speech, you may see neutral faces as angry. The famous lawyer Gerry Spence wrote about something similar. Every time he spoke, he noticed one of the jurors would look stern and cross his arms across his chest. He just knew that juror was really opposed to his message. He was shocked when all the jurors voted in favor of his client. How could that be? What about the man with his arms crossed? Later, the juror said, his crossed arms weren't in opposition, he just had a big belly, and it is a nice place to rest his arms. Be aware of the tendency to interpret other's nonverbals in a negative way.

You do not know what is going on in the minds of your audience so always assume the best.

Realize That Stress Can Be Helpful

Health psychologist Kelly McGonigal shares her surprising revelation-stress can be a good thing. In her TED Talk, *How to Make Stress Your Friend*, she reveals that when it comes to stress, a rapid heartbeat and fast breathing are not the problem. The problem is what we *believe* those physical reactions mean. It is how we label the stress that matters most. Think about it. Your heart pounds and your breath quickens in moments of joy. Your heart pounds and your breath quickens before acts of great courage. Your heart pounds and your breath quickens in anticipation of special events. A pounding heart and quickened breath can be a good thing. When you interpret those physical symptoms as something good, it opens your blood vessels and sends extra oxygen to your brain and you feel energized and prepared. When you label that fast heartbeat and rapid breathing as helpful, you feel more confident, less anxious, and less stressed out. McGonigal suggests it is when you interpret these reactions as bad that it constricts your blood vessels leading to health issues.

Football players and other athletes often do things to get pumped before running out on the field. These players believe an adrenaline rush means they are going to play well. They think of adrenaline as a gift that means they are charged up. They believe the adrenaline will help them run faster and be more alert. If you are a speaker and you experience an adrenaline rush, be like these players and think of it as a sign your body is awake, alert, and ready to go. Just remember that most people experience some version of butterflies before they speak. If you are nervous, you are normal. Good speakers channel energy into making a good speech. Good speakers know you do not want to get rid of the butterflies, you just want them to fly in formation.

So, what does that mean for you? It means your pounding heart and heavy breathing have prepared you for action.

Watch the full video on stress here.



The Surprising Side Effect of Stress

Ready for the bonus feature?

Now you have watched the video, you know there is another great side effect to stress–you become more social. McGonigal suggests that when you are stressed, not only do you release adrenaline, but you also release oxytocin. It is the release of oxytocin that makes you want to spend time encouraging people and being around people. All these years, I have joked that my public speaking students have bonded so fiercely because they bonded through pain, and now I know it is literally true. Since they were together in times of high excitement during speeches, they felt closer and more bonded (much like a sports team).

McGonigal also suggests that an oxytocin reaction is a form of self-healing. When you have an oxytocin reaction, you tend to want to seek and give support. All of this wonderful oxytocin protects, regenerates, and strengthens your heart.

What does this mean for you? It means if you feel anxious about an upcoming speech, call a friend or get a hug from your mom. That feeling you have makes you want to tell someone how you feel is your body's way of helping you to be successful and healthy. Your body knows what it needs, it doesn't need to run from speech, it needs to connect with people who care about you. In your anxiety, you should encourage others. In doing so, you help yourself along the way. Your body knows what to do- listen.

Let Fear Propel You

It is normal to have physical reactions when thinking about public speaking and it is how we frame these feelings that makes all the difference. Many famous speakers tell of wrestling with fear and Gerry Spence, lawyer and author of *How to Argue and Win Every Time and Win Your Case*, is one of them. I will let him describe his battle in his own words.

> *"In the courtroom, I sometimes carry on a silent conversation with myself about my fear, while the jurors look on wondering, as they must, what occupies this strange man who stands silently before them looking down at his feet. My conversation with myself most often sounds like this:*
>
> *"How are you feeling, Gerry?" I ask.*
>
> *"The jury is watching, waiting for me to begin my argument," I reply. "I can't just stand here saying nothing."*
>
> *"I asked you, how are you feeling?"*
>
> *"You know how I feel.*
>
> *"What is the feeling?"*
>
> *"You know what the feeling is."*
>
> *"Are you afraid to say it?"*

"All right. I'm afraid."

"Well, you should be. Big stakes. The prosecutor wants to destroy your client. He wants to destroy you."

"I don't want to think about it. Not now. Not standing here."

It's all right to be afraid. You should be afraid. Go ahead. Feel it.

"But the jury's watching."

"They can wait a few seconds more.
Fear is energy.
If you feel your fear, you can also feel its power, and you can change its power to your power."

Suddenly, I look up at the waiting jury. I hear myself address them in a clear, quiet voice, "Ladies and gentlemen of the jury." Suddenly, I am vaguely aware that something is happening to my fear. I have looked it in the eye. I have stared it down. It retreats like a whimpering cur that is now afraid to face me! The pain of it recedes. I feel a new power well up. And my argument begins…

I have learned not to be ashamed of my fear, but to embrace it. One cannot be brave without it, for is not our bravery merely the facing of our fear?"

Can you see a pattern emerge with these things? Fear is not the problem, it is how we allow fear to cripple us or give us the power that matters.



Believe That with Practice, You Can Improve

When you think about speaking are you tempted to believe, "Some people are just born good speakers" or "I just wasn't made for this public speaking stuff." If that is you, you may have what Stanford researcher Carol Dweck calls a "fixed mindset." It does not have to be that way, Dweck found when people left their options open and believed that they could improve, they did. One way to keep your mind open is to add the word "yet" to the end of the sentence. It's easy. Let's try it: "I haven't mastered this…yet. I haven't learned to gesture without thinking about it…yet."

Another way you can help yourself have a growth mindset is to pick a few growth mindset quotes and place them where you can see them every day. Look at them, read them out loud, and think about where you want to be. Let a growth mindset become your new habit.

Here are a few of my favorite quotes:

- It’s not always about being the best. It’s about being better than you were yesterday. –Jigoro Kano
- No matter how many mistakes you make or how slow your progress, you are still way ahead of everyone who isn’t trying. –Tony Robbins
- Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it. –Charles Swindoll
- Courage is like a muscle. We strengthen it when we use it. –Ruth Gordon
- Sometimes what we call “failure” is really just that necessary struggle called learning.–Louis Armstrong
- May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears. –Nelson Mandela
- A comfort zone is a beautiful place but nothing ever grows there. –John Assaraf
- You won’t always be motivated; you will have to learn to be disciplined.–Author unknown
- Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will. –Suzy Kassem
- You have not failed unless you have quit trying. –Gordon B. Hinckley



Change the Way You Think About Things

Whatever you do, do not think about the pink elephant. Stop!

Don’t think about the pink elephant with cute pink ears. Do not think about an elephant with a hot pink tail. How are you doing? If you are like most people, not too well.

Now, try this. Think about a green monkey. Go ahead. Picture its green curly tail and its fluffy green fur. So, here’s the question, when you were thinking of the green monkey, did your image of the pink elephant go away? For most people, it did.

What’s the point? The point is before a speech, most people tell themselves, “I won’t be nervous, I won’t be nervous, I won’t think of the pink elephant.” Do you see where I’m headed with all of this? Telling yourself not to be nervous rarely helps. The more you say, “I won’t be nervous,” the more you feel nervous.

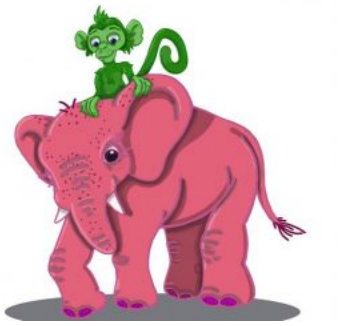
So how do you stop thinking of the pink elephant? By thinking of the green monkey of course. Apply this to speaking. Instead of saying, “I won’t be nervous” or “I won’t forget what to say,” say things like, “This speech is going to be great! I can do this.” or “My audience will love the part where I…” Speech teacher, Donn King calls this harnessing your green monkey, and researchers call it cognitive restructuring. You will restructure the way you think about things.

Conquer your fear with positive self-talk. Tell yourself you will be relaxed, articulate, and confident…and you will be.

Cognitive Restructuring

Don’t Say (Pink Elephant)	Do Say (Green Monkey)
• I’m afraid my voice will crack. • I’ll mess up and say the wrong words. • I’m so nervous. • I hate doing speeches.	• I can do this. • The audience will like my topic. • I am confident. • I know my stuff. • I am smart and capable. • I will speak with power and authority.

I often use the green monkey analogy when making presentations to groups. I say, “When you think about the green monkey, the pink elephant goes away. Except for some of you, some of you imagine the green monkey riding the pink elephant (the audience always laughs). You are the special ones who do things differently.” I said this in a special presentation to Panamanian Engineering students and their director Michael Rau sent me a picture and a note that said, “This is me.”



Thanks to Michael Rau for letting me use his illustration.

This made my day and I keep it on my desk as a reminder–we all do things differently. Sometimes the green monkey (positive thinking) can erase the pink elephant (negative self-talk). For others, the self-doubt may still be there but the monkey (positive thinking) eventually learns to drive the fear to work towards great things. Each of us finds different ways to believe in ourselves and harness our fears. Each of us is working to find our way, so find what works for you.

Focus On What You Want More Of

If you think, I am energized.

If you think, I am going to speak confidently.

If you think, I am going to share important things and they will want to listen

Then, you’ll get more of those feelings.

Think about things you actually want to increase.

Plan on Recovering Well

I Hope You Mess Up At Least Once—I Really Mean It!

I hope you mess up so you can get it over your unrealistic expectation of perfection.

I love hearing stories of how people messed up in speeches. My favorite one is of a mega-church pastor who attempted to say ‘the church is a living organism’ but he accidentally said another much more embarrassing “O” word. Guess what? He is still preaching.

I love showing videos of where Obama says there are 52 states and I laugh at how Bush says “Americans are working to put food on their family.” Guess what? They still managed to get things done.

I love to see the video of where the local TV anchor’s tooth falls out during a broadcast. Guess what—he is still the anchor.

Being human and making mistakes makes you human; how you deal with those mistakes can make you more approachable. One of my first jobs was as a cashier at a convenience store. Whenever I made a mistake, I would lower my eyes and look ashamed and repeatedly tell the customer how sorry I was. One day, my boss came up to me and said I needed to find a better strategy for when I messed up. He said by repeatedly apologizing, I was making it a bigger deal than it was. The next time, I messed up, I looked at the customer and said, “This very special hamburger is only sixty-five dollars and twenty cents.” The customer laughed and made a remark about how it had better be a darn good burger. I assured him it was a great hamburger while I fixed my mistake. He left smiling.

What’s the point? The point is that mistakes will not kill you. Mistakes give you good stories to tell. I hope you mess up at least once so when you are sitting around with friends who are willing to listen to your stories that you can tell them of your most embarrassing speech blunder. I hope everyone can have a good laugh. And laughter after all…is good for you.

Besides, perfect people are boring. Robert Glover, psychotherapist, and author says, “In general people are not drawn to perfection in others. People are drawn to shared interests, shared problems, and an individual’s life energy. Humans connect with humans. Hiding one’s humanity and trying to project an image of perfection makes a person vague, slippery, lifeless, and interesting.”

Just remember the audience doesn’t expect perfection. They don’t judge that you made a mistake, but rather how you recover from it. When you do mess up, don’t make a big deal of it. Most of the time, you are better off not even mentioning it at all. If you are quick on your feet, you might say one or two funny words but then go on. You have great things to say, don’t let a little bump in the road slow you down. Practice your speech and plan on being perfect, but if that doesn’t work out, plan on recovering well. Try again. Fail better.



Samuel Beckett (1906-1989)

> *If you pretend you didn’t make a mistake,*
> *chances are the audience won’t notice, and certainly won’t dwell on it.*
> *Interrupting your speech by apologizing or panicking*
> *will make your mistake more noticeable and will throw you off.*
> *Jennifer Conner*
> *University of Arkansas Speech Student*

Realize the Audience is On Your Side

Chris Anderson of TED Talks gives the following wisdom:

> *Acknowledging nervousness can also create engagement. Showing your vulnerability, whether through nerves or tone of voice, is one of the most powerful ways to win over an audience, provided it is authentic. Susan Cain, who wrote a book about introverts and spoke at our 2012 conference, was terrified about giving her talk. You could feel her fragility onstage, and it created this dynamic where the audience was rooting for her—everybody wanted to hug her afterward. The fact that we knew she was fighting to keep herself up there made it beautiful, and it was the most popular talk that year.*

I share this example for a couple of reasons. One, notice you can hear her nervousness and yet you get so carried away with her message you forget about it quickly. Two, many of you may think of yourself as an introvert who is just not the “public speaking” type, and yet, here she is speaking powerfully and giving examples of other introverts who speak powerfully.



? Key Takeaways

Remember this!

- Most people get nervous at the thought of public speaking. If you are nervous, you are normal.
- It is not the physical reaction of stress that is the problem, it is how you think about it. Think of the adrenaline rush as excitement. The way you feel is your body getting you ready to succeed.
- You have permission to be powerful. Have a growth mindset and allow yourself to try.
- Decide what you have to say is more important than any discomfort you have.
- Focus on what the audience needs to hear. Move your focus from what the audience needs to hear more than your need you have to be comfortable.
- By now, you should have identified you have some ways of thinking that may be holding you back. You are armed with the knowledge that you can choose which self to bring to your speech. Now, it is time to try it out.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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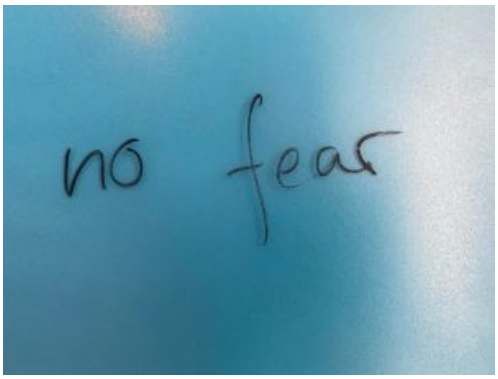
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2.4: Overcome Communication Apprehension by Hacking Your Body



You will never be more aware of your body than when giving a speech. Things like eye contact and gesturing, suddenly feel unnatural. The good news is there are many ways to harness your fear and turn it into power. There are many thought experiments you can do and many ways to "hack your body" to deal with the anxiety that comes from giving a speech. In this chapter, we will talk a little about thought and a lot about action.

Visualize Yourself Giving Your Speech

Visualize yourself giving your speech. Imagine yourself rising from your chair and walking towards the podium. Imagine delivering your first few words with power. Imagine your audience smiling and nodding. Imagine using your visuals effectively. Imagine thunderous applause at the end and imagine confidently walking back to your chair.

Researchers who study communication apprehension in public speaking reported that 80% of college students who used positive visualization strategies were able to reduce their level of apprehension. When students visualized giving a speech, they could reduce negative thinking and lower their communication anxiety. Not only that, but students who visualized giving their speech had better gestures and fewer "ums."

Visualization, it is easy, it is free, and it works. Try it!



Talk About Yourself in Positive Ways

It's time to start talking nice to yourself. In the book, *Communicating from the Inside Out*, the authors noted the thoughts you have about yourself trigger up to 100 times more brain activity than random thoughts. In addition, when you talk out loud to yourself, your brain activity increases1,000-fold. Did you catch that? When you talk about yourself, you activate your brain in a powerful way. When you hear your own voice talk about you, you activate your brain even more, because not you have involved the listening center. It makes sense when you think about it. When I say, "I've got this," I activated the part of my brain that had the thought, I activated the part of my brain associated with speech, and I activated the part of the brain associated with listening. That

is a lot of brainpower given to one sentence. When you say things, good or bad, you hear yourself loud and clear. It is as if you sat in the car and cranked the volume up. When you do that, make sure the "song" you are playing to yourself is a good one.

The lesson here is this—be careful what you tell yourself because you are listening more than you know. Take charge of your thoughts and replace any negative thoughts with positive ones. Talk nice…. Your brain is listening.

Say Positive Things About Public Speaking

Your brain communicates with the firing of neurons. These neurons are like an interstate system in your brain. The more often a neural route is used, the larger it becomes. When you take the same road over and over in your thoughts, the messages transmit faster and faster. If the road is used repeatedly, then those thoughts become automatic. Think of it like the familiar road back to your house, you can drive there without even thinking about it–it's automatic. That's why when you practice — playing the piano, driving a car, or putting a golf ball, it becomes easier. Eventually, it is like you are on autopilot.

If you think positive thoughts over and over, then those positive thoughts become automatic. If you think negative thoughts over and over, those thoughts become automatic. That is why you have to beware of any negative thoughts you have about public speaking because if you keep thinking negative thoughts, you will make the pathway so large and strong it eventually becomes your default setting. Once those thoughts are on autopilot, they will keep playing over and over until you do something to consciously stop them.

To stop the automatic negative thoughts concerning public speaking, you need to consciously take control. You need to (1) recognize that negative thoughts are a choice and you can choose to think positive thoughts, (2) say positive things out loud and often and, (3) use visualization techniques to visualize yourself being successful at presentations. Repeat this often so these pathways become automatic.

Say "I Am Excited"

Never say, "I am nervous;" instead say, "I am excited." When you feel nervous acknowledge it. Acknowledge that you are having a physical reaction and then take control of the interpretation. Think, "I can feel my heart beating fast. I'm nervous because I'm about to do something of consequence. It is normal for me to feel like this. I am going to interpret this feeling as excitement. I am excited."

Give a Talk, Instead of a Speech

Instead of saying, "I have a speech to give on Monday", say, "I am giving a talk on Monday." A speech is fear-inducing. A talk is something simple that you do every day. Think about it, they are called TED Talks not TED Speeches.

Exercise, Laugh, and Breathe to Reduce the Effect of Cortisol

Cortisol is the stress hormone released when you are anxious, upset, or scared. Since public speaking can be a source of stress, it benefits you to work on ways to reduce the cortisol reactions. Changing how you think about stress helps, but you also need to "burn off" stress.

Exercising before and after a speech can be a powerful way to help your body reduce the effects of cortisol. A Psychology Today article, *Cortisol: Why "the Stress Hormone" is Public Enemy Number One*, suggests several ways to lower your cortisol levels.

1. Physical activity: exercise, walk, do yoga.
2. Meditation and deep breathing.
3. Spend time with friends.
4. Laughter.
5. Listen to some of your favorite music.

Get started on your public speaking playlist today! After that, go hang out with friends. Take a walk together.

? Tips from Toastmaster's International

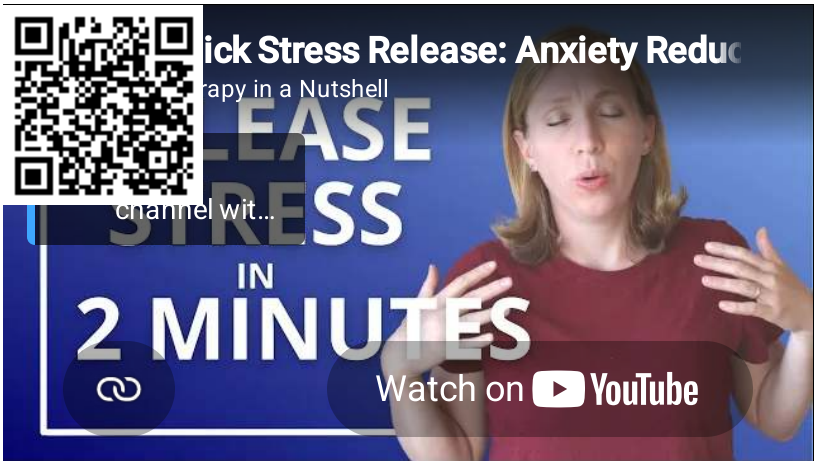
- **Breathe out.** Take slow deep breaths in and then release your breath from the bottom of your abdomen to get the maximum benefits of release and relaxation.
- **Get rest.** Try to get an adequate amount of sleep prior to your speech to ensure optimal mental alertness.
- **Fuel your mental engine.** Eat a light meal at least 20 minutes prior to your speech.

Release the Tension in Your Body

How can you make your body work for you, you ask? You can stop many of your nervous reactions by releasing the tension in your muscles.

- Roll your shoulders, loosen your arms.
- Close your eyes and notice any tight muscles. When you notice a tight muscle, first tense it– then relax it.
- Sit with your palms open and facing up on your lap.
- Consciously try to slow down your breathing.
- Make funny faces to relax your cheeks and facial muscles.
- Notice if your neck and facial muscles are tense. If they are, make a point to relax them. (See video below)

In this video, family therapist, Emma McAdam illustrates a quick way to release stress. She suggests stress is like an angry toddler that won't be ignored and has to be acknowledged.

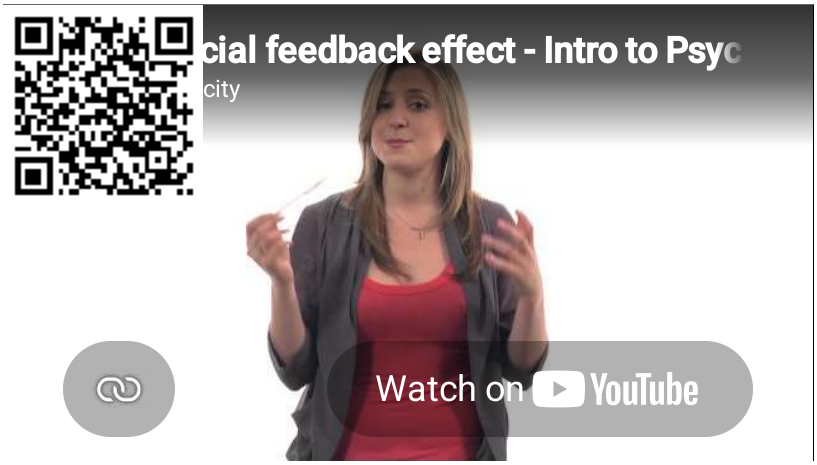


FAKE CONFIDENCE

When you get nervous, your body responds in very direct ways. Your breathing gets short and your muscles begin to tense up. Here's the good news! Your body and your mind work in a feedback loop. Let me give you an example: If I am mad, I make a mad face and if I make a mad face, I feel mad. Now that you know there is a feedback loop, you can break into it. In the example I just gave you, I could break the mad feedback loop by smiling. If I smile long enough and add a "happy thought," then my body tells my mind that I am happy.

The same is true with what happens when you experience communication apprehension. When you begin to feel nervous, your muscles tighten, and your breathing becomes shallow. The more your body acts nervous, the more your mind believes you are nervous. The good news is you have the power to break into the cycle. You can stop or slow down the physical reaction of nervousness.

The Facial Feedback Hypothesis states that when you make a facial expression, it can influence the emotion that you are feeling. For example, when you force yourself to smile, you begin to enjoy the moment more. The more you smile, the more you may alter your own perception of the situation. As a speaker, when you fake confidence with your body and face, you may actually begin to feel more confident. Amy Cuddy says, "Fake it until you become it." Watch this quick video to explain more about the facial feedback effect.



STAND LIKE WONDER WOMAN



Stand like Wonder Woman (or Superman) with your legs spread and your hands on your hips. Now hold that pose for two minutes. Do you feel powerful yet? Amy Cuddy, Harvard Researcher, had test subjects' power pose (tall stance open arms, open torso) for as little as two minutes before subjecting them to a stressful job interview. Those who stood in a power pose reported feeling more confident and less nervous.

But wait, there's more. When they asked the job interviewers what they thought of the interviewees, those conducting the interviews preferred those who had power posed before the job interviewer. The effect not only influenced the speakers, but also the listeners.

When observers view you acting confidently, they treat you like you are confident which guess what….makes you feel more confident.

Act confident to feel confident.

*** Reference the NY Times Article for challenges to some of Amy Cuddy's research.

Pretend To Be Someone Else

Are you still feeling a little unsure about yourself? No worries—just pretend like you are an actor playing the part of someone who is confident. Think about a confident speaker you know. When you are mentally preparing for your speech, imagine you *are* that person: How would *they* walk, how would *they* talk, how would *they* gesture? When I make a professional presentation, I often think about my former boss who is a powerful communicator. I ask myself, how would he enter the room and shake hands? How would he walk to the podium? How would he move around during the speech? I steal his confidence to get started. When you start your speech, imagine you are that powerful person. Use their confidence going into the speech. I'm always amazed at how much confidence I gain by starting my speech as someone else. As I continue to speak that confidence that I borrowed slowly becomes mine.



Gesture to Help Release Nervous Energy

I love the movie clip from Talladega Nights where the race car driver, Ricky Bobby, is being interviewed and he keeps making his hands float up awkwardly. After struggling with his hands a while, he finally blurts out, “What do I do with my hands?” I am always amazed at how I don’t even think about my hands most days, but when I get up to give a speech, suddenly, I am aware they exist, and I have no idea what to do with them. If you are like me and like most speakers, you struggle with your hands during presentations.

Nonverbal researchers did a study where they had people describe what they did that day. When the participants told the story using their hands, they added more details to their story, spoke more fluidly, and were able to think better. Gestures seemed to help the speaker to recall information and to speak more fluidly. Did you know that even people who are blind from birth, gesture? It seems to serve the purpose of helping the speaker to think of words and maintain a flow in the speech.

Gesturing doesn’t just help the listener; it helps the speaker. But what does this mean for you? It means you are meant to gesture. It suggests that when you gesture, you will be able to think of ideas more clearly and thus speak with better fluidity. In addition, gestures can help you to release nervous energy. When you gesture, you can relieve cognitive stress, you can relieve nervous energy, and which makes you appear more confident.

Gestures also help the audience listen and understand. Studies show that speakers who gesture are seen as more persuasive, more likable, and as having more leadership potential. In a major study of the most popular TED Talks, the researchers discovered that the more gestures, the more views, and likes for the speech.

Gesturing—good for the speaker, good to relieve stress, and good for the audience!

> **?** Quick Tips with Your Hands
>
> Make the OK sign with one hand. The act of touching your fingertips together relieves stress. This is a good trick to try when you feel a little anxious because it really is going to be “OK.”
>
> Sweaty palms? Have an ice-cold water bottle that you hold in your hand to reduce the temperature of your hands.

Memorize Your Opening and Closing

Opening and closing a speech are the times when speakers tend to get the most nervous. For that reason, you should memorize the first few sentences and the last few sentences of your speech. When you start off powerfully, you feel powerful, and the audience expects you to be powerful. Carefully write out the first few words. Practice those over and over until you can say them with confidence and power.

When you begin to wind down your speech, your audience is preparing to clap. They don’t want to clap too soon or too late, so they are on high alert. Having a planned out closing, not only helps you own the last point, but it also gives them a definitive notion of when to clap. If you are like most of us, you might get a little extra nervous near the end. That’s why you should memorize your ending. By memorizing the closing, you are helping to relieve that tension and finish in a way that demonstrates your confidence and knowledge.



PRACTICE UNTIL IT FEELS COMFORTABLE

PRACTICE AT LEAST FIVE TIMES

The best way to practice speaking is to practice speaking. It may sound obvious, but it is true. Make sure you practice your speech at least 5-10 times from start to finish.

PRACTICE GETTING FUNKY

After you have practiced your speech with your notes, I suggest you go someplace comfortable and practice your speech without note cards. Don't worry if you don't know all the details—just wing it! I like to call this "Getting funky." Do something a little crazy like sing your speech, do your speech in a wrestler's voice, rap your speech, or dance around while saying your speech.

Relax, have fun, get funky. This will help you associate speech with being relaxed and having fun. For "funky" speech practice, it is less important to get the words right and it is more important to relax your body, put a smile on your face, and have fun. After doing this exercise, go back and do your speech with notes and in a serious tone. You will be amazed at how much more relaxed you feel.

PRACTICE TO A LIVE AUDIENCE

It is one thing to practice to a mirror, it is another to practice to a living thing. Find a friendly face, a roommate, a friend, or a dog, and practice your speech to a live audience member. Practicing with a set of watching eyes makes a big difference.

PRACTICE BY RECORDING YOURSELF

Record yourself giving your speech. Sit back and watch your video recording and make notes of areas where you need to make adjustments.

PRACTICE BY VISUALIZING YOUR SPEECH

Sit in your chair and imagine yourself giving your speech. Imagine your confidence as you walk to the podium. Imagine your strong opening, image the audience smiling at you. Imagine their nods of approval as you give your powerful ending.

> *We are what we repeatedly do.*
> *Excellence is not an act*
> *but a habit.*
> *Aristotle*

WRITE YOURSELF ENCOURAGING NOTES

On top of your speech notes, put positive messages to yourself. Write "I've got this" in bright colors on the top of the page. Add a little cartoon character that makes you smile. Put a picture of your loved one making a funny face, a picture of your dog, a cartoon picture that makes you happy. One TED Talk speaker said she wrote on her notes, "This Matters, I've got this!"

I still get nervous on the first day of class, so I draw a smiley face on my notes and the phrase, "I love being a teacher."



BREATHE: BELLY BREATHING

One way to manage stress is to do deep breathing. Place one hand on your chest and one hand on your stomach. Take a deep breath in through your nose. Feel the breath go in. Let the breath completely fill up your lungs—inhale for 15 seconds. You should feel the hand that is on your stomach rise. Now, open your mouth and let the air out slowly over 15 seconds. Repeat this. Each time try to fill up your lungs fully. Taking as few as 3 belly breaths can increase your oxygen allowing you to relax.



BREATHE: THE NOSTRIL SWITCH

Put your finger on the side of your nose and push the nostril closed.
Breathe in through the nose and out through your mouth.
Now, push the other nostril closed.
Breathe in through the nose and out through your mouth.
Do this until you have taken 3 breaths on each side.
Now, take 3 big breaths in through the mouth and out through the nose with both nostrils open.
This should deepen your breathing and relieve some of the stress.
Most importantly——Don't just read about deep breathing—- DO IT!

Taking a deep breath, faking that I'm confident,
and focusing on the topic helped me manage my anxiety.
After a few seconds, I would forget about the anxiety
and really get into what I was speaking about!
Tara Johnson
Advanced Public Speaking Student, University of Arkansas

✔ Think of Giving a Speech as a Conversation with Friends

Your goal is not to be Winston Churchill or Nelson Mandela. It's to be you.
If you're a scientist, be a scientist; don't try to be an activist.
If you're an artist, be an artist; don't try to be an academic.
If you're just an ordinary person, don't try to fake some big intellectual style; just be you.

You don't have to raise a crowd to its feet with a thunderous oration.
Conversational sharing can work just as well.
In fact, for most audiences, it's a lot better.
If you know how to talk to a group of friends over dinner,
then you know enough to speak publicly.
— Chris J. Anderson, Curator TED Talks

? Key Takeaways

- Visualize yourself being successful at speaking.
- Talk about public speaking in positive ways. Say, "I'm excited!" instead of "I'm nervous."
- Exercise, laugh or meditate to reduce the cortisol reaction.
- Do exercises to release tension. Beware of tension and relax your muscles.
- Pretend to be confident, borrow someone else confidence if needed. Fake confidence and it will become you.
- Memorize your opening and closing.
- Write yourself positive notes.
- Practice, practice, practice.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

✔ Sources of Anxiety and Ways to Overcome

1. Situational — When talking to friends, we may not be nervous but if asked to say the same thing as a speech, we get nervous. The solution is to think of a presentation as a conversation rather than a performance.

2. Audience –Sometimes we are nervous because of who is in the audience. The solution is to visualize your speech and the audience's positive reaction.

3. Goal –We may get anxious when we think about the goal of the speech. Often times we have a future goal that we are worried about. The solution is to focus on the moment–exercise, play a video game, do a tongue twister.

No Freaking Speaking: Managing Public Speaking Anxiety by Matt Abrahams



✔ Developing Self Confidence

Lessons from soccer coach, Dr. Ivan Joseph on how to develop self-confidence.

- Practice and keep practicing. Repetition is important for learning a skill.
- Self-talk. Be aware of the things you say to yourself.
- Get away from the people who will tear you down.
- Catch yourself doing good and record it.

The Skill of Self Confidence by Dr. Ivan Joseph



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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Who They?

3.1: Engage Your Audience- Don't Spit Random Words at Generic People

3.2: Demographic Characteristics

3.3: Psychographic Characteristics

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3.1: Engage Your Audience- Don't Spit Random Words at Generic People



The success of your presentation
will be judged not by the knowledge you send
but by what the listener receives.
Lilly Walters, Secrets of Successful Speakers

There are four words that can change everything about how you look at public speaking. These four words can alter how you look at nervousness, how you design your content, the way you present, and the way the audience receives the message. What are these words? “It is not about you.”

It is Not About You

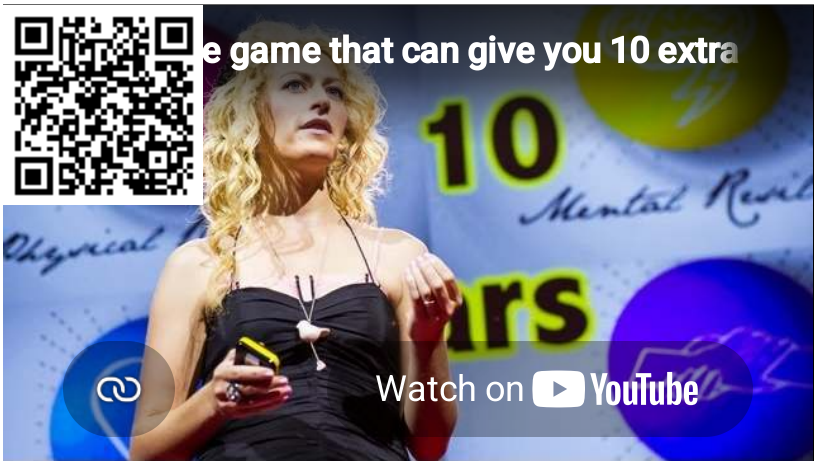
It is not about you. So, there you have it–the secret to success in speaking wrapped up in five little words. It is not about you; it is about your audience. Most of the time, speakers think, “*I* have this great message *I* need to tell people” or “*I* need to inform them of what *I* know.” In each case, it is about “I”. To be a successful speaker, you have to change your way of thinking. A speech is not about *you*, the speaker, it is about *them*, the audience. It is about the fact they need something, and you can provide it for them. They may need information, they may need to be inspired, they may need to know about a product that will improve their lives, they may need to celebrate a special moment. They have needs and when your message meets those needs, your audience will be transformed. Chris Anderson of TED talks says, The truth about “speaking your truth” is this: “If the audience doesn’t understand how your truth applies to them, or what they get by learning about your dreams, they’ll tune out or quickly forget what you’ve said.” The more you think about your audience and explore who they are and what they need, the more you can tailor your speech.

> *Treat your audience as guests*
> *who’ve consented to give you*
> *some of their precious time and attention.*
> *Don’t abuse their gift*
> *by making them feel like captives*
> *who are compelled to listen to you.*
> *Vivian Buchan, Make Presentations with Confidence*

Give Your Audience Something of Value: Audience Before Content

A speech is a gift you give the audience. Chris Anderson, the curator of TED Talks, says, “Focusing on what you should give, should be the foundation of your talk.” From the moment, you are tasked with giving a speech, you should ask yourself what gift you have to give. One way to think about it is the acronym ABC-audience before content. One professional speaker helps herself to think about what she *gives* by imagining herself handing out one-hundred-dollar bills to each audience member. This helps her remember her speech should *give* each person something of value.

Game designer Jane McGonigal tells her audience she is giving them something valuable. She suggests she will give them seven and a half extra minutes to their life. Watch her introduction to hear for yourself.



I'm a gamer, so I like to have goals. I like special missions and secret objectives. So here's my special mission for this talk: I'm going to try to increase the life span of every single person in this room by seven and a half minutes. Literally, you will live seven and a half minutes longer than you would have otherwise, just because you watched this talk.

Speech is about serving your audience instead of serving your agenda. One group of speech coaches, Ginger Public Speaking, emphasize being servant speakers. They illustrate the difference between *taking* and *serving* this way:

> ***Normal public speaking can focus more on taking from an audience:***
>
> - *I need them to listen to me.*
> - *I need them to look interested in what I'm saying.*
> - *I need them to laugh at my jokes.*
> - *I need them to affirm my expertise.*
> - *I need them to know how good I am.*
>
> ***Servant speaking is all about building a community:***

- *I want to give my community what they most need to hear.*
- *I believe my message will bring benefit to those listening.*
- *I want the people listening to me to feel a part OF something not apart FROM something.*

Every speech, every time, is about connecting with the audience. Think about who they are and the perspective they bring. Think about their wants, their needs, their desires, and their perspective. Public speaking is about serving, it is about giving a gift. Watch this short video where Chris Anderson talks about the gift of an idea.



> *Did you notice three out of four of the key features that Chris Anderson mentions have to do with the audience?*

> *1. Limit your talk to just one major idea.*
> *2. Give them a reason to care.*
> *3. Build your ideas based on what the audience already knows.*
> *4. Make your idea worth sharing. Who does this idea benefit?*
>
> *The information in this video is for a specific context–how to give a TED Talk–but many of the lessons apply to public speaking in general.*



Getting into the Mind of Your Audience

"Speakers do not give speeches to audiences; they jointly create meaning with audiences," according to scholars Sprague, Stuart, and Bodary, to create meaning, you need to think about what your audience already knows. You need to get into the mind of your audience. The key to good speaking is to put an idea in the mind of your audience. For this to work, you need to think about them and their worldview. To do this, you need to research your audience as well as your topic.

Frank Luntz knows all about how to get in the mind of an audience, it's what he does for a living. He is an American political and communications consultant and he polls audiences to find out their beliefs. He specializes in helping speakers find what words best resonate with audiences. He says:

> *You can have the best message in the world, but the person on the receiving end will always understand it through the prism of his or her own emotions, preconceptions, prejudices, and preexisting beliefs. It's not enough to be correct or reasonable or even brilliant. The key to successful communication is to take the imaginative leap of stuffing yourself into your listener's shoes to know what they are thinking and feeling in the deepest recesses of their mind and heart. How that person perceives what you say is even more real, at least in a practical sense, than how you perceive yourself.*

This means not just looking at an audience in terms of demographics, but rather, what are their goals, why should they care, what do they need?

Ask Yourself, What Do They Need?

Many of you are reading this book because you are in a public speaking class. If so, you are thinking, "What do I have to do to make an "A" on this speech?" or "What is the least I can do to get my college credit?" Notice that both approaches focus on "I." Realize when you give your presentation, there will be an audience of college students that *need* something. What do they need? They need not be bored. They need to think it was worth it to come to class. They need to learn things. They need to be inspired. If it is a persuasion speech, don't think about what you need to persuade them to do, think about them and how their lives will be

improved if they listen to your speech and act on the important issue you presented. If you are giving a ceremonial speech, think about how you can make them feel a part of something–make them feel included.

The goal of effective communication
should be for listeners to say
'Me too!' versus 'So what?'
– Jim Rohn, motivational speaker

I want to share with you a few scenarios from my own experience. Read carefully and consider what the audience needs.

INFORMATION:
I spoke to the monthly meeting of Kiwanis about a nonprofit I managed.

What did my audience need?

- To enjoy themselves among friends after the meal.
- To know about what is happening in their community.
- To feel like their involvement in the club was meaningful.
- To feel like they could do things that will make a difference.
- To feel like they are a part of something important.

Why did they come to the speech?

> *Because they are part of a club that has weekly luncheons with community speakers. They are there to be with like-minded individuals, they are there to find ways to get involved, and they are there to network.*

CELEBRATION:
I spoke to a sorority at their annual banquet that honored the academic achievements of the group.

What did my audience need?

- To feel bonded with others in their sorority.
- To feel proud of their achievements.
- To feel motivated to succeed and make good grades in college.
- To feel like the university cares about their success and recognizes their hard work.

Why did they come to the speech?

> *They liked being part of a group where they make friends and celebrate accomplishments. They were required to attend, or they would be fined. They knew me or one of the other speakers that day.*

PERSUASION:
I spoke to a major corporation about why they needed to buy diesel engine parts from the company I worked with.

> *What did my audience need?*
>
> - *To know about the product and how it might benefit them.*
> - *To be able to understand the details of the product enough to make an informed decision.*
> - *To feel empowered to make an informed choice.*
> - *To feel good about their decision.*
> - *To be able to get back to work in a timely fashion.*
> - *To feel like they were doing what was right for their company and their customers.*

Why did they come to the speech?

> *They benefited from finding good products for their company. It was their job. Saving their company money while buying a good product makes them look good.*

TRAINING:
I spoke at a teaching camp to a group of college faculty and gave them tips for teaching.

What did my audience need?

> - *To know about specific ways to improve teaching.*
> - *To feel good about being a teacher.*
> - *To understand the teaching tip in a way they could apply it.*
> - *To connect with and feel encouraged by other teachers.*

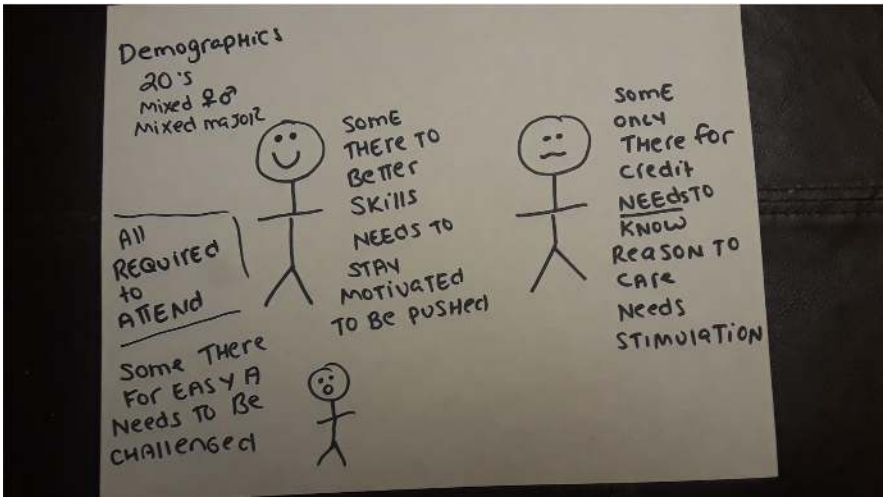
Why did they come to camp?

> *It is an optional camp, so they came specifically to learn to be a better teacher. They came to spend time with friends.*

Do this anytime you have a speech to give. Put yourself in the mind of the audience and write their needs and motivations.

Write down what they need and why they are at the event. It is easy to think about the tangible reasons they attended, but it is helpful to think about the emotional reasons they are there. Are they there to bond with friends? Are they there to be inspired? Are they there because they have to be? What reward do they get for coming? Notice in some of my examples, I have things like "to feel good," "to know more," "to connect."

> *Make yourself a graphic of the target audience members. As you write your speech, keep looking at this reference so you keep the audience's needs in mind. Here is one I made for students I have in my public speaking class.*



Nancy Duarte, the author of *The Art and Science of Creating Great Presentations*, suggests you ask yourself these questions about your audience.

1. **Lifestyle:** What does a walk in their shoes look like?
2. **Knowledge:** What do they already know and not know about your topic?
3. **Motivation and Desire:** What are their wants and desires? What motivates them?
4. **Values:** What is important to them? How does their use of time and money reveal their priorities?
5. **Influence:** What influences their behaviors and thoughts?
6. **Respect:** What makes them feel respected? How do they give and receive respect?



Your audience may get tired after eating a big meal.

Consider the Situational Needs

Consider the setting of your speech. After a big lunch, people may be tired. If they have listened to other speeches before yours, they may be fatigued from sitting and listening so long. If they have been listening for a while, consider having them engage briefly with another audience member. If you know they have been sitting, consider how you can have them move a little. If the room is stuffy, or loud, or if they were forced to come and listen, acknowledge how much you appreciate their presence.

Consider the Audience's Needs

People don't remember what we think is important.
They remember what they think is important.
John Maxwell, leadership expert

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is one tool you can use to help you analyze audience needs. Work through the pyramid and see if you can relate each level to your topic in some way. I find it is particularly helpful to use it as a brainstorming tool when constructing speeches. In short, psychologist Abraham Maslow suggested people are motivated by their needs and they seek to satisfy their needs. For our purposes, we won't delve into the larger theory but rather acknowledge that people seek to satisfy their needs. The more you identify and talk to their need and demonstrate how those needs can be satisfied, the more likely they are to have a positive response to your topic (and more likely to be persuaded).



Consider the many needs of your audience

Let's work through an example of this. Imagine you are doing a speech to persuade people to take a self-defense course at a local gym.

- **PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS**: People need to sleep: I can remind listeners that they sleep better once they exercise. They will sleep better knowing they can protect themselves. Taking a self-defense class will help them get a good night's sleep.
- **SAFETY NEEDS**: People need to feel safe: I can remind them of crime statistics to make them feel unsafe so they take the class to regain a sense of safety.
- **BELONGING NEEDS:** People need to belong: I can encourage them to take the class with a group of friends or I can remind them of times they missed spending time with friends because they were uncomfortable being out late at night alone. Take a self-defense class will give them the confidence they need to go out with friends.

- **ESTEEM NEEDS**: People need to feel good about themselves: I can remind them how bad it feels to not be able to fend for themselves and tell them how good it feels to have the confidence to know how to defend themselves. Learning new skills makes you feel good. Independence feels good.
- **COGNITIVE NEEDS:** People have the need to know, so I can tell them about the science of some of the techniques and why they work.
- **SELF-ACTUALIZATION NEEDS:** People need to feel safe, they need to know and belong, so they can work to fulfill their life's goals. A college student who is afraid to walk to their night class, might skip class and then fall short of their personal goal of graduating.

Designing a presentation without an audience in mind
is like writing a love letter and addressing it:
To Whom It May Concern.
– Ken Haemer, Presentation Design Manager

Recipe for Listenability



Listenability: What does that mean in plain English?

By using easily understood phrases and words and giving the audience a reason to listen you are making your speech listenable.

Think of your speech in terms of listenability. Communication scholar D.L. Rubin says, "Listenable discourse is characterized by linguistic and rhetorical structures that ease the particular cognitive burdens listeners face." (What do you think about that quote, appropriate to the audience of this book or unnecessarily wordy and full of big words? Was it a listenable quote–I don't think so.)

In plain English, make your speech easy to listen to. How do you do that? Glad you asked, let me share with you a few ways.

Find Common Ground

Seek to establish a connection with your audience right away. Find common ground or draw from common experiences. If you are talking to a civic organization read their mission statement and seek commonalities. Work in the common ground such as, "Like you, I am passionate about finding a better solution for the homeless in our area." Recognize similarities if they represent a cause that matters to you, if you have a hometown team in common, if you all ate a catered lunch, or if you all walked uphill to get to class. It is no coincidence when speakers come onto a college campus, they almost always mention one of these: The mascot, the sports team, a place on campus, a famous eating establishment, or a campus hero. These details draw the audience in to listen. People appreciate a speaker who took the time to think about them it will increase both liking and credibility.

When I teach a public speaking class, I always dedicate a day to helping my students understand the audience and how to relate. I ask questions and we put the answers on the board. For example, I ask, "How many like camping?" "How many like cats?" "How many are politically involved?" We put the answers to the questions on the board for everyone to see. Once the board is covered, I explain they should take a picture of this and reference it in all of their speeches. For example, they might say, "I noticed only 20% of the class is politically involved, which is why I decided to persuade you to take a political science class during your time at college" or they might say, "Most of the class said they liked camping. Now I know you like camping, I want to tell you about why you need to go camping along the Buffalo River."

Sometimes a speaker will use the same speech with different audiences and common ground has to change. Julie Miyeon Sohn, Toastmaster's competitor, reflected on what she learned about adapting to an audience. Her failure to adapt caused her not to win at the World Championship of Public Speaking:

> *"One thing I would do differently is changing how I select my speech topic. My story about learning English was well received in Korea because the Korean audience had all had a similar experience to mine. However, I failed to connect with the audience at the semi-final because the story was not very relatable to the international audience. I would change my story to something more universal so that everyone can relate to it regardless of their race, nationality, and age."*

In order to find common ground, you need to take time to get to know the audience. In addition to the traditional research, one speaker suggests reading up on the news before you speak and draw references to things most people might know. Make sure the examples you give are now by most audience members. Speaker Nancy Duarte shares her common ground mishaps:

> *I referred to an airline, (an example of amazing customer service, Open Skies) to an audience of American business executives, forgetting that an airline with only one route (NY-Paris) wasn't something many of them would know.*

Even if most of your audience knows about your common ground reference, they may have differing opinions about it. Nancy Duarte says,

> *I learned this the hard way with the same audience, telling them, proudly, how a former customer had asked me for referral to a therapist (everyone goes to therapists in NY!), which provoked guffaws from brawny macho Midwesterners.*

Finding common ground with your audience, not only gets their attention, but it helps them get on the same wavelength–literally. Princeton neuroscientist Uri Hasson says the more commonality between a storyteller and listener, the more brain imaging shows that the brains sync up. Let that sink in. When you find common ground through story, it shows up on a brain scan. Your audience's brain scan lights up in the same places yours does–that is incredible. Thinking about your audience and then finding common ground is crucial to your success.

The royal road to a man's heart
is to talk to him about the things he treasures most.
Dale Carnegie, Author, Speaker

To Be Listenable, Reference Someone in the Group

When possible, go to a speaking event early and talk to several people. Engage them in friendly conversation and then ask them questions related to your topic. During your presentation, point them out and say, "Derek was telling me that…." The audience's attention zooms in when you acknowledge someone from the group. If you don't have time to visit beforehand, you can always reference the host who invited you. Mentioning anyone they know can draw the audience's attention.

To Be Listenable, Tell Them How It Applies to Them

To keep the audience's attention, talk about what they care about the most–themselves. Get the audience on your side by telling them why this speech is relevant to them. Don't just assume they know, help them make those connections. Typically, highly engaged, and knowledgeable audiences, need only a light reminder of the topic's application. For those that are not very knowledgeable or not motivated listeners, you need to tell them specifically how it applies and why. One easy way to do this is to say, "So what, who cares…" Another way is to simply ask the audience, "Why do you think this should matter to you?" Then, answer the question.

Laura Tempesta, Sports Bra Expert, Inventor & Founder of Bravolution, gave a TED Talk about bras and cleverly found a way to relate to the whole audience. Watch to see how she engages the WHOLE audience and makes them want to listen.



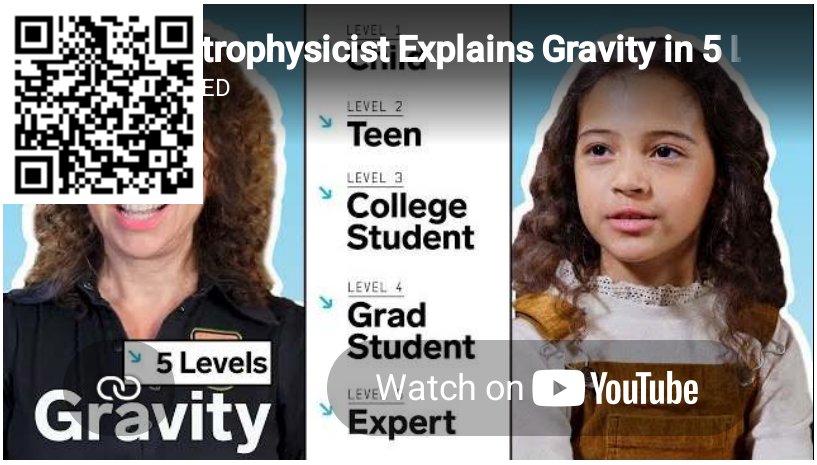
So, let's take a look at the design of the bra and the limits it imposes. And for those of you who don't wear bras, I'm assuming you've encountered a few along the way and are familiar with the technology. Laura Tempesta

To Be Listenable, Use the Language of Your Audience

Author, William Butler Yeats said, "Think like a wise man but communicate in the language of the people." Make sure that the words you use match the vocabulary and the knowledge level of the audience. Throughout your speech, define your terms clearly and carefully. Be careful not to use jargon or "insider" language that will exclude listeners who aren't "in the know." While working for a nonprofit, I was invited to come onto the university campus to speak to campus groups interested in volunteering. To identify with the audience, I told them I was a COMM major. After my presentation, someone came up to me and said, "Ms. Meade, what is a COMM?" I explained it was shorthand for Communication Major. We laughed at my mistake, I apologized for assuming everyone knew what it meant, and then he offered to join my organization. It goes to show you, even within the group (in my case people on a college campus), you can't assume people know the specialty language. It also goes to show you that you can mess up and still make a friend (if you acknowledge your mistake gracefully).

I am often to be a judge for a unique speech competition. Graduate students have three minutes to explain their research in a way anyone can understand. They have to make it plain enough a layperson can understand what they are doing and what the results mean. Many graduate students have been working in complex theories and specialty language for so long they have a hard time realizing not everyone knows what these concepts mean. It is important you learn to know how to adapt your message to audiences with differing levels of knowledge and complexity.

Watch this Wired video where an astrophysicist explains gravity in five levels of difficulty. (You don't have to watch the whole video, just watch a little bit of how she talks to each person to get the point). This is an excellent example of talking about the same topic to different audience members.



Finding the right vocabulary and the right tone for the right audience takes a lot of thought and practice. Alan Alda and the Center for Communicating Science issued a "flame challenge" and they asked scientists to explain a flame to 11-year-olds.

To watch more on this https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hS6rOCdy-uo

> *Here is perhaps the simplest case*
> *of persuasion.*
> *You persuade a person only*
> *insofar as you can talk their language*
> *by speech, gesture, tonality, order,*
> *image, attitude, idea,*
> *identifying your ways with theirs.*
> *Kenneth Burke, American literary theorist*

Use Inclusive Language

Inclusive language means many things. It means speaking to the knowledge level and education level of your audience. It also means designing sentences where you invite them to be a part.

> *NO: I know **most people** worry about what goes into**their** food.*
>
> *YES: I know most of **us** worry about what goes into **our** food.*

The use of "us" and "our," makes the sentence more personal and friendly. As much as possible, use personal pronouns with your audience. As Shel Leanne points out in the book, *Say It Like Obama: The Power of Speaking with Purpose and Vision*, these words help to "send the message that the speaker and those listening are on the same team, in the same boat, facing the same fate."

Give the Audience a Map of the Journey so they Won't Get Lost

Tell them what you are going to say, say it, and then tell them what you said. Along the way, help them stay on track by telling them where they are headed. "Now that we talked about this history of this, I want to share with you the future of the product."

Always keep the focus on what is the point of your speech. Nancy Duarte, presentation expert suggests, "Every bit of content you share should propel the audience towards that destination."

Take the Audience's Perspective

Your speech is a journey, and you are taking your audience on that journey with you. Chris Anderson, TED Talk curator says, "It is your job to know about your fellow travelers. What do they need from the journey and how can you help them, so they enjoy the trip and they don't get lost?" Delve into the audience's mind, what is their perspective of your topic?

> ***Consider This***
> *When the country music singer, Garth Brooks arrives as the venue, he sits in many of the seats that are pointing at the stage and asks, "What am I doing for this person." As a speaker, it is good to sit in the many (symbolic) seats of your audience and ask, "What am I doing for this person?"*

Ask for Audience Participation

Actively involving your audience helps them stay alert and attentive. All too often, speakers seem to spit random words at generic people. The audience is supposed to passively sit back and take in whatever comes their way. An audience is made up of people who need to be considered, addressed, and engaged and it is your challenge to figure out how to connect. Consider using one of the following when engaging your audience:

- Ask rhetorical questions.
- Take an informal poll.
- Ask for a volunteer.
- Have them write something down.

- Ask them to talk with their neighbor about a topic.
- Have everyone yell the answer at the same time.
- Tell them there will be a “test” at the end.

Watch Toastmaster’s World Championship Speech by Darren Tay Wen Jie to see how he relates to the audience.



✔ Look at All the Ways He Connected with the Audience

Darren Tay said in a Business Insider interview that he emphasized the importance of making audience members feel like he was talking directly to them. One way he does this is by asking rhetorical questions of the audience: “If you are all wondering whether the underwear Greg used was clean, I had the same question.” Look at this list of all the ways he connects with the audience in this speech.

- He opens by staring at them directly.
- If *you* are all wondering whether the underwear Greg used was clean, I had the same question.
- Mr. contest chair, fellow toastmasters, and anyone including those watching worldwide. If *you* are looking at Calvin Klein here, stop staring! My eyes are up here.
- “I gonna knock you in my teeth and punch you in the guts and laugh at your sorry behind. He didn’t quite use the word- behind. I just cleaned up the words because *this is a toastmaster program.*
- And, have *you* ever wondered why a bully needs to tell you the exact sequence that they gonna bully you?
- *My friends*, whenever I heard those words, my hands would tremble. *Have you ever felt so fearful,* that you cannot eat or sleep?
- *My friends, as much as we* tried to deny it, *we* are our toughest and strongest bully. *We* beat ourselves up and put ourselves down. *Have you ever f*elt that you are not good enough? I thought that way.
- I’m standing on stage now in front of two *thousand of you a*nd more are watching worldwide but I am not afraid anymore. I am in control because I am acknowledging it, I am stepping out of it, observing it, and watching it weaken and fade. My friends, *let’s all not run away f*rom our inner bullies anymore. *Let us* all face our inner bullies and acknowledge its presence and fight. *Let us all* be together as a family supporting one another because we can all outsmart and (outlast).

Asses and Elephants

Making Assumptions Makes an Ass out of U and Me (ASSuME)

Make a list of the known demographics of your audience and create a profile. Make a list of what you know about them and what you assume about them. Be honest, but don’t let that profile lead you astray. Don’t create unrealistic stereotypes and expectations based on the way you profiled them. For example, just because your audience is made up of seventy-year-old women, does not mean that they have the same values as your conservative grandma. Most of us naturally default to grouping things based on what we already know–don’t assume.

While persuading the class to skydive, one student said, “I know you may not be interested Dr. Meade, but you can tell your sons about it.” Just for the record, I went skydiving the next year– my sons still haven’t been. In another speech, I had a student say, “Now that I have shown you how to make taco casserole, you can take this recipe home with you to make it. Guys, you can take it to your girlfriend.” The guys were upset because she didn’t think they were interested or capable.

In the first example, they made assumptions about abilities and interests based on age, and in the other example, they made assumptions based on gender roles. Don’t assume.

Let’s Talk About the Elephant in the Room

What do you call people? Frankly, this is a tricky topic. It is like the elephant in the room that everyone can see but no one wants to mention. African American/Black/Native American/Indian/Transexual/Non-binary–there are so many different words in the “people dictionary”. What is acceptable and what is offensive seems to change regularly. If I am honest (and I try to be), I get nervous about what to call people, because I’m afraid I will mess up and someone will get upset when I didn’t mean any ill intent. Then I think, why do people get their feeling hurt over the littlest things? Well, if you are on the receiving end, they are not *little* things. I try to remember when someone said hurtful things to me and then it is easier to remember why it matters. Even if the person who hurt my feelings wasn’t trying to be mean, it still hurt. When I was hurt by those words, I was too busy with my own thoughts to hear anything else they had to say.

Hurt people do not listen. If the point of my speech is to be heard and I said something that causes my audience not to listen, I hurt not only them but my own cause.

I once spoke before an interfaith board of directors. I had a list of the names and organizations that were represented, and I thought I had done all my research. During my presentation, I talked about the need for volunteers in the community, I talked about how each of their groups represented a belief that people should help each other, and then I asked them to “Go back to your churches and ask if they will allow me to come out and give a talk about how your church can get involved with helping others.” After my presentation, a member of the board came up to me and said, “Lynn, not all of us go to church, some of us go to synagogue.” I thanked her for correcting me and I learned to use the phrase “faith groups” instead of the word “churches” when talking to an interfaith audience. Because I was gracious in accepting my mistake, we developed a great working relationship for years to come. Before speaking to a group– do your research. If you mess up (and if you are human, you will mess up eventually), be gracious to those who pointed out your mistake, learn from your mistake, and accept responsibility.

Do no harm. Create no barrier. When taking the audience-centered approach, consider what the audience needs so they can listen. Do your research to learn the preferred name for a group and the vocabulary of the group because it respects the audience. Audience members who feel respected are more likely to listen.



Randy Pausch says if there is an elephant in the room you should introduce it.

The elephant in the Room

Elephant in the room is an idiom that means to point out an obvious truth or fact.

Did you see what I did here?

I didn’t ASSuME that you knew what that phrase means, I gave you a definition.

Your Credibility is Linked to the Audience’s Opinion of You

Every time you speak, you are building credibility, maintaining credibility, or diminishing credibility, according to Ryan Sheets, Director of the Business Communication Lab at the University of Arkansas, your credibility (ethos) is linked to what the audience thinks of you. An audience expects you to not only have knowledge but also to be trustworthy and sincere. What they think about

you translates to how much they will listen to your message. That opinion is formed by looking at the way you are dressed, how you carry yourself, the words you say, and the way you address them.

Your credibility is tied up in their opinion of you and whether they think you care about them.

Thinking About the Audience Makes You Less Anxious

When you realize speech is not about you having something to say but rather, you are giving the audience something of value, it changes things. Not only will you give a better speech, but you will benefit yourself as well. When you think about the needs of the audience, you become less nervous. Focusing on their needs and the topic helps you focus on providing a service rather than delivering a performance.

> - *Instead of thinking, "I am so nervous,"*
>   *try thinking "the audience really will benefit from knowing this."*
> - *Instead of thinking, "I will persuade them to do this"*
>   *change your thinking to "their life will be better if they try this."*

If you pick a topic you are passionate about and if you believe in it, you will begin to care more about the importance of the topic and less about your own personal discomfort. If you feel a little nervous, think about how your information can improve lives or change people's perspectives. Make your topic so important that you forget to be nervous.

Quit being so self-centered. It's not about you—- it's about the audience. They need something and you have it. Writer Ambrose Redmoon said, "Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear."

Don't be selfish. It does little good to have all that experience and all that knowledge and keep it to yourself. Author Marianne Williamson says, "Your playing small does not serve the world." It is worth a little discomfort for the awesome privilege you have to change, educate, motivate, and persuade your audience. They need this information, and you are the one lucky enough to get to give it to them. When you spend all your time thinking about how to connect with the audience and how to help them understand what you have to offer, you have less energy to spend worrying about if you are nervous.

> *I tell myself that what I have to say in any speech*
> *is important for people to hear,*
> *and that I prepped for it,*
> *and am well versed in it.*
> *So basically knowing that what I have to say is worth hearing*
> *makes me confident in saying it.*
> *Andrew Powell, Former University of Arkansas Communication Student*

Audience Analysis Tools

There are many ways to gather information about the audience,
Here are a few of the most common and a list of the pros and cons of each

Interview	
• Ask the person who invited you to tell you about the audience. • When possible, interview a member of the audience. • Sometimes, it is helpful to ask someone outside the group to give you their impressions of the group.	
Pros	**Cons**
• Gives great insider information. • Often yields quotable items.	• Are time-consuming. • The interviewee always represents a limited perspective.

Survey

- Send out an electronic survey.
- Do an informal survey by those who pass by in a break room or lunchroom.
- Have the leadership administer a survey.

Pros	Cons
• Allows you to know key opinions. • Gives the audience the first impression of you as someone who wants to be prepared.	• Surveys may become a burden to people who don't want one more thing to do. • People often say what is expected rather than what they really feel.

Internet Research

- Search the internet for information about the group, the person, the venue.
- Check out professional- LinkedIn– and social media-Facebook, Instagram, Twitter– sites for information.
- Look up the mission statement of the organization.
- Find pictures of the venue.

Pros	Cons
• Gives you an overview of who they want people to think they are. • Helps you identify the priorities of an organization.	• It can be/feel a little creepy to look at family photos of someone on their Facebook and Instagram. • Mentioning you looked at their social media can freak them out.

Demographic Data

Demographic data can come from statistical sources or it can come from asking questions to the person who invited you to the venue.

- Race
- Religion
- Age
- Professional status
- Education level
- Sexual Orientation
- Beliefs

Pros	Cons
• Gives you an overview of who they want people to think they are. • Helps you identify the priorities of an organization.	• Can result in stereotypes. • Can be time-consuming.

When we think a speech is about what we have to say, we get it wrong. The whole reason you are giving the presentation is for the audience. The speech is about them, and your job is to figure out who they are and what they need before you write even the first word.

? Key Takeaways

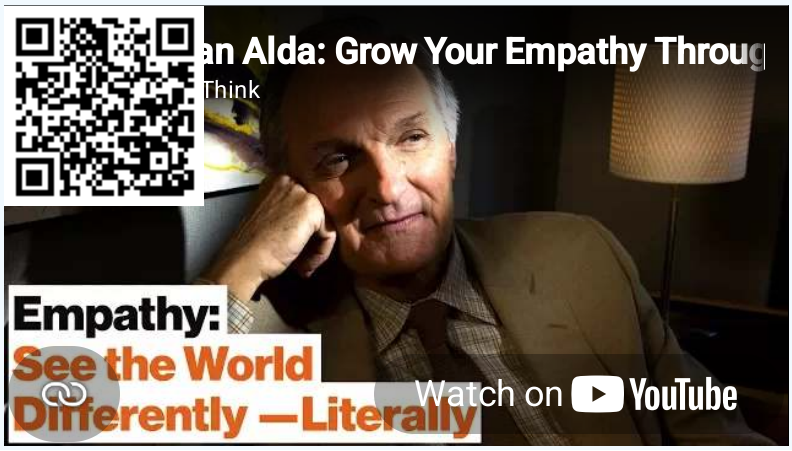
Remember This!

- The most important thing to remember is it is not about you; it is about the audience.
- Focus on making your speech listenable.
- Make a list of what your audience needs and the reasons they are listening to your speech.
- Don't stereotype or make assumptions about your audience.
- Know the right words to use for your specific audience.
- Use a variety of tools to gather information about your audience.

Extras to Help You with Understanding Audience

? Exercises

Actor and writer Alan Alda trains communicators by teaching them basic improvisational techniques. The goal is to help them to gain empathy and to learn to read people better. In this video, he explains a couple of ways to gain empathy with your audience.



From the book, *If I Understood You, Would I Have This Look on My Face* by Alan Alda



Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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3.2: Demographic Characteristics

When we use the term audience analysis, we mean looking at the audience first by its demographic characteristics and then by their internal psychological traits. “Demo-” comes the Greek root word demos meaning “people,” and “-graphic” means description or drawing. Demographic characteristics describe the outward characteristics of the audience. This textbook will discuss eleven of them below, although you might see longer or shorter lists in other sources. Some of them are obvious and some not as much. But before we get into the specific demographic characteristics, let’s look at three principles.

First, be careful not to stereotype on the basis of a demographic characteristic. Stereotyping is generalizing about a group of people and assuming that because a few persons in that group have a characteristic, all of them do. If someone were sitting near campus and saw two students drive by in pickup trucks and said, “All students at that college drive pickup trucks,” that would be both stereotyping and the logical fallacy of hasty generalization (see Chapter 14). At the same time, one should not totalize about a person or group of persons. Totalizing is taking one characteristic of a group or person and making that the “totality” or sum total of what that person or group is. Totalizing often happens to persons with disabilities, for example; the disability is seen as the totality of that person, or all that person is about. This can be both harmful to the relationship and ineffective as a means of communicating. If a speaker before a group of professional women totalizes and concludes that some perception of “women’s issues” are all they care about, the speaker will be less effective and possibly unethical.

Avoiding stereotyping and totalizing is important because you cannot assume everything about an audience based on just one demographic characteristic. Only two or three might be important, but in other cases, several demographic characteristics matter. The age of a group will be important in how they think about investing their money, but so will the socio-economic level, career or profession, and even where they live. Even their religious beliefs may come into it, since many religious groups have teachings about how much income should be given to charity. A good speaker will be aware of more than one or two characteristics of the audience.

Second, in terms of thinking about demographic characteristics, not all of them are created equal, and not all of them are important in every situation. When parents come to a PTA meeting, they are concerned about their children and playing the important role of “parent,” rather than being concerned about their profession. When senior citizens are thinking about how they will pay for their homes in retirement years, their ethnicity probably has less to do with it as much as their age and socio-economic level.

Third, there are two ways to think about demographic characteristics: positively and negatively. In a positive sense, the demographic characteristics tell you what might motivate or interest the audience or even bind them together as a group. In a negative sense, the demographic characteristic might tell you what subjects or approaches to avoid. Understanding your audience is not a game of defensive tic-tac-toe, but a means of relating to them.

For example, a common example is given about audiences of the Roman Catholic faith. Speakers are warned not to “offend” them by talking about abortion, since official Roman Catholic teaching is against abortion. However, this analysis misses three points. First, even if most Roman Catholics take a pro-life position, they are aware of the issues and are adults who can listen and think about topics. Additionally, not all Roman Catholics agree with the official church stance, and it is a complex issue. Second, Roman Catholics are not the only people who hold views against abortion. Third, and most important, if all the speaker thinks about Roman Catholics is that they are against something, the speaker might miss all the things the audience is for and what motivates them. In short, think about how the demographic characteristics inform what to talk about and how, not just what to avoid talking about.

There is one more point to be made about demographic characteristics before they are listed and explained. In a country of increasing diversity, demographic characteristics are dynamic. People change as the country changes. What was true about demographic characteristics—and even what was considered a demographic characteristic—has changed in the last fifty years. For example, the number of Internet users in 1980 was minuscule (mostly military personnel). Another change is that the percentage of the population living in the Great Lakes areas has dropped as the population has either aged or moved southward.

What follows is a listing of eleven of the more common demographic characteristics that you might use in understanding your audience and shaping your speech to adapt to your audience.

3.2.1 Age

The first demographic characteristic is age. In American culture, we have traditionally ascribed certain roles, behaviors, motivations, interests, and concerns to people of certain ages. Young people are concerned about career choices; people over 60 are

concerned about retirement. People go to college from the age of 18 to about 24. Persons of 50 years old have raised their children and are “empty nesters. These neat categories still exist for many, but in some respects they seem outdated.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2015), 38% of college students are over 25 years old. Some women and men wait until their late thirties to have children, and thus at 50 have preteens in the house. More and more grandparents are raising grandchildren, and some people foster or adopt children in their middle years. Combining the longer lives Americans are living with the economic recession of 2008 and following, 62 is no longer a reasonable age for retirement for many.

Therefore, knowing that your audience is 18, 30, 55, or 70 is important, but it is just one of many factors. In your classroom audience, for example, you may find 30-year-old returning, nontraditional college students, young entrepreneurs, 17-year-old dual enrollment students, and veterans who have done three or four tours in the Middle East as well as 18- or 19-yearold traditional college students.

3.2.2 Gender

The second demographic characteristic commonly listed is gender. This area is open to misunderstanding as much as any other. Despite stereotypes, not all women have fifty pairs of shoes with stiletto heels in their closets, and not all men love football. In almost all cases you will be speaking to a “mixed” audience of men and women, so you will have to keep both groups in mind. If you are speaking to a group of all men or all women and you are of the same gender as the audience, you might be able to use some appropriate common experiences to connect with the audience. However, if you are a woman speaking to an all-male audience or a man speaking to an all-female audience, those are situations in which to be aware of overall gender differences in communication.

According to Deborah Tannen (2007), a scholar of linguistics and a wellknown author, men and women in the United States have divergent communication styles. She is quick to point out neither is all good or all bad, nor do they apply to every single person. The two communication styles are just different, and not recognizing the differences can cause problems, or “noise,” in communication. Although she normally applies these principles to family, marital, and work relationships, they can be applied to public speaking.

According to Tannen, women tend to communicate more inductively; they prefer to give lots of details and then move toward a conclusion. Other research on differences in gender communication indicate that women listen better, interrupt less, and collaborate more, although there is research to indicate this is not the case. (Keep in mind these are generalized tendencies, not necessarily true of every single woman or man.) Women tend to be less direct, to ask more questions, to use “hedges” and qualifiers (“it seems to me,” “I may be wrong, but…”) and to apologize more, often unnecessarily. Other research indicates women praise more, consequently expect more praise, and interpret lack of praise differently from how men do (Floyd, 2017).

This pattern of less direct communication ascribed to many women may not sound the same to men as it does to women. To men it may seem that a female speaker is unsure or lacks confidence, whereas the female speaker is doing it out of habit or because she thinks it sounds open-minded and diplomatic; possibly, the strategy has worked before and/or in most cases. Tannen calls women’s style of communication “rapport” style, whereas she labels male communication as more of a “report” style. Some communication scholars call these differences “expressive” (women) vs. informational (men) (Floyd 2017).



Male speakers, on the other hand, are more deductive and direct; they state their point, give limited details to back it up, and then move on. Men may be less inclined to ask questions and qualify what they say; they might not see any reason to add unnecessary fillers. Men also may tend toward basic facts, giving some the impression they are less emotional in their communication, which is a stereotype. Finally, men are socialized to “fix” things and may give advice to women when it is not really needed or wanted.

These generalized differences in communication by gender have led to much material for comedians and YouTube videos and much discussion and soul-searching about women's supposed habitually apologizing. In some ways, these differences are traditional and some writers, especially women, are trying to help others avoid these patterns without losing the positive side of female or male communication differences. For example, books such as Lean In (Sandberg, 2013) are meant to teach women to negotiate for better salaries and conditions and avoid common communication behaviors that hurt their ability to negotiate. Also, many differences are situational and have to do with relative levels of power and other factors. However, it is unlikely these general tendencies are going to disappear any time soon.

Therefore, if you are a woman speaking to an all-male audience, be direct without mimicking "male talk." It might be a good idea to avoid excessive detail and description; it will be seen as getting off topic. Do not follow the habit of starting sentences with "I don't know if this is 100% correct, but…" or even worse, the habitual "I'm sorry, but…" If on the other hand you are a male speaking to a primarily female audience, realize that women want knowledge but not to have their problems fixed. Men also seem abrupt when talking to women, and much research supports the conclusion that men talk more than women in groups and interrupt more. So, male speakers should allow time for questions and work hard at listening.

This section on gender has taken a typical, traditional "binary" approach. Today, more people openly identify as a gender other than traditionally male or female. Even those of us who identify as strictly male or female do not fully follow traditional gender roles. This is an area for growing sensitivity. At the same time, the purpose, subject, and context of the speech will probably define how and whether you address the demographic characteristic of gender.

Age and gender are the two main ways we categorize people: a teenaged boy, an elderly lady, a middle-aged man; a young mother. There are several other demographic characteristics, however.

3.2.3 Race, Ethnicity, and Culture

Race, ethnicity, and culture are often lumped together; at the same time, these categorizations can be controversial. We will consider race, ethnicity, and culture in one section because of their interrelationship although they are distinct categories

We might think in terms of a few racial groups in the world: Caucasian, African, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American. Each one of these has many ethnicities. Caucasian has ethnicities of Northern European, Arab, some South Asian people groups, Mediterranean, etc. Then each ethnicity has cultures. Mediterranean ethnicities include Greek, Italian, Spanish, etc., and then each of these has subcultures, and so on. It should be noted that many social scientists today reject the idea of race as a biological reality altogether and see it as a social construct. This means it is a view of humanity that has arisen over time and affects our thinking about others.

Unfortunately, dividing these categories and groups is not that easy, and these categories are almost always clouded by complicated political and personal concerns, which we do not have time or space to address here. Most audiences will be heterogeneous, or a mixture of different types of people and demographic characteristics, as opposed to homogeneous, very similar in many characteristics (a group of single, 20-year-old, white female nursing students at your college). Therefore, be sensitive to your audience members' identification with a culture. Anglos are often guilty of confusing Hispanic (a language category) with cultures (a more regional or historical category), and overlooking that Mexican is not Puerto Rican is not Cuban is not Colombian. In the same way for Caucasians, a Canadian is not an Australian is not an American is not a Scot, just because their last names, basic looks, and language seem almost the same (well, sort of!). "American" itself is a problematic term since "American" can refer to every country in the Western Hemisphere.

As mentioned in a previous example, focus as much on the positives—what that culture values—rather than what the culture does not like or value. Now we turn to an even more complicated category, religion.

3.2.4 Religion

Religion, casually defined as beliefs and practices about the transcendent, deity, and the meaning of life, can be thought of as an affiliation and as a life commitment. According to polls, due to either family or choice, a majority of Americans (although the percentage is shrinking) have some kind of religious affiliation, identity, or connection. It may simply be where they were christened as an infant, but it is a connection—"I'm in that group." About 23% of Americans are being called "nones" because they do not claim a formal religious affiliation (Pew Research, 2015).

On the other hand, a person may have an affiliation with a religious group but have no real commitment to it. The teaching and practices of the group, such as a denomination, may not affect the personal daily life of the member. Likewise, someone who has an

affiliation may develop his or her own variations of beliefs that do not match the established organization's doctrines. Unless the audience is brought together because of common faith concerns or the group shares the same affiliation or commitment, religious faith may not be relevant to your topic and not a central factor in the audience analysis. As with other categories, be careful not to assume or stereotype about religious groups.

Religion, like ethnicity and culture, is an area where you should be conscious of the diversity of your audience. Not everyone worships in a "church," and not everyone attends a house of worship on Sunday. Not everyone celebrates Christmas the way your family does, and some do not celebrate it at all. Inclusive language, which will be discussed in Chapter 10, will be helpful in these situations.

3.2.5 Group Affiliation

Without getting into a sociological discussion, we can note that one demographic characteristic and source of identity for some is group affiliation. To what groups do the audience members' predominantly belong? Sometimes it will be useful to know if the group is mostly Republican, Democrat, members of a union, members of a professional organization, and so on. In many cases, your reason for being the speaker is connected to the group identity. Again, be mindful of what the group values and what binds the audience together.

3.2.6 Region

Region, another demographic characteristic, relates to where the audience members live. We can think of this in two ways. We live in regions of the country: Northeast, Southeast, Midwest, Rocky Mountain region, Northwest, and West Coast. These regions can be broken down even more, such as coastal Southeastern states. Americans, especially in the East, are very conscious of their state or region and identify with it a great deal.

The second way to think about region is as "residence" or whether the audience lives in an urban area, the suburbs, or a rural area. If you live in the city, you probably do not think about being without cell phone or Internet service, but many people in rural areas do not take those for granted. The clubs that students in rural high schools belong to might be very different from what a student in a city would join.

3.2.7 Occupation

Occupation may be a demographic characteristic that is central to your presentation. For the most part in the U.S., we choose our occupations because they reflect our values, interests, and abilities, and as we associate with colleagues in that occupation, those values, interests, and abilities are strengthened. You are probably in college to enter a specific career that you believe will be economically beneficial and personally fulfilling. We sometimes spend more time at work than any other activity, except sleeping. Messages that acknowledge the importance, diversity, and reasons for occupations will be more effective. At the same time, if you are speaking to an audience with different occupations, do not use jargon from one specific occupation. This idea is addressed more in Chapter 11.

3.2.8 Education

The next demographic characteristic is education, which is closely tied to occupation and is often, though not always, a matter of choice. In the United States, education usually reflects what kind of information and training a person has been exposed to, but it does not necessarily reflect intelligence. An individual with a bachelor's degree in physics or computer science will probably know a great deal more about those fields than someone with a Ph.D. in English. Having a certain credential is supposed to be a guarantee of having learned a set of knowledge or attained certain skills. Some persons, especially employers, tend to see achieving a credential such as a college degree as the person's having the "grit" to finish an academic program (Duckworth, 2016). We are also generally proud of our educational achievements, so they should not be disregarded.

3.2.9 Socio-economic Level

Socio-economic level, another demographic characteristic, is also tied to occupation and education in many cases. We expect certain levels of education or certain occupations to make more money. While you cannot know the exact pay of your audience members, you should be careful about references that would portray your own socio-economic level as superior to their own. Saying, "When I bought my BMW 7 Series" (a car that retails at over $80,000) would not make a good impression on someone in the audience who is struggling to make a car payment on her used KIA. One time a lawyer for a state agency was talking to a group of college professors about how she negotiated her salary. She mentioned that she was able to get her salary raised by an amount

that was more than the annual salary of the audience members. Her message, which was a good one, was lost in this case because of insensitivity to the audience.

3.2.10 Sexual Orientation

The next few demographic characteristics are more personal and may not seem important to your speech topic, but then again, they may be the most important for your audience. Sexual orientation, usually referred to by the letters LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-gendered, Queer), is a characteristic not listed in speech textbooks forty years ago. As acceptance of people of various sexual orientations and lifestyles becomes more common, we can expect that these differences will lead to people feeling free to express who they are and not be confined to traditional gender roles or stereotypes. For this reason, it is useful to employ inclusive language, such as “partner” or “spouse.”

3.2.11 Family Status

Family status, such as whether the audience members are married, single, divorced, or have children or grandchildren may be very important to the concerns and values of your audience and even the reason the audience is brought together. For example, young parents could be gathered to listen to a speaker because they are concerned about health and safety of children in the community. Getting married and/or having a child often creates a major shift in how persons view the world, responsibilities, and priorities. A speaker should be aware if she is talking to single, married, divorced, or widowed persons and if the audience members are parents, especially with children at home.

Does this section on demographic characteristics leave you wondering, “With all this diversity, how can we even think about an audience?” If so, do not feel alone in that thought. As diversity increases, audience understanding and adaptation becomes more difficult. To address this concern, you should keep in mind the primary reason the audience is together and the demographic characteristics they have in common—their common bonds. For example, your classmates may be diverse in terms of age, ethnicity, or religion, but they have in common profession (all students) and region (living near or on the campus), group identity (campus organizations or major) as well as, possibly, other characteristics.

Perhaps your instructor will do an exercise in class that helps you explore the demographic characteristics displayed in your class audience. You might find that most live with their parents, or that 60% of them are planning to enter a health profession, or that one-third of them have children at home. Knowing these facts will help you find ways to choose topics, select approaches and sources for those topics, know when you should explain an idea in more detail, avoid strategies that would become barriers to communicating with the audience, and/or include personal examples to which the audience members can relate. In Chapter 4, we include case study exercises to bring together audience analysis in composing the foundational approach of the speech.

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3.3: Psychographic Characteristics

Whereas demographic characteristics describe the "facts" about the people in your audience and are focused on the external, psychographic characteristics explain the inner qualities. Although there are many ways to think about this topic, here the ones relevant to a speech will be explored: beliefs, attitudes, needs, and values.



3.3.1 Beliefs

Daryl Bem (1970) defined beliefs as "statements we hold to be true." Notice this definition does not say the beliefs are true, only that we hold them to be true and as such they determine how we respond to the world around us. Stereotypes are a kind of belief: we believe all the people in a certain group are "like that" or share a trait. Beliefs are not confined to the religious realm but touch all aspects of our experience. Sports fans believe certain things about their favorite teams. Republicans and Democrats believe certain, usually different, principles about how the government should be run.

Beliefs, according to Bem, come essentially from our experience and from sources we trust.For example, a person may believe everyone should take public speaking because in their own experience the course helped them be successful in college and a career. Another person may believe that corporal punishment is good for children because their own parents–whom they love and trust–spanked them after their misbehavior.

Therefore, beliefs are hard to change—not impossible, just difficult. Beliefs are harder to change based on their level of each of these characteristics of belief:

- stability—the longer we hold them, the more stable or entrenched they are;
- centrality—they are in the middle of our identity, self-concept, or "who we are";
- saliency—we think about them a great deal; and
- strength—we have a great deal of intellectual or experiential support for the belief or we engage in activities that strengthen the beliefs.

Beliefs can have varying levels of stability, centrality, salience, and strength. An educator's beliefs about the educational process and importance of education would be strong (support from everyday experience and reading sources of information), central (how he makes his living and defines his work), salient (he spends every day thinking about it), and stable (especially if he has been an educator a long time). Beliefs can be changed, and we will examine how in Chapter 13 under persuasion, but it is not a quick process.

3.3.2 Attitudes

The next psychographic characteristic, attitude, is sometimes a direct effect of belief. Attitude is defined as a stable positive or negative response to a person, idea, object, or policy (Bem 1970). More specifically, Myers (2012) defines it as "a favorable or unfavorable evaluative reaction toward someone or something, exhibited in one's beliefs, feelings, or intended behavior" (p. 36). How do you respond when you hear the name of a certain singer, movie star, political leader, sports team, or law in your state? Your response will be either positive or negative, or maybe neutral if you are not familiar with the object of the attitude. Where did that attitude come from? Psychologists and communication scholars study attitude formation and change probably as much as any other subject, and have found that attitude comes from experiences, peer groups, beliefs, rewards, and punishments.

Do not confuse attitude with "mood." Attitudes are stable; if you respond negatively to Brussels sprouts today, you probably will a week from now. That does not mean they are unchangeable, only that, like beliefs, they change slowly and in response to certain experiences, information, or strategies. As with beliefs, we will examine how to change attitudes in the chapter on persuasion. Changing attitudes is a primary task of public speakers because attitudes are the most determining factor in what people actually

do. In other words, attitudes lead to actions, and interestingly, actions leads to and strengthen attitudes. Think back to the TedTalk video by Dr. Amy Cuddy that you watched in Chapter 1. She explains that acting powerful and confident can strengthen your attitude of confidence.

We may hold a belief that regular daily exercise is a healthy activity, but that does not mean we will have a positive attitude toward it. There may be other attitudes that compete with the belief, such as “I do not like to sweat,” or “I don’t like exercising alone.” Also, we may not act upon a belief because we do not feel there is a direct, immediate benefit from it or we may not believe we have time right now in college. If we have a positive attitude toward exercise, we will more likely engage in it than if we only believe it is generally healthy

3.3.3 Values

As you can see, attitude and belief are somewhat complex “constructs,” but fortunately the next two are more straightforward. (A construct is “a tool used in psychology to facilitate understanding of human behavior; a label for a cluster of related but co-varying behaviors” [Rogelberg, 2007].) Values are goals we strive for and what we consider important and desirable. However, values are not just basic wants. A person may want a vintage sports car from the 1960s, and may value it because of the amount of money it costs, but the vintage sports car is not a value; it represents a value of either

- nostalgia (the person’s parents owned one in the 1960s and it reminds him of good times),
- display (the person wants to show it off and get “oohs” and “ahs”),
- materialism (the person believes the adage that the one who dies with the most toys wins),
- aesthetics and beauty (the person admires the look of the car and enjoys maintaining the sleek appearance),
- prestige (the person has earned enough money to enjoy and show off this kind of vehicle), or
- physical pleasure (the driver likes the feel of driving a sports car on the open road).

Therefore we can engage in the same behavior but for different values; one person may participate in a river cleanup because she values the future of the planet; another may value the appearance of the community in which she lives; another just because friends are involved and she values relationships. A few years ago political pundits coined the term “values voters,” usually referring to social conservatives, but this is a misnomer because almost everyone votes and otherwise acts upon their values—what is important to the individual.

3.3.4 Needs

The fourth psychographic characteristic is needs, which are important deficiencies that we are motivated to fulfill. You may already be familiar with the well-known diagram known as Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943). It is commonly discussed in the fields of management, psychology, and health professions. A version of it is shown in Figure 2.1. Some recent versions show it with 8 levels.) It is one way to think about needs. In trying to understand human motivation, Maslow theorized that as our needs represented at the base of the pyramid are fulfilled, we move up the hierarchy to fulfill other types of need (McLeod, 2014).

According to Maslow’s theory, our most basic physiological or survival needs must be met before we move to the second level, which is safety and security. When our needs for safety and security are met, we move up to relationship or connection needs, often called “love and belongingness.” The fourth level up is esteem needs, which could be thought of as achievement, accomplishment, or self-confidence. The highest level, self-actualization, is achieved by those who are satisfied and secure enough in the lower four that they can make sacrifices for others. Self-actualized persons are usually thought of as altruistic or charitable. Maslow also believed that studying motivation was best done by understanding psychologically healthy individuals, and he also used child development to construct his model. (Maslow is not without his critics; see Neher, 1991).

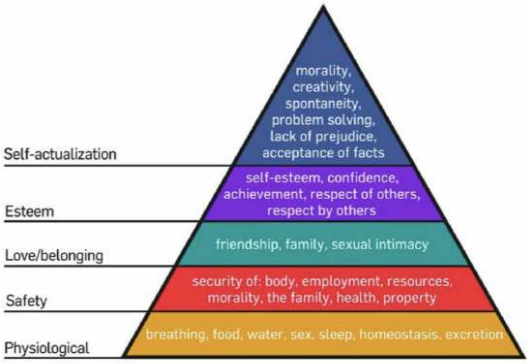


Figure 2.1 - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In another course you might go into more depth about Maslow's philosophy and theory, but the key point to remember here is that your audience members are experiencing both "felt" and "real" needs. They may not even be aware of their needs. In a persuasive speech one of your tasks is to show the audience that needs exist that they might not know about. For example, gasoline sold in most of the U.S. has ethanol, a plant-based product, added to it, usually about 10%. Is this beneficial or detrimental for the planet, the engine of the car, or consumers' wallets? Your audience may not even be aware of the ethanol, its benefits, and the problems it can cause.

A "felt" need is another way to think about strong "wants" that the person believes will fulfill or satisfy them even if the item is not necessary for survival. For example, one humorous depiction of the Maslow's hierarchy of needs (seen on Facebook) has the words "wifi" scribbled at the bottom of the pyramid. Another meme has "coffee" scribbled at the bottom of the hierarchy. As great as wifi and coffee are, they are not crucial to human survival, either individually or collectively, but we do want them so strongly that they operate like needs.

So, how do these psychographic characteristics operate in preparing a speech? They are most applicable to a persuasive speech, but they do apply to other types of speeches as well. What are your audience's informational needs? What beliefs or attitudes do they have that could influence your choice of topic, sources, or examples? How can you make them interested in the speech by appealing to their values? The classroom speeches you give will allow you a place to practice audience analysis based on demographic and psychographic characteristics, and that practice will aid you in future presentations in the work place and community.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: Say What?

4.1: Types of Supporting Materials
4.2: Exploring Types of Support
4.3: Plagiarism
4.4: Using Research in a Speech

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4.1: Types of Supporting Materials

Essentially, there are seven types of supporting materials: examples, narratives, definitions, descriptions, historical and scientific fact, statistics, and testimony. Each provides a different type of support, and you will want to choose the supporting materials that best help you make the point you want to get across to your audience.

4.1.1 Examples

This type of supporting material is the first and easiest to use but also easy to forget. Examples are almost always short but concrete specific instances to illuminate a concept. They are designed to give audiences a reference point. If you were describing a type of architecture, you would obviously show visual aids of it and give verbal descriptions of it, but you could say, “You pass an example of this type of architecture every time you go downtown—City Hall.” An example must be quickly understandable, something the audience can pull out of their memory or experience quickly.

The key to effectively using examples in your speeches is this: what is an example to you may not be an example to your audience, if they have a different experience. One of the authors has been teaching four decades and cannot use the same pop culture examples she used to use in class. Television shows from twenty years ago are pretty meaningless to audiences today. Time and age are not the only reasons an example may not work with the audience. If you are a huge soccer fan speaking to a group who barely knows soccer, using a well-known soccer player as an example of perseverance or overcoming discrimination in the sports world may not communicate. It may only leave the audience members scratching their heads.

Additionally, one good, appropriate example is worth several less apt ones. Keep in mind that in the distinction between supporting materials that prove, those that clarify, and those that do both, examples are used to clarify

4.1.2 Narratives

Earlier in this textbook the “power of story” was mentioned. Narratives, stories, and anecdotes are useful in speeches to interest the audience and clarify, dramatize, and emphasize ideas. They have, if done well, strong emotional power. They can be used in the introduction, the body, and the conclusion of the speech. They can be short, as anecdotes usually are. Think of the stories you often see in Readers’ Digest, human interest stories on the local news, or what you might post on Facebook about a bad experience you had at the DMV. They could be longer, although they should not comprise large portions of the speech.

Narratives can be personal, literary, historical, or hypothetical. Personal narratives can be helpful in situations where you desire to:

- Relate to the audience on a human level, especially if they may see you as competent but not really similar or connected to them.
- Build your credibility by mentioning your experience with a topic.

Of course, personal narratives must be true. They must also not portray you as more competent, experienced, brave, intelligent, etc., than you are; in other words, along with being truthful in using personal narratives, you should be reasonably humble.

An example of a literary narrative might be one of Aesop’s fables, a short story by O’Henry, or an appropriate tale from another culture. Keep in mind that because of their power, stories tend to be remembered more than other parts of the speech. Do you want the story to overshadow your content? Scenes from films would be another example of a literary narrative, but as with examples, you must consider the audience’s frame of reference and if they will have seen the film.

Historical narratives (sometimes called documented narratives) have power because they can also prove an idea as well as clarify one. In using these, you should treat them as fact and therefore give a citation as to where you found the historical narrative. By “historical” we do not mean the story refers to something that happened many years ago, only that it has happened in the past and there were witnesses to validate the happening.

If you were trying to argue for the end to the death penalty because it leads to unjust executions, one good example of a person who was executed and then found innocent afterward would be both emotional and probative. Here, be careful of using theatrical movies as your source of historical narrative. Hollywood likes to change history to make the story they want. For example, many people think Braveheart is historically accurate, but it is off on many key points—even the kilts, which were not worn by the Scots until the 1600s.



Hypothetical narratives are ones that could happen but have not yet. To be effective, they should be based on reality. Here are two examples:

> *Picture this incident: You are standing in line at the grocery checkout, reading the headlines on the Star and National Enquirer for a laugh, checking your phone. Then, the middle-aged man in front of you grabs his shoulder and falls to the ground, unconscious. What would you do in a situation like this? While it has probably never happened to you, people have medical emergencies in public many times a day. Would you know how to respond?*
>
> *IImagine yourself in this situation. It is 3:00 in the morning. You are awakened from a pretty good sleep by a dog barking loudly in the neighborhood. You get up and see green lights coming into your house from the back yard. You go in the direction of the lights and unlock your back door and there, right beside your deck, is an alien spaceship. The door opens and visitors from another planet come out and invite you in, and for the next hour you tour their ship. You can somehow understand them because their communication abilities are far advanced from ours. Now, back to reality. If you were in a foreign country, you would not be able to understand a foreign language unless you had studied it. That is why you should learn a foreign language in college.*

Obviously, the second is so "off-the-wall" that the audience would be wondering about the connection, although it definitely does attract attention. If using a hypothetical narrative, be sure that it is clear that the narrative is hypothetical, not factual. Because of their attention-getting nature, hypothetical narratives are often used in introductions.

4.1.3 Definitions

When we use the term "definition" here as a supporting material, we are not talking about something you can easily find from the dictionary or from the first thing that comes up on Google, such as shown in Figure 7.2



Figure 4.1.1: - Typical dictionary definition

First, using a dictionary definition does not really show your audience that you have researched a topic (anyone can look up a definition in a few seconds). Secondly, does the audience need a definition of a word like "love," "bravery," or "commitment?" They may consider it insulting for you to provide them definition of those words.

To **define** means to set limits on something; defining a word is setting limits on what it means, how the audience should think about the word, and/or how you will use it. We know there are denotative and connotative definitions or meanings for words, which we

usually think of as objective and subjective responses to words. You only need to define words that would be unfamiliar to the audience or words that you want to use in a specialized way.

For example, terms used in specialized fields, often called "jargon," (see Chapter 10) need to be defined and explained. These words may be in medicine, law, the military, technology, or the arts. Some of these words may be in foreign languages, such as Latin (habeas corpus, quid pro quo). Some of them may be acronyms; CBE is a term being used currently higher education that means "Competency Based Education." That is part of a definition, but not a full one—what is competency based education? To answer that question, you would do best to find an officially accepted definition and cite it.

You may want to use a **stipulated definition** early in your speech. In this case, you clearly tell the audience how you are going to use a word or phrase in your speech. "When I use the phrase 'liberal democracy' in this speech, I am using it in the historical sense of a constitution, representative government, and elected officials, not in the sense of any particular issues that are being debated today between progressives and conservatives." This is a helpful technique and makes sure your audience understands you, but you would only want to do this for terms that have confusing or controversial meanings for some.

Although we tend to think of the dictionary definition as the standard, that is only one way of defining something. The dictionary tends to define with synonyms, or other words that are close in meaning. All of us have had the experience of looking up a word and finding a definition that uses another word we do not know! Synonyms are one way to define, but there are some others.

4.1.3.1 Classification and differentiation

This is a fancy way of saying "X is a type of Y, but it is different from the other Ys in that . . ." "A bicycle is type of vehicle that has two wheels, handlebars instead of a steering wheel, and is powered by the feet of the driver." Obviously you know what a bicycle is and it does not need defining, so here are some better examples:

> *Laparoscopic adjustable gastric banding (LAGB) is a (**type of**) surgical procedure that (**how different**) involves the placement of an adjustable silicone belt around the upper portion of the stomach using a laparoscope. The band can be tightened by adding saline to fill the band like blowing air into a doughnut-shaped balloon. The band is connected to a port that is placed under the skin of the abdomen. This port is used to introduce or remove saline into the band.*
>
> *Gestational diabetes is a (**type of**) diabetic condition (**how different**) that appears during pregnancy and usually goes away after the birth of the baby.*
>
> *Social publishing platforms are a **(type of)** social medium where **(how different)** long and short-form written content can be shared with other users.*

4.1.3.2 Operational Definitions

Operational definitions give examples of an action or idea to define it. If we were to define "quid pro quo sexual harassment" operationally, we might use a hypothetical narrative of a female employee who is pressured by her supervisor to date him and told she must go out with him socially to get a promotion. Operational definitions do not have to be this dramatic, but they do draw a picture and answer the question, "What does this look like in real life?" rather than using synonyms to define.

4.1.3.3 Definition by Contrast or Comparison

You can define a term or concept by telling what it is similar to or different from. This method requires the audience to have an understanding of whatever you are using as the point of contrast or comparison. When alcoholism or drug addiction is defined as a disease, that is a comparison. Although not caused by a virus or bacteria, addiction disorder has other qualities that are disease-like

When defining by contrast, you are pointing how a concept or term is distinct from another more familiar one. For example, "pop culture" is defined as different from "high culture" in that, traditionally, popular culture has been associated with people of lower socioeconomic status (i.e. less wealth or education). High culture, on the other hand, is associated with as the "official" culture of the more highly educated within the upper classes. Here, the definition of popular culture is clarified by highlighting the differences between it and high culture.ed within the upper classes. Here, the definition of popular culture is clarified by highlighting the differences between it and high culture.

A similar form of definition by contrast is defining by negation, which is stipulating what something is not. This famous quotation from Nelson Mandela is an example: "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." Here, Mandela is helping us draw limits around a concept by saying what it is not.

4.1.4 Descriptions

The key to description is to think in terms of the five senses: sight (visual; how does the thing look in terms of color, size, shape), hearing (auditory; volume, musical qualities), taste (gustatory; sweet, bitter, salty, sour, gritty, smooth, chewy), smell (olfactory; sweet, rancid, fragrant, aromatic, musky), and feel (tactile; rough, silky, nubby, scratchy). The words **kinesthetic** (movement of the body) and **organic** (feelings related to the inner workings of the body) can be added to those senses to describe internal physical feeling, such as straining muscles or pain (**kinesthetic**) and nausea or the feelings of heightened emotions (**organic**).

Description as a method of support also depends on details, or answering the five questions of what, where, how, who, when. To use description, you must dig deeper into your vocabulary and think concretely. This example shows that progression.

> *Furniture*
>
> *A chair*
>
> *A recliner*
>
> *A La-Z-Boy® rocker-recliner*
>
> *An old green velvet La-Z-Boy® rocker recliner An old lime green velvet La-Z-Boy® rocker recliner with a cigarette burn on the left arm*

As you add more description, two things happen. The "camera focus" becomes clearer, but you also add tone, or attitude. A recliner is one thing, but who buys a lime green velvet recliner? And someone sat in it smoked and was sloppy about it. In this case, the last line is probably too much description unless you want to paint a picture of a careless person with odd taste in furniture.



Description is useful as supporting material in terms of describing processes. This topic was discussed in Chapter 6 in chronological patterns of organization. Describing processes requires detail and not taking for granted what the audience already knows. Some instructors use the "peanut butter sandwich" example to make this point: How would you describe making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich to someone who had never seen, a sandwich, peanut butter, or jelly? You would need to put yourself in their shoes to describe the process and not assume they know that the peanut butter and jelly go on the inside, facing surfaces of the bread, and that two pieces of bread are involved

4.1.5 Historic and Scientific Fact

This type of supporting material is useful for clarification but is especially useful for proving a point. President John Adams is quoted as saying, "Facts are stubborn things," but that does not mean everyone accepts every fact as a fact, or that everyone is capable of distinguishing a fact from an opinion. A fact is defined by the Urban Dictionary as "The place most people in the world tend to think their opinions reside." This is a humorous definition, but often true about how we approach facts. The meaning of "fact" is complicated by the context in which it is being used. The National Center for Science Education (2008) defines fact this way:

> *In science, an observation that has been repeatedly confirmed and for all practical purposes is accepted as 'true.' Truth in science, however, is never final and what is accepted as a fact today may be modified or even discarded tomorrow.*

Another source explains fact this way:

> [Fact is] a truth known by actual experience or observation. The hardness of iron, the number of ribs in a squirrel's body, the existence *of fossil trilobites, and the like are all facts. Is it a fact that electrons orbit around atomic nuclei? Is it a fact that Brutus stabbed Julius Caesar? Is it a fact that the sun will rise tomorrow? None of us has observed any of these things - the first is an inference from a variety of different observations, the second is reported by Plutarch and other historians who lived close enough in time and space to the event that we trust their report, and the third is an inductive inference after repeated observations. ("Scientific Thought: Facts, Hypotheses, Theories, and all that stuff")*

Without getting into a philosophical dissertation on the meaning of truth, for our purposes facts are pieces of information with established "backup." You can cite who discovered the fact and how other authorities have supported it. Some facts are so common that most people don't know where they started—who actually discovered that the water molecule is two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen (H2O)? But we could find out if we wanted to (it was, by the way, the 18th century chemist Henry Cavendish). In using scientific and historical fact in your speech, do not take citation for granted. If it is a fact worth saying and a fact new to the audience, assume you should cite the source of the fact, getting as close to the original as possible.

Also, the difference between historical narrative (mentioned above) and historical fact has to do with length. An historical fact might just be a date, place, or action, such as "President Ronald Reagan was shot by John Hinckley on March 30, 1981, in front of Washington, D.C. Hilton Hotel." An historical narratives would go into much more detail and add dramatic elements, such as this assassination attempt from the point of view of Secret Service agents.

4.1.6 Statistics

Statistics are misunderstood. First, the meaning of the term is misunderstood. Statistics are not just numbers or numerical facts. The essence of statistics is the collection, analysis, comparison, and interpretation of numerical data, understanding its comparison with other numerical data. For example, it is a numerical fact that the population of the U.S., according to the 2010 census, was 308,700,000. This is a 9.7% increase from the 2000 census; this comparison is a statistic. However, for the purpose of simplicity, we will deal with both numerical facts and real statistics in this section.

Statistics are also misunderstood because the science of statistics is difficult. Even terms like mean, median, and mode often confuse people, much less regression analysis, two-tailed T-tests, and margin of error. Before you can use statistics in a speech, you should have a basic understanding of them.

Mean iis the same as mathematical average, something you learned to do early in math classes. Add up the figures and divide by the number of figures. Related to mean is the concept of standard deviation, which is the average amount each figure is different from (higher or lower) than the average or mean. Standard deviation is harder to figure (and usually done by computer!) but it does let you know if a group is more similar than alike. If the average on a test in a class is 76, but the standard deviation is 20, that tells you students tended to do really well (96) or really poorly (56) on it (we're simplifying here, but you see the point).

The **median**, however, is the middle number in a distribution. If all salaries of ballplayers in MLB were listed from highest to lowest, the one in the exact middle of the list would be the median. You can tell from this that it probably will not be the same as the average, and it rarely is; however, the terms "median" and "mean" are often interchanged carelessly. Mode is the name for the most frequently occurring number in the list. As an example, Figure 7.3 is a list of grades from highest to lowest that students might make on a midterm in a class. The placement of mean, median, and mode are noted.

Percentages have to do with ratios. There are many other terms you would be introduced to in a statistics class, but the point remains: be careful of using a statistic that sounds impressive unless you know what it represents. There is an old saying about "figures don't lie but liars figure" and another, "There are liars, damn liars, and statisticians." These sayings are exaggerations but they point out that we are inundated with statistical information and often do not know how to process it. Another thing to watch when using numerical facts is not to confuse your billions and your millions. There is a big difference. If you say that 43 billion people in the US are without adequate health care, you will probably confuse your audience, since the population of the planet is around 7 billion!

In using statistics, you are probably going to use them as proof more than as explanation. Statistics are considered a strong form of proof. Here are some guidelines for using them effectively in a presentation.

98	
96	
96	
94	
92	
90	The mode, (90) appears in this list 4 times, more than any other grade in the class
90	
90	
86	
80	The median, 9 grades are above it and 10 below
78	
78	
78	The mean is 76.57, much lower than either the mode or median
72	
70	
68	
68	
66	
60	
56	

Figure 4.1.2: - Mean, Mode, Median

1. Use statistics as support, not as a main point. The audience may cringe or tune you out for saying, “Now I’d like to give you some statistics about the problem of gangs in our part of the state.” That sounds as exciting as reading the telephone book! Use the statistics to support an argument. “Gang activity is increasing in our region. For example, it is increasing in the three major cities. Mainsville had 450 arrests for gang activity this year alone, up 20% from all of last year.” This example ties the numerical fact (450 arrests) and the statistical comparison (up 20%) to an argument. The goal is to weave or blend the statistics seamlessly into the speech, not have them stand alone as a section of the speech.
2. Always provide the source of the statistic. In the previous example, it should read, “According to a report published on the Georgia Bureau of Investigation’s website, Mainsville had 450 arrests . . .” There are a number of “urban myth” statistics floating around that probably have a basis in some research done at some point in time, but that research was outlived by the statistic. An audience would have reason to be skeptical if you cannot provide the name of the researcher or organization that backs up the statistics and numerical data. By the way, it is common for speakers and writers to say “According to research” or “According to studies.” This tag is essentially meaningless and actually a logical fallacy. Give a real source to support your argument.
3. . In regard to sources, depend on the reliable ones. Table 7.1, originally published in Wrench, Goding, Johnson, and Attias (2011), lists valid websites providing statistical information.
4. Do not overuse statistics. While there is no hard and fast rule on how many to use, there are other good supporting materials and you would not want to depend on statistics alone. You want to choose the statistics and numerical data that will strengthen your argument the most and drive your point home. Statistics can have emotional power as well as probative value if used sparingly.

5. Use graphs to display the most important statistics. If you are using presentation software such as PowerPoint, you can create your own basic pie, line, or bar graphs, or you can borrow one and put a correct citation on the slide. However, you do not need to make a graph for every single statistic. More information on these types of visual aids and what type of information they convey best can be found in Chapter 9.
6. Explain your statistics as needed, but do not make your speech a statistics lesson. Explain the context of the statistics. If you say, “My blog has 500 subscribers” to a group of people who know little about blogs, that might sound impressive, but is it? You can also provide a story of an individual, and then tie the individual into the statistic. After telling a story of the daily struggles of a young mother with multiple sclerosis, you could follow up with “This is just one story in the 400,000 people who suffer from MS in the United States today, according to National MS Society.”
7. If you do your own survey or research and use numerical data from it, explain your methodology. “In order to understand the attitudes of freshmen at our college about the subject of open source textbooks, I polled 150 first-year students, only three of whom were close friends, asking them this question: ‘Do you agree that our college should encourage the faculty to use open source textbooks?’ Seventy-five percent of them indicated that they agreed with the statement.”
8. . It goes without saying that you will use the statistic ethically, that there will be no distortion of what the statistic means. However, it is acceptable and a good idea to round up numerical data to avoid overwhelming the audience. Earlier we used the example of the U.S. census, stating the population in 2010 was 308.7 million. That is a rounded figure. The actual number was 308,745,538, but saying “almost 309 million” or “308.7 million” will serve your purposes and not be unethical.
9. Additionally, do not make statistics mean what they do not mean. Otherwise, you would be pushing the boundaries on ethics. In the example about your survey of students, if you were to say, “75% of college freshmen support . . . .” That is not what the research said. Seventy-five percent of the students you surveyed indicated agreement, but since your study did not meet scientific standards regarding size of sample and how you found the sample, you can only use the information in relation to students in your college, not the whole country. One of the authors had a statistics professor who often liked to say, “Numbers will tell you whatever you want if you torture them long enough,” meaning you can always twist or manipulate statistics to meet your goals if you want to.
10. An effective technique with numerical data is to use physical comparisons. “The National Debt is 17 trillion dollars. What does that mean? It means that every American citizen owes $55,100.” “It means that if the money were stacked as hundred dollar bills, it would go to . . .” Or another example, “There are 29 million Americans with diabetes. That is 9.3%. In terms closer to home, of the 32 people in this classroom, 3 of us would have diabetes.” Of course, in this last example, the class may not be made up of those in risk groups for diabetes, so you would not want to say, “Three of us have diabetes.” It is only a comparison for the audience to grasp the significance of the topic.
11. Finally, because statistics can be confusing, slow down when you say them, give more emphasis, gesture—small ways of helping the audience grasp them.

Table 4.1.1: - *Statistics-Oriented Websites*

https://www.bls.gov/	Bureau of Labor Statistics provides links to a range of websites for labor issues related to a vast range of countries as well as information for USA labor issues
https://www.usa.gov/statistics	Provides statistics on the USA federal government
https://www.bjs.gov/	Bureau of Justice statistics provides information on crime statistics in the USA
https://www.census.gov/	US Census Bureau provides a wide range of information about people living in the USA
https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/index.htm	National Center for Health Statistics is provided by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It provides information on health issues in the USA
https://senseaboutscienceusa.org/stats-check/	A non-profit organization that helps people understand quantitative data and provides some on the website
https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/	Roper Center for Public Opinion Research provides data related to a range of issues in the USA

https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/	Nielsen provides data on consumer use of various media formats
https://www.gallup.com/home.aspx	Gallup provides public opinion data on a range of social and political issues in the USA and around the world
https://www.pewresearch.org/	Pew Research Center provides public opinion data Gallup provides public opinion data on a range of social and political issues in the USA and around the world

4.1.7 Testimony

Testimony y is the words of others. You might think of them as quoted material. Obviously, all quoted material or testimony is not the same. Some quotations you just use because they are funny, compelling, or attention-getting. They work well as openings to introductions. Other types of testimony are more useful for proving your arguments. Testimony can also give an audience insight into the feelings or perceptions of others. Testimony is basically divided into two categories: expert and peer.

4.1.7.1 Expert Testimony

What is an expert? Here is a quotation of the humorous kind: An expert is "one who knows more and more about less and less" (Nicholas Butler). Actually, an **expert** for our purposes is someone with recognized credentials, knowledge, education, and/or experience in a subject. Experts spend time studying the facts and putting the facts together. They may not be scholars who publish original research but they have in-depth knowledge. They may have certain levels of education, or they have real-world experience in the topic.

For example, one of the authors is attending a quilt show this week to talk to experts in quilting. This expertise was gained through years of making, preserving, reading about, and showing quilts, even if they never took Quilting 101 in college. To quote an expert on expertise, "To be an expert, someone needs to have considerable knowledge on a topic or considerable skill in accomplishing something" (Weinstein, 1993). In using expert testimony, you should follow these guidelines:

- Use the expert's testimony in his or her relevant field, not outside of it. A person may have a Nobel Prize in economics, but that does not make him or her an expert in biology.
- Provide at least some of the expert's relevant credentials.
- Choose experts to quote whom your audience will respect and/or whose name or affiliations they will recognize as credible.
- Make it clear that you are quoting the expert testimony verbatim or paraphrasing it. If verbatim, say "Quote . . . end of quote" (not unquote—you cannot unquote someone).
- If you interviewed the expert yourself, make that clear in the speech also. "When I spoke with Dr. Mary Thompson, principal of Park Lake High School, on October 12, she informed me that . . ."

Expert testimony is one of your strongest supporting materials to prove your arguments, but in a sense, by clearly citing the source's credentials, you are arguing that your source is truly an expert (if the audience is unfamiliar with him or her) in order to validate his or her information.

4.1.7.2 Peer Testimony

Any quotation from a friend, family member, or classmate about an incident or topic would be **peer testimony**. It is useful in helping the audience understand a topic from a personal point of view. For example, in the spring of 2011, a devastating tornado came through the town where one of the authors and many of their students live. One of those students gave a dramatic personal experience speech in class about surviving the tornado in a building that was destroyed and literally disappeared. They survived because she and her coworkers at their chain restaurant were able to get to safety in the freezer. While she may not have had an advanced degree in a field related to tornadoes or the destruction they can cause, this student certainly had a good deal of knowledge on the subject based on her experience of surviving a tornado. However, do not present any old testimony of a peer or friend as if it were expert or credentialed.

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4.2: Exploring Types of Support

Learning Objectives

1. Understand how speakers can use statistics to support their speeches.
2. Differentiate among the five types of definitions.
3. Differentiate among four types of supportive examples.
4. Explain how narratives can be used to support informative, persuasive, and entertaining speeches.
5. Differentiate between the two forms of testimony.
6. Differentiate between two types of analogies that can be used as support.



Figure 4.2.1: Mgnifying Glass (CC BY 2.0; Tall Chris via Flickr)

Now that we've explained why support is important, let's examine the various types of support that speakers often use within a speech: facts and statistics, definitions, examples, narratives, testimony, and analogies.

4.2.1 Facts and Statistics

As we discussed in Chapter 7 "Researching Your Speech", a fact is a truth that is arrived at through the scientific process. Speakers often support a point or specific purpose by citing facts that their audience may not know. A typical way to introduce a fact orally is "Did you know that…?"

Many of the facts that speakers cite are based on statistics. Statistics is the mathematical subfield that gathers, analyzes, and makes inferences about collected data. Data can come in a wide range of forms—the number of people who buy a certain magazine, the average number of telephone calls made in a month, the incidence of a certain disease. Though few people realize it, much of our daily lives are governed by statistics. Everything from seat-belt laws, to the food we eat, to the amount of money public schools receive, to the medications you are prescribed are based on the collection and interpretation of numerical data.

It is important to realize that a public speaking textbook cannot begin to cover statistics in depth. If you plan to do statistical research yourself, or gain an understanding of the intricacies of such research, we strongly recommend taking a basic class in statistics or quantitative research methods. These courses will better prepare you to understand the various statistics you will encounter.

However, even without a background in statistics, finding useful statistical information related to your topic is quite easy. Table 8.3 "Statistics-Oriented Websites" provides a list of some websites where you can find a range of statistical information that may be useful for your speeches.

Table 8.3 Statistics-Oriented Websites

Website	Type of Information
http://www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm	Bureau of Labor Statistics provides links to a range of websites for labor issues related to a vast range of countries.
http://bjs.gov	Bureau of Justice Statistics provides information on crime statistics in the United States.

Website	Type of Information
http://www.census.gov	US Census Bureau provides a wide range of information about people living in the United States.
https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/	National Center for Health Statistics is a program conducted by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It provides information on a range of health issues in the United States.
http://www.stats.org	STATS is a nonprofit organization that helps people understand quantitative data. It also provides a range of data on its website.
http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/	Roper Center for Public Opinion provides data related to a range of issues in the United States.
http://www.nielsen.com	Nielsen provides data on consumer use of various media forms.
http://www.gallup.com	Gallup provides public opinion data on a range of social and political issues in the United States and around the world.
http://www.adherents.com	Adherents provides both domestic and international data related to religious affiliation.
http://people-press.org	Pew Research Center provides public opinion data on a range of social and political issues in the United States and around the world.

Statistics are probably the most used—and misused—form of support in any type of speaking. People like numbers. People are impressed by numbers. However, most people do not know how to correctly interpret numbers. Unfortunately, there are many speakers who do not know how to interpret them either or who intentionally manipulate them to mislead their listeners. As the saying popularized by Mark Twain goes, “There are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics” (Twain, 1924).

To avoid misusing statistics when you speak in public, do three things. First, be honest with yourself and your audience. If you are distorting a statistic or leaving out other statistics that contradict your point, you are not living up to the level of honesty your audience is entitled to expect. Second, run a few basic calculations to see if a statistic is believable. Sometimes a source may contain a mistake—for example, a decimal point may be in the wrong place or a verbal expression like “increased by 50 percent” may conflict with data showing an increase of 100 percent. Third, evaluate sources (even those in Table 8.3 “Statistics-Oriented Websites”, which are generally reputable) according to the criteria discussed earlier in the chapter: accuracy, authority, currency, and objectivity.

4.2.2 Definitions

Imagine that you gave a speech about the use of presidential veto and your audience did not know the meaning of the word “veto.” In order for your speech to be effective, you would need to define what a veto is and what it does. Making sure everyone is “on the same page” is a fundamental task of any communication. As speakers, we often need to clearly define what we are talking about to make sure that our audience understands our meaning. The goal of a definition is to help speakers communicate a word or idea in a manner that makes it understandable for their audiences. For the purposes of public speaking, there are four different types of definitions that may be used as support: lexical, persuasive, stipulative, and theoretical.

4.2.3 Lexical Definitions

A lexical definition is one that specifically states how a word is used within a specific language. For example, if you go to Dictionary.com and type in the word “speech,” here is the lexical definition you will receive:

Speech
–noun

the faculty or power of speaking; oral communication; ability to express one’s thoughts and emotions by speech sounds and gesture: *Losing her speech made her feel isolated from humanity.*

the act of speaking: *He expresses himself better in speech than in writing.*

something that is spoken; an utterance, remark, or declaration: *We waited for some speech that would indicate her true feelings.*

a form of communication in spoken language, made by a speaker before an audience for a given purpose: a fiery speech.
any single utterance of an actor in the course of a play, motion picture, etc.
the form of utterance characteristic of a particular people or region; a language or dialect.
manner of speaking, as of a person: *Your slovenly speech is holding back your career.*

a field of study devoted to the theory and practice of oral communication.

Lexical definitions are useful when a word may be unfamiliar to an audience and you want to ensure that the audience has a basic understanding of the word. However, our ability to understand lexical definitions often hinges on our knowledge of other words that are used in the definition, so it is usually a good idea to follow a lexical definition with a clear explanation of what it means in your own words.

4.2.4 Persuasive Definitions

Persuasive definitions are designed to motivate an audience to think in a specific manner about the word or term. Political figures are often very good at defining terms in a way that are persuasive. Frank Luntz, a linguist and political strategist, is widely regarded as one of the most effective creators of persuasive definitions (Luntz, 2007). Luntz has the ability to take terms that people don't like and repackage them into persuasive definitions that give the original term a much more positive feel. Here are some of Luntz's more famous persuasive definitions:

- Oil drilling → energy exploration
- Estate tax → death tax
- School vouchers → opportunity scholarships
- Eavesdropping → electronic intercepts
- Global warming → climate change

Luntz has essentially defined the terms in a new way that has a clear political bent and that may make the term more acceptable to some audiences, especially those who do not question the lexical meaning of the new term. For example, "oil drilling" may have negative connotations among citizens who are concerned about the environmental impact of drilling, whereas "energy exploration" may have much more positive connotations among the same group.

4.2.5 Stipulative Definitions

A stipulative definition is a definition assigned to a word or term by the person who coins that word or term for the first time. In 1969, Laurence Peter and Raymond Hull wrote a book called *The Peter Principle: Why Things Always Go Wrong*. In this book, they defined the "Peter Principle" as "In a Hierarchy Every Employee Tends to Rise to His [sic] Level of Incompetence" (Peter & Hull, 1969). Because Peter and Hull coined the term "Peter Principle," it was up to them to define the term as they saw fit. You cannot argue with this definition; it simply is the definition that was stipulated.

4.2.6 Theoretical Definitions

Theoretical definitions are used to describe all parts related to a particular type of idea or object. Admittedly, these definitions are frequently ambiguous and difficult to fully comprehend. For example, if you attempted to define the word "peace" in a manner that could be used to describe all aspects of peace, then you would be using a theoretical definition. These definitions are considered theoretical because the definitions attempt to create an all-encompassing theory of the word itself.

In an interpersonal communication course, one of our coauthors asked a group of random people online to define the term "falling in love." Here are some of the theoretical definitions they provided:

I think falling in love would be the act of feeling attracted to a person, with mutual respect given to each other, a strong desire to be close and near a person,…and more.

Being content with the person you are with and missing them every minute they are gone.

Um…falling in love is finding a guy with lots of credit cards and no balances owing.

Falling in love is when you take away the feeling, the passion, and the romance in a relationship and find out you still care for that person.

Meeting someone who makes your heart sing.

Skydiving for someone's lips.

Definitions are important to provide clarity for your audience. Effective speakers strike a balance between using definitions where they are needed to increase audience understanding and leaving out definitions of terms that the audience is likely to know. For example, you may need to define what a "claw hammer" is when speaking to a group of Cub Scouts learning about basic tools, but you would appear foolish—or even condescending—if you defined it in a speech to a group of carpenters who use claw hammers every day. On the other hand, just assuming that others know the terms you are using can lead to ineffective communication as well. Medical doctors are often criticized for using technical terms while talking to their patients without taking time to define those terms. Patients may then walk away not really understanding what their health situation is or what needs to be done about it.

4.2.7 Examples

Another often-used type of support is examples. An example is a specific situation, problem, or story designed to help illustrate a principle, method, or phenomenon. Examples are useful because they can help make an abstract idea more concrete for an audience by providing a specific case. Let's examine four common types of examples used as support: positive, negative, nonexamples, and best examples.

4.2.8 Positive Examples

A positive example is used to clarify or clearly illustrate a principle, method, or phenomenon. A speaker discussing crisis management could talk about how a local politician handled herself when a local newspaper reported that her husband was having an affair or give an example of a professional baseball player who immediately came clean about steroid use. These examples would provide a positive model for how a corporation in the first instance, and an individual in the second instance, should behave in crisis management. The purpose of a positive example is to show a desirable solution, decision, or course of action.

4.2.9 Negative Examples

Negative examples, by contrast, are used to illustrate what *not* to do. On the same theme of crisis management, a speaker could discuss the lack of communication from Union Carbide during the 1984 tragedy in Bhopal, India, or the many problems with how the US government responded to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The purpose of a negative example is to show an undesirable solution, decision, or course of action.

4.2.10 Nonexamples

A nonexample is used to explain what something is *not*. On the subject of crisis management, you might mention a press release for a new Adobe Acrobat software upgrade as an example of corporate communication that is not crisis management. The press release nonexample helps the audience differentiate between crisis management and other forms of corporate communication.

4.2.11 Best Examples

The final type of example is called the best example because it is held up as the "best" way someone should behave within a specific context. On the crisis management theme, a speaker could show a clip of an effective CEO speaking during a press conference to show how one should behave both verbally and nonverbally during a crisis. While positive examples show appropriate ways to behave, best examples illustrate the best way to behave in a specific context.

Although examples can be very effective at helping an audience to understand abstract or unfamiliar concepts, they do have one major drawback: some audience members may dismiss them as unusual cases that do not represent what happens most of the time. For example, some opponents of wearing seat belts claim that *not* wearing your seat belt can help you be thrown from a car and save you from fire or other hazards in the wrecked automobile. Even if a speaker has a specific example of an accident where this was true, many audience members would see this example as a rare case and thus not view it as strong support.

Simply finding an example to use, then, is not enough. An effective speaker needs to consider how the audience will respond to the example and how the example fits with what else the audience knows, as discussed under the heading of accuracy earlier in this chapter.

4.2.12 Narratives

A fourth form of support are narratives, or stories that help an audience understand the speaker's message. Narratives are similar to examples except that narratives are generally longer and take on the form of a story with a clear arc (beginning, middle, and end).

People like stories. In fact, narratives are so important that communication scholar Walter Fisher believes humans are innately storytelling animals, so appealing to people through stories is a great way to support one's speech (Fisher, 1987).

However, you have an ethical responsibility as a speaker to clearly identify whether the narrative you are sharing is real or hypothetical. In 1981, *Washington Post* reporter Janet Cooke was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for her story of an eight-year-old heroin addict (Cooke, 1980). After acknowledging that her story was a fake, she lost her job and the prize was rescinded (Green, 1981). In 2009, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal gave a nationally televised speech where he recounted a story of his interaction with a local sheriff in getting help for Hurricane Katrina victims. His story was later found to be false; Jindal admitted that he had heard the sheriff tell the story after it happened but he had not really been present at the time (Finch, 2009).

Obviously, we are advocating that you select narratives that are truthful when you use this form of support in a speech. Clella Jaffe explains that narratives are a fundamental part of public speaking and that narratives can be used for support in all three general purposes of speaking: informative, persuasive, and entertaining (Jaffe, 2010).

4.2.13 Informative Narratives

Jaffe defines informative narratives as those that provide information or explanations about a speaker's topic (Jaffe, 2010). Informative narratives can help audiences understand nature and natural phenomena, for example. Often the most complicated science and mathematical issues in our world can be understood through the use of story. While many people may not know all the mathematics behind gravity, most of us have grown up with the story of how Sir Isaac Newton was hit on the head by an apple and developed the theory of gravity. Even if the story is not precisely accurate, it serves as a way to help people grasp the basic concept of gravity.

4.2.14 Persuasive Narratives

Persuasive narratives are stories used to persuade people to accept or reject a specific attitude, value, belief, or behavior. Religious texts are filled with persuasive narratives designed to teach followers various attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors. Parables or fables are designed to teach people basic lessons about life. For example, read the following fable from Aesop (http://www.aesopfables.com): "One winter a farmer found a snake stiff and frozen with cold. He had compassion on it, and taking it up, placed it in his bosom. The Snake was quickly revived by the warmth, and resuming its natural instincts, bit its benefactor, inflicting on him a mortal wound. 'Oh,' cried the Farmer with his last breath, 'I am rightly served for pitying a scoundrel.'" This persuasive narrative is designed to warn people that just because you help someone in need doesn't mean the other person will respond in kind.

4.2.15 Entertaining Narratives

Entertaining narratives are stories designed purely to delight an audience and transport them from their daily concerns. Some professional speakers make a very good career by telling their own stories of success or how they overcame life's adversities. Comedians such as Jeff Foxworthy tell stories that are ostensibly about their own lives in a manner designed to make the audience laugh. While entertaining narratives may be a lot of fun, people should use them sparingly as support for a more serious topic or for a traditional informative or persuasive speech.

4.2.16 Testimony

Another form of support you may employ during a speech is testimony. When we use the word "testimony" in this text, we are specifically referring to expert opinion or direct accounts of witnesses to provide support for your speech. Notice that within this definition, we refer to both expert and eyewitness testimony.

4.2.17 Expert Testimony

Expert testimony accompanies the discussion we had earlier in this chapter related to what qualifies someone as an expert. In essence, expert testimony expresses the attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors recommended by someone who is an acknowledged expert on a topic. For example, imagine that you're going to give a speech on why physical education should be mandatory for all grades K–12 in public schools. During the course of your research, you come across *The Surgeon General's Vision for a Fit and Healthy Nation* (www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/obesityvision/obesityvision2010.pdf). You might decide to cite information from within the report written by US Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin about her strategies for combating the problem of childhood obesity within the United States. If so, you are using the words from Dr. Benjamin, as a noted expert on the subject, to support your speech's basic premise. Her expertise is being used to give credibility to your claims.

4.2.18 Eyewitness Testimony

Eyewitness testimony, on the other hand, is given by someone who has direct contact with the phenomenon of your speech topic. Imagine that you are giving a speech on the effects of the 2010 “Deepwater Horizon” disaster in the Gulf of Mexico. Perhaps one of your friends happened to be on a flight that passed over the Gulf of Mexico and the pilot pointed out where the platform was. You could tell your listeners about your friend’s testimony of what she saw as she was flying over the spill.

However, using eyewitness testimony as support can be a little tricky because you are relying on someone’s firsthand account, and firsthand accounts may not always be reliable. As such, you evaluate the credibility of your witness and the recency of the testimony.

To evaluate your witness’s credibility, you should first consider how you received the testimony. Did you ask the person for the testimony, or did he or she give you the information without being asked? Second, consider whether your witness has anything to gain from his or her testimony. Basically, you want to know that your witness isn’t biased.

Second, consider whether your witness’ account was recent or something that happened some time ago. With a situation like the BP oil spill, the date when the spill was seen from the air makes a big difference. If the witness saw the oil spill when the oil was still localized, he or she could not have seen the eventual scope of the disaster.

Overall, the more detail you can give about the witness and when the witness made his or her observation, the more useful that witness testimony will be when attempting to create a solid argument. However, never rely completely on eyewitness testimony because this form of support is not always the most reliable and may still be perceived as biased by a segment of your audience.

4.2.19 Analogies

An analogy is a figure of speech that compares two ideas or objects, showing how they are similar in some way. Analogies, for public speaking purposes, can also be based in logic. The logical notion of analogies starts with the idea that two ideas or objects are similar, and because of this similarity, the two ideas or objects must be similar in other ways as well. There are two different types of analogies that speakers can employ: figurative and literal.

4.2.20 Figurative Analogies

Figurative analogies compare two ideas or objects from two different classes. For the purposes of understanding analogies, a “class” refers to a group that has common attributes, characteristics, qualities, or traits. For example, you can compare a new airplane to an eagle. In this case, airplanes and eagles clearly are not the same type of objects. While both may have the ability to fly, airplanes are made by humans and eagles exist in nature.

Alternatively, you could attempt to compare ideas such as the struggle of The Church of Reality (http://www.churchofreality.org/wisdom/welcome_home/, a group that sees the use of marijuana as a religious sacrament) to the struggle of the civil rights movement. Is a church’s attempt to get marijuana legalized truly the same as the 1960s civil rights movement? Probably not, in most people’s view, as fighting for human rights is not typically seen as equivalent to being able to use a controlled substance.

Figurative analogies are innately problematic because people often hear them and immediately dismiss them as far-fetched. While figurative analogies may be very vivid and help a listener create a mental picture, they do not really help a listener determine the validity of the information being presented. Furthermore, speakers often overly rely on figurative analogies when they really don’t have any other solid evidence. Overall, while figurative analogies may be useful, we recommend solidifying them with other, more tangible support.

4.2.21 Literal Analogies

Literal analogies, on the other hand, compare two objects or ideas that clearly belong to the same class. The goal of the literal analogy is to demonstrate that the two objects or ideas are similar; therefore, they should have further similarities that support your argument. For example, maybe you’re giving a speech on a new fast-food brand that you think will be a great investment. You could easily compare that new fast-food brand to preexisting brands like McDonald’s, Subway, or Taco Bell. If you can show that the new start-up brand functions similarly to other brands, you can use that logic to suggest that the new brand will also have the same kind of success as the existing brands.

When using literal analogies related to ideas, make sure that the ideas are closely related and can be viewed as similar. For example, take the Church of Reality discussed in Section 8 “Expert Testimony”. You could compare the Church of Reality’s use of

marijuana to the Native American Church's legal exemption to use peyote in its religious practices. In this instance, comparing two different religious groups' use of illegal drugs and demonstrating that one has legal exemption supports the idea that the other should have an exemption, too.

As with figurative analogies, make sure that the audience can see a reasonable connection between the two ideas or objects being compared. If your audience sees your new fast-food brand as very different from McDonald's or Subway, then they will not accept your analogy. You are basically asking your audience to confirm the logic of your comparison, so if they don't see the comparison as valid, it won't help to support your message.

4.2.21.1 Key Takeaways

- Speakers often use facts and statistics to reinforce or demonstrate information. Unfortunately, many speakers and audience members do not have a strong mathematical background, so it is important to understand the statistics used and communicate this information to the audience.
- Speakers use definitions—which may be lexical, persuasive, stipulative, or theoretical—to clarify their messages. Lexical definitions state how a word is used within a given language. Persuasive definitions are devised to express a word or term in a specific persuasive manner. Stipulative definitions are created when a word or term is coined. Theoretical definitions attempt to describe all parts related to a particular type of idea or object.
- Examples—positive, negative, non, and best—help the audience grasp a concept. Positive examples are used to clarify or clearly illustrate a principle, method, or phenomenon. Negative examples show how not to behave in a specific situation. Nonexamples are used to express what something is not. Best examples show the best way someone should behave in a situation.
- Narratives can be used in all three general purposes of speaking: informative, persuasive, and entertaining. Informative narratives provide information or explanations about a speaker's topic. Persuasive narratives are stories a speaker can use to get his or her audience to accept or reject a specific attitude, value, belief, or behavior. Entertaining narratives are stories that are designed purely to delight an audience. Speakers have an ethical obligation to let the audience know whether a narrative is true or hypothetical.
- Expert testimony is an account given by someone who is a recognized expert on a given topic. Eyewitness testimony is an account given by an individual who has had firsthand experience with a specific phenomenon or idea. Explaining the context of the testimony is important so your audience can evaluate the likelihood that the testimony is accurate, current, and unbiased.
- Analogies, both figurative and literal, can help audiences understand unfamiliar concepts. Figurative analogies compare two ideas or objects from two different classes. Conversely, literal analogies compare two objects or ideas that clearly belong to the same class. Speakers using analogies need to make sure that the audience will be able to see the similarity between the objects or ideas being compared.

4.2.22 Exercises

1. Look at the speech you are currently preparing for your public speaking class. What types of support are you using? Could you enhance the credibility of your speech by using other types of support? If so, what types of support do you think you are lacking?
2. Find and analyze a newspaper op-ed piece or letter to the editor that takes a position on an issue. Which types of support does the writer use? How effective and convincing do you think the use of support is? Why?
3. You've been asked to give a speech on child labor within the United States. Provide a list of possible examples you could use in your speech. You should have one from each of the four categories: positive, negative, non, and best.
4. Of the three types of narratives (informative, persuasive, and entertaining), which one would you recommend to a friend who is giving a sales presentation. Why?

4.2.23 References

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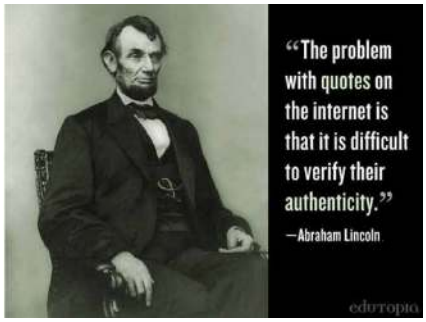
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4.3: Plagiarism

Although there are many ways that you could undermine your ethical stance before an audience, the one that stands out and is committed most commonly in academic contexts is plagiarism. A dictionary definition of plagiarism would be “the act of using another person’s words or ideas without giving credit to that person” (Merriam-Webster, 2015). According to the student help website Plagiarism.org, sponsored by WriteCheck, plagiarism is often thought of as “copying another’s work or borrowing someone else’s original ideas” (“What is Plagiarism?”, 2014). However, this source goes on to say that the common definition may mislead some people. Plagiarism also includes:

- Turning in someone else’s work as your own;
- Copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit;
- Failing to put quotation marks around an exact quotation correctly;
- Giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation;
- Changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit;
- Copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.



Plagiarism exists outside of the classroom and is a temptation in business, creative endeavors, and politics. However, in the classroom, your instructor will probably take the most immediate action if he or she discovers your plagiarism either from personal experience or through using plagiarism detection (or what is also called “originality checking”) software. Many learning management systems, perhaps such as the one used at your institution, now have a plagiarism detection program embedded in the function where you submit assignments.

In the business or professional world, plagiarism is never tolerated because using original work without permission (which usually includes paying fees to the author or artist) can end in serious legal action. The Internet has made plagiarism easier and thus increased the student’s responsibility to know how to cite and use source material correctly.

4.3.1 Types of Plagiarism

In our long experience of teaching, we have encountered many instances of students presenting work they claim to be original and their own when it is not. We have also seen that students often do not intend to plagiarize but, due to poor training in high school, still are committing an act that could result in a failing grade or worse. Generally, there are three levels of plagiarism: stealing, sneaking, and borrowing. Sometimes these types of plagiarism are intentional, and sometimes they occur unintentionally (you may not know you are plagiarizing). However, as everyone knows, “Ignorance of the law is not an excuse for breaking it.” So let’s familiarize you with how plagiarism occurs in order to prevent it from happening.

4.3.2 Stealing

There is a saying in academia: “If you steal from one source, that is plagiarism; if you steal from twelve, that is scholarship.” Whoever originated this saying may have intended for it to be humorous, but it is a misrepresentation of both plagiarism and scholarship.

No one wants to be the victim of theft; if it has ever happened to you, you know how awful it feels. When a student takes an essay, research paper, speech, or outline completely from another source, whether it is a classmate who submitted it for another instructor, from some sort of online essay mill, or from elsewhere, this is an act of theft no better or worse than going into a store and shoplifting. The wrongness of the act is compounded by the fact that then the student lies about it being his or her own. If you are

tempted to do this, run the other way. Your instructor will probably have no mercy on you, and probably neither will the student conduct council.



Most colleges and universities have a policy that penalizes or forbids “self-plagiarism.” This means that you can’t use a paper or outline that you presented in another class a second time. You may think, “How can this be plagiarism or wrong if I wrote both and in my work I cited sources correctly?” The main reason is that by submitting it to your instructor, you are still claiming it is original, first-time work for the assignment in that particular class. Your instructor may not mind if you use some of the same sources from the first time it was submitted, but he or she expects you to follow the instructions for the assignment and prepare an original assignment. In a sense, this situation is also a case of unfairness, since the other students do not have the advantage of having written the paper or outline already.

Another issue that often comes up with students happens when two or more students, perhaps in the same section or different sections of the same course and same instructor, submit the same assignment. When confronted, the student say, “We worked on it together.” If your instructor wants you to work collaboratively, he or she will make that clear. Otherwise, do not do this–the situation usually ends quite badly for students.

4.3.3 Sneaking

In “sneaking plagiarism,” instead of taking work as a whole from another source, the student will copy two out of every three sentences and mix them up so they don’t appear in the same order as in the original work. Perhaps the student will add a fresh introduction, a personal example or two, and an original conclusion. This “sneaky” plagiarism is easy today due to the Internet and the word processing functions of cutting and pasting.

In fact, many students do not see this as the same thing as stealing because they think “I did some research, I looked some stuff up, and I added some of my own work.” Unfortunately, this approach is only marginally better than stealing and will probably end up in the same penalties as the first type of plagiarism. Why? Because no source has been credited, and the student has “misappropriated” the expression of the ideas as well as the ideas themselves. Interestingly, this type of plagiarism can lead to copyright violation if the work with the plagiarism is published.

Most of the time students do not have to worry about copyright violation when they correctly use and cite material from a source. This is because in academic environments, “fair use” is the rule. In short, you are not making any money from using the copyrighted material, such as from a published book. You are only using it for learning purposes and not to make money, so “quoting” (using verbatim) with proper citation a small amount of the material is acceptable for a college class.

If, however, you were going to try to publish and sell an article or book and “borrowed” a large section of material without specifically obtaining permission from the original author, you would be guilty of copyright violation and by extension make your organization or company also guilty. When you enter your career field, the “fair use” principle no longer applies and you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holder and pay fees to use all or portions of a work. For more information on this very important and often misunderstood subject, visit the Creative Commons website and the Library of Congress.

One area in speeches where students are not careful about citing is on their presentational slides. If a graphic or photo is borrowed from a website (that is, you did not design it), there should be a citation in small letters on the slide. The same would be true of borrowed quotations, data, and ideas. Students also like to put their “works cited” or “references” on the last slide, but this really does not help the audience or get around the possibility of plagiarism.

4.3.4 Borrowing

The third type of plagiarism is “borrowing.” In this case, the student is not stealing wholesale. He or she may actually even give credit for the material, either correctly or incorrectly. He might say, “According to the official website of . . .” or “As found in an article in the Journal of Psychology, Dr. John Smith wrote . . .” Sounds good, right? Well, yes and no. It depends on whether the student has borrowed in a “sneaky way” (cutting and pasting passages together but this time indicating where the sections came from) or if the student is using the ideas but not the exact wording. In other words, has the student adequately, correctly, and honestly paraphrased or summarized the borrowed material, or just “strung the sources together” with some “according to’s”?

Students often are puzzled about what and when to cite borrowed material from sources. At this point, your instructor may have specific instructions, and you should always follow those first. However, in most cases you can go by the “repeated information” rule. If you are doing research and access ten sources, and over half of them have the same piece of information (usually a historical or scientific fact or statistic), you can assume this is “common knowledge.” That is, it is common to anyone who knows anything about the subject, and then you do not have to have a citation. If you find a piece of information in one source only, it probably represents the original research or viewpoint of that writer, and should be cited clearly. On the other hand, there are exceptions. An often-cited or used piece of information has an original source, such as a government agency, and you would be better off to find the original source and cite that. Secondly, citing sources adds to your credibility as a prepared speaker. Again, your instructor’s directions on what and how much your cite bear upon this advice. Generally, it is better to err on the side of citing more than less.

4.3.5 Ethically Crediting Sources

In using source material correctly, a speaker does three things:

1. Students often are puzzled about what and when to cite borrowed material from sources. At this point, your instructor may have specific instructions, and you should always follow those first. However, in most cases you can go by the “repeated information” rule. If you are doing research and access ten sources, and over half of them have the same piece of information (usually a historical or scientific fact or statistic), you can assume this is “common knowledge.” That is, it is common to anyone who knows anything about the subject, and then you do not have to have a citation. If you find a piece of information in one source only, it probably represents the original research or viewpoint of that writer, and should be cited clearly. On the other hand, there are exceptions. An often-cited or used piece of information has an original source, such as a government agency, and you would be better off to find the original source and cite that. Secondly, citing sources adds to your credibility as a prepared speaker. Again, your instructor’s directions on what and how much your cite bear upon this advice. Generally, it is better to err on the side of citing more than less.

(Note: This text and its examples use APA because the Communication discipline is considered a social science. As with other advice, use the format your instructor directs you to use.)

A speech is quite different. Saying “According to Jones, p. 78,” really does very little for the audience. They can’t turn to the back of the paper. They don’t have a way, other than oral communication, to understand the type of information being cited, how recent it is, the credibility of the author you are citing and why you think he or she is a valid source, or the title of the work. It is necessary in a speech to give more complete information that would help the audience understand its value. The page number, the publishing company, and city it was published in are probably not important, but what is important is whether it is a website, a scholarly article, or a book; whether it was written in 1950 or 2010; and what is the position, background, or credentials of the source.

So, instead of “According to Jones, p. 78,” a better approach would be,

“According to Dr. Samuel Jones, Head of Cardiology at Vanderbilt University, in a 2010 article in a prestigious medical journal…”

Or

“In her 2012 book, The Iraq War in Context, historian Mary Smith of the University of Georgia states that…”

Or

"In consulting the website for the American Humane Society, I found these statistics about animal abuse compiled by the Society in 2012…”

This approach shows more clearly that you have done proper research to support your ideas and arguments. It also allows your audience to find the material if they want more information. Notice that in all three examples the citation precedes the fact or information being cited. This order allows the audience to recognize the borrowed material better. The use of a clear citation up-front makes it more noticeable as well as more credible to the audience.

2. This approach shows more clearly that you have done proper research to support your ideas and arguments. It also allows your audience to find the material if they want more information. Notice that in all three examples the citation precedes the fact or information being cited. This order allows the audience to recognize the borrowed material better. The use of a clear citation up-front makes it more noticeable as well as more credible to the audience.

3. . The speaker should phrase or summarize the ideas of the source into his or her own words. Paraphrasing, which is putting the words and ideas of others into one's own authentic or personal language, is often misunderstood by students. Your instructor may walk you through an exercise to help your class understand that paraphrasing is not changing 10% of the words in a long quotation (such as two or three out of twenty) but still keeping most of the vocabulary and word order (called syntax) of the source. You should compose the information in your own "voice" or way of expressing yourself.

In fact, you would be better off to think in terms of summarizing your source material rather than paraphrasing. For one thing, you will be less likely to use too much of the original and therefore be skirting the edge of plagiarism. Secondly, you will usually want to put the main arguments of a source in your own words and make it shorter.

Here is an example of an original source and three possible ways to deal with it.

Original information, posted on CNN.com website, October 31, 2015:

"The biggest federal inmate release on record will take place this weekend. About 6,600 inmates will be released, with 16,500 expected to get out the first year. More than 40,000 federal felons could be released early over the next several years, the U.S. Sentencing Commission said. The sentencing commission decided a year ago to lower maximum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders and to make the change retro-active, with the inmate releases effective November 1, 2015. Sentences were reduced an average of 18%, the commission said. Early release will be a challenge for the inmates as well as the judicial bureaucracy" (Casarez, 2015).

With that as our original source, which of the following is truly paraphrasing?

The CNN News website says the federal government is releasing 40,000 felons from prison in the next few years.

According to a report posted on CNN's website on October 31 of 2015, the federal government's Sentencing Commission is beginning to release prisoners in November based on a decision made in 2014. That decision was to make maximum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders shorter by an average of 18%. Over the next several years over 40,000 federal felons could be let go. However, this policy change to early release will not be easy for the justice system or those released.

The largest release ever of federal inmates will take place in early November. At first 6,600 inmates will be released, and then over 16,000 over the first year. The U.S. Sentencing Commission says it could release over 40,000 federal felons over the upcoming years because the sentencing commission decided a year ago to lessen maximum sentences for nonviolent drug offenders and to make this this happen for those already in jail. When the Sentencing Commission says that when it made that decision, the sentences were reduced an average of 18%. Early release will be a challenge for the felons as well as the judicial system. This came from a story on CNN News website in later October 2015.

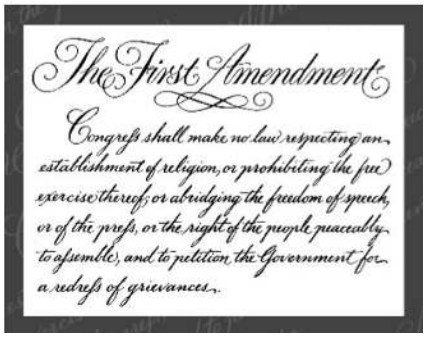
If you chose the second citation, you would be correct. The first version does not really interpret the original statement correctly, and the third choice imitates the original almost entirely. Choice 2, on the other hand, is in completely different language and identifies the source of the information clearly and at the beginning.

This exercises may raise the question, "Should I always paraphrase or summarize rather than directly quote a source?" There are times when it is appropriate to use a source's exact wording, but quoting a source exactly should be done sparingly—sort of like using hot sauce! You should have a good reason for it, such as that the source is highly respected, has said the idea in a compelling way, or the material is well known and others would recognize it. If you do, you should make it clear you are quoting them exactly by the way you introduce and end the borrowed material.

4.3.6 Conclusion

As mentioned before, students often have not been trained to use source material correctly and plagiarize unintentionally. But like the old saying goes, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse." You will still be held accountable whether you understand or not, so now,

in your early college career, is the time you should learn to cite source material correctly in oral and written communication.



4.3.7 Something to Think About

In Appendix B you will find more information about plagiarism

Why do you think it is so hard for students to learn to cite sources appropriately?

The following exercise might be helpful for you to develop an understanding of orally citing your sources.

Choose one of your sources for an upcoming speech for this exercise. On a sheet of paper, answer these 9 questions.

1. Is this information you found in a unique source, or information that was repeated in all or most of your sources? (This may bear upon whether you need to cite the information or not.)
2. Who is the original author or "speaker" of this quotation or material?
3. What is the title of source?
4. . Is it a primary or secondary source? Is the writer quoting someone else (secondary) or is the author the one who discovered the knowledge/information? If the source is secondary, who is being quoted or cited originally?
5. What do you know about the source of the citation? Is she/he an expert, such as a scientist, doctor, government official, college professor, etc?
6. Where did you find the article? In what journal or magazine, on what website, in what book?
7. If a website, who sponsors the website (what organization, government, company)?
8. When was this information published? What is the date on it?
9. Are you repeating the source's words exactly or just abstracting (summarizing) what was said? Which would be better, in this case?

If you had to pick 5 of the 7 above to put in your speech, which would you use, based on the three criteria of 1. Audience can find it 2. It makes you look more credible, and 3. It is ethical? Put a star by them.

If you had to pick 4 of the 7, which one would you take out from the previous question? (Cross it out)

It is not necessary to say all of this information, but most of it should be included in the citation. This is how a speech citation is different from a paper. The audience does not have access to this information unless you say it.

Now, write how you would cite this source in the speech. Some stem phrases would be "According to . . ." "In the article. . ." "On a webpage entitled . . ." "On the website for the . . . . organization. . ." "In my interview with Dr. Sam Smith, who is . . . ."

Compare with classmates.

4.3.7.1 Case study

Jennifer has an informative speech due for Dr. MacKenzie's class. It is about why the gold standard is no longer used in American currency. She chose the subject because she had to write a paper about it in American history class. What should Jennifer consider in how she uses sources?

Jennifer's friend Beth approaches her about having to give an informative speech for Professor Daniels' class. Beth confesses she has been having personal problems and needs help, and she asks Jennifer to let her use some of her outline for Dr. MacKenzie's class. What would be the best course of action for Jennifer?

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4.4: Using Research in a Speech



When writing, an author who uses outside information has specific rules guiding how one cites someone else's work. Whether utilizing MLA, APA, Chicago, or any other formalized set of citation and referencing rules, the guidelines clearly lay out the process for an author. In verbal communication, such as a public speaking context, however, rules do not seem as readily apparent, if they exist at all. Regardless, speakers still have the ethical responsibility to let listeners know where certain outside information originated, so how can they accomplish this?

As mentioned, the rules for writing citations are clear. While styles like MLA and Chicago may have differing rules to format these citations, they all perform the function of letting the reader know specifically where to go look for more information should something resonate with the reader. The in-text citations point to reference materials, usually listed at the end of a paper, chapter, or book, so that the reader can go look up the reference if they choose. In a speech, the responsibility to let listeners know where information came from works a bit differently.

As speakers deliver the message to the audience, they will need to support a claim by using an outside source. At those moments, the speaker has an ethical responsibility to let the audience know where the information came from, just as in writing, but with a subtle difference. A speaker also has the responsibility of letting the audience know why they should perceive the source as credible. Unlike a writer, the speaker does not have the luxury of providing an instantaneous way for the audience to pause the act of communication and look up the source in question.

This begs the question: How much information does a speaker need to share with the audience to demonstrate credibility? The answer, of course, depends on the audience, which provides yet another justification for the speaker to get to know the audience as much as possible prior to the presentation. While this presents some difficulty in assuming how much information provides enough context, typically speakers find it best to err on the side of caution and present more information, but not so much as to become distracting. Take a look at the following two examples:

> **Oral citation 1:** *"According to Dr. Shann Ferch, touch is an integral component in acts of forgiveness."*

In this first sample, the citation provides too little information. All audience members unfamiliar with this expert would know is that this person has earned a doctorate, but they would not know his area of specialty. For all they know, Dr. Ferch could work as a chiropractor, which does not suggest he would not know anything about the topic, but the audience definitely needs more information. However, if the audience knew of Dr. Ferch and his work, then this first oral citation would provide the right amount of information.

> **Oral citation 2:***"According to Dr. Shann Ferch, author of the 2011 book* Forgiveness and Power in the Age of Atrocity, *published by Lexington Books, as well as professor of forgiveness and leadership studies at Gonzaga University, touch is an integral component in acts of forgiveness."*

In this second sample, the citation runs too long. While it does provide ample information (in fact, it provides nearly all the information listed in a bibliography's citation), by the time the speaker finishes relaying all of Dr. Ferch's information, the audience

has forgotten the topic of discussion.

> **Oral citation 3:** *"According to Dr. Shann Ferch, a leadership professor and forgiveness researcher at Gonzaga University, touch is an integral component in acts of forgiveness."*

This third sample provides the perfect amount of information for the average audience unfamiliar with the source. The claim gets effectively supported by providing the audience with just enough information to establish the source's credibility. Commonly known and understood sources do not need much in the way of credibility, however. For example, a mainstream and well-known publication like the *New York Times* needs no initial explanation as to the credibility of the author, so the best rule to follow remains to include only as much information as necessary to make the case for a source's credibility.

But where should the speaker insert bibliographic information? Follow one of the two general approaches to accomplish this: front loading and back loading. Take a look at the following samples:

Back loading: *"More than 90% of our communication is sent through nonverbal channels, such as facial expressions, eye contact, vocal tone, posture, and gestures. Marketers are keenly aware of this fact and often manipulate actors in commercials to provide maximum persuasive effects. I found my information on nonverbal percentages from a book on public speaking by Hamilton Gregory, and I found the information on marketing in an article in* Time Magazine*."*

Front loading: *"According to a book on public speaking by Hamilton Gregory, more than 90% of our communication is sent through nonverbal channels, such as facial expressions, eye contact, vocal tone, posture, and gestures. A recent article in* Time Magazine *suggests that marketers are keenly aware of this fact and often manipulate actors in commercials to provide maximum persuasive effects."*

In the back-loading example, the researched information gets provided up front, and the source for that information comes later. With this type of citation, the audience may initially assume that the speaker created the factual information, but after the speaker reveals the source, the audience comes to realize that it comes from an outside source. In the front-loading example, the audience gets immediately cued to hear that the information that follows comes from an outside source, but done in 11 fewer words, allowing a more conversational tone to develop.

Constructing an oral citation seems quite simple, but how do speakers know when and where to insert them? Generally speaking, any time they relay information to the audience gathered from an outside source, they should want to give credit to the original source. Follow this rule the vast majority of the time. In addition, note these more specific instances where a citation becomes absolutely necessary:

- **Any time using numbers**: dates, statistics, total counts, etc. Never leave a number hanging without stating who provided the data.
- **Any time stating a testable, observable, verifiable fact**. Use a source citation to provide support for that fact. For example, "According to recent reports by NASA, evidence suggests that a planet lies beyond the orbit Pluto."
- **Any time the speaker share information that the audience could deem questionable.** Use a credible source to back up the claim. Example: "Cleopatra lived closer to the invention of the iPhone than she did to the building of the Great Pyramid." According to whom?

While these guidelines provide a starting point for where, when, and how to cite outside research, keep in mind that one of the goals of a public speaker is to remain conversational and engaging. If the speech begins to sound like a book report and subsequent bibliography, the audience may very well tune the speaker out. Be sure to find ways to insert this information as support material, but remember to do so as conversationally as possible.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: See What?

5.1: Functions of Presentation Aids
5.2: Presentation Aids
5.3: Don't Ruin a Great Presentation with Terrible Slides
5.4: PowerPoint/Prezi

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5.1: Functions of Presentation Aids

Why should you use presentation aids? If you have prepared and rehearsed your speech adequately, shouldn't a good speech with a good delivery be enough to stand on its own? While it is true that impressive presentation aids will not rescue a poor speech, a good speech can often be made even better by the strategic use of presentation aids. Presentation aids can fulfill several functions: they can serve to improve your audience's understanding of the information you are conveying, enhance audience memory and retention of the message, add variety and interest to your speech, and enhance your credibility as a speaker. Let's examine each of these functions.

5.1.1 Improving Audience Understanding

Human communication is a complex process that often leads to misunderstandings. If you are like most people, you can easily remember incidents when you misunderstood a message or when someone else misunderstood what you said to them. Misunderstandings happen in public speaking just as they do in everyday conversations.

One reason for misunderstandings is the fact that perception and interpretation are highly complex individual processes. Most of us have seen the image in which, depending on your perception, you see either the outline of a vase or the facial profiles of two people facing each other. Or perhaps you have seen the image of the woman who may or may not be young, depending on your frame of reference at the time. This shows how interpretations can differ, and it means that your presentations must be based on careful thought and preparation to maximize the likelihood that your listeners will understand your presentations as you intend them to do so. (You can see these images at http://members.optusnet.com. au/~charles57/Creative/Drawing/vases.htm and https://www.youtube. com/watch?v=P9iv173VtGM.)

As a speaker, one of your basic goals is to help your audience understand your message. To reduce misunderstanding, presentation aids can be used to clarify or to emphasize.

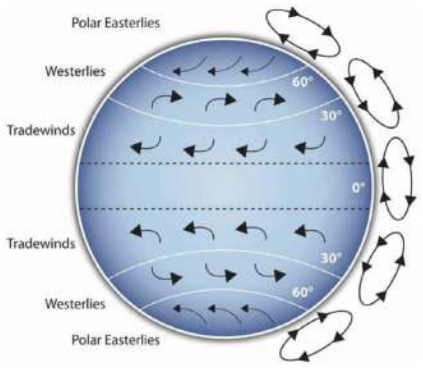


Figure 5.1.1: Coriolis Effect

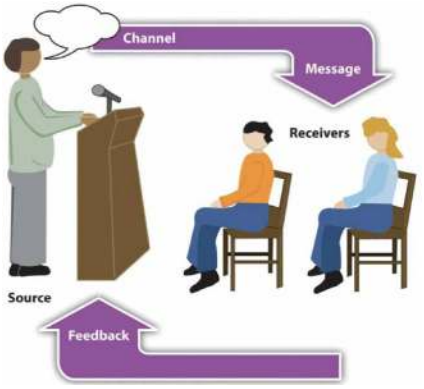


Figure 5.1.2: Model of Communication

5.1.1.1 Clarifying

Clarification is important in a speech because if some of the information you convey is unclear, your listeners will come away puzzled or possibly even misled. Presentation aids can help clarify a message if the information is complex or if the point being made is a visual one.

If your speech is about the impact of the Coriolis Effect on tropical storms, for instance, you will have great difficulty clarifying it without a diagram because the process is a complex one. The diagram in Figure 5.1.1 (“Coriolis Effect”) would be effective because it shows the audience the interaction between equatorial wind patterns and wind patterns moving in other directions. The diagram allows the audience to process the information in two ways: through your verbal explanation and through the visual elements of the diagram. By the way, the Coriolis Effect is defined as “an effect whereby a mass moving in a rotating system experiences a force (the Coriolis force) acting perpendicular to the direction of motion and to the axis of rotation. On the earth, the effect tends to deflect moving objects to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern and is important in the formation of cyclonic weather systems.” You can see why a picture really helps with this definition.

Figure 5.1.2 (“Model of Communication”) is another example of a diagram that maps out the process of human communication. In this image you clearly have a speaker and an audience with the labels of source, channel, message, receivers, and feedback to illustrate a basic model of human communication. As with most models, it is simplified. (Can you remember what two components of the communication process, explained in Chapter 1, that are missing here?)



Figure 5.1.3: Petroglyph example

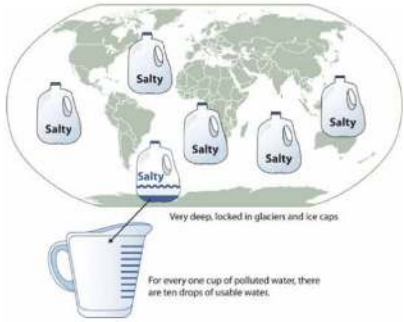


Figure 5.1.4: Planetary Water Supply

Another aspect of clarifying occurs when a speaker wants to help audience members understand a visual concept. For example, if a speaker is talking about the importance of petroglyphs in Native American culture, just describing the petroglyphs won’t completely help your audience to visualize what they look like. Instead, showing an example of a petroglyph, as in Figure 5.1.3 (“Petroglyph”) can more easily help your audience form a clear mental image of your intended meaning.



Figure 5.1.5: Chinese Lettering Amplified. Source: Image courtesy of Wikimedia, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/

5.1.1.2 Emphasizing

When you use a presentational aid for emphasis, you impress your listeners with the importance of an idea. In a speech on water conservation, you might try to show the environmental proportions of the resource. When you use a conceptual drawing like the one in Figure 5.1.4 (“Planetary Water Supply”), you show that if the world water supply were equal to ten gallons, only ten drops

would be available and drinkable for human or household consumption. This drawing is effective because it emphasizes the scarcity of useful water and thus draws attention to this important information in your speech.

Another way of emphasizing that can be done visually is to zoom in on a specific aspect of interest within your speech. In Figure 5.1.5 ("Chinese Lettering Amplified"), we see a visual aid used in a speech on the importance of various parts of Chinese characters. On the left side of the visual aid, we see how the characters all fit together, with an emphasized version of a single character on the right.

So, **clarifying** and **emphasizing** are two roles that support the "Improving Audience Understanding" purpose of presentation aids. What are other purposes?

5.1.2 Aiding Retention and Recall

The second function that presentation aids can serve is to increase the audience's chances of remembering your speech. An article by the U.S. Department of Labor (1996) summarized research on how people learn and remember. The authors found that "83% of human learning occurs visually, and the remaining 17% through the other senses—11% through hearing, 3.5% through smell, 1% through taste, and 1.5% through touch."

For this reason, exposure to an image can serve as a memory aid to your listeners. When your graphic images deliver information effectively and when your listeners understand them clearly, audience members are likely to remember your message long after your speech is over. Moreover, people often are able to remember information that is presented in sequential steps more easily than if that information is presented in an unorganized pattern. When you use a presentation aid to display the organization of your speech (such as can be done with PowerPoint slides), you will help your listeners to observe, follow, and remember the sequence of information you conveyed to them. This is why some instructors display a lecture outline for their students to follow during class and why a slide with a preview of your main points can be helpful as you move into the body of your speech.

An added plus of using presentation aids is that they can boost your memory while you are speaking. Using your presentation aids while you rehearse your speech will familiarize you with the association between a given place in your speech and the presentation aid that accompanies that material.

5.1.3 Adding Variety and Interest

A third function of presentation aids is simply to make your speech more interesting. For example, wouldn't a speech on varieties of roses have greater impact if you accompanied your remarks with a picture of each rose? You can imagine that your audience would be even more enthralled if you had the ability to display an actual flower of each variety in a bud vase. Similarly, if you were speaking to a group of gourmet cooks about Indian spices, you might want to provide tiny samples of spices that they could smell and taste during your speech.

5.1.4 Enhancing a Speaker's Credibility

Presentation aids alone will not be enough to create a professional image. As we mentioned earlier, impressive presentation aids will not rescue a poor speech. Even if you give a good speech, you run the risk of appearing unprofessional if your presentation aids are poorly executed. Conversely, a high quality presentation will contribute to your professional image. This means that in addition to containing important information, your presentation aids must be clear, clean, uncluttered, organized, and large enough for the audience to see and interpret correctly. Misspellings and poorly designed presentation aids can damage your credibility as a speaker.

In addition, make sure that you give proper credit to the source of any presentation aids that you take from other sources. Using a statistical chart or a map without proper credit will detract from your credibility, just as using a quotation in your speech without credit would. This situation will usually take place with digital aids such as PowerPoint slides. The source of a chart or the data shown in a chart form should be cited at the bottom the slide.

If you focus your efforts on producing presentation aids that contribute effectively to your meaning, that look professional, and that are handled well, your audience will most likely appreciate your efforts and pay close attention to your message. That attention will help them learn or understand your topic in a new way and will thus help the audience see you as a knowledgeable, competent, and credible speaker. With the prevalence of digital communication, the audience expectation of quality visual aids has increased.

5.1.5 Avoiding Problems with Presentation Aids

Using presentation aids can come with some risks. However, with a little forethought and adequate practice, you can choose presentation aids that enhance your message and boost your professional appearance in front of an audience. One principle to keep in mind is to use only as many presentation aids as necessary to present your message or to fulfill your classroom assignment. The number and the technical sophistication of your presentation aids should never overshadow your speech.

Another important consideration is technology. Keep your presentation aids within the limits of the working technology available to you. Whether or not your classroom technology works on the day of your speech, you will still have to present. What will you do if the computer file containing your slides is corrupted? What will you do if the easel is broken? What if you had counted on stacking your visuals on a table that disappears right when you need it? Or the Internet connection is down for a YouTube video you plan to show?

You must be prepared to adapt to an uncomfortable and scary situation. This is why we urge students to go to the classroom well ahead of time to test the equipment and ascertain the condition of items they're planning to use. As the speaker, you are responsible for arranging the things you need to make your presentation aids work as intended. Carry a roll of masking tape so you can display your poster even if the easel is gone. Test the computer setup. Have your slides on a flash drive AND send it to yourself as an attachment or upload to a Cloud service. Have an alternative plan prepared in case there is some glitch that prevents your computer-based presentation aids from being usable. And of course, you must know how to use the technology.

More important than the method of delivery is the audience's ability to see and understand the presentation aid. It must deliver clear information, and it must not distract from the message. Avoid overly elaborate presentation aids. Instead, simplify as much as possible, emphasizing the information you want your audience to understand.

Another thing to remember is that presentation aids do not "speak for themselves." When you display a visual aid, you should explain what it shows, pointing out and naming the most important features. If you use an audio aid such as a musical excerpt, you need to tell your audience what to listen for. Similarly, if you use a video clip, it is up to you as the speaker to point out the characteristics in the video that support the point you are making—but probably beforehand, so you are not speaking over the video. At the same time, a visual aid should be quickly accessible to the audience. This is where simplicity comes in. Just as in organization of a speech you would not want to use 20 main points, but more like 3-5, you should limit categories of information on a visual aid.

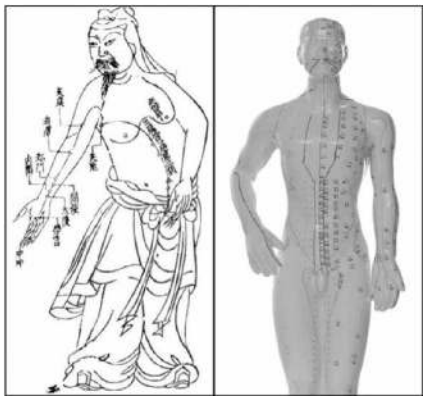


Figure 5.1.6: Acupuncture Charts. Source: Image on the left from Wikimedia, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Acupuncture_chart_300px.jpg. Image on the right © Thinkstock

Congenital Anomalies	Relative Risk	Nunmber of Smokers N = 1,943	Number of Nonsmokers N = 16,073	95% CI	*p*-Value
Cardiovascular System	1.56	43	217	1.12–2.19	$p < .01$
Skeletal System	1.11	19	139	0.68–1.82	NS
Hematologic System	1.39	20	121	0.86–2.25	NS
Nervous System	1.30	4	25	0.91–1.86	NS
Pulmonary System	1.25	7	39	0.55–2.84	NS
Gastrointestinal System	0.54	1	17	0.07–4.11	NS

Figure 5.1.7: Birth Weight Chi-Square. Source: Woods, S. E., & Raju, U. (2001).

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5.2: Presentation Aids

Learning Objectives

- Explain reasons why presentation aids are important in public speeches;
- Detail how presentation aids function;
- Discuss strategies for implementing and integrating presentation aids.

When you give a speech, you are presenting much more than just a collection of words and ideas. Because you are speaking live, your audience members will aesthetically experience your speech through all five of their senses: hearing, vision, smell, taste, and touch. In addition to your verbal and nonverbal embodiment, presentation aids assist in amplifying your content for the audience's overall experience.

Presentation aids are the resources beyond the speech itself that a speaker uses to enhance the message conveyed to the audience. The type of presentation aids that speakers most typically make use of are **visual aids:** pictures, diagrams, charts and graphs, maps, and the like. **Audible aids** include musical excerpts, audio speech excerpts, and sound effects. A speaker may also use fragrance samples or food samples as olfactory (sense of smell) or gustatory (sense of taste) aids. Finally, presentation aids can be three-dimensional objects or they can change over a period of time, as in the case of a how-to demonstration. As you can see, you have a range of presentation aids at your disposal.

Effective presentation aids are guided by two questions:

1. How can I best represent an idea in my speech through a presentation aid?
2. When is best to introduce it to the audience?

If you're able to answer these two main questions, the audience is more likely to understand your idea more fully. Each presentation aid a speaker uses must be a direct, uncluttered example of a specific element of the speech. It is understandable that someone presenting a speech about Abraham Lincoln might want to include a photograph of him, but if there's a high probability that the audience knows what Lincoln looked like, the picture would not contribute much to the message unless, perhaps, the message was specifically about the changes in Lincoln's appearance during his time in office.

In this example, other visual artifacts may be more likely to deliver relevant information—a diagram of the interior of Ford's Theater where Lincoln was assassinated, a facsimile of the messy and much-edited Gettysburg Address, or a photograph of the Lincoln family, for example. The key is that each presentation aid must directly express an idea in your speech.

Moreover, presentation aids must be used at the time when you are presenting the specific ideas related to the aid. For example, if you are speaking about coral reefs and one of your supporting points is about the location of the world's major reefs, it would make sense to display a map of these reefs while you're talking about location. If you display it while you are explaining what coral actually is, or describing the kinds of fish that feed on a reef, the map will not serve as a useful aid—in fact, it's likely to be a distraction.

In this chapter, we will discuss some principles and strategies to help you incorporate effective presentation aids into your speech. We will begin by discussing the functions that good presentation aids fulfill. Next, we will explore some of the many types of presentation aids and how best to design and utilize them. We will also describe various media that can be used for presentation aids.

5.2.1 Functions of Presentation Aids

Why should you use presentation aids? If you have prepared and rehearsed your speech adequately, shouldn't a good speech with a good delivery be enough to stand on its own? While it is true that impressive presentation aids will not rescue a poor speech, it is also important to recognize that a good speech can often be made even better by the strategic use of presentation aids. Remember that your speech is an experience rather than the isolated transmission of information, so presentation aids can enhance or detract from the aesthetics.

Presentation aids can fulfill several functions:

- improve your audience's understanding of the information you are conveying;
- enhance audience memory and retention of the message;
- add variety and interest to your speech;

- enhance your credibility as a speaker.

Let's examine each of these functions.

5.2.1.1 Improving Audience Understanding

Human communication is a complex process that often leads to misunderstandings. If you are like most people, you can easily remember incidents when you misunderstood a message or when someone else misunderstood what you said to them. Misunderstandings happen in public speaking just as they do in everyday conversations.

One reason for misunderstandings is that perception and interpretation are highly complex, individual processes (remember that communication is always cultural and contextual rather than a universal set of symbols). Most of us have seen the image in which, depending on your perception, you see either the outline of a vase or the facial profiles of two people facing each other, known as the Rubin's vase (Hasson et al, 2001). Or you may have listened to a song for years only to have a friend say, "uh, those aren't the lyrics!" These examples demonstrate how interpretation can differ, and it means that your presentations must be based on careful thought and preparation to maximize the likelihood that your listeners will understand your presentation as you intend them to.

As a speaker, one of your basic goals is to help your audience understand your message. To reduce misunderstanding, presentation aids can be used to clarify or to emphasize. Use table 10.1 to identify questions that underly clarifying or emphasizing ideas.

Improving Audience Understanding		
To clarify : Simplifying complex information	Am I describing a complex process that could represented differently? Am I referencing ideas that are visual or sensory in nature?	If your speech is about the impact of the Coriolis Effect on tropical storms, for instance, you will have great difficulty clarifying it without a diagram because the process is a complex one.
To emphasize : Impress your listeners with the importance of an idea	Is there an idea or aspect of the speech that needs to be underscored?	Let's say that you're describing the increased prevalence of super tornadoes across the state of Kansas over the last 30 years. You may decide that a map will visually underscore the sudden increase in storms.
		Table 10.1

5.2.1.2 Aiding Retention and Recall

The second function that presentation aids can serve is to increase the audience's chances of remembering your speech. An article by the U.S. Department of Labor (1996) summarized research on how people learn and remember. The authors found that "83% of human learning occurs visually, and the remaining 17% through the other senses—11% through hearing, 3.5% through smell, 1% through taste, and 1.5% through touch."

For this reason, exposure to an image can serve as a memory aid to your listeners. When your graphic images deliver information effectively and when your listeners understand them clearly, audience members are likely to remember your message long after your speech is over.

An added plus of using presentation aids is that they can boost *your* retention and memory while you are speaking. Using your presentation aids while you rehearse your speech will familiarize you with the association between a given place in your speech and the presentation aid that accompanies that material.

5.2.1.3 Adding Variety and Interest

A third function of presentation aids is simply to make your speech more interesting. For example, wouldn't a speech on community gardens have a greater impact if you accompanied your remarks with pictures of such gardens? You can imagine that your audience would be even more enthralled if you had the ability to display produce for your audience live. Similarly, if you were

speaking to a group of gourmet cooks about spices, you might want to provide tiny samples of spices that they could smell and taste during your speech.

5.2.1.4 Enhancing a Speaker's Credibility

The final function of a presentation aid is to increase your ethos, or credibility. A high-quality presentation will contribute to your professional image. This means that in addition to containing important information, your presentation aids must be clear, clean, uncluttered, organized, and large enough for the audience to see and interpret correctly. Misspellings and poorly designed presentation aids can damage your credibility as a speaker. Even if you give a good speech, you run the risk of appearing unprofessional if your presentation aids are poorly executed.

In addition, make sure that you give proper credit to the source of any presentation aids that you take from other sources. Using a statistical chart or a map without proper credit will detract from your credibility, just as using a quotation in your speech without credit would. This situation will usually take place with digital aids such as PowerPoint slides. The source of a chart or the data shown in a chart form should be cited at the bottom of the slide and orally in your speech.

If you focus your efforts on producing presentation aids that contribute effectively to your meaning, that look professional, and that are handled well, your audience will most likely appreciate your efforts and pay close attention to your message. That attention will help them learn or understand your topic in a new way and will thus help the audience see you as a knowledgeable, competent, and credible speaker. With the prevalence of digital communication, the audience expectation of quality visual aids has increased.

5.2.2 Avoiding COMMON PRESENTATION AID PITFALLS

Using presentation aids can come with some risks. However, with a little forethought and adequate practice, you can choose presentation aids that enhance your message and boost your professional appearance in front of an audience.

One principle to keep in mind is to use only as many presentation aids as necessary to present your message or clarify a component of your idea. Too often, speakers fall into a "must have long and detailed presentational aids for the entire speech" – in these cases, the aid can overshadow or distract from the content, rather than to clarify or add emphasis. Instead, simplify as much as possible, emphasizing the information you want your audience to understand rather than overwhelming them with too much text and too many images.

Another important consideration is context. Remember to survey the literal context of your speech to decide what aid is possible – is there technology? Is there a poster stand or a white board? Are there speakers? Is there WiFi? Keep your presentation aids within the limits of the working technology available to you. Whether or not your technology works on the day of your speech, you will still have to present. As the speaker, you are responsible for arranging the things you need to make your presentation aids work as intended. Carry a roll of duct tape so you can display your poster even if the easel is gone. Find an extra chair if your table has disappeared. Test the computer setup. Have your slides on a flash drive AND send it to yourself as an attachment or post to a cloud service. Have an alternative plan prepared in case there is some glitch that prevents your computer-based presentation aids from being usable. And of course, you must know how to use the technology.

Finally, presentation aids do not "speak for themselves." When you display a visual aid, you should explain what it shows, pointing out and naming the most important features. If you use an audio aid such as a musical excerpt, you need to tell your audience what to listen for. Similarly, if you use a video clip, it is up to you as the speaker to point out the characteristics in the video that support the point you are making—but probably beforehand, so you are not speaking over the video. At the same time, a visual aid should be quickly accessible to the audience. This is where simplicity comes in. Just as in organization of a speech you would use 3-5 main points, not 20 main points, you should limit categories of information on a visual aid.

5.2.3 Types of Presentation Aids

Now that we've explored some basic hints for preparing presentation aids, the next step is determining what type of presentation aid is best. We'll discuss types of aids that fall into two categories: representations of data and/or representations that display a real process, idea, person, place, or thing. In other words, ask yourself: "what type of information do I think needs to be accentuated? A statistic? An image of an idea?" Once you answer, the categories below can help you determine which aid would be the best to display that type of information.

5.2.3.1 Representations of Data

If you are looking to clarify a complex piece of data or piece of evidence from your speech, you may decide that a chart, graph, or diagram is best. Charts, graphs, and diagrams help represent statistics, processes, figures, or other numeric evidence that may be otherwise difficult to comprehend if just spoken.

Chart: A **chart** is commonly defined as a graphical representation of data or a sketch representing an ordered process. Whether you create your charts or do research to find charts that already exist, it is important for them to exactly match the specific purpose in your speech. Figure 10.1 ("Acupuncture Chart") shows a chart related to acupuncture and may be useful in a speech about the history and development of acupuncture. However, if your goal is to show the locations of meridians (the lines along which energy is thought to flow) and the acupuncture points, you may need to select an alternative image.



Figure 10.1

There are two common types of charts: statistical charts and sequence-of-steps chart.

- *Statistical Charts*: For most audiences, statistical presentations must be kept as simple as possible, and they must be explained. When visually displaying information from a quantitative study, you need to make sure that you understand the material and can successfully and simply explain how one should interpret the data. This is surely an example of a visual aid that, although it delivers a limited kind of information, does not speak for itself. As with all other principles of public speaking, KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE.
- *Sequence-of-Steps Charts*: Charts are also useful when you are trying to explain a process that involves several steps. If you are working with a scientific or medical argument, you may need to visually map the sequence because the process is otherwise difficult to follow.

Graph: A **graph** is a pictorial representation of the relationships of quantitative data using dots, lines, bars, pie slices, and the like. Graphs show how one factor (such as size, weight, number of items) varies in comparison to other items. Whereas a statistical chart may report the mean (or average) ages of individuals entering college, a graph would show how the mean age changes over time. A statistical chart may report the number of computers sold in the United States, while a graph will use bars or lines to show the breakdown of those computers by operating systems such as Windows, Macintosh, and Linux.

Public speakers can show graphs using a range of different formats. Some of those formats are specialized for various professional fields. Very complex graphs often contain too much information that is not related to the purpose of a speech. If the graph is cluttered, it becomes difficult to comprehend. If you find a graph that has useful information, ask: "do I need to represent this graph as-is or can I represent a key portion of the graph that's most relevant to my data?"

There are 3 types of graphs that we'll introduce: line graphs, bar graphs, and pie graphs.

- *Line Graph*: A line graph is designed to show trends over time. You could, for example, use a line graph to chart Enron's stock prices over time.
- *Bar Graph:* Bar graphs are useful for showing the differences between quantities. They can be used for population demographics, fuel costs, math ability in different grades, and many other kinds of data. The graph in Figure 10.2 ("Suicide vs. Homicide") is well designed. It is relatively simple and is carefully labeled, making it easy for you to guide your audience through the recorded numbers of each type of death. The bar graph is designed to show the difference between rates of suicides and homicides across various age groups. When you look at the data, the first grouping clearly shows that eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds are more likely to die because of a homicide than any of the other age groups.
- *Pie Graph:* Pie graphs are usually depicted as circles and are designed to show proportional relationships within sets of data; in other words, they show parts of or percentages of a whole. They should be simplified as much as possible without eliminating

important information.

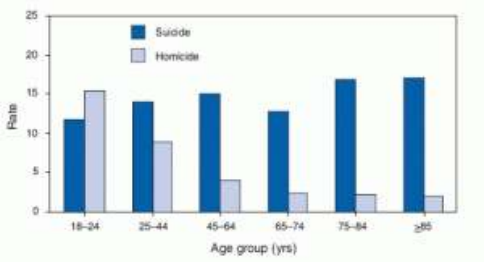


Figure 10.2

Diagrams: **Diagrams** are visual representations that simplify a complex process. They may be drawings or sketches that outline and explain the parts of an object, process, or phenomenon that cannot be readily seen. When you introduce a diagram, you are working to label parts of a process for your audience. For example, you may decide to diagram how human communication occurs because simply describing that process would be too complex.

Charts, graphs, and diagrams can present challenges in being effective but also in being ethical. To be both ethical and effective, you need a good understanding of what statistics mean, and you need to create or use graphs that show amounts clearly. Remember that clarifying is a key goal of presentational aids, so ask: is my graph or chart making my information more or less difficult to comprehend?

5.2.3.2 Representations of Real Processes or Things

In contrast, a second set of presentational aids represents real processes, things, persons, places, or ideas. While charts and graphs simplify more complex or abstract ideas, data, or evidence, this set of presentational aids attempts to add emphasis to real, literal stuff. This includes: maps, photos, videos, audio recordings, and objects (diagrams can also fall into this category, depending on what you're mapping).

Maps: Maps are extremely useful if the information is clear and limited. There are all kinds of maps, including population, weather, ocean current, political, and economic maps, so you should find the right kind for the purpose of your speech. Choose a map that emphasizes the information you need to deliver and are trying to represent. For example, you might decide that a map outlining the Hawaiian Islands would be helpful to clarify the spatial dimensions of the state. Although the map may not list the names of the islands, it is helpful in orienting the audience to the direction and distance of the islands to other geographic features, such as the Pacific Ocean.

Photographs and Drawings: Sometimes a photograph or a drawing is the best way to show an unfamiliar but important detail. For example, if you gave a speech about the impact of plastics on ocean life, you may decide to include a photo of a beached whale who had suffered from plastic inhalation. The photo may emphasize the impact of plastic that speaking otherwise doesn't capture.

Video or Audio Recordings: Another very useful type of presentation aid is a video or audio recording. Whether it is a short video from a website such as YouTube or Vimeo, a segment from a song, or a piece of a podcast, a well-chosen video or audio recording may be a good choice to enhance your speech.

There is one major warning to using audio and video clips during a speech: do not forget that they are supposed to be aids to your speech, not the speech itself! In addition, be sure to avoid these four mistakes that speakers often make when using audio and video clips:

- Avoid choosing clips that are too long for the overall length of the speech.
- Practice with the audio or video equipment prior to speaking. If you are unfamiliar with the equipment, you'll look foolish trying to figure out how it works. Be sure that the speakers on the computer are on and at the right volume level.
- Cue the clip to the appropriate place prior to beginning your speech, and try to avoid any advertisement interruptions (which can make the aid look unprofessional).
- The audience must be given context before the video or audio clip is played, specifically what the clip is and why it relates to the speech. At the same time, the video should not repeat what you have already said, but add to it.

Objects: Objects refer to anything you could hold up and talk about during your speech. If you're talking about the importance of not using plastic water bottles, you might hold up a plastic water bottle and a stainless-steel water bottle as examples.

5.2.4 Ways to Display Your Presentation Aid

Above, we've discussed why you might use a presentation aid and what aid might work best. "How do I display these?" you might be wondering. For example, if you decide that a graph would be helpful in clarifying a complex idea, you have options on how to present that graph to the audience, including presentation software or more low-tech means. We'll talk through each below.

5.2.4.1 Using Presentation Software

Presentation software and slides are a common mechanism to display information for your audience. You are likely familiar with PowerPoint, but there are several others:

- Prezi, available at www.prezi.com
- Slide Rocket, available at www.sliderocket.com
- Google Slides, available in Google Drive and useful for collaborative assignments
- Keynote, the Apple presentation slide software on Macs
- Impress, an Open Office product (http://www.openoffice.org/prod-uct/impress.html)
- PrezentIt
- AdobeAcrobat Presenter
- ThinkFree
- E-Maze

Each software allows you to present professional-looking slides. For example, you can use the full range of fonts, although many of them are not appropriate for presentations because they are hard to read. Use Table 10.3 to track advantages and disadvantages of using slides.

Advantages to Using Slides	**Disadvantages to Using Slides**
• They allow visualization of concepts; • They are easily portable and uniform; • They can be embedded with videos and audio; • They are projectable and more easily visible throughout a room	• They're too linear and audiences aren't encouraged to see the relationship between ideas (Frommer, 2012); • PowerPoint is too rigid in the slide-by-slide format (Tufte, 2005). • They become overcrowded; • The presentational slides become the speech.
	Table 10.3

Remember that presentation software aids are a way to display what you want your audience to know—a graph, an idea, an image. Presentation software is not the only way to display these, so slides should be a purposeful choice. *What* you display is the top priority.

Before we continue, we have one note: You'll notice that "text from the speech" is not included in our list of types of presentation aids in the section above. You may decide that adding emphasis to a key word or concept from your speech is needed – and that's OK! You may even decide that providing that concept, visually, for the audience is worthwhile by writing or displaying the words, and that's OK, too. However, remember that presentation aids are included for a reason, and it's often unnecessary to provide an entire outline of your speech's text through a presentation software like PowerPoint slides. Speakers, too often, copy and paste parts of their speech onto a PowerPoint slide and think, 'There! A presentation aid!" Ask: *what purpose does this text serve for my audience?* If your answer doesn't result in clarifying, emphasizing, or retaining, it's likely not needed.

5.2.4.1.1 Creating Quality Slide Shows

Slides should show the principles of good design, which include unity, emphasis or focal point, scale and proportion, balance, and rhythm (Lauer & Pentak, 2000). Presenters should also pay attention to tone and usability. With those principles in mind, here are some tips for creating and then using presentation software.

- *Unity and Consistency:* use a single (readable) sans serif font, single background, and unified animations for your visuals so that they look like a unified set. Each slide should have one message, photo, or graphic.
- *Emphasis, Focal Point, and Visibility:* all information should be large enough—at least 24-point font— for audiences. To guarantee visibility, follow the 7X7 rule: no more than seven horizontal lines of text (including the heading) and the longest line

should not exceed seven words. Finally, provide higher contrast between text and slides.

- *Tone*: Fonts, color, clip art, photographs, and templates all contribute to tone, which is the attitude being conveyed in the slides. Make sure the tone of the presentation software matches the overall aesthetic tone of the speech.
- *Scale and Proportion*: Use numbers to communicate a sequence. If bullet points are used, the text should be short. Adjust graphs or visuals on the slide, avoiding small or multiple visuals on the same image.
- *Balance and rhythm*: Work to create symmetry and balance between each slide. When presenting, think about what's being displayed on the slide to the audience and when. If you aren't using it, insert a black screen between images.
- *Usability*: With any image or graphic, make sure to include "alt text" – or a description of what the image is. Proving alt text is helpful for users with screen readers.

We recommend that you survey your university's resources for assistance with creating quality and accessible presentation slides.

5.2.4.2 Low-Tech Presentation Aids

In addition to presentation slides, there are other "low-tech" ways to display. Instead of providing a diagram on PowerPoint, you may decide that drawing it live is more beneficial. Below, we talk through a few additional means to display your information to the audience.

5.2.4.2.1 Dry-Erase Board

If you use a chalkboard or dry-erase board, what you display should still be thought-out, rehearsed, and clearly professional. You run the risk of appearing less prepared, but numerous speakers do utilize chalk and dry-erase boards effectively. Typically, these speakers use the chalk or dry-erase board for interactive components of a speech. For example, maybe you're giving a speech in front of a group of executives. Chalk or dry-erase boards are very useful when you want to visually show information that you are receiving from your audience. If you ever use a chalk or dry-erase board, follow these five simple rules:

- Write large enough so that everyone in the room can see (which is harder than it sounds; it is also hard to write and talk at the same time!).
- Print legibly; don't write in cursive script.
- Write short phrases; don't take time to write complete sentences.
- Never turn your back to the audience while you're talking.
- Be sure you have markers that will not go dry, and clean the board afterward.

5.2.4.2.2 Flipchart

A flipchart is useful for situations when you want to save what you have written for future reference or to distribute to the audience after the presentation. As with whiteboards, you will need good markers and readable handwriting, as well as a strong easel to keep the flipchart upright.

5.2.4.2.3 Posters

Posters often represent a key graph, idea, or visualization. For a poster, you likely want to display one key piece of information at one key part of your presentation. Otherwise, posters are probably not the best way to approach presentation aids in a speech. There are problems with visibility as well as portability. Avoid producing a presentation aid that looks like you simply cut pictures out of magazines and pasted them on.

5.2.4.2.4 Handouts

Handouts are appropriate for delivering information that audience members can take away with them. As we will see, handouts require a great deal of management if they are to contribute to your credibility as a speaker.

First, make sure the handout is worth the trouble of making, copying, and distributing it. Does the audience really need the handout? Second, make sure to bring enough copies of the handout for each audience member to get one. Having to share or look on with one's neighbor does not contribute to a professional image. Third, consider timing. We recommend providing the handout at the conclusion of your speech.

5.2.5 Reminders for Integrating Presentation Aids

Regardless of what presentation aid you choose—a photo, chart, map— and the medium that you'll display it—a handout, slide deck, audio device— all presentation aids require rehearsal. While we've included tips on integrating presentation aids in your speech throughout this chapter, use the following list of strategies to integrate your aid into the speech.

- Gather all citation information and provide it both visually and orally to your audience.
- In your speaking notes, mark where you will integrate the presentation aid so that you don't forget about it due to nervousness.
- Determine where the presentation aid will be when it's not being displayed.
- For a PowerPoint presentation, include blank/black slides that are used when your visual aid isn't in use.
- Store other objects in non-distracting locations.
- Rehearse your transitions into and out of the presentation aid.

5.2.6 The Mythical Norm and Presentation Aids

In Chapter 8 on nonverbal delivery, we introduced the idea of the mythical norm. As you remember, when you're an audience member, it's important to reflect on the assumptions that we hold about the speaker. Are we judging a speaker based on our own assumptions of what's normal?

Similarly, when you're making decisions about presentation aids as a speaker, it's important to be reflexive about who is in the audience. Are you making decisions about presentation aids based on our own assumptions about what's normal and who's normal? Are you assuming, for example, that all audience members are able-bodied and able to visually and audibly experience your presentation aid?

Creating an accessible experience for audience members must be a priority. For example, you may want to avoid red and green colors on your visual aids as they're not perceivable to all audience members. While constructing presentation software of slides, make sure you include alt-text for images, especially if you provide the slides to the presentation. These are for audience members who may be sight-impaired. Check out guidelines for the presentation software you're using on how to embed alt-text. Additionally, be weary of smells that may be intense or irritate audience members. Overall, be careful not to assume that audience members also fit the mythical norm as you construct your presentation aid.

5.2.7 Conclusion

To finish this chapter, we will recap a few key pieces of information. Whether your aid is a slide show, object, or dry erase board, these standards are essential:

- Presentation aids must be easily experienced by your audience.
- Presentation aids must be portable, easily handled, and efficient. They should disappear when not in use.
- Presentation aids should be aesthetically pleasing, which includes in good taste. Additionally, electronic media today allows you to create very "busy" slides with varieties of fonts, colors, collages of photos, etc. Keep in mind the principles of unity and focal point.
- Color is another aesthetic aspect. Some colors are just more soothing, readable, and appropriate than others. Also, the color on your slides may be different when projected from what is on your computer.
- Provide credit when using images that aren't your own.
- Finally, presentation aids must support your speech and have high relevance to your content.

This chapter has covered a wide range of information about all kinds of audio and visual aids, but audiences today expect and appreciate professionally designed and handled presentation aids. The stakes are higher now, but the tools are many.

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5.3: Don't Ruin a Great Presentation with Terrible Slides



The more strikingly visual your presentation is,
the more people will remember it.
And more importantly, they will remember you.
– Paul Arden
Creative Director of Advertising Company Satchi and Satchi

The speaker was a master in his field which is why he was chosen to speak. He was brilliant, he was motivated to share his ideas, and he was great at conversation. The only problem was he was the most boring speaker I have ever heard. He stood at the front of the room and read presentation slides to us for two hours. He rarely looked at the audience. It was the longest two hours of any conference I have ever attended.

Chances are you have had a similar experience. A speaker has ridiculous amounts of text on a slide and then stands there and reads it to you. Unfortunately for all of us, a lot of college classes are that way. In fact, most of us learned about how to use slides by seeing our teachers use them–poorly.

The use of electronic slides–PowerPoint, Presenter, Google Slides, Prezi—is pervasive. Sixty-seven percent of college students reported that instructors used PowerPoint; and of these instructors, 95% used this software all or most of the time. Numerous articles chide that presentation slides might be the death of education.

Many successful speakers have shunned slides altogether. Chris Anderson, head of TED, the highly successful group that leads TED Talks, highlights at least of third of the most viewed TED talks do not use any slides whatsoever.



The Most Important Questions of All

1. Do I need slides?
2. If I need slides, what does the audience need to get from those slides?

I once made a presentation to NASA scientists who were preparing to talk about their research. I said, “If you sit at your computer and you open your presentation software and begin writing your speech on your slides, you are making a slide show, not a speech. A good speaker always considers what the audience needs to hear and then uses slides to offer visual support to help the audience understand. If you start with the slides, you’ve got it backward. ” Two years later, I was traveling out of state and saw a man who was smiling at me as he approached–it was one of the scientists from the NASA talk. He looked at me and said, “I remember you because you changed the way I do things. That piece of advice, about never starting with your slides changed everything for me. I

really struggled as a speaker until you told us we are making a speech, not a slide show. Since I have changed, people seem to like my presentations more and more likely to come up and talk to me about my research."

Slides are Good Because They…

- Can create credibility. (Many people expect you to use slides and meeting that expectation gives you credibility.
- Help focus the audience's attention.
- Help the audience visualize concepts.
- Help people take organized notes of a talk.
- Helps the speaker stay on track.
- Provides aesthetic appeal.
- Show something that may be hard to describe.

Slides are Bad Because They…

- Can distract from what the speaker is saying.
- Can hurt the speaker's credibility when poorly constructed.
- Can cause people to mindlessly take notes without thinking about the content.
- Can be boring…especially when a speaker stands up there and simply reads the slides to an audience.
- Can lead to passive listening when a teacher uses them in the classroom and give the students a copy of the slides.

Rules for Slides



Write Your Speech First

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the most important things you can do when preparing your speech is to get away from your slide software. Under no circumstance should you open your slide software (PowerPoint, Presenter, Google slides, Prezi, Keynote, etc.) until your speech is complete **and** you have made a plan for what visuals the audience needs to see.

Keep Text to A Minimum

No more than six words across and six words down. Chris Anderson of TED specifies,

> *Even when a text slide is simple, it may be indirectly stealing your thunder. Instead of a slide that reads: A black hole is an object so massive that no light can escape from it, you'd do better with one that reads: How black is a black hole? Then you'd give the information from that original slide in spoken form. That way, the slide teases the audience's curiosity and makes your words more interesting, not less.*

Offer One Idea to a Slide

You can keep text to a minimum by limiting ideas to one per slide. Audience members should be able to glance quickly–about 3 seconds–and get all the information. It is better to have a lot of slides where each has only one idea per slide than it is to have one slide with a list of ideas. Nancy Duarte, communication coach, reminds us that if you have too many words, it is no longer a visual aid but a teleprompter. Estimate approximately how long it will take an audience member to read your slide by timing yourself reading the slide backward.

> *Think of your slides as billboards. When people drive, they only briefly take their eyes off their main focus — the road — to process billboard information. Similarly, your audience should focus intently on what you're saying, looking only briefly at your slides when you display them. Nancy Duarte*

Get Rid of the Title (Most of the time)

Most of the time, a title on each slide is not needed. You, the speaker, will say what the content is about; no need to read it–it is just distracting.

Reduce Cognitive Load

It is better to help the audience focus on the main point in the slide. By keeping things simple, it reduces the audience's cognitive resources. There are several ways you can reduce cognitive load.

- Avoid busy backgrounds they can drain mental energy.
- Eliminate unneeded titles.
- Use basic, easy-to-read font.
- Ask yourself if the company logo or school banner is needed on the slide or if it just becomes one more thing.
- Keep background colors consistent
- Format photos and illustrations in the same style.

Use Pictures Instead of Words When Possible

People retain more information when what they see on the screen supports the message they are hearing.

> *We are incredible at remembering pictures.*
> *Hear a piece of information,*
> *and three days later you'll remember 10% of it. A*
> *dd a picture and you'll remember 65%.*
> *John Medina, author of Brain Rules.*

Learning Recall Related to Type of Presentation

Presentation	**Ability to Recall**	
	after 3 hours	**after 3 days**
Spoken lecture	25%	10-20%
Written (reading)	72%	10%
Visual and verbal (illustrated lecture)	80%	65%

Avoid Distracting Slide Transitions

There is rarely a time when you should use the transition feature of the software. Things that twirl, cube, swap, and swoosh rarely help the audience to focus on your idea. Most of the time, they are just cheesy and distracting. Three transitions that can be used with a level of professionalism are cut, fade, and dissolve. The easiest rule is if you do not have a reason for a transition, don't do it.

Use Easy-to-Read, Plain Font

Use 28-point font and larger. Do not use more than three different sizes and make the size variants purposeful. It is best to stick with a plain, sans-serif font such as Helvetica, Arial, or Tahoma. There are two types of font, serif (with fancy tails) and san serif (without fancy tails). The Plain, san serif font is easiest to read when projected.



The letters on the left are plain, san-serif font, and the ones on the right are serif, or fancy font.

Go For High Contrast

Always go for the highest contrast. I recently attended a special event and the speaker projected his side and then looked back at it surprised and said, “Sorry, you can’t see the red letters.” The speaker had attempted to put red letters on a black ground–this is always a no-no because it rarely shows well. It is best to pick a dark blue or back background and put white or yellow letters on it. You can also use a white or yellow background with dark black or blue letters (While JP Philips in the video Death by PowerPoint -below- advises against it, it is still a professional standard).

Use Minimal Bullets

If you do have bullet points, make sure you have more than one point because let’s face it, bullet points are for making lists and one point does not make a list. In addition, you should never have more than six bullet points because then you would have too much stuff on your slide.

> *Bullets belong to the Godfather.*
> *Avoid them at all costs.*
> *Dashes belong at the Olympics,*
> *not at the beginning of the text.*
>
> *Chris Anderson, TED Talks*

While I’m not sure I fully support eliminating all bullets, I do warn you to use them sparingly.

Use Blank Slides

You do not always have to have a slide behind you. Insert black, blank slides between points when you need to talk to the audience without the distraction of a visual.

Have a Backup Plan

Technology is evil and is the enemy of all that is good. It will crash on you. You should always have a backup plan and you should always be prepared to speak even if your slides do not work. You should always have notecards and I highly suggest printing out your slides to reference and then if the projector bulb goes out or the computer crashes, you can still make your presentation.

Test Your Slide Show, Videos, and Clicker/Remote

You should always practice using your slides. It is helpful to test out your presentation on your friends or trusted colleague and ask them to give you feedback. When you get to the place where you will give your presentation, it is a good idea to pull up your slides and make sure they work with the clicker/remote. It is a good idea to carry extra batteries with you too. Test the volume of your videos and make sure they play properly. Finally, make sure you know where the audio-visual person will be in case you have any problems. If you are a student, have a friend who can come up and fix your slides while you keep your speech going.

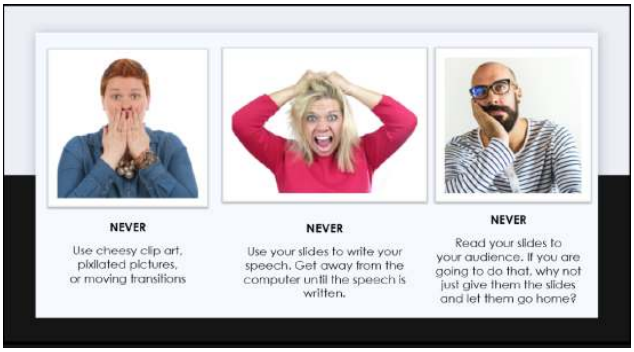
Avoid the Laser Pointer

A laser pointer highlights any shakiness you have in your hands. If you want to highlight something on a slide, use a graphic arrow.

Make Reminders on Your Notes to Change Your Slide

Many of my students will turn on their presentation slides and during the speech forget they are there. After they conclude their speech and we have applauded, they will look back at the projector and say, “Oh, here is my visual aid,” and then will rapidly click through the seven slides they should have shown us during the speech.

To avoid this, practice with your slides and mark on your notecards where to advance your slide. I usually draw an “S” in a circle and then color in the circle with a highlighter.



Point Your Body and Your Eyes Towards the Audience Not Towards the Slides

Your feet indicate where you want to go. If your feet are pointed towards the door, you are indicating you want to go out the door. Similarly, if your feet are pointed towards the back wall where your slides are located, it indicates you want to go towards your slides and not towards the audience. In short, you have turned your back on your audience. Point your feet, your hips, and your head towards the audience.

Keep your eyes on your audience and not your slides. Having brief slides helps. If you only have a few words or a nice photo on your slides, you are less tempted to stand there and read to the audience. In addition, having your notes in front of you as opposed to using your slides as your notes helps you keep pointed forward. Just remember, talk to your audience, not your slides.

Use Movement Minimally

These days, there are many different types of presentation slides. One of those is Prezi. For many (like me), the movement in Prezi creates a nauseous feeling. If you decide to use this tool, keep movement limited.

Here is a TED Talk that effectively uses Prezi.



Videos

Videos can be an amazing addition to your presentation. Rarely, do you want to use more than a one-minute clip. More likely, you will want about 30 seconds. In my experience, videos that work perfectly at your home computer have about a sixty percent chance of working at the venue where you speak. If you have a video file on your computer remember that the video file and the slide file have to go to the venue. The easiest way to do this is to create a file folder for your presentation and put the video file and the slideshow file in the folder. Save the file folder to the cloud or your thumb drive that you take to the venue. On the day of your presentation, go in ahead of time and make sure everything works and the volume on the video is set properly.

The most common mistake I see is someone will link their presentation to a video, and they bring a copy of the presentation with them but leave the video on their home computer. I usually upload videos to my personal YouTube account, and also have them in file format on a USB I always include a link to the video on my slide just in case it doesn't work.

GIFS

Sometimes they work. Sometimes they don't. GIF means graphic interchange format and is usually a short animation. If you decide that the GIF enhances your message and you decide to include it, make sure it works at the speech venue on the day you present. Be aware that a short GIF on a continual loop can be very annoying. A cartoon that waves once is cute, a cartoon that waves 20 times is distracting.

Give Credit for Visuals When Possible

When possible credit to the originator of the photo. Simply write "Photo credit: Name or originator of the photo." Usually, 12-14-point font credit is centered under the photo or in the bottom right-hand corners. Be consistent in the way you do your citations. Citing your graphic may not look as nice as a plain slide, but it shows you have integrity, and that you give credit where it is due. Make sure you have a legal license to use the photo or they are listed as Creative Commons; better yet, do as a friend of mine does, always use your original photos.

Thoughts About Fair Use

The internet makes it easy to get photos, videos, and music that you can use in your presentation. Just because it is easy to get, doesn't mean it is legal.

Chances are you are using this textbook because you are a college student. Because your presentations are of an educational nature, they are protected under Fair Use copyright laws which means you can use copyrighted material once for educational purposes *if* you give credit to the authors.

Once you graduate and work for a company, what was once considered free to use is now under a different system. For example, you may have to get permission to use someone's photos or you may now have to pay to use a music clip.

Baylor University put together a checklist to help determine whether something would be considered fair use.

Fair list checklist.

Use Photos Wisely

When using photos, it is usually best to make them full screen if the picture is the point of the visual. If they are a decoration to the point, format them so they are visually pleasing and balanced with the words. If you do use a smaller photo, use a plain background. Always use pictures with the highest resolution possible and always give photo credit. In the college classroom, students prefer pictures and "visually rich" slides if they were relevant to the content of the lecture. In addition, they preferred minimal text and limited bullet-point lists.

Don’t Do This!



What’s <u>Wrong</u> With This Slide?

- The background is distracting.
- There are too many photos on the slide.
- The heading is not needed–the speaker should say it.
- The photo credit is too large.

Do This Instead!



What's Right With This Slide?

- The picture is clear and takes up most of the slide.
- No unnecessarily distracting words
- The photo credit is balanced and an appropriate size.
- No caption is needed because the speaker will tell about what it is and where it is

Want to Take Your Slide Composition to the Next Level? Check out these Resources

To see a great explanation with examples of why certain slide layouts work.
https://www.presentation-process.com/powerpoint-slides.html

To see samples of good and bad use of photos on slides, check out Presentation Zen.
https://www.presentationzen.com/presentationzen/visuals/

To take your visual composition to the next level by using the rule of thirds to compose slides, check out the rule of thirds.
http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/rule-of-thirds-powerpoint/

To see the types of slides a professional designer makes.
https://www.nolanhaimscreative.com/presentation-design-portfolio

To see design principles
https://courses.lumenlearning.com/ivytech-comm101-master/chapter/chapter-13-design-principles/

Nancy Duarte: [For visuals], I think people tend to go with the easiest, fastest idea. Like, "I'm going to put a handshake in front of a globe to mean partnership!" Well, how many handshakes in front of a globe do we have to look at before we realize it's a total cliche? Another common one — the arrow in the middle of a bullseye. Really? Everyone else is thinking that way.

The slides themselves are supposed to be a mnemonic device for the audience so they can remember what you had to say. They're not just a teleprompter for the speaker. A bullseye isn't going to make anyone remember anything. Don't go for the first idea. Think about the point you're trying to make and brainstorm individual moments that you're trying to emphasize. Think to the second, the third, the fourth idea — and by the time you get to about the tenth idea, those will be the more clever memorable things for the audience.

Watch Mac Stone as he shows photos that make "You want to save the Everglades."



Be *in* the Image but Not *on* the Image

Stand near your slides but don't stand where you will be a shadow on your slides. Sometimes a presenter will stand far away from their slide causing the audience to have to bounce back and forth with their attention. On the other hand, practice with your slides at the venue and have a friend let you know where you can and cannot stand. If it is easy to stand in front of the slides, I will sometimes put tape on the floor to indicate where to stand and put a tape boundary to remind myself where not to stand.

? These Are Not the Same

Should I Give Out My Slides As a Handout?

One BIG mistake novice speechmakers make is they use their slides as their notes, their visual aid, and their handout. In this model, a speaker opens up the presentation software and writes their speech on the slide. When the day of the presentation comes along, the speaker stands in front of the audience and reads the slides to the audience. Finally, the speaker gives the audience members a copy of the slides to take home.

Delivery Notes are what you look at during your presentation. They should have details about what you will say, they should have reminders for when to advance your slides, and they should have notes reminding you to project your voice or to look up.

Slides are the projection the audience sees. They should be purposeful, brief, and concise, and designed to help listeners understand.

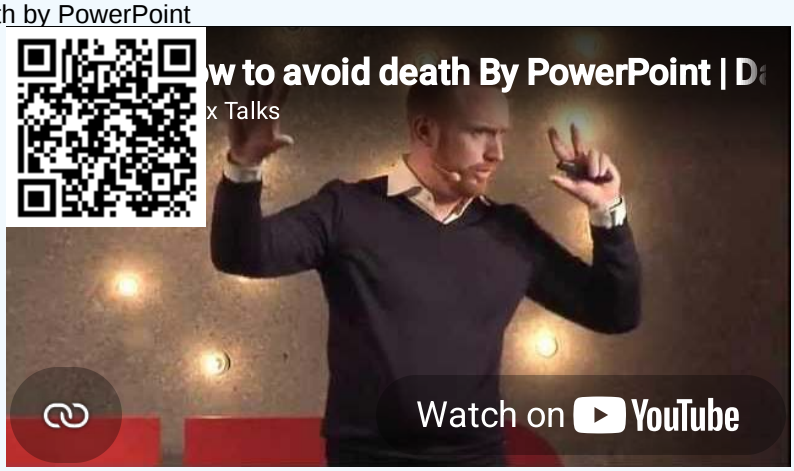
Handouts are the items you give the audience to take home with them. It should provide only the information the audience needs to remember after your presentation is over.

> *Never, ever hand out copies of your slides, and certainly not before your presentation. That is the kiss of death. By definition since slides are "speaker support" material, they are there in support of the speaker…You. As such, they should be completely incapable of standing by themselves and are thus useless to give to your audience, where they will simply be guaranteed to be a distraction. The flip side of this is that if*

> *the slides can stand by themselves, why the heck are you up there in front of them? (David Rose as quoted in Presentation Zen)*

With that said, when students spend their attention copying slides, they do not spend time listening to the lecture. Making the slides available to students to use during an educational lecture may reduce cognitive load and encourage learning. However, if the slides are so detailed the student can get all the information from the slide, then they may not attend class or they may not take any notes of their own which reduces learning. It is a delicate balance of structure but not all the content.

? How To Avoid Death by PowerPoint



Watch the Video How to Avoid Death By PowerPoint

> *Okay, ladies and gentlemen, welcome. There is a question which has puzzled me for quite a while, and that is, why do our PowerPoints look the way they look? Or rather, how on earth, can we accept that they look the way they look? How can you do that?*
>
> *And do you know what's even more intellectually challenging for me to understand, is how can a person sit over here in this meeting room with ten others, observing this dismally bad PowerPoint filled with charts, graphical elements, page numbers, fading away five, seven minutes thinking of other things. You know the feeling, the boredom, the waste of time!? This person, after 40 minutes, he/she will stand up, a bit dazed, trotting off to his own office, coming to his own computer, flipping it up, going like: oh my god, I've got a presentation tomorrow, and I do have a PowerPoint to build. Now what is the chance that this person will build an equally bad PowerPoint as the one that he/she was by herself tortured by in the other conference room? Is that a big chance? Yeah. David JP Phillips, TED Speaker. How to Avoid Death By Power Point*

David JP Phillip Provides This Solution

1. Only put one idea per slide.
2. Make spoken and projected content match. Don't make an audience chose between listening to you or looking at your slide. Sweller and Mayer conclude there is something in our brain called the redundancy effect, and it works like this. If the audience has to pick between reading text on a slide or listening to you talk, they have a hard time focusing and cannot recall most of what was said.
3. Build slides with minimal distractions. We pay attention to moving objects, signaling colors, contrast-rich objects, big objects. Build your slides with this in mind. For example, only have a large title if it is the most important, otherwise, make it smaller.
4. Avoid using full sentences on slides.
5. Contrast controls your focus. If you use a white background, it draws attention away from the speaker.

6. Do not put too many objects on your slide. Go for six or less.

Watch These Creative Uses of Slides

Notice how Tim Urban uses slides to engage the audience. Instead of long lists of words, he uses funny drawings, which results in the audience hanging on his every word.



? Do Slides Help or Hurt Student Learning?



A group of researchers set out to find out if there is a connection between the use of slides by teachers and student learning. They looked at all the studies that had been done on the topic and they made a chart to look at similarities and differences (it is called a meta-analysis). The results were interesting.

They found that students expected teachers to use slides in classes. Students self-reported that they liked when a teacher used slides. Students thought that slides helped them to learn and to pay attention. This was particularly true for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields, where many slides contain projected models and diagrams.

While students perceived it was helpful, research indicates there is little or no effect on either test scores or information retention. I would argue that there is increasingly an expectation that speakers use slides. Because of this, a speaker who chooses not to use slides may violate audience expectations resulting in lower credibility.

Here is a summary of various educational studies regarding slides in classroom learning:

- Students who downloaded class slides before class improved exam scores by 3.48%
- Students performed worse on recall and recognition tasks when slides included pictures that were not relevant.
- Slides that show positive pictures enhanced learning more than negative pictures.
- In an older study (2005), students said they preferred teachers to write on the board and use props rather than show slides.
- Students who preferred it when the teacher wrote on the board said that they liked it better because there was more active engagement, a more appropriate pace, and less extraneous material given.
- Students who preferred slides said they liked being able to have copies of slides in case they were absent or in case the notes they had were complete.

**Notice in this section, I did not mention each specific study and researcher. I did it so you could most easily get the information and think about it as it related to your own academic experiences. The studies referenced are below. When you give your speech, similarly, you should decide when it is best to include references at the bottom of each slide or to put them all at the end. Context should always guide you on how best to manage your sources. There is an entire chapter dedicated to thinking about how to manage research.

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Unique Rules for Academic Presentation Slides

Whether you are presenting in a graduate class or at a conference, there are certain expectations regarding slides that are much different than business or undergraduate class slides. Academic slides should be able to stand alone and provide a clear summary of your work.

1. Your slides should include academic references at the bottom of the slide.
2. Your slide should include details about the point being made. Someone who did not come to your presentation but got a copy of your slides should be able to understand the point.
3. Your slide should include a citation for photos. Academic integrity is important.
4. Your slides should include a reference page as the last page. This will not be shown to your audience at the presentation but is only included because of its handout value. Many conferences and graduate classes require you share your slides. Including your reference page as the last slide gives everyone access to your full list of references.
5. Include your name and contact information on the opening and closing slides. You want people to have your information in case they want to contact you with questions or want to work with you on future projects. In academic conferences, people are going from room to room to find the right place to go. Make it easy for them to know they are at the right location by having a slide with the title and name from the program.
6. You should name your talk something interesting that makes people want to attend. Oftentimes, academic titles are boring so label your talk something that draws in an audience. You can include a copy of your actual research paper in the

uploaded materials, or you can reference the title of your paper in your talk. You are not obligated to name your talk after your journal article title.

7. Some academics are including Twitter handles and hashtags related to the conference so attendees can network.
8. Many conferences ask for the slides in advance and will put them on a website and make them downloadable for all participants. For this reason, your slides should be able to provide stand-alone information–meaning someone who did not attend your presentation could understand your talk.
9. Think about your slides as your business card. Some people may see these slides without ever meeting you. They will judge you based on your slides–make a good first impression, your future may depend on it.



Notice the nice balanced format. The text is easy to read and is at least 28-point, plain font. It includes the reference for the data and a reference for the photo.



Notice the title slide is graphically pleasing. Try to find a photo and a title that causes the audience to start thinking about your topic before your presentation begins. This slide is your business card– it represents you.

How to Put Citations in Slides

When considering the how and when of citations, it is important to consider the context of your speech. Different contexts will require different types of citations. Many speakers have ended their presentation with, “And here’s my reference page.” That has got to be the most boring way to end a speech ever! Don’t do it. There is **never** any reason to project your reference page for your audience to see. Depending on the context, however, you may include your reference on your slide.

A student in a public speaking class	**A College Teacher**	**A Businessperson Making a Formal Presentation:**

In class, you should always verbally mention your research and you should turn in a complete reference page. Teachers will vary if they want you to include the full reference on the bottom of the slide. You should always ask the teacher.	Typically, in graduate-level classes, students and teachers are expected to offer full citations. These are likely to be in the form of a reference page given to the audience in paper or electronic form. Each discipline is different. When in doubt, include the full reference at the bottom of a slide.	You will have to read into the context of this one. You should always mention any research to give you credibility but whether you put a citation on the slide will vary from place to place. When in doubt, err on the side or including the citation. Business presentations rarely include citations on photos.

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- Slides should always be used purposefully.
- Write your speech before making your slides.
- It is better to have many slides that each make only one point than it is to have few slides with many points.
- No more than six words across and six words down, use at least 28-point, plain (san-serif) font.
- Different contexts have different expectations for slide design.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

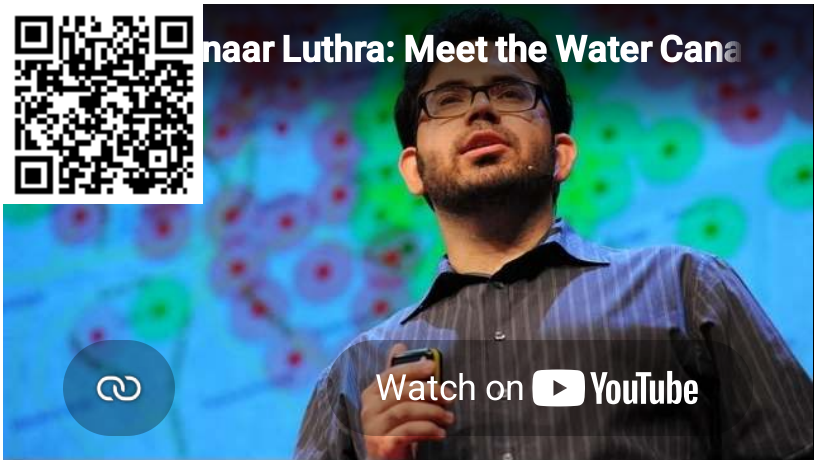
I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

Bonus Feature

Watch a part of Sonaar Luthra's speech for a great example of slide usage. The pictures help us to understand and remember and he avoids unnecessary words.



For those of you interested in Multi-Media Learning Principles, this chart explains how to each principle applies to good slide creation.

Multimedia Learning Moreno and Mayer

Learning the principles behind why and how it works can help you remember how to apply them. This chart shares with you some of the best practices from multimedia research on the principle and the application of visual media.

	What does it mean?	for your slides?
Multiple Representation Principle	For meaningful learning to occur, both channels (verbal and visual) should be used at the same time in a way learners can connect the information from each channel.	• Say it and show it on your slide to help people remember things. • It is helpful to access the visual and auditory parts of the brain to help people connect.
Temporal Contiguity Principle	Don't be talking about one thing and have a picture up of something else. Verbal and visual content should be presented together in contiguous time. Putting words and pictures explaining the same content into working memory at the same time is beneficial. If the information is out of synch, the brain is less able to connect the information from the two inputs.	• Make your words and pictures presented simultaneously. • Don't be talking about one thing and have a picture or graph of something different on your slide.
Split Attention Principles and Modality Principle	People learn best when their attention is not split between spoken and visual words.	• It is better to say things in your speech rather than write sentences on a screen. • Keep text to a minimum. • Better to use pictures instead of words.
Redundancy Principle	While two channels of content that support each other can be more effective, too much can cause cognitive overload.	• It is best to talk and show pictures rather than talk, have words, and show pictures. • When you speak words and you project words and then you add a picture, it causes overload.
Coherence Principle	Background sounds and music can overload auditory channels and distract.	• Make sure everything on the slide is related to the message. • Skip the distractions.
Image Principle	People do not learn better when the speaker's image is on the screen.	• No need to show your headshot.

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5.4: PowerPoint/Prezi

5.4.0.1



Presentation software, such as PowerPoint or Prezi, allows relative newcomers to design to create powerful and engaging visual aids of all types. Tools such as Prezi often offer free access for educational purposes and can offer a fresh, unique take on the classic presentation slides. However, it can come with a much steeper learning curve, though they offer pre-made templates available for use. Other free open-source presentation software options include Google Slides and LibreOffice. Many of these offer simplified design templates and provide video tutorials on getting started.

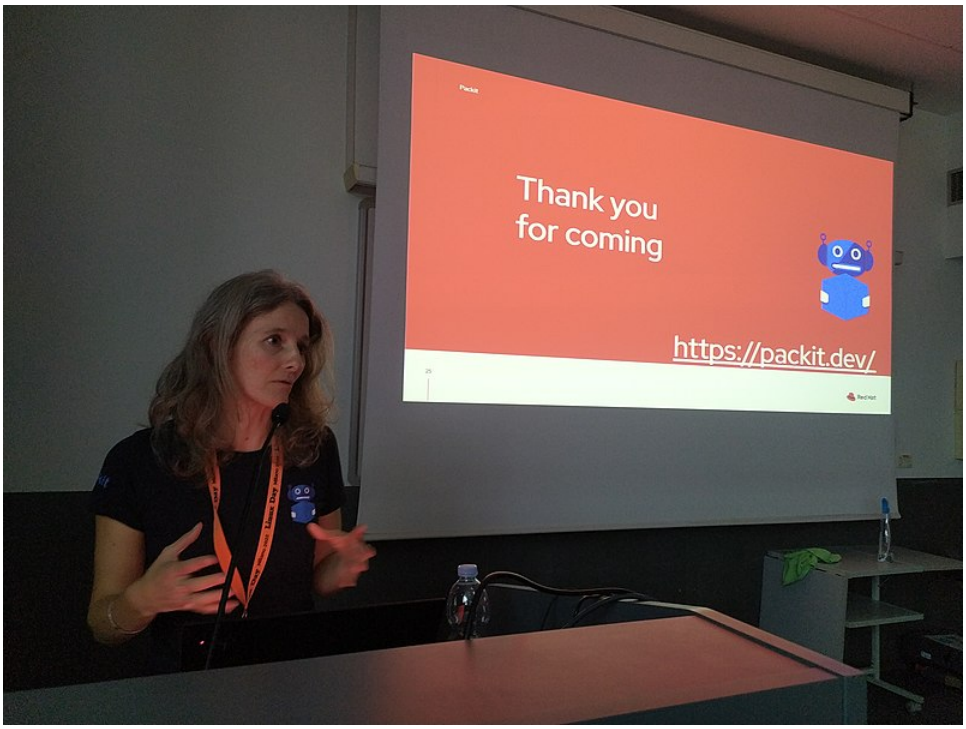
5.4.0.1 PowerPoint/Prezi Tips

Regardless of the software used, make all elements on a slide large enough to be seen by anyone in the room, also referred to as "aiming for back-row comprehension." Make the font choices easy and large enough to read without making the audience squint. In general, choose fonts for screen projection that do not have serifs, such as Arial, Verdana, or Tahoma. Exotic fonts or word art can be used to accent the presentation, but don't overdo it. Other tips include:

- **Make it simple**. Too many novice speakers try to do too much with their visual aids when something simple would have done the job just as well. Do more with less.
- **Make it clear**. Try not to assume the audience will "get" the point of the speech. Make sure to fill in the blanks with missing information and leave nothing open to random interpretations.
- **Make it consistent**. Avoid changing up the slide design, background, animations, or font styles halfway through the speech.
- **Think critically about the chosen colors**. A bright white background with plain black text may look simple, but for listeners up front, it may strain their eyes. Similarly, a black background with red text without sufficient contrast could be difficult to see.
- **Use images wherever possible, instead of text**. A picture is worth 1,000 bulleted points!
- **Do not use images for decoration**. All images chosen should support the information presented in the speech, whether they do so actively or passively.
- **Avoid using disturbing or offensive photos.** They might evoke a strong emotional reaction from the audience. If it is necessary to use graphic images, first, warn the audience before showing them. This helps them overcome the shock factor and pay attention instead to the message. Second, do not display them for any longer than necessary to make the desired impact. Once speakers gross someone out or overly shock them, they have lost their attention for the remainder of the speech. There is a fine line between shock value and shock overload.

Note to Self

Ask someone to look over your images to give you an outsider's perspective and help determine whether a photo adds value to your speech or whether it becomes a distraction.



- **Keep to a single message per slide**. Make sure that the slide matches the topic of discussion.
- **Use the 5 × 7 rule (or 5 × 5 or 6 × 6, depending upon the specific professor's advice) rule**: Avoid having excessive lines of text on each slide (5–6 lines total. This general rule helps prevent slides from becoming too wordy.
- **Use black slides in between points as filler slides**. This can help prevent the blinding light from the projector.
- **Don't allow the slides to take the place of the speaker**. If the audience becomes too focused on the visual aids and the speaker fades into the background, then the visuals have no longer provided aid but have stolen the spotlight.
- **Use only high-resolution images.** To avoid pixilation, fill the space on each slide with the image.
- **Do not talk to the screen**. There is a natural human tendency for people to look in the same direction as others in their vicinity, so when the audience looks up at the screen, resist the urge to turn toward the screen as well. However, maintain eye contact with the audience while explaining the visual, or at least as much as possible.

Note to Self

If you must look, try not to turn your whole body away from the audience and look only briefly, for about 1–2 seconds. Helpful tip: Plant your foot that is closest to your visual aid solidly. When you look back at your visual, leave your foot planted, and you will naturally spring back toward the audience.

- **HomeUse progressive revelation.** When using multiple lines of text on a slide, reveal only one point at a time. By doing so, only one subpoint get revealed at a time, helping to build suspense and maintain attention.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: What Order?

6.1: Determining Your Main Ideas
6.2: Structuring the Introduction
6.3: Opening a Speech- Get Their Attention from the Start!
6.4: Steps of a Conclusion
6.5: Structuring the Conclusion
6.6: Closing a Speech- End with Power and Let Them Know It is Time to Clap
6.7: Keeping Your Speech Moving
6.8: Transitions- Bridging Ideas for a Seamless Presentation

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6.1: Determining Your Main Ideas

Learning Objectives

1. Revisit the function of a specific purpose.
2. Understand how to make the transition from a specific purpose to a series of main points.
3. Be able to narrow a speech from all the possible points to the main points.
4. Explain how to prepare meaningful main points.



Figure 6.1.1: Lightbulb! (CC BY 2.0; Matt Wynn via Flickr)

When creating a speech, it's important to remember that speeches have three clear parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The introduction establishes the topic and whets your audience's appetite, and the conclusion wraps everything up at the end of your speech. The real "meat" of your speech happens in the body. In this section, we're going to discuss how to think strategically about the body of your speech.

We like the word *strategic* because it refers to determining what is important or essential to the overall plan or purpose of your speech. Too often, new speakers just throw information together and stand up and start speaking. When that happens, audience members are left confused and the reason for the speech may get lost. To avoid being seen as disorganized, we want you to start thinking critically about the organization of your speech. In this section, we will discuss how to take your speech from a specific purpose to creating the main points of your speech.

6.1.1 What Is Your Specific Purpose?

Before we discuss how to determine the main points of your speech, we want to revisit your speech's specific purpose, which we discussed in detail in Chapter 6 "Finding a Purpose and Selecting a Topic". Recall that a speech can have one of three general purposes: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain. The general purpose refers to the broad goal for creating and delivering the speech. The specific purpose, on the other hand, starts with one of those broad goals (inform, persuade, or entertain) and then further informs the listener about the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* of the speech.

The specific purpose is stated as a sentence incorporating the general purpose, the specific audience for the speech, and a prepositional phrase that summarizes the topic. Suppose you are going to give a speech about using open-source software. Here are three examples (each with a different general purpose and a different audience):

General Purpose	To inform

General Purpose	To inform
Specific Purpose	To inform a group of school administrators about the various open-source software packages that could be utilized in their school districts
General Purpose	To persuade
Specific Purpose	To persuade a group of college students to make the switch from Microsoft Office to the open-source office suite OpenOffice
General Purpose	To entertain
Specific Purpose	To entertain members of a business organization with a mock eulogy of for-pay software giants as a result of the proliferation of open-source alternatives

In each of these three examples, you'll notice that the general topic is the same—open-source software—but the specific purpose is different because the speech has a different general purpose and a different audience. Before you can think strategically about organizing the body of your speech, you need to know what your specific purpose is. If you have not yet written a specific purpose for your current speech, please go ahead and write one now.

6.1.2 From Specific Purpose to Main Points

Once you've written down your specific purpose, you can now start thinking about the best way to turn that specific purpose into a series of main points. Main points are the key ideas you present to enable your speech to accomplish its specific purpose. In this section, we're going to discuss how to determine your main points and how to organize those main points into a coherent, strategic speech.

6.1.3 How Many Main Points Do I Need?

While there is no magic number for how many main points a speech should have, speech experts generally agree that the fewer the number of main points the better. First and foremost, experts on the subject of memory have consistently shown that people don't tend to remember very much after they listen to a message or leave a conversation (Bostrom & Waldhart, 1988). While many different factors can affect a listener's ability to retain information after a speech, how the speech is organized is an important part of that process (Dunham, 1964; Smith, 1951; Thompson, 1960). For the speeches you will be delivering in a typical public speaking class, you will usually have just two or three main points. If your speech is less than three minutes long, then two main points will probably work best. If your speech is between three and ten minutes in length, then it makes more sense to use three main points.

You may be wondering why we are recommending only two or three main points. The reason comes straight out of the research on listening. According to LeFrancois, people are more likely to remember information that is meaningful, useful, and of interest to them; different or unique; organized; visual; and simple (LeFrancois, 1999). Two or three main points are much easier for listeners to remember than ten or even five. In addition, if you have two or three main points, you'll be able to develop each one with examples, statistics, or other forms of support. Including support for each point will make your speech more interesting and more memorable for your audience.

6.1.4 Narrowing Down Your Main Points

When you write your specific purpose and review the research you have done on your topic, you will probably find yourself thinking of quite a few points that you'd like to make in your speech. Whether that's the case or not, we recommend taking a few minutes to brainstorm and develop a list of points. In brainstorming, your goal is simply to think of as many different points as you can, not to judge how valuable or important they are. What information does your audience need to know to understand your topic? What information does your speech need to convey to accomplish its specific purpose? Consider the following example:

Specific Purpose	To inform a group of school administrators about the various open-source software packages that could be utilized in their school districts

Specific Purpose	To inform a group of school administrators about the various open-source software packages that could be utilized in their school districts
Brainstorming List of Points	Define open-source software.
	Define educational software.
	List and describe the software commonly used by school districts.
	Explain the advantages of using open-source software.
	Explain the disadvantages of using open-source software.
	Review the history of open-source software.
	Describe the value of open-source software.
	Describe some educational open-source software packages.
	Review the software needs of my specific audience.
	Describe some problems that have occurred with open-source software.

Now that you have brainstormed and developed a list of possible points, how do you go about narrowing them down to just two or three main ones? Remember, your main points are the key ideas that help build your speech. When you look over the preceding list, you can then start to see that many of the points are related to one another. Your goal in narrowing down your main points is to identify which individual, potentially minor points can be combined to make main points. This process is called chunking because it involves taking smaller chunks of information and putting them together with like chunks to create more fully developed chunks of information. Before reading our chunking of the preceding list, see if you can determine three large chunks out of the list (note that not all chunks are equal).

Specific Purpose	To inform a group of school administrators about the various open-source software packages that could be utilized in their school districts
Main Point 1	**School districts use software in their operations.**
	Define educational software.
	List and describe the software commonly used by school districts.
Main Point 2	**What is open-source software?**
	Define open-source software.
	Review the history of open-source software.
	Explain the advantages of using open-source software.
	Describe the value of open-source software.
	Explain the disadvantages of using open-source software.
	Describe some problems that have occurred with open-source software.
Main Point 3	**Name some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider.**
	Review the software needs of my specific audience.
	Describe some educational open-source software packages.

You may notice that in the preceding list, the number of subpoints under each of the three main points is a little disjointed or the topics don't go together clearly. That's all right. Remember that these are just general ideas at this point. It's also important to

remember that there is often more than one way to organize a speech. Some of these points could be left out and others developed more fully, depending on the purpose and audience. We'll develop the preceding main points more fully in a moment.

6.1.5 Helpful Hints for Preparing Your Main Points

Now that we've discussed how to take a specific purpose and turn it into a series of main points, here are some helpful hints for creating your main points.

6.1.6 Uniting Your Main Points

Once you've generated a possible list of main points, you want to ask yourself this question: "When you look at your main points, do they fit together?" For example, if you look at the three preceding main points (school districts use software in their operations; what is open-source software; name some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider), ask yourself, "Do these main points help my audience understand my specific purpose?"

Suppose you added a fourth main point about open-source software for musicians—would this fourth main point go with the other three? Probably not. While you may have a strong passion for open-source music software, that main point is extraneous information for the speech you are giving. It does not help accomplish your specific purpose, so you'd need to toss it out.

6.1.7 Keeping Your Main Points Separate

The next question to ask yourself about your main points is whether they overlap too much. While some overlap may happen naturally because of the singular nature of a specific topic, the information covered within each main point should be clearly distinct from the other main points. Imagine you're giving a speech with the specific purpose "to inform my audience about the health reasons for eating apples and oranges." You could then have three main points: that eating fruits is healthy, that eating apples is healthy, and that eating oranges is healthy. While the two points related to apples and oranges are clearly distinct, both of those main points would probably overlap too much with the first point "that eating fruits is healthy," so you would probably decide to eliminate the first point and focus on the second and third. On the other hand, you could keep the first point and then develop two new points giving additional support to why people should eat fruit.

6.1.8 Balancing Main Points

One of the biggest mistakes some speakers make is to spend most of their time talking about one of their main points, completely neglecting their other main points. To avoid this mistake, organize your speech so as to spend roughly the same amount of time on each main point. If you find that one of your main points is simply too large, you may need to divide that main point into two main points and consolidate your other main points into a single main point.

Let's see if our preceding example is balanced (school districts use software in their operations; what is open-source software; name some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider). What do you think? Obviously, the answer depends on how much time a speaker will have to talk about each of these main points. If you have an hour to talk, then you may find that these three main points are balanced. However, you may also find them wildly unbalanced if you only have five minutes to speak because five minutes is not enough time to even explain what open-source software is. If that's the case, then you probably need to rethink your specific purpose to ensure that you can cover the material in the allotted time.

6.1.9 Creating Parallel Structure for Main Points

Another major question to ask yourself about your main points is whether or not they have a parallel structure. By parallel structure, we mean that you should structure your main points so that they all sound similar. When all your main points sound similar, it's simply easier for your audiences to remember your main points and retain them for later. Let's look at our sample (school districts use software in their operations; what is open-source software; name some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider). Notice that the first and third main points are statements, but the second one is a question. Basically, we have an example here of main points that are not parallel in structure. You could fix this in one of two ways. You could make them all questions: what are some common school district software programs; what is open-source software; and what are some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider. Or you could turn them all into statements: school districts use software in their operations; define and describe open-source software; name some specific open-source software packages that may be appropriate for these school administrators to consider. Either of these changes will make the grammatical structure of the main points parallel.

6.1.10 Maintaining Logical Flow of Main Points

The last question you want to ask yourself about your main points is whether the main points make sense in the order you've placed them. The next section goes into more detail of common organizational patterns for speeches, but for now we want you to just think logically about the flow of your main points. When you look at your main points, can you see them as progressive, or does it make sense to talk about one first, another one second, and the final one last? If you look at your order, and it doesn't make sense to you, you probably need to think about the flow of your main points. Often, this process is an art and not a science. But let's look at a couple of examples.

School Dress Codes Example	
Main Point 1	History of school dress codes
Main Point 2	Problems with school dress codes
Main Point 3	Eliminating school dress codes

Rider Law Legislation	
Main Point 1	Why should states have rider laws?
Main Point 2	What are the effects of a lack of rider laws?
Main Point 3	What is rider law legislation?

When you look at these two examples, what are your immediate impressions of the two examples? In the first example, does it make sense to talk about history, and then the problems, and finally how to eliminate school dress codes? Would it make sense to put history as your last main point? Probably not. In this case, the main points are in a logical sequential order. What about the second example? Does it make sense to talk about your solution, then your problem, and then define the solution? Not really! What order do you think these main points should be placed in for a logical flow? Maybe you should explain the problem (lack of rider laws), then define your solution (what is rider law legislation), and then argue for your solution (why states should have rider laws). Notice that in this example you don't even need to know what "rider laws" are to see that the flow didn't make sense.

6.1.10.1 Key Takeaways

- All speeches start with a general purpose and then move to a specific purpose that gives the *who*, *what*, *where*, and *how* for the speech.
- Transitioning from the specific purpose to possible main points means developing a list of potential main points you could discuss. Then you can narrow your focus by looking for similarities among your potential main points and combining ones that are similar.
- Shorter speeches will have two main points while longer speeches will generally have three or more main points. When creating your main points, make sure that they are united, separate, balanced, parallel, and logical.

6.1.11 Exercises

1. Generate a specific purpose for your current speech. Conduct a brainstorming activity where you try to think of all the possible points you could possibly make related to your specific purpose. Once you've finished creating this list, see if you can find a meaningful pattern that helps you develop three main points.
2. Pair up with a partner. Take the three main points you developed in the previous exercise, exchange papers with your partner and ask him or her to see whether or not they are united, separate, balanced, parallel, and logical. You do the same for your partner's main points. If they are not, what can you or your partner do to fix your main points?

6.1.12 References

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6.2: Structuring the Introduction

A common concern many students have as the date of their first major speech approaches is “I don’t know how I should start my speech.” What they are really saying is they aren’t sure what words will be memorable, attention-capturing, and clever enough to get their audience interested or, on a more basic level, sound good. This is a problem most speakers have, since the first words you say, in many ways, set the tone for the rest of your speech. There may not be any one “best” way to start a speech, but we can provide some helpful guidelines that will make starting a speech much easier.

With that in mind, there are five basic elements that you will want to incorporate into your introduction. And while you have some leeway to structure your introduction in a way that best fits with your speech and you wouldn’t necessarily always do all of these in the order below, the following order of these five elements is fairly standard. Unless you have a specific reason to do otherwise, it is probably a pretty good order for you to use.

6.2.1 Element 1: Get the Audience’s Attention

The first major purpose of an introduction is to gain your audience’s attention and make them interested in what you have to say. While many audiences may be polite and not talk while you’re speaking, actually getting them to listen to what you are saying is a completely different challenge. Let’s face it—we’ve all tuned someone out at some point because we weren’t interested in what they had to say. If you do not get the audience’s attention at the outset, it will only become more difficult to do so as you continue speaking.

That’s why every speech should start with an **attention getter**, or some sort of statement or question that piques the audience’s interest in what you have to say at the very start of a speech. Sometime these are called “grabbers.” The first words out of your mouth should be something that will perk up the audience’s ears. Starting a speech with “Hey everybody. I’m going to talk to you today about soccer” already sounds boring and has not tried to engage the individuals in the audience who don’t care about soccer. Once your audience has deemed your speech to be boring, trying to inform, persuade, or entertain them becomes exponentially more difficult. So let’s briefly discuss what you can do to capture your audience’s attention from the onset.

First, when selecting an attention-getting device, you want to make sure that the option you choose is actually appropriate and relevant to your specific audience. Different audiences will have different backgrounds and knowledge, so you should use your audience analysis to determine whether specific information you plan on using would be appropriate for a specific audience. For example, if you’re giving a speech on family units to a group of individuals over the age of sixty-five, starting your speech with a reference to the television show *Stranger Things* may not be the best idea because the audience may be unfamiliar with that show.

You will also want to choose an attention-getting device appropriate for your speech topic. Ideally, your attention-getting device should have a relevant connection to your speech. Imagine if a speaker pulled condoms out of his pocket, yelled “Free sex!” and threw the condoms at the audience in the beginning of a speech about the economy. While this may clearly get the audience’s attention, this isn’t really a good way to prepare an audience for a speech about the stock market, or really much else. To help you out, below we have listed a number of different attention getters that you may find useful for opening your speech.

6.2.1.1 Anecdotes and Narratives

An **anecdote** is a brief account or story of an interesting or humorous event. Notice the emphasis here is on the word “brief.” A common mistake speakers make when telling an anecdote is to make the anecdote too long. An example of an anecdote used in a speech about the pervasiveness of technology might look something like this:

> *In July 2009, a high school girl named Miranda Becker was walking along a main boulevard near her home on Staten Island, New York, typing in a message on her cell phone. Not paying attention to the world around her, she took a step and fell right into an open manhole.*

Notice that the anecdote is short and has a clear point. From here the speaker can begin to make his or her point about how technology is controlling our lives.

A second type of anecdote is a parable or fable. A parable or fable is an allegorical anecdote designed to teach general life lessons. The most widely known parables for most Americans are those given in the Bible and the best-known fables are Aesop’s Fables (http://www.umass.edu/aesop/index.php). So if you decide your speech will focus on the benefits of remaining in college for more than four years in order to obtain multiple degrees, you may want to adapt some version of “The Tortoise and The Hare” as your attention getter.

It is sometimes helpful to begin your speech in a way that your audience finds familiar, since this can make them feel more connected to your speech. This may be particularly helpful for topics with which your audience is unfamiliar. One of the best and easiest ways to do this is to begin with a story that your audience is likely to have heard before. These types of stories come in a number of forms, but the most common ones include fables, tall tales, ghost stories, parables, fairy tales, myths, and legends.

Two primary issues that you should be aware of often arise with using stories as attention getters. First, you shouldn't let your story go on for too long. If you are going to use a story to begin your speech, you need to think of it more in terms of summarizing the story rather than actually reciting the entire thing. Even a relatively simple story like "The Tortoise and the Hare" can take a couple of minutes to get through in its entirety, so you'll need to cut it down to the main points or highlights. The second issue with using stories as attention getters is that the story must in some way relate to your speech. If you begin your speech by recounting the events in "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," your speech will in some way need to address such topics as finding balance or coming to a compromise. If your story doesn't relate to your topic, you will likely confuse your audience and they may spend the remainder of your speech trying to figure out the connection rather than listening to what you have to say.

A personal story is another option here. You may consider starting your speech with a story about yourself that is relevant to your topic. Some of the best speeches are ones that come from personal knowledge and experience. If you are an expert or have firsthand experience related to your topic, sharing this information with the audience is a great way to show that you are credible during your attention getter. For example, if you had a gastric bypass surgery and you wanted to give an informative speech about the procedure, you could introduce your speech in this way:

> *In the fall of 2015, I decided that it was time that I took my life into my own hands. After suffering for years with the disease of obesity, I decided to take a leap of faith and get a gastric bypass in an attempt to finally beat the disease.*

If you use a personal example, don't get carried away with the focus on yourself and your own life. Your speech topic is the purpose of the attention getter, not the other way around. Another pitfall in using a personal example is that it may be too personal for you to maintain your composure. For example, a student once started a speech about her grandmother by stating, "My grandmother died of cancer at 3:30 this morning." The student then proceeded to burst into uncontrollable tears. While this is an extreme example, we strongly recommend that you avoid any material that could get you upset while speaking. When speakers have an emotional breakdown during their speech, audience members stop listening to the message and become very uncomfortable. They may empathize with the distraught speaker, but the effectiveness has been diminished in other ways.

6.2.1.2 Startling Statement/Statistic/Fact

Another way to start your speech is to surprise your audience with startling information about your topic. Often, startling statements come in the form of statistics and strange facts. The goal of a good startling statistic is that it surprises the audience and gets them engaged in your topic. For example, if you're giving a speech about oil conservation, you could start by saying, "A Boeing 747 airliner holds 57,285 gallons of fuel." You could start a speech on the psychology of dreams by noting, "The average person has over 1,460 dreams a year."

A strange fact, on the other hand, is a statement that does not involve numbers but is equally surprising to most audiences. For example, you could start a speech on the gambling industry by saying, "There are no clocks in any casinos in Las Vegas." You could start a speech on the Harlem Globetrotters by saying, "In 2000, Pope John Paul II became the most famous honorary member of the Harlem Globetrotters." All four of these examples came from a great website for strange facts (http://www.strangefacts.com).

Although startling statements are fun, it is important to use them ethically. First, make sure that your startling statement is factual. The Internet is full of startling statements and claims that are simply not factual, so when you find a statement you'd like to use, you have an ethical duty to ascertain its truth before you use it and to provide a reliable citation. Second, make sure that your startling statement is relevant to your speech and not just thrown in for shock value. We've all heard startling claims made in the media that are clearly made for purposes of shock or fear mongering, such as "Do you know what common household appliance could kill you? Film at 11:00." As speakers, we have an ethical obligation to avoid playing on people's emotions in this way.

6.2.1.3 A Rhetorical Question

A **rhetorical question** is a question to which no actual reply is expected. For example, a speaker talking about the history of Mother's Day could start by asking the audience, "Do you remember the last time you told your mom you loved her?" In this case, the speaker does not expect the audience to shout out an answer, but rather to think about the question as the speech goes on.

6.2.1.4 Immediate Reference to Subject

The most direct (but probably the least interesting of the possible attention getters) is to tell your audience the subject of your speech. Here's an example:

> *We are surrounded by statistical information in today's world, so understanding statistics is becoming paramount to citizenship in the twenty-first century.*

This sentence explicitly tells an audience that the speech they are about to hear is about the importance of understanding statistics. While this isn't the most entertaining or interesting attention getter, it is very clear and direct. And note that it justifies the importance of the audience paying attention while avoiding being completely snooze-inducing, as it would have been if it were reworded as, "I want to talk to you about statistics."

6.2.1.5 Reference to Audience or Appeal to Self-Interest

As we have tried to emphasize throughout this book, your audience is the single most important factor is crafting your speech, so it makes sense that one approach to opening your speech is to make a direct reference to the audience. In this case, the speaker has a clear understanding of the audience and points out that there is something unique about the audience that should make them interested in the speech's content. Here's an example:

> *As students at State College, you and I know the importance of selecting a major that will benefit us in the future. In today's competitive world, we need to study a topic that will help us be desirable to employers and provide us with lucrative and fulfilling careers. That's why I want you all to consider majoring in communication.*

In this example, the speaker reminds the audience of their shared status as students and uses the common ground to acknowledge the importance of selecting a major that will benefit them in the future. Earlier in the textbook (Chapter 4) we used the expression WIIFM ("What's in it for me?") to remind you that your topic and approach should appeal to the self-interests and needs of the audience members.

6.2.1.6 Quotation

Another way to capture your listeners' attention is to use the words of another person that relate directly to your topic. Maybe you've found a really great quotation in one of the articles or books you read while researching your speech. If not, you can also use a number of Internet or library sources that compile useful quotations from noted individuals. Quotations are a great way to start a speech, so let's look at an example that could be used during the opening of a commencement address (a type of special occasion speech discussed later in Chapter 15):

> *The late actress, fashion icon, and social activist Audrey Hepburn once noted that, "Nothing is impossible. The word itself says 'I'm possible'!"*

If you use a quotation as your attention getter, be sure to give the source first (as in this example) so that it isn't mistaken as your own wording.

6.2.1.7 Reference to Current Events

Referring to a current news event that relates to your topic is often an effective way to capture attention, as it immediately makes the audience aware of how relevant the topic is in today's world. For example, consider this attention getter for a persuasive speech on frivolous lawsuits:

> *On January 10 of this year, Scott Anthony Gomez, Jr., and a fellow inmate escaped from a Pueblo, Colorado, jail. During their escape the duo attempted to rappel from the roof of the jail using a makeshift ladder of bed sheets. During Gomez's attempt to scale the building, he slipped, fell forty feet, and injured his back. After being quickly apprehended, Gomez filed a lawsuit against the jail for making it too easy for him to escape.*

In this case, the speaker is highlighting a news event that illustrates what a frivolous lawsuit is, setting up the speech topic of a need for change in how such lawsuits are handled.

6.2.1.8 Historical Reference

You may also capture your listeners' attention by referring to an historical event related to your topic. Obviously, this strategy is closely related to the previous one, except that instead of a recent news event you are reaching further back in history to find a relevant reference. For example, if you are giving a speech on the perception of modern music as crass or having no redeeming values, you could refer back to Elvis Presley and his musical breakout in the 1950s as a way of making a comparison:

During the mid-1950s, Elvis Presley introduced the United States to a new genre of music: rock and roll. Initially viewed as distasteful, and Presley was himself chastised for his gyrating dance moves and flashy style. Today he is revered as "The King of Rock 'n Roll." So when we criticize modern artists for being flamboyant or over the top, we may be ridiculing some of the most important musical innovators we will know in our lifetimes.

In this example, the speaker is evoking the audience's knowledge of Elvis to raise awareness of similarities to current artists that may be viewed today as he was in the 1950s.

6.2.1.9 Humor

Humor is another effective method for gaining an audience's attention. Humor is an amazing tool when used properly. We cannot begin to explain all the facets of humor within this chapter, but we can say that humor is a great way of focusing an audience on what you are saying. However, humor is a double-edged sword. If you do not wield the sword carefully, you can turn your audience against you very quickly.



When using humor, you really need to know your audience and understand what they will find humorous. One of the biggest mistakes a speaker can make is to use some form of humor that the audience either doesn't find funny or, worse, finds offensive. Think about how incompetent the character of Michael Scott seems on the television program The Office, in large part because of his ineffective use of humor. We always recommend that you test out humor of any kind on a sample of potential audience members prior to actually using it during a speech. If you do use a typical narrative "joke," don't say it happened to you. Anyone who heard the joke before will think you are less than truthful!

Now that we've warned you about the perils of using humor, let's talk about how to use humor as an attention getter. Humor can be incorporated into several of the attention-getting devices mentioned. You could use a humorous anecdote, quotation, or current event. As with other attention-getting devices, you need to make sure your humor is relevant to your topic, as one of the biggest mistakes some novices make when using humor is to add humor that really doesn't support the overall goal of the speech. So when looking for humorous attention getters, you want to make sure that the humor is not going to be offensive to your audience and relevant to your speech.

For example, here's a humorous quotation from Nicolas Chamfort, a French author during the sixteenth century: "The only thing that stops God from sending another flood is that the first one was useless." While this quotation could be effective for some audiences, other audiences may find this humorous quotation offensive. The Chamfort quotation could be appropriate for a speech on the ills of modern society, but probably not for a speech on the state of modern religious conflict. It also would not be appropriate in an area that had just experienced damaging floods. You want to make sure that the leap from your attention getter to your topic isn't too complicated for your audience, or the attention getter will backfire.

This list of attention-getting devices represents a thorough, but not necessarily exhaustive, range of ways that you can begin your speech. Certainly these would be the more common attention getters that most people employ. Again, as mentioned earlier, your selection of attention getter is not only dependent on your audience, your topic, and the occasion, but also on your preferences and skills as a speaker. If you know that you are a bad storyteller, you might elect not to start your speech with a story. If you tend to tell jokes that no one laughs at, avoid starting your speech off with humor.

To review, think back to the factors of attention in Chapter 7. The best attention getters are

- concrete (they bring up or refer to real experiences);
- novel (they use material that is new or fresh to the audience);
- familiarity (makes the audience perk up with something comfortable and close to their experience);
- movement-oriented (don't spend too long in the introduction because the audience will wonder where you are headed);
- need-oriented (your attention getter and introduction in general should rel

Other factors like suspense (introducing a story and finishing it at the end) or conflict (telling a story with strong opposing forces and tension) can also be used.

6.2.2 Element 2: Establish or Enhance Your Credibility

Whether you are informing, persuading, or entertaining an audience, one of the things they will be expecting is for you to know what you are talking about. So the second element of an introduction is to let your audience know that you are a knowledgeable and credible source for this information. To do this, you will need to explain how you know what you know about your topic.

For some people, this will be simple. If you are informing your audience how a baseball is thrown, and you have played baseball since you were eight years old, that makes you a fairly credible source. You probably know what you are talking about. So let us know that by saying something like, "Having played baseball for over ten years, including two years as the starting pitcher on my high school's varsity team, I can tell you about the ways that pitchers use to throw different kind of balls in a baseball game." With regard to persuasive speaking, if you are trying to convince your audience to join Big Brothers Big Sisters and you have been volunteering for years, let them know: "I've been serving with Big Brothers Big Sisters for the last two years, and I can tell you that the experience is very rewarding." By telling your audience you volunteer, you are saying to them "I'm not asking you to do anything I wouldn't do myself."

However, you may be speaking on a subject with which you have no history of credibility. If you are just curious about when streetlights were installed at intersections and why they are red, yellow, and green, you can give an interesting speech on that. But you will still need to give your audience some sort of reason to trust your knowledge. Since you were required to do research, you are at least more knowledgeable on the subject that anyone else in the class. In this case you might say, "After doing some research and consulting several books on the subject, I want to share what I've learned about the evolution of traffic lights in America."

6.2.3 Element 3: Establish Rapport

The next element of your introduction will be to establish rapport with your audience. *Rapport* is basically a relationship or connection you make with your audience. In everyday life, we say that two people have a rapport when they get along really well and are good friends. In your introduction, you will want to explain to your audience why you are giving them this information and why it is important to them (answering the WIIFM question). You will be making a connection through this shared information and explaining to them how it will benefit them. One of the best examples of rapport we have seen came from an informative speech on the poet Lord Byron:

> *You may be asking yourselves why you need to know about Lord Byron. If you take Humanities 1202 as I did last semester, you will be discussing his life and works, so after this speech you will have a good basis for the class material.*

What is important here is that this speaker used the audience analysis techniques discussed in Chapter 2 to determine the demographic make-up of the audience and determine what would motivate them to listen. Knowing that they are all college students, the speaker enticed them to listen with the suggestion that this information would benefit them in a future class they might take.

Another important thing to note here is that there is not necessarily a right or wrong way to establish rapport with your audience. You as the speaker must determine what you think will work best and help make a connection. Take for example an informative speech on "how to throw a baseball." How would you establish rapport with your audience on that topic? Maybe you choose to focus on the age of your audience, and noting that they are all relatively young and that some of them are already parents, you might say, "A lot of people in this room have or may have children someday, and if you decide you want to throw a ball with them or help them with sports, here are three steps you can use to teach them how to throw a baseball." Will everyone in the class have kids someday? Probably not, but it is reasonable to guess that most about your audience will relate to this approach based on a demographic analysis.

6.2.4 Element 4: Preview Your Topic/Purpose/Central Idea

The fourth major function of an introduction after getting the audience's attention is to reveal the purpose of your speech to your audience. Have you ever sat through a speech wondering what the basic point was? Have you ever come away after a speech and had no idea what the speaker was talking about? An introduction should make the topic, purpose, and central idea clear. This might be a good place for you to review the material in Chapter 4 about writing central idea statements and specific purposes. For most speeches, the central idea and preview (Element 5) should come at the end of the introduction.



While not a hard and fast rule, you will probably also want to avoid having the audience "guess" what your topic is through clues. Consider the following topic reveal:

> *Today I'd like to talk to you about a man who overcame great adversity to become the President of the United States. During his time in office he faced increasing opposition from conservative voices in government, as well as some dissension among his own party, all while being thrust into a war he didn't want.*

As an attention getter, this may not be bad, but what it doesn't do is reveal the topic. The speaker at this point might assume the audience has clearly figured out who this speech is about and moved on. Unfortunately, the above passage could refer to either Abraham Lincoln or Barack Obama, and members of the audience might either be confused or disappointed when they figure out the speech isn't covering what they thought it was.

It should also be noted here that at no point in your introduction do you ever want to read your specific purpose statement as a way of revealing your topic. Your specific purpose is included on your outline for your instructor's sake and to keep you on track during preparation. The language used in the specific purpose ("To inform my audience…") is too awkward to be actually read aloud.

6.2.5 Element 5: Preview Your Main Points

Just like previewing your topic, previewing your main points helps your audience know what to expect throughout the course of your speech and prepares them to listen. Your preview of main points should be clear and easy to follow so that there is no question in your audience's minds what they are. Long, complicated, or verbose main points can get confusing. Be succinct and simple: "Today, in our discussion of Abraham Lincoln's life, we will look at his birth, his role a president, and his assassination." From that there is little question as to what specific aspects of Lincoln's life the speech will cover. However, if you want to be extra sure they get it, you can always enumerate them by using signposts (as we discussed in Chapter 6): "In discussing how to make chocolate chip cookies, first we will cover what ingredients you need, second we will talk about how to mix them, and third we will look at baking them."

What these five elements do is prepare your audience for the bulk of the speech (i.e. the body section) by letting them know what they can expect, why they should listen, and why they can trust you as a speaker. Having all five elements starts your speech off on much more solid ground that you would get without having them.

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6.3: Opening a Speech- Get Their Attention from the Start!



Get the audience's attention, or the rest of your speech is a waste. I mean it! Most people spend the majority of their speech preparation time working on the body of their speech and then they tack on an opening and a closing last minute.

The opening and closing deserve the most attention. Why? If you don't get the audience's attention and get them to pay attention to you instead of… the thoughts in their heads, their grocery lists, their neighbors, their social media…then all the rest of your brilliant content is wasted because they will never hear it. Lisa Marshall of Toastmasters International stresses the opening words are so important that "I spend 10 times more time developing and practicing the opener than any other part of the speech."

Look at the description of Person A and Person B and tell me which person you like more.

Person A
envious, stubborn, critical, impulsive, industrious, and intelligent

Person B
intelligent, industrious, impulsive, critical, stubborn, and envious

If you are like most people, you have a preference for Person B. This illustrates a study by Solomon Ashe. He had subjects rate these two people using a string of descriptive words. Now look back at the descriptions. Look closely and you will notice they are the same words in a different order. Most people put the most emphasis on the first three words in determining how they will create the person. Like Asche's subjects, your audience will be evaluating those first three words. Let's bring it back around to speechmaking. The first sentence out of your mouth is crucial and the first three words are especially important.

I am sure you are not surprised to know that people form opinions quickly. To prove this, researchers showed subjects either a 20-minute clip of a job applicant or a 20-30 second clip of a job applicant. They were asked to rate the person on likeability and self-assurance. People were able to form an opinion in under thirty seconds. Not only that but they were able to form the same opinions from a 30-second clip as a 20-minute exposure.

The Battle for Attention

> *Remember that every piece of content in our modern era is part of an attention war. It's fighting against thousands of other claims on people's time and energy. This is true even when you're standing on a stage in front of a seated audience. They have deadly distracters in their pockets called smartphones, which they can use to summon to their eyes a thousand outside alternatives. Once emails and texts make their claim, your talk may be doomed. And then there's that lurking demon of modern life, fatigue. All these are lethal enemies. You never want to provide someone with an excuse to zone out. You have to be a savvy general directing this war's outcome. Starting strong is one of your most important weapons.*
> *Chris Anderson, TED Talks, The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking.*

"People don't pay attention to boring things," according to John Medina, author of Brain Rules, "You've got 30 seconds before they start asking the question, 'Am I going to pay attention to you or not?'"It is important to get your audience's attention right

away. In this chapter, I will share with you several ways to win the war for attention and to start your speech right. I will show you the basic opening and closing structure of speeches and give you many examples of what that looks like. A speech, like an airplane, needs a good take-off and a good landing. Now it's time to prepare to have a strong take-off and learn everything that goes into a speech introduction. This chapter is full of examples from a variety of talks. I included quotes from those introductions, but I also included links to each of those talks hoping you will be interested enough to want to listen.

Ways to Start a Speech

Chris Anderson likens this to battle. "First there is the 10-second war: can you do something in your first moments on stage to ensure people's eager attention while you set up your talk topic? Second is the 1-minute war: can you then use that first minute to ensure that they're committed to coming on the full talk journey with you?"

When thinking about your speech, spend a lot of time thinking about how to win the battle for their attention. Your introduction should make your audience want to put down their phones and listen. Your introduction should be so compelling they stop their wandering minds and turn their thoughts to you and you alone. Your introduction should start with three strong words where they form a strong opinion of you and your speech. Let me share how to accomplish this.

Story

Capturing the audience through the story is one of the most powerful ways to start a speech. A story engages the brain in powerful ways and causes the audience's brains to sync with the speakers. A well-told story will allow the audience to "see" things in their mind's eye and to join the speaker's emotions.

Watch this clip by Ric Elias for how he begins his speech with a powerful story. Particularly notice his first four words, "Imagine a big explosion."



Imagine a big explosion as you climb through 3,000 ft. Imagine a plane full of smoke. Imagine an engine going clack, clack, clack. It sounds scary. Well, I had a unique seat that day. I was sitting in 1D. I was the only one who could talk to the flight attendants. So I looked at them right away, and they said, "No problem. We probably hit some birds." The pilot had already turned the plane around, and we weren't that far. You could see Manhattan. Two minutes later, three things happened at the same time.

The pilot lines up the plane with the Hudson River. That's usually not the route. He turns off the engines. Now, imagine being in a plane with no sound. And then he says three words. The most unemotional three words I've ever heard. He says, "Brace for impact."

Ric Elias, Three Things I Learned While My Plane Crashed.

Consider these other examples and notice how the speaker uses a story.

More powerful introductions using story:

> ***I love you,*** *I believe in you and it's going to be OK. The three things that I needed to hear three years ago when I felt more abandoned than ever. I remember that day as if it happen this morning. It was Sunday and I had just woken up early at a brisk 12:30 in the afternoon.*
> *Ryan Brooks, Honesty, courage, and the importance of brushing your teeth.*
>
> ***When I was nine years old*** *I went off to summer camp for the first time. And my mother packed me a suitcase full of books, which to me seemed like a perfectly natural thing to do. Because in my family, reading was the primary group activity. And this might sound antisocial to you, but for us, it was really just a different way of being social. You have the animal warmth of your family sitting right next to you, but you are also free to go roaming around the adventureland inside your own mind. And I had this idea that camp was going to be just like this, but better.*
> *Susan Cain. The Power of Introverts.*
>
> ***I grew up to study the brain*** *because I have a brother who has been diagnosed with a brain disorder: schizophrenia.*
> *Jill Bolte Taylor, My Stroke of Insight.*
>
> ***A few years ago,*** *I got one of those spam emails. I'm not quite sure how, but it turned up in my inbox, and it was from a guy called Solomon Odonkoh.*
> *James Veitch This is What Happens When You Reply to Spam Email.*
>
> ***Eleven years ago,*** *while giving birth to my first child, I hemorrhaged and was transfused with seven pints of blood. Four years later, I found out that I had been infected with the AIDS virus and had unknowingly passed it to my daughter, Ariel, through my breast milk, and my son, Jake, in utero.*
> *Elizabeth Glaser, Address to the 1992 Democratic National Convention.*

Good stories immediately set the stage and introduce you to the place and to the people. Doing this helps your brain can form a structure where the story takes place. It helps you see the story unfold in your mind. If you need help starting a story, Vanessa Van Edwards suggests these prompts:

- Once upon a time.
- I'm here for a reason, and it's an interesting story.
- The best thing that ever happened to me was.

There is an entire chapter on the Power of Story that can be found here.

Humor is a rubber sword –
it allows you to make a point without drawing blood.
– Mary Hirsch

Humor

When Family Guy's Seth MacFarlane spoke at Harvard Commencement in the rain, he started with "There's nowhere I would rather be on a day like this than around all this electoral equipment." People laughed, people smiled, and the speech was off to a strong start. Humor works because it gives the audience a hit of the feel-good hormone dopamine. That is … if you are funny. If you decide to use humor, make sure you are funny. Test your humor on honest friends. In addition, the humor you use should fit your personality and your audience. Be warned, some groups would find humor inappropriate, do your research.

Watch this clip for how Tshering Tobgay begins his speech with humor.



In case you are wondering, no, I'm not wearing a dress, and no, I'm not saying what I'm wearing underneath. (Laughter) This is a go. This is my national dress. This is how all men dress in Bhutan. That is how our women dress. Like our women, we men get to wear pretty bright colors, but unlike our women, we get to show off our legs. Our national dress is unique, but this is not the only thing that's unique about my country. Our promise to remain carbon neutral is also unique, and this is what I'd like to speak about today, our promise to remain carbon neutral.

Tshering Tobgay, This Country Isn't Just Carbon Neutral–Its Carbon Negative.

More powerful introductions using humor

> ***I didn't rebel as a teenager.*** *I started late and was still going at it the summer I turned thirty. I just became an American citizen, I divorced my husband, I got a big tattoo of a bat on my arm, and I joined a New York City punk band.*
> *Danusia Trevino, Guilty*
>
> ***I need to make a confession*** *at the outset here. A little over 20 years ago, I did something that I regret, something that I'm not particularly proud of. Something that, in many ways, I wish no one would ever know, but that here I feel kind of obliged to reveal. In the late 1980s, in a moment of youthful indiscretion, I went to law school. Dan Pink, The Puzzle of Motivation.*
>
> ***It is really interesting*** *to be a woman and to get to 45 and to not be married yet and to not have kids, especially when you have pushed out your fifth kid on television.*
> *Tracee Ellis Ross, 2017 Glamour Woman of the Year.*
>
> ***I am not drunk****…but the doctor who delivered me was." (reference the shake she has due to a botched medical procedure at birth causing her cerebral palsey).*
> *Maysoon Zayid, I've Got 99 Prolbems and Cerebral Palsey is Not One of Them.*

Salutation followed by humor

> *Oh boy, thank you so much, thank you so much. Thank you, President Cowan, Mrs. President Cowen; distinguished guests, undistinguished guests, you know who you are, honored faculty and creepy Spanish teacher. And thank you to all the graduating Class of 2009, I realize most of you are hungover and have splitting headaches and haven't slept since Fat Tuesday, but you can't graduate 'til I finish, so listen up. When I was asked to*

make the commencement speech, I immediately said yes. Then I went to look up what commencement meant which would have been easy if I had a dictionary, but most of the books in our house are Portia's, and they're all written in Australian. So I had to break the word down myself, to find out the meaning. Commencement: common, and cement, common cement. You commonly see cement on sidewalks. Sidewalks have cracks, and if you step on a crack, you break your mother's back. So there's that. But I'm honored that you've asked me here to speak at your common cement
Ellen DeGenres, Commencement Speech at Tulane.

Well, thank you. Thank you Mr. President, First Lady, King Abdullah of Jordan, Norm, distinguished guests. Please join me in praying that I don't say something we'll all regret. That was for the FCC. If you're wondering what I'm doing here, at a prayer breakfast, well so am I. I'm certainly not here as a man of the cloth, unless that cloth is — is leather.
Bono at the 54th annual National Prayer Breakfast.

Interesting or Startling Fact

Starting your speech by sharing a little-known fact, can be powerful. For this to fully work, you need to have the audience's attention from the very first word. Read on for how these speakers started strong.

Powerful introductions using facts

Sadly, in the next 18 minutes when I do our chat, four Americans that are alive will be dead from the food that they eat.
Jamie Oliver, Teach Every Child About Food.

So I want to start by offering you a free, no-tech life hack, and all it requires of you is this: that you change your posture for two minutes.
Amy Cuddy, Your Body Language May Shape Who You Are.

Okay, now I don't want to alarm anybody in this room, but it's just come to my attention that the person to your right is a liar. (Laughter) Also, the person to your left is a liar. Also the person sitting in your very seats is a liar. We're all liars. What I'm going to do today is I'm going to show you what the research says about why we're all liars, how you can become a lie spotter and why you might want to go the extra mile and go from lie spotting to truth seeking, and ultimately to trust building.
Pamela Meyer, How to Spot a Liar.

You will live 7.5 minutes longer than you would have otherwise, just because you watched this talk.
Jane McGonigal. The Game That Can Give You Ten Extra Years of Life.

There are 900,000 divorces in the United States of America every year. Fewer than 10% of them ever talked to anybody about their relationship. So why would you need a science? Well, we need a science to develop effective treatment and understanding of how to make love work. Why? Why should we care about having great relationships? Well, it turns out that in the past 50 years, a field called social epidemiology has emerged, and it shows that great friendships, great love relationships between lovers and parents and children lead to greater health – mental health as well as physical health – greater

> *wealth, greater resilience, faster recovery from illness, greater longevity – if you want to live 10 to 15 years longer, work on your relationships, not just your exercise – and more successful children as well.* John Gottman. The Science of Love.
>
> *This room may appear to be holding 600 people but there is actually so many more because within each of us there is a multiple of personalities.*
> *Elizabeth Lesser, Take the Other to Lunch.*

Use a Prop

Using a physical object can draw the audience's attention. Make sure you plan the timing of the prop, and you practice with it. It is important that it is large enough for the audience to see and they can see it well enough that they are not frustrated. Depending on your speech, it may be appropriate to put it away, so it is not distracting.

Powerful introductions using props

> *Darren Tay walks onto the stage and stares at the audience. He pulls a pair of underwear out of his pocket and puts them on over his suit. "Hey loser how do you like your new school uniform. I think it looks great on you. Those were the words of my high school bully Greg Upperfield. Now if you are all wondering if the underwear that Greg used was clean, I had the same questions.*
> *Darren Tay, Outsmart, Outlast. Toastmasters 2016 World Champion of Public Speaking*.

> *Mohammed Qahtani walks onstage, puts a cigarette in his mouth … then looks up as if noticing the audience and says, "What?" As the audience laughs, he continues. "Oh, you all think smoking kills? Ha-ha, let me tell you something. Do you know that the amount of people dying from diabetes are three times as many [as the] people dying from smoking? Yet if I pulled out a Snickers bar, nobody would say anything." He goes on to say, his facts are made up and his real topic is about how words have power.* Mohammed Qahtani, Toastmasters 2015 World Champion of Public Speaking
>
> *JA Gamach blows a train whistle and then starts his speech as if he were a conductor, "All aboard! It's a bright sunny day and you are taking a train. You are wearing a pair of sandals you proudly made yourself. As you board the train one of your sandals slips off and falls beside the track. (J.A. loses one sandal that falls down the platform.) You try to retrieve it. Too late. The train starts to pull away. What would you have done? I would have cursed my bad luck, mad at losing a sandal.*
> *JA Gamache, Toastmasters 2007 World Championship.*

Use a Quotation

Powerful introductions using quotes

Rules for using quotes

- Be sure to use the quote purposefully and not just as placeholders.
- Quotes can just take up valuable space where you could put content unless they are not properly used.

- Let the quote be more important than the author. When using a quote at the opening, say the quote first and then the author. When using a quote at the end of a speech, say the author first and then the quote.
- Keep it short and sweet. Use a quote that gets to the point quickly.
- If you must use long quotes–put them on your slide.
- If you project a quote, read it to the audience. Never expect them to read it while you talk about something else. Never say stupid things like, "You can read, I'll let you read this for yourselves" or "Your adults, I'll let you process this."
- Check the authorship and authenticity of the quote. There are so many quotes on the internet that are misattributed and misquoted. For example, who wrote the quote: "They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel"?
- Do not go for the overused quote or your audience is prone to dismiss it. Instead of quoting an overused "I have a dream quote" do as Jim Key, the 2003 Toastmasters International World Championship of Public Speaking did and pick an equally great but lesser-used Martin Luther King Quote: "The time is always right to do what is right!"

Watch Nate Stauffer at a Moth Grand Slam as he uses poetry to start and carry his story.

Watch this clip for how Andrew Solomon opens with a quote to make us think about depression.



Andrew Solomon, Depression, The Secret We Share.

Reference the Occasion

> *Ceremonial speeches often call for acknowledgment of those in attendance or a mention of the occasion. Here is how Martin Luther King Junior set up his famous speech.*
>
> > *I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation.*
> > *Martin Luther King Junior, I Have a Dream.*

Get the Audience Involved

Having the audience stand, raise their hand, or even nod in encouragement can cause them to focus on your message. This can be particularly helpful if the audience has been sitting for a while. Let me show you a few examples of how that works.

Ask a Question

You can involve the audience from the start by asking them a question.

Watch the first few minutes of Amy Purdy's speech and how she starts with a question, "If your life were a book and you were the author, how would you want your story to go?"

More powerful introductions using a question

> *I'm here today to talk about a disturbing question, which has an equally disturbing answer. My topic is the secret of domestic violence and the question I'm going to tackle is the one everyone always asks. Why would she stay? Why would anyone stay with a man who beats her?*
> *Why Domestic Violence Victims Don't Leave- Leslie Morgan Steiner*
>
> *Here's a question we need to rethink together: What should be the role of money and markets in our societies? Today, there are very few things that money can't buy. If you're sentenced to a jail term in Santa Barbara, California, you should know that if you don't like the standard accommodations, you can buy a prison cell upgrade. It's true. For how much, do you think? What would you guess? Five hundred dollars? It's not the Ritz-Carlton. It's a jail! Eighty-two dollars a night. Eighty-two dollars a night.*
> *Michael Sandel, Why We Shouldn't Trust Markets with Our Civic Life.*

> *How do you explain when things don't go as we assume? Or better, how do you explain when others are able to achieve things that seem to defy all of the assumptions? For example: Why is Apple so innovative? Year after year, after year, after year, they're more innovative than all their competition.*
> *Simon Sinek, How Great Leaders Inspire Action.*
>
> *Can you remember a moment when a brilliant idea flashed into your head?*
> *Darren LaCroix, Ouch! World Champion of Public Speaking.*

Have the Audience Participate

If you ask a question you want the audience to answer, be sure to give them time to respond. If they raise their hands, be sure to acknowledge their response. You might have the answer by standing, by raising their hands, by speaking to their neighbor. You might call on one member of the audience to answer for the group.

If you ask a question you want the audience to answer, don't let your presentation slide give away the answer. For example, one speaker had a slide behind him that said, "Lesson 1: Don't Worry About IQ." He has the audience raise their hand if they want to improve their grades then he asks, "So can I get a show of hands, how many would say IQ is going to be the most important to get those marks to go up?" Very few people responded because the answer was "written on the wall" literally.

Watch this clip as Allan Pease engages the audience.



Everybody hold your right hand in front like this in a handshaking position. Uncross your legs. Relaxed position. Right hand in front. When I say the word, "Now" here's what we're going to do. I am going to ask you to turn to someone besides you, shake hands as if you're meeting for the first time, and keep pumping till I ask you to stop. Then you'll stop and freeze it and we're going to analyze what's happening. You got that? You don't have time to think about this. Do it now. Pick anybody and pump. Pump, everybody. Freeze it. Hold it. Stop. Hold it. Freeze it. Keep your hands locked. Keep them locked. The person whose hand is most on top is saying "I'll be the boss for the rest of the day."
Allan Pease, Body Language, the Power is in the Palm of Your Hands.

More powerful introductions using audience participation

> *I have a confession to make. But first, I want you to make a little confession to me. In the past year, I want you to just raise your hand if you've experienced relatively little stress?*
> *Kelly McGonigal, How to Make Stress Your Friend.*
>
> *So I'd like to start, if I may, by asking you some questions.*
>
> *If you've ever lost someone you truly loved, ever had your heartbroken, ever struggled through an acrimonious divorce, or being the victim of infidelity, please stand up.*
>
> *If standing up isn't accessible to you, you can put your hand up. Please stay standing and keep your hand up there.*
>
> *If you've ever lived through a natural disaster, being bullied or made redundant, stand on up. If you've ever had a miscarriage, if you've ever had an abortion or struggled through infertility, please stand up. Finally, if you or anyone you love has had to cope with mental illness, dementia, some form of physical impairment or cope with suicide, please stand up.*
>
> *Look around you. Adversity doesn't discriminate. If you are alive, you are going to have to, or you've already had to, deal with some tough times Thank you, everyone. Take a seat.*
> *Lucy Hone: The Three Secrets of Resilient People.*

Advice from Moth Storytelling Club

Have a great first line that sets up the stakes and grabs attention

> *No: "So I was thinking about climbing this mountain. But then I watched a little TV and made a snack and took a nap and my mom called and vented about her psoriasis then I did a little laundry (a whites load) (I lost another sock, darn it!) and then I thought about it again and decided I'd climb the mountain the next morning."*
>
> *Yes: "The mountain loomed before me. I had my hunting knife, some trail mix and snow boots. I had to make it to the little cabin and start a fire before sundown or freeze to death for sure."*

Arouse Suspense or Curiosity

Watch this clip for how Kathryn Schulz creates curiosity by showing us Johnny Depp's tattoo and then talks about her tattoo of regret. We hang on to her every word wondering, "Where is all this going and how bad can her tattoo really be?"



So that's Johnny Depp, of course. And that's Johnny Depp's shoulder. And that's Johnny Depp's famous shoulder tattoo. Some of you might know that, in 1990, Depp got engaged to Winona Ryder, and he had tattooed on his right shoulder "Winona forever." And then three years later — which in fairness, kind of is forever by Hollywood standards — they broke up, and Johnny went and got a little bit of repair work done. And now his shoulder says, "Wino forever."

So like Johnny Depp, and like 25 percent of Americans between the ages of 16 and 50, I have a tattoo. I first started thinking about getting it in my mid-20s, but I deliberately waited a really long time. Because we all know people who have gotten tattoos when they were 17 or 19 or 23 and regretted it by the time they were 30. That didn't happen to me. I got my tattoo when I was 29, and I regretted it instantly. And by "regretted it," I mean that I stepped outside of the tattoo place — this is just a couple miles from here down on the Lower East Side — and I had a massive emotional meltdown in broad daylight on the corner of East Broadway and Canal Street. (Laughter) Which is a great place to do it because nobody cares. (Laughter) And then I went home that night, and I had an even larger emotional meltdown, which I'll say more about in a minute.

Kathryn Schulz, Don't Regret, Regret.

> *Saying unexpected things or challenging assumptions can get a speech started off right.*
>
> > ***A herd of wildebeests,** a shoal of fish, a flock of birds. Many animals gather in large groups that are among the most wonderful spectacles in the natural world. But why do these groups form? The common answers include things like seeking safety in numbers or hunting in packs or gathering to mate or breed, and all of these explanations, while often true, make a huge assumption*

> *about animal behavior, that the animals are in control of their own actions, that they are in charge of their bodies. And that is often not the case.*
> *Ed Yong. Zombie Roaches and Other Parasite Tales. TED Talk*

✔ Keys to Success

Memorize your first sentence so you can deliver it with impact.
Memorize your whole speech opening if possible.
Make sure your first three words have an impact.

? Typical Patterns for Speech Openings

- Get the audience's attention–called a hook or a grabber.
- Establish rapport and tell the audience why you care about the topic of why you are credible to speak on the topic.
- Introduce the speech thesis/preview/good idea.
- Tell the audience why they should care about this topic.
- Give a transition statement to the body of the speech.

Step Two: Credibility

First, you hook the audience with your powerful grabber, then you tell them why you are credible to speak on the topic and why the topic is important. If they know your credentials, you would not need to tell them your credibility but you may still want to tell them why you are interested in the topic. Here are a few examples of how some speakers included credibility.

Tell Why You Are Credible

> *I'm a doctor, but I kind of slipped sideways into research, and now I'm an epidemiologist.*
> *Ben Goldacre, Battling Bad Science.*
>
> *I started studying resilience research a decade ago at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. It was an amazing time to be there because the professors who trained me had just picked up the contract to train all 1.1 million American soldiers to be as mentally fit as they always have been physically fit. Lucy Hone: The Three Secrets of Resilient People.*
>
> *What I'm going to do is to just give a few notes, and this is from a book I'm preparing called "Letters to a Young Scientist." I'd thought it'd be appropriate to present it, on the basis that I have had extensive experience in teaching, counseling scientists across a broad array of fields. And you might like to hear some of the principles that I've developed in doing that teaching and counseling.*
> *EO Wilson: Advice to a Young Scientist.*

Step Three: Tell Why it is Important

Early on in your speech, you should tell the audience why they should care. You should connect the speech to things they care about. This is where you answer, so what, who cares?

> *You know, I didn't set out to be a parenting expert. In fact, I'm not very interested in parenting, per se. It's just that there's a certain style of parenting these days that is kind of*

> *messing up kids, impeding their chances to develop.*
> *Julie Lythcott-Haims, How to Raise Successful Kids – Without Over-Parenting*

Step Four: Tell the Purpose of the Talk (aka Preview/ Thesis)

> *"If you don't know what you want to achieve in your presentation your audience never will." – Harvey Diamond, author*

Tell the audience your purpose, clearly give them an overview of the main points. MIT professor, Patrick Winston says one of the best things to add to your speech is an empowerment promise. You want to tell people what they will know at the end of your speech that they didn't know at the beginning. It's their reason for being here. His empowerment promise was, "Today you will see some examples of what you can put in your armory of speaking techniques and it will be the case that one of those examples–some heuristic, some technique, maybe only one will be the one that will get you the job. By the end of the next 60 minutes, you will have been exposed to a lot of ideas, some of which you will incorporate into your own repertoire, and they will ensure that you get the maximum opportunity to have your ideas valued and accepted by the people you speak with." Notice that this statement told you what to expect and why it mattered.

Here are examples of how various speakers accomplished this.

> *For years, I've been telling people, stress makes you sick. It increases the risk of everything from the common cold to cardiovascular disease. Basically, I've turned stress into the enemy. But I have changed my mind about stress, and today, I want to change yours.*
> *Kelly McGonigal, How to Make Stress Your Friend.*
>
> *We've been sold the lie that disability is a Bad Thing, capital B, capital T. It's a bad thing, and to live with a disability makes you exceptional. It's not a bad thing, and it doesn't make you exceptional.*
> *Stella Young, I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much*

> *What I'm going to show you is all of the main things, all of the main features of my discipline, evidence-based medicine. And I will talk you through all of these and demonstrate how they work, exclusively using examples of people getting stuff wrong.*
> *Ben Goldacre, Battling Bad Science.*
>
> *I would like to think that we (Arab women) poor, oppressed women actually have some useful, certainly hard-earned lessons to share, lessons that might turn out useful for anyone wishing to thrive in the modern world. Here are three of mine.*
> *Leila Hoteit, Three Lessons on Success from an Arab businesswoman*
>
> *We are often terrified and fascinated by the power hackers now have. They scare us. But the choices they make have dramatic outcomes that influence us all. So I am here today because I think we need hackers, and in fact, they just might be the immune system for the information age. Sometimes they make us sick, but they also find those hidden threats in our world, and they make us fix it.*
> *Keren Elazari. Hackers: The Internet's Immune System*
>
> ***Try This — Inspired by TED Master Class***
> *After you write your thesis, send it to three people with the question,*
> *"Based on what you read here, what do you think my speech will be about?"*

Putting It All Together

At this point, you know you need to have a grabber, a preview, a credibility statement, and a so-what-who-cares statement. Let's take a look at one of the top TED talks of all time by Jamie Oliver. This speech is a good illustration of everything we've been talking about so far and how all this works together.



Teach Every Child About Food by Jamie Oliver Analyzed

Get the audience's attention– called a hook or a grabber.	Sadly, in the next 18 minutes when I do our chat, four Americans that are alive will be dead through the food that they eat.
Establish rapport and tell the audience why you care about the topic or why you are credible to speak on the topic.	My name's Jamie Oliver. I'm 34 years old. I'm from Essex in England and for the last seven years, I've worked fairly tirelessly to save lives in my own way. I'm not a doctor; I'm a chef, I don't have expensive equipment or medicine. I use information, education.
Tell the audience why they should care about this topic.	I profoundly believe that the power of food has a primal place in our homes that binds us to the best bits of life. We have an awful, awful reality right now. America, you're at the top of your game. This is one of the most unhealthy countries in the world.
Introduce the speech thesis/preview/good idea.	I came here to start a food revolution that I so profoundly believe in. We need it. The time is now. We're in a tipping-point moment.

Give a transition statement to the body of the speech.	I've been doing this for seven years. I've been trying in America for seven years. Now is the time when it's ripe — ripe for the picking. I went to the eye of the storm. I went to West Virginia, the most unhealthy state in America. Or it was last year. We've got a new one this year, but we'll work on that next season.



Never Start a Speech This Way

So we've talked about hooking the audience, telling why you are credible, telling them why they should care, and giving them a preview of your talk, now let's talk about what *not* to say or do. There are some things that speakers say to hurt their credibility and diminish the chances the audience will listen, be sure to avoid these.

"Everybody close your eyes."

> *I don't want to close my eyes; it makes me feel awkward and exposed to be in a group of people with my eyes closed. Because of that, I keep my eyes open. The problem is when I keep my eyes open, I feel like some sort of horrible nonconformist rebel. I feel awkward with my eyes closed and I feel guilty if they are open. Either way, I just feel bad. Besides, half of the time when speakers tell audience members to close their eyes, they forget to tell us when we can open them. If you are wanting me to imagine a story, just tell me to imagine it, don't make me close my eyes (rant over).*

"Can everybody hear me?"

> *You should plan your opening to be intentional and with power. "Can everybody hear me" is a weak and uncertain statement and this is not the first impression you want to leave. Do a microphone check before the audience members arrive and have someone stand in different corners of the room to make sure you can be heard. Don't waste your valuable speech time with questions that you should already know the answer to.*

"How long do I have to speak?"

> *You should know that before you begin. Even if the presentations for the day are running over and you are the last speaker, you should ask the MC before you begin. Always plan your first words with power.*

"Can you read this?"

> *You should make your slides big, really big. Test out your slides in advance of your speech, walk all around the room and make sure you can read them. Have a friend check*

> *them out as well. You should know they are big enough because you planned for it and tested it.*

"Turn off your cell phones and laptops."

> *People really hate having things taken away, not to mention that your audience may want to take notes on their devices. Chances are you are speaking to adults, let them determine if it is appropriate to have out their technology.*

"I'm sorry, I'm losing my voice."
"I'm stopped up."
"I'm under the weather."

> *Stop apologizing! Stop making excuses! While these lines may be true, they just come of as excuses and can make the audience either feel like you don't want to be there, or they just feel sorry for you.*

"I'm so nervous right now."

Talking about your nervousness will make you more nervous and will make them look for signs of your nervousness. Just start your speech.

"So, Um, Ok."

Do not start with hesitation. Plan the first words, memorize the first words, practice the first words. Do not start with "Ok, so um, now I'd like…" Plan strong and start strong.

> ***Do Not Discuss Your Business with People Watching…Really! I Mean It!***
>
> *Many of us are giving and listening to presentations in an online format. I have attended numerous presentations this year through Zoom where I have to sit and watch while the organizers engage in personal small talk or deal with the details of the presentation.*
> *This is how the speech I recently attended began."Donna, you are going to share your screen, right?"*
> *"Yes. I have my PowerPoint ready to go. Will you push "record" when I give the signal?"*
> *"Sure. Where did you say that button is again? Do you think we should wait five more minutes, I think we had more who were coming? Dave, what was the total we were expecting?"*
> *"Yeah, we had 116 sign up, but the reminders went out late so this may be all we have. We can give them a few more minutes to log on."*
> *"Donna, How is your dog? Is she still struggling with her cone since her spay surgery? My dog never would wear the cone –she tore her stitches out and broke her wound open. It was terrible. Well, it looks like it is about time to begin, thank you everyone for coming."*
> *If you are organizing an event online, hosting a speech online, giving a*

> *presentation online–please keep it professional. Most platforms will allow you to keep the audience in a waiting room until it is time to start. If you have a business to deal with, keep the audience out until you have everything ready to go. Once the audience is in the meeting, you should engage the audience in group-type small talk or you should just start the presentation. In professional settings, you should start the meeting on time. Why punish those who showed up on time to wait for those who aren't there yet?*

? A Conversation Over Coffee with Bill Rogers

I asked my long-time friend, Bill Rogers, to write an excerpt to add to the book. I met Bill when he was the Chief Development Officer for a hospital in Northwest Arkansas and I met him again when he was reinventing himself as a college student getting a Master's Degree in the theater. He would love to share a symbolic cup of coffee with you and give you advice about public speaking.

Perfect morning for a walk, isn't it? Join me for a cup of coffee? Wonderful. Find us a table and I'll get our coffee.

There you go; just like you like it. There's nothing like a great cup of coffee on the patio of your neighborhood coffee shop, is there?

Now that you're settled in your favorite chair, take a sip, and let that glorious caffeine kick in and do its stuff. Okay, let's talk.

So, you were asking me about public speaking.

Well, let's see. Where do we begin?

One of the first pieces of advice I ever received was to imagine that every member of your audience is sitting there in their underwear! Yeah, right. That never worked for me. I tried it once with a local civic group of community leaders both male and female. If the intent of that tidbit is to make you relax, it certainly didn't work for me. It just made me more self-conscious… and more nervous. I not only got distracted, but I also lost my train of thought, I started sweating, and, of course, imagined myself standing there without clothes. Needless to say, that speech was a disaster and I've never used it again. I suggest you don't either.

In the early days, I also relied very heavily on my typed-up speech. Now, there's nothing wrong with that unless you find yourself reading it word for word as I did. Nothing is more boring nor puts an audience to sleep quicker than a speaker with their nose down reading a speech. There's no connection and connection with your audience is key.

As you know, I love theatre and I've done a bit of acting over the years. Early on, I learned that the quicker I learned my lines, the more I could play, experiment, and shape my character. It relaxed me and gave me enormous freedom. It led me to find a mantra for myself: "With discipline comes freedom." This freedom will allow you to improvise as your audience or situation dictates while still conveying the core message of your presentation. That discipline and its resulting freedom apply to public speaking of any kind and, I think, will serve you well.

Another old adage we've all heard is Aristotle's advice. You know the one. No? Well, roughly, it's to tell your audience what you're going to say, say it, and then tell them what you just said. That's the basic formula for public speaking. And it works as a good place to start.

However, effective speaking is much more and, to me, it starts with a story or even a simple sentence.

You know the feeling you get when you read the first sentence of a good book and it just reaches out and grabs you? That should be your goal with every presentation. One sentence to capture your audience's attention. Something that causes them to lean forward. Something that sparks their imagination.

It doesn't have to be all that profound either. It can be something very simple. A personal story that relates to your topic. A relevant fact or statistic that defines or illustrates the issue or subject matter at hand.

A couple of classics come to mind. The first is Alice Walker's, "The Color of Purple."

> *"You better not tell nobody but God."*

And the second one is from my favorite novel, “To Kill A Mockingbird,” by Harper Lee.

> *“When he was nearly thirteen, my brother Jem got his arm broken at the elbow.”*

Both sentences hook you immediately. A few simple words speak volumes. After reading or hearing those words, you naturally lean in. You want to learn more. You want to find out what happens next. Every effective speech or presentation does the same thing.

Of course, make sure that the first and last thing you say to your audience is both relevant and appropriate. I share this out of an abundance of caution. I once worked for an internationally recognized and well-respected children’s research hospital and I was given the privilege to speak at a national educational convention. The room was filled wall to wall with teachers. I thought I’d be cute and add a little levity. I opened my presentation with this line, “You know, I’ve had nightmares like this…” Instead of the roars of laughter, I was expecting, a wave of silence ensued. Not only was the line not funny, but it was also wholly inappropriate and I immediately lost my audience. Not my best day. Learn from my mistakes.

Finally, let’s touch on the importance of approaching a speech as a conversation. You and I are sitting here enjoying our coffee and having a friendly, relaxed conversation. Strive for that every chance you get. You may not always have that luxury. Some speeches and presentations simply demand formality. But even in those cases, you can usually make it somewhat conversational. I always try to write my speeches in a conversational style. Like I’m talking to a friend…or trying to make a new one.

So, to recap: tell a story, learn your lines, hook your audience with a simple sentence, close with a question or call to action, use repetition, keep it conversational, treat your audience as a friend, and give yourself permission to relax.

Above all, be yourself. Allow yourself to be as relaxed as you are with those closest to you. If you’re relaxed, if you try to think of your audience as a friend, then, in most cases, they too will relax and they will root for you. Even if they disagree with what you are telling them, they will respect you and they will listen.

How about another cup?

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- The most important part of your speech is the introduction because if you don’t get their attention, they are not listening to the rest of what you have to say.
- To get attention, tell a story, use humor, share a quote, tell a startling fact, show a prop, ask a question, reference the occasion.
- In addition to the grabber, a good introduction should establish rapport and tell the audience why you are credible.
- An introduction often includes a “so what who cares statement” to tell the audience why this should matter to them.
- The thesis/preview should be clear enough that someone could read just that sentence or couple of sentences and know what the speech is about.

Please share your feedback, suggestsoin, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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6.4: Steps of a Conclusion

Learning Objectives

1. Examine the three steps of an effective conclusion: restatement of the thesis, review of the main points, and concluding device.
2. Differentiate among Miller's (1946) ten concluding devices.



Figure 6.4.1: Steps (CC BY-SA 2.0; Matthew Culnane via Flickr)

In Section 11.1, we discussed the importance a conclusion has on a speech. In this section, we're going to examine the three steps in building an effective conclusion.

6.4.1 Restatement of the Thesis

Restating a thesis statement is the first step in a powerful conclusion. As we explained in Chapter 9 "Introductions Matter: How to Begin a Speech Effectively", a thesis statement is a short, declarative sentence that states the purpose, intent, or main idea of a speech. When we restate the thesis statement at the conclusion of our speech, we're attempting to reemphasize what the overarching main idea of the speech has been. Suppose your thesis statement was, "I will analyze Barack Obama's use of lyricism in his July 2008 speech, 'A World That Stands as One.'" You could restate the thesis in this fashion at the conclusion of your speech: "In the past few minutes, I have analyzed Barack Obama's use of lyricism in his July 2008 speech, 'A World That Stands as One.'" Notice the shift in tense: the statement has gone from the future tense (this is what I will speak about) to the past tense (this is what I have spoken about). Restating the thesis in your conclusion reminds the audience of the major purpose or goal of your speech, helping them remember it better.

6.4.2 Review of Main Points

After restating the speech's thesis, the second step in a powerful conclusion is to review the main points from your speech. One of the biggest differences between written and oral communication is the necessity of repetition in oral communication. When we preview our main points in the introduction, effectively discuss and make transitions to our main points during the body of the speech, and finally, review the main points in the conclusion, we increase the likelihood that the audience will retain our main points after the speech is over.

In the introduction of a speech, we deliver a *preview* of our main body points, and in the conclusion we deliver a *review*. Let's look at a sample preview:

In order to understand the field of gender and communication, I will first differentiate between the terms biological sex and gender. I will then explain the history of gender research in communication. Lastly, I will examine a series of important findings related to

gender and communication.

In this preview, we have three clear main points. Let's see how we can review them at the conclusion of our speech:

Today, we have differentiated between the terms biological sex and gender, examined the history of gender research in communication, and analyzed a series of research findings on the topic.

In the past few minutes, I have explained the difference between the terms "biological sex" and "gender," discussed the rise of gender research in the field of communication, and examined a series of groundbreaking studies in the field.

Notice that both of these conclusions review the main points originally set forth. Both variations are equally effective reviews of the main points, but you might like the linguistic turn of one over the other. Remember, while there is a lot of science to help us understand public speaking, there's also a lot of art as well, so you are always encouraged to choose the wording that you think will be most effective for your audience.

6.4.3 Concluding Device

The final part of a powerful conclusion is the concluding device. A concluding device is essentially the final thought you want your audience members to have when you stop speaking. It also provides a definitive sense of closure to your speech. One of the authors of this text often makes an analogy between a gymnastics dismount and the concluding device in a speech. Just as a gymnast dismounting the parallel bars or balance beam wants to stick the landing and avoid taking two or three steps, a speaker wants to "stick" the ending of the presentation by ending with a concluding device instead of with, "Well, umm, I guess I'm done." Miller observed that speakers tend to use one of ten concluding devices when ending a speech (Miller, 1946). The rest of this section is going to examine these ten concluding devices.

6.4.4 Conclude with a Challenge

The first way that Miller found that some speakers end their speeches is with a challenge. A challenge is a call to engage in some kind of activity that requires a contest or special effort. In a speech on the necessity of fund-raising, a speaker could conclude by challenging the audience to raise 10 percent more than their original projections. In a speech on eating more vegetables, you could challenge your audience to increase their current intake of vegetables by two portions daily. In both of these challenges, audience members are being asked to go out of their way to do something different that involves effort on their part.

6.4.5 Conclude with a Quotation

A second way you can conclude a speech is by reciting a quotation relevant to the speech topic. When using a quotation, you need to think about whether your goal is to end on a persuasive note or an informative note. Some quotations will have a clear call to action, while other quotations summarize or provoke thought. For example, let's say you are delivering an informative speech about dissident writers in the former Soviet Union. You could end by citing this quotation from Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "A great writer is, so to speak, a second government in his country. And for that reason no regime has ever loved great writers" (Solzhenitsyn, 1964). Notice that this quotation underscores the idea of writers as dissidents, but it doesn't ask listeners to put forth effort to engage in any specific thought process or behavior. If, on the other hand, you were delivering a persuasive speech urging your audience to participate in a very risky political demonstration, you might use this quotation from Martin Luther King Jr.: "If a man hasn't discovered something that he will die for, he isn't fit to live" (King, 1963). In this case, the quotation leaves the audience with the message that great risks are worth taking, that they make our lives worthwhile, and that the right thing to do is to go ahead and take that great risk.

6.4.6 Conclude with a Summary

When a speaker ends with a summary, he or she is simply elongating the review of the main points. While this may not be the most exciting concluding device, it can be useful for information that was highly technical or complex or for speeches lasting longer than thirty minutes. Typically, for short speeches (like those in your class), this summary device should be avoided.

6.4.7 Conclude by Visualizing the Future

The purpose of a conclusion that refers to the future is to help your audience imagine the future you believe can occur. If you are giving a speech on the development of video games for learning, you could conclude by depicting the classroom of the future where video games are perceived as true learning tools and how those tools could be utilized. More often, speakers use visualization of the future to depict how society would be, or how individual listeners' lives would be different, if the speaker's

persuasive attempt worked. For example, if a speaker proposes that a solution to illiteracy is hiring more reading specialists in public schools, the speaker could ask her or his audience to imagine a world without illiteracy. In this use of visualization, the goal is to persuade people to adopt the speaker's point of view. By showing that the speaker's vision of the future is a positive one, the conclusion should help to persuade the audience to help create this future.

6.4.8 Conclude with an Appeal for Action

Probably the most common persuasive concluding device is the appeal for action or the call to action. In essence, the appeal for action occurs when a speaker asks her or his audience to engage in a specific behavior or change in thinking. When a speaker concludes by asking the audience "to do" or "to think" in a specific manner, the speaker wants to see an actual change. Whether the speaker appeals for people to eat more fruit, buy a car, vote for a candidate, oppose the death penalty, or sing more in the shower, the speaker is asking the audience to engage in action.

One specific type of appeal for action is the immediate call to action. Whereas some appeals ask for people to engage in behavior in the future, the immediate call to action asks people to engage in behavior right now. If a speaker wants to see a new traffic light placed at a dangerous intersection, he or she may conclude by asking all the audience members to sign a digital petition right then and there, using a computer the speaker has made available (http://www.petitiononline.com). Here are some more examples of immediate calls to action:

- In a speech on eating more vegetables, pass out raw veggies and dip at the conclusion of the speech.
- In a speech on petitioning a lawmaker for a new law, provide audience members with a prewritten e-mail they can send to the lawmaker.
- In a speech on the importance of using hand sanitizer, hand out little bottles of hand sanitizer and show audience members how to correctly apply the sanitizer.
- In a speech asking for donations for a charity, send a box around the room asking for donations.

These are just a handful of different examples we've actually seen students use in our classrooms to elicit an immediate change in behavior. These immediate calls to action may not lead to long-term change, but they can be very effective at increasing the likelihood that an audience will change behavior in the short term.

6.4.9 Conclude by Inspiration

By definition, the word inspire means to affect or arouse someone. Both affect and arouse have strong emotional connotations. The ultimate goal of an inspiration concluding device is similar to an "appeal for action" but the ultimate goal is more lofty or ambiguous; the goal is to stir someone's emotions in a specific manner. Maybe a speaker is giving an informative speech on the prevalence of domestic violence in our society today. That speaker could end the speech by reading Paulette Kelly's powerful poem "I Got Flowers Today." "I Got Flowers Today" is a poem that evokes strong emotions because it's about an abuse victim who received flowers from her abuser every time she was victimized. The poem ends by saying, "I got flowers today… / Today was a special day—it was the day of my funeral / Last night he killed me" (Kelly, 1994).

6.4.10 Conclude with Advice

The next concluding device is one that should be used primarily by speakers who are recognized as expert authorities on a given subject. Advice is essentially a speaker's opinion about what should or should not be done. The problem with opinions is that everyone has one, and one person's opinion is not necessarily any more correct than another's. There needs to be a really good reason your opinion—and therefore your advice—should matter to your audience. If, for example, you are an expert in nuclear physics, you might conclude a speech on energy by giving advice about the benefits of nuclear energy.

6.4.11 Conclude by Proposing a Solution

Another way a speaker can conclude a speech powerfully is to offer a solution to the problem discussed within a speech. For example, perhaps a speaker has been discussing the problems associated with the disappearance of art education in the United States. The speaker could then propose a solution of creating more community-based art experiences for school children as a way to fill this gap. Although this can be an effective conclusion, a speaker must ask herself or himself whether the solution should be discussed in more depth as a stand-alone main point within the body of the speech so that audience concerns about the proposed solution may be addressed.

6.4.12 Conclude with a Question

Another way you can end a speech is to ask a rhetorical question that forces the audience to ponder an idea. Maybe you are giving a speech on the importance of the environment, so you end the speech by saying, “Think about your children’s future. What kind of world do you want them raised in? A world that is clean, vibrant, and beautiful—or one that is filled with smog, pollution, filth, and disease?” Notice that you aren’t actually asking the audience to verbally or nonverbally answer the question; the goal of this question is to force the audience into thinking about what kind of world they want for their children.

6.4.13 Conclude with a Reference to Audience

The last concluding device discussed by Miller (1946) was a reference to one’s audience. This concluding device is when a speaker attempts to answer the basic audience question, “What’s in it for me?” The goal of this concluding device is to spell out the direct benefits a behavior or thought change has for audience members. For example, a speaker talking about stress reduction techniques could conclude by clearly listing all the physical health benefits stress reduction offers (e.g., improved reflexes, improved immune system, improved hearing, reduction in blood pressure). In this case, the speaker is clearly spelling out why audience members should care—what’s in it for them!

6.4.14 Informative versus Persuasive Conclusions

As you read through the ten possible ways to conclude a speech, hopefully you noticed that some of the methods are more appropriate for persuasive speeches and others are more appropriate for informative speeches. To help you choose appropriate conclusions for informative, persuasive, or entertaining speeches, we’ve created a table (Table 11.1 “Your Speech Purpose and Concluding Devices”) to help you quickly identify appropriate concluding devices.

Table 11.1 Your Speech Purpose and Concluding Devices

Types of Concluding Devices	General Purposes of Speeches		
	Informative	*Persuasive*	
Challenge		x	x
Quotation	x	x	x
Summary	x	x	x
Visualizing the Future	x	x	x
Appeal		x	x
Inspirational	x	x	x
Advice		x	x
Proposal of Solution		x	x
Question	x	x	x
Reference to Audience		x	x

6.4.14.1 Key Takeaways

- An effective conclusion contains three basic parts: a restatement of the speech’s thesis; a review of the main points discussed within the speech; and a concluding device that helps create a lasting image in audiences’ minds.
- Miller (1946) found that speakers tend to use one of ten concluding devices. All of these devices are not appropriate for all speeches, so speakers need to determine which concluding device would have the strongest, most powerful effect for a given audience, purpose, and occasion.

6.4.15 Exercises

1. Take the last speech you gave in class and rework the speech’s conclusion to reflect the three parts of a conclusion. Now do the same thing with the speech you are currently working on for class.

2. Think about the speech you are currently working on in class. Write out concluding statements using three of the devices discussed in this chapter. Which of the devices would be most useful for your speech? Why?

6.4.16 References

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6.5: Structuring the Conclusion

Similar to the introduction, the conclusion has three specific elements that you will want to incorporate in order to make it as strong as possible. Given the nature of these elements and what they do, these should generally be incorporated into your conclusion in the order they are presented below.

6.5.1 Element 1: Signal the End

The first thing a good conclusion should do is to signal the end of a speech. You may be thinking that telling an audience that you're about to stop speaking is a "no brainer," but many speakers really don't prepare their audience for the end. When a speaker just suddenly stops speaking, the audience is left confused and disappointed. Instead, you want to make sure that audiences are left knowledgeable and satisfied with your speech. In a way, it gives them time to begin mentally organizing and cataloging all the points you have made for further consideration later.



Generally, the easiest way to signal that it is the end of your speech is to begin your conclusion with the words, "In conclusion." Similarly, "In summary" or "To conclude" work just as well. While these may seem very blunt ways of communicating the end of your speech to the audience, you want it to be extremely clear to everyone that you are wrapping things up. Certainly you can choose to employ more elegant, interesting, or creative language here, but you then run the risk of the audience not catching on to the fact that your speech is ending.

On the other hand, saying "In conclusion" (and definitely saying it more than once) can have an unintended negative effect. The audience may figure you are finished and turn you off, sort of like how we get up and leave during the credits in a movie. Therefore, you can also go straight to the summary, which is Element 2.

6.5.2 Element 2: Restate Main Points

In the introduction of a speech you delivered a preview of your main points; now in the conclusion you will deliver a review. One of the biggest differences between written and oral communication is the necessity of repetition in oral communication (the issue of "planned redundancy" again). When you preview your main points in the introduction, effectively discuss and make transitions to your main points during the body of the speech, and finally, review the main points in the conclusion, you increase the likelihood that the audience will understand and retain your main points after the speech is over. Remember, your English instructors can re-read your essays as many times as they want, but your audience – and your instructor – only have one opportunity to catch and remember the points you are trying to get across in your speech.

Because you are trying to remind the audience of your main points, you want to be sure not to bring up any new material or ideas. For example, if you said, "There are several other issues related to this topic, such as…but I don't have time for them," that would make the audience confused and perhaps wonder why you did not address those issues in the body section. Or if you were giving a persuasive speech on wind energy and you ended with, "Wind energy is the energy of the future, but there are still a few problems with it, such as noise and killing lots of birds," you are bringing up a counter-argument that should have been dealt with in the body of the speech.

This is a good place to remind you that the introduction, preview, transitions, and conclusion are for helping the audience be interested and prepared to listen, to retain, and to follow your speech. The conclusion is too late for that. The hard core facts and content are in the body. If you are tempted to cram lots of material into the conclusion, that is not the place for it, nor is it the place to provide the important steps to a solution.

As you progress as a public speaker, you will want to work on rephrasing your summary statement so that it does not sound like an exact repeat of the preview. For example, if your preview was:

The three arguments in favor of medical marijuana that I will present are that it would make necessary treatments available to all, it would cut down on the costs to law enforcement, and it would bring revenue to state budgets.

Your summary might be:

In the minutes we've had together, I have shown you that approving medical marijuana in our state will greatly help persons with a variety of chronic and severe conditions. Also, funds spent on law enforcement to find and convict legitimate marijuana users would go down as revenues from medical marijuana to the state budget would go up.

6.5.3 Element 3: Clincher

The third element of your conclusion is the **clincher**, or something memorable with which to conclude your speech. The clincher is sometimes referred to as a Concluding Device. These are the very last words you will say in your speech, so you need to make them count. This is the last thing your audience will hear, so you want to make it good. A good clincher prevents your audience from feeling let down, and in fact can even make an audience remember a speech more favorably.

IIn many ways the clincher is like the inverse of the attention getter. You want to start the speech off with something strong, and you want to end the speech with something strong. To that end, similar to what we discussed above with attention getters, there are a number of ways you can make your clincher strong and memorable.

6.5.3.1 Conclude with a Challenge

One way you can end your speech is with a challenge. A challenge is a call to engage in some kind of activity that requires a special effort. In a speech on the necessity of fundraising, a speaker could conclude by challenging the audience to raise 10 percent more than their original projections. In a speech on eating more vegetables, you could challenge your audience to increase their current intake of vegetables by two portions daily. In both of these challenges, audience members are being asked to go out of their way to do something different that involves effort on their part.

In a challenge, try to make it aspirational but reasonable. The challenge should be something they can strive for but not see as something impossible. The audience may see two more servings a day of fruits and vegetables as reasonable, but six probably as too much.

In the same category as a challenge, probably the most common persuasive concluding device is the appeal for action or the call to action. In essence, the appeal for action occurs when a speaker asks her or his audience to engage in a specific behavior. Whether the speaker appeals for people to eat more fruit, buy a car, vote for a candidate, oppose the death penalty, get more sleep, or sing more in the shower, the speaker is asking the audience to engage in action.

One specific type of appeal for action is the immediate call to action. Whereas some appeals ask for people to engage in behavior in the future, the immediate call to action asks people to engage in behavior right now. If a speaker wants to see a new traffic light placed at a dangerous intersection, he or she may conclude by asking all the audience members to sign a digital petition right then and there, using a computer the speaker has made available. For a speech on eating more vegetables, pass out raw veggies and dip at the conclusion of the speech; someone giving a speech on petitioning a lawmaker for a new law could provide audience members with a prewritten e-mail they can send to the lawmaker.

If you are giving a persuasive speech about a solution to a problem, you should not relegate the call to action to the very end of the speech. It should probably be a main point where you can deal with the steps and specifics of the solution in more detail. For example, perhaps a speaker has been discussing the problems associated with the disappearance of art education in the United States. The speaker could then propose a solution of creating more community-based art experiences for school children as a way to fill this gap. Although this can be an effective conclusion, speakers should ask themselves whether the solution should be discussed in more depth as a stand-alone main point within the body of the speech so that audience concerns about the proposed solution may be addressed.

6.5.3.2 Conclude with a Quotation

Another way you can conclude a speech is by providing a quotation relevant to the speech topic. When using a quotation, you need to think about whether your goal is to end on a persuasive note or an informative note. Some quotations will have a clear call to action, while other quotations summarize or provoke thought. For example, let's say you are delivering an informative speech about dissident writers in the former Soviet Union. You could end by citing this quotation from Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "A great writer is, so to speak, a second government in his country. And for that reason no regime has ever loved great writers."

Notice that this quotation underscores the idea of writers as dissidents, but it doesn't ask listeners to put forth effort to engage in any specific thought process or behavior. If, on the other hand, you were delivering a persuasive speech urging your audience to sponsor a child in a developing country for $40 per month, you might use this quotation by Forest Witcraft:

> *"A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank acc*ount was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove. But the world may be different, because I was important in the life of a child."

In this case, the quotation leaves the audience with the message that monetary sacrifices are worth taking, that they make our lives worthwhile, and that the right thing to do is to go ahead and make that sacrifice.

6.5.3.3 Conclude by Visualizing the Future

The purpose of a conclusion that refers to the future is to help your audience imagine the future you believe can occur. If you are giving a speech on the development of video games for learning, you could conclude by depicting the classroom of the future where video games are perceived as true learning tools. More often, speakers use visualization of the future to depict how society or how individual listeners' lives would be different if audience accepts and acts on the speaker's main idea. For example, if a speaker proposes that a solution to illiteracy is hiring more reading specialists in public schools, the speaker could ask her or his audience to imagine a world without illiteracy

6.5.3.4 Conclude by Inspiration

By definition, the word **inspire** means to affect or arouse someone. Both affect and arouse have strong emotional connotations. The ultimate goal of an inspirational concluding device is similar to an "appeal for action" but the ultimate goal is more lofty or ambiguous; the goal is to stir someone's emotions in a specific manner. This is done by sharing a story, poem, or quotation that appeals to the audience's basic values and therefore appeals to emotions. Stories or allusions to "underdogs" who overcame obstacles to achieve something worthwhile or those who make sacrifices for the good of others can help inspire. You probably know of such stories (Olympic athletes and a well-known figure such as Captain Sullenberg are examples) that would be of value, as long as they are relevant to your topic and purpose. Poetry is sometimes used to inspire, but you want to use a short passage (eight lines or less) of poetry that is clear to the audience.

6.5.3.5 Conclude with a Question

Another way you can end a speech is to ask a rhetorical question that forces the audience to ponder an idea. Maybe you are giving a speech on the importance of the environment, so you end the speech by saying, "Think about your children's future. What kind of world do you want them raised in? A world that is clean, vibrant, and beautiful—or one that is filled with smog, pollution, filth, and disease?" Notice that you aren't actually asking the audience to verbally or nonverbally answer the question; the goal of this question is to force the audience into thinking about what kind of world they want for their children.

6.5.3.6 Refer Back to the Introduction

This method provides a good sense of closure to the speech and can be one of the most effective methods. If you started the speech with a startling statistic or fact, such as "Last year, according to the official website of the American Humane Society, four million pets were euthanized in shelters in the United States," in the end you could say, "Remember that shocking number of four million euthanized pets? With your donation of time or money to the Northwest Georgia Rescue Shelter, you can help lower that number in our region."

6.5.3.7 Conclude with an Anecdote or Personal Story

As with your attention getter, a brief story can be a strong way to conclude. However, it must be relevant and not go on too long. Combining this method and the previous one, you might finish telling a story that you started in the introduction as your clincher. This method is probably better with persuasive speeches where you want to end with a strong emotional appeal.

6.5.3.8 Conclude with a Reference to Audience or Audience Self-Interest

The last concluding device involves a direct reference to your audience. This concluding device is used when a speaker attempts to answer the basic audience question, "What's in it for me?" (the WIIFM question). The goal of this concluding device is to spell out the direct benefits a behavior or thought change has for audience members. For example, a speaker talking about stress reduction techniques could conclude by clearly listing all the physical health benefits stress reduction offers (e.g., improved reflexes, improved immune system, improved hearing, reduction in blood pressure). In this case, the speaker is spelling out why audience members should care about the topic and what's in it for them.

6.5.3.9 Informative versus Persuasive Conclusions

As you read through the above possible ways to conclude a speech, hopefully you noticed that some of the methods are more appropriate for As you read through the above possible ways to conclude a speech, hopefully you noticed that some of the methods are more appropriate for persuasive speeches and others are more appropriate for informative speeches. An appeal to action, for example, may not be appropriate for an informative speech since asking your audience to do something often borders on persuasion, which isn't what an informative speech is intended to do. Similarly, if your persuasive speech is on the importance of voting in the next local election, an appeal to action clincher would probably be one of your stronger options.

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6.6: Closing a Speech- End with Power and Let Them Know It is Time to Clap



Open Your Speech With a Bang
Close It With a Slam-Dunk
Westside Toastmasters

"Great is the art of beginning, but greater is the art of ending," according to poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The first few words of your speech make the audience want to listen and the last few sentences help them decide what they feel about you and your topic. In this chapter, I will explain the function of a conclusion, the format of a conclusion, and I will give you numerous examples of ways to end your speech. Most of this chapter is dedicated to showing you good examples of different types of speech closings. Let's get started by talking about the purpose of the closing.

A Strong Closing Does Many Things

1. **Summarizes the points.** By restating your points your audience is more likely to remember them.
2. **Tells the audience when to clap.** Let's face it, it is so awkward when you are done with your speech, and no one claps. Being clear the end is near, relieves the audience of the pressure of wondering if they are clapping at the right time.
3. **Provides resolution.** Your speech should give the audience a sense of resolve or a sense of being challenged.

The Formula for Closing Most Speeches

- Transition statement to ending.
- Review the main points–repeat the thesis.
- If it is a persuasive speech, tell the audience what you want them to do or think.
- Provide a closing statement.

Restate the Thesis

Tell them what you are going to say, say it, tell them what you have said. This speech pattern is useful in most types of speeches because it helps the speaker to remember your key points. As you build your closing, make sure you restate the thesis. A good rule of thumb is to write it in such a way that if the audience were asked to restate the main points, their answer would match closely with your thesis.

EXAMPLE
Watch as Stella Young gives her thesis and then restates her thesis at the end of the speech as she wraps up.
The thesis of the talk in the introduction:
We've been sold the lie that disability is a Bad Thing, capital B, capital T. It's a bad thing, and to live with a disability makes you

exceptional. It's not a bad thing, and it doesn't make you exceptional.

Restates the thesis of the talk at the closing:

Disability doesn't make you exceptional but questioning what you think you know about it does.



This next example is from a student's speech. It is easy to pull out one sentence that clearly summarizes the main points of her speech. Following her summary, she winds the speech down into a thoughtful conclusion and ends with three powerful words.

> *Now is the time to separate the war on drugs from the war on addiction. Today you've heard the problems, impacts, and solutions of criminalizing addictions. Bruce Callis is 50 years old now. And he is still struggling with his addiction. while you all are sitting out there listening to this, I'm living with it. Bruce Callis is my father and for my entire life, I have watched our misguided system destroy him. The irony here is that we live in a society where we are told to recycle. We recycle paper, aluminum, and electronics. But why don't we ever consider recycling them most precision think on Earth–**the human life.***
> *Student Tunnette Powell, Winner of the 2012 Interstate Oratorical Association Contest.*

Closing Phrases

After you restate your thesis, you should carefully deliver your closing phrases. Your closing should provide a resolution to your speech and/or it should challenge the audience. *Frantically Speaking* writer Hrideep Barot suggests "a conclusion is like tying a bow or ribbon to a box of your key ideas that your audience will be taking along with them."

A speech closing is not just about the words you say, but it is also the way you say it. Change the pace near the end of your speech. Let your tone alone should signal the end is near. It is about deliberate voice control, don't let your voice weakly away.

In the next section, I will cover these ways to end your speech:

> *End with powerful words*
> *End with a quote*
> *End with a graphic*
> *End with parallel construction*
> *End on a positive note*
> *End with a challenge*
> *End with a question*
> *End with inspiration*
> *End with well-wishing*
> *End with humor*
> *End with a call to action*

> *End with a feeling of resolve*
> *End with a prop*

The best way to teach you about advanced closings is to show not tell. For this section, I will briefly explain each type of closing and then provide a video. Each video is queued so you can play the video and watch the closing statement. I included a transcript under each video if you want to follow along. It will be most beneficial for you to watch the clip and not just read the text. By watching, you will have a chance to hear the subtle changes in the speaker's voice as they deliver their closing statements.

End with Powerful Words

As you design your closing, look at the last three to five words and examine them to see if they are strong words. Oftentimes, you can rearrange a sentence to end with a powerful word. (I have the video cued to play just the closing)

> ***Watch this clip for how BJ Miller ends with a powerful thought and a powerful word.***



Parts of me died early on, and that's something we can all say one way or another. I got to redesign my life around this fact, and I tell you it has been a liberation to realize you can always find a shock of beauty or meaning in what life you have left, like that snowball lasting for a perfect moment, all the while melting away. If we love such moments ferociously, then maybe we can learn to live well — not in spite of death, but because of it. **Let death be what takes us, not lack of imagination.**

BJ Miller, What Really Matters at the End of Life

End by Circling Back to the Opening

Another type of ending is to circle back to what you said in the beginning. You can revisit a quote, share the end to an illustration that was begun in the beginning, or you can put away a prop you got out in the beginning.

Watch this clip for how Zubing Zhang
begins and ends with the same quote to circle back around to the main idea.



She starts by telling a story of bungee jumping off the world's highest platform and how she saw a sign with a quote that says, "Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone." After telling her own story about pushing her emotional limits, she circles back around at the end by saying, "As the words said high on the bungee platform, "Life begins at the edge of your comfort zone."

Yubing Zhang, Life Begins at the End of Your Comfort Zone.

End With Quote

If you end your speech with a quote, attend to the following.

1. Always say the author of the quote before the quote for example, "I want to leave you with a leadership quote 'What you do has far greater impact than what you say,' Steven Covey." The problem with this ending is that "Stephen Covey" are the last two words of the speech and that is boring. Consider instead this ending. "I think Robin Sharma said it best 'Leadership is not about a title or a designation. It's about impact, influence, and inspiration.'" In this arrangement, the last three words are powerful–influence and inspiration.
2. Provided context for the quote before or after. Make sure the quote is meaningful and not just an easy way to end.

Watch this clip for how Sir Ken Robinson ends with a quote. Notice how he says the author and then the quote.

Also, notice how he then ties his speech to the quote with a final few sentences and ends with the powerful word–"revolution" and how he uses a strong vocal emphasis as he says his last word. (I have the video cued to play just the closing)



There's a wonderful quote from Benjamin Franklin. "There are three sorts of people in the world: Those who are immovable, people who don't get it, or don't want to do anything about it; there are people who are movable, people who see the need for change and are prepared to listen to it; and there are people who move, people who make things happen." And if we can encourage more people, that will be a movement. And if the movement is strong enough, that's, in the best sense of the word, a revolution. **And that's what we need.**

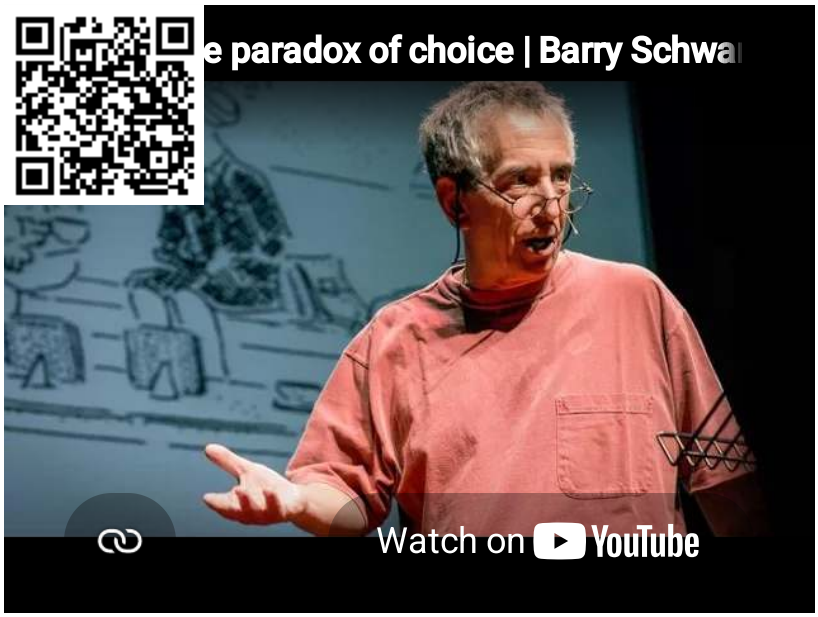
Sir Ken Robinson, How to Escape Education's Death Valley.

End with a Graphic

You might want to use a visual to make your final point. Bringing in a picture, graphic, or object, reengages the audience to pay attention to your final ideas.

Watch this clip for how Barry Schartz uses the magic words "so to conclude" and then he creatively uses a picture of a fishbowl to narrow in on his point.

Notice how his final word is spoken with urgency as he says "disaster." (I have the video cued to play just the closing)



> *So, to conclude. (He shows a picture of fish in a fishbowl) He says, "You can be anything you want to be — no limits." You're supposed to read this cartoon and, being a sophisticated person, say, "Ah! What does this fish know? Nothing is possible in this fishbowl." Impoverished imagination, a myopic view of the world –that's the way I read it at first. The more I thought about it, however, the more I came to the view that this fish knows something. Because the truth of the matter is, if you shatter the fishbowl so that everything is possible, you don't have freedom. You have paralysis. If you shatter this fishbowl so that everything is possible, you decrease satisfaction. You increase paralysis, and you decrease satisfaction. Everybody needs a fishbowl. This one is almost certainly too limited –perhaps even for the fish, certainly for us. But the absence of some metaphorical fishbowl is a recipe for misery and, I suspect, disaster.*
>
> *Barry Schwartz, The Paradox of Choice*

End with Parallel Construction

Parallel construction is a series of repeated phrases. It can be a powerful tool to use in a persuasive speech as it creates a feeling of importance.

Watch this clip for how Malala Yousafzai ends with a series of parallel statements to build momentum.
Notice how her pace perfectly matches her words and you feel her strength when she ends with "education first." (I have the video cued to play just the closing)



Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty, injustice, and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright peaceful future. So let us wage a global struggle against illiteracy, poverty, and terrorism, and let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one pen, and one book can change the world.
Education is the only solution. Education First.

Malala Yousafzai, United Nations Youth Assembly

End on a Positive Note

Audiences are constantly evaluating a speaker to determine their attitude and motivation. As you consider your speech closing, ask yourself what type of impression do you want to leave? Do you want to leave them with depression or hope? Sadness or promise? Most of the time, audiences will receive messages that end positively better than speeches that end negatively.

In this speech sample, Hans Rosling showed the audience some hard statistics and he even pointed fingers at the audience as part of the problem. To help them hear his main point, he wisely ends on a positive note.

Watch this clip for how Hans Rosling
ends this thought-provoking talk on a positive note.
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



Now, when thinking about where all this leaves us, I have just one little humble advice for you, besides everything else, look at the data. Look at the facts about the world and you will see where we are today and how we can move forwards with all these billions on our wonderful planet. The challenge of extreme poverty has been greatly reduced and it's for the first time in history within our power to end it for good. The challenge of population growth is, in fact, already being solved, the number of children has stopped growing. And for the challenge for climate change, we can still avoid the worst, but that requires the richest, as soon as possible, find a way to use their set their use of resources and energy at a level that, step by step, can be shared by 10 billion or 11 billion by

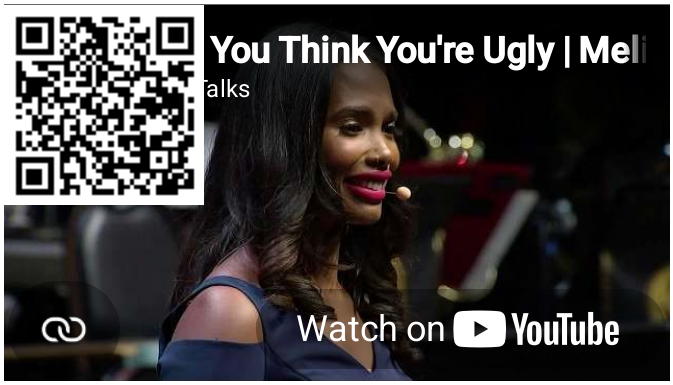
the end of this century. I've never called myself an optimist, but I do say I'm a possibilist and I also say the **world is much better than many of you think.**

Hans Rosling, Facts about the Population.

End with a Challenge

Leave the audience with a doable personal challenge. Help them mentally make sense of all the information that you shared by helping them know how to file it away and how to use it.

Watch this clip for how Melissa Butler
ends with a challenge.
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: https://uark.pressbooks.pub/speaking/?p=1935

So, I challenge each of you, when you go home today, look at yourself in the mirror, see all of you, look at all of your greatness that you embody, accept it, and love it. And finally, when you leave the house tomorrow, try to ***extend that same love and acceptance to someone who doesn't look like you****.*

Melissa Butler, Why You Think You're Ugly.

Watch this clip as
Darren LaCroix literally falls face down
to anchor the point that when we fall, we "fall forward."
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



Darren LaCroix talks about taking risks and falling down and getting back up, he literally and purposefully falls down during his speech and ends this way:

> *What's your next step… take it. I didn't want to look back at my life and say you know I never did try that comedy thing, but I died debt-free. All of us are headed toward that goal we are going to teach a point where we get stuck and our feet are like in cement and we can't move but we're so afraid of that ouch but we forget that if we lean forward and take a risk–(He falls face down) and we fall on our face. When we get up, notice, you still made progress. So please, with me, go ahead and fall.* ***But fall forward.***
>
> *Darren LaCroiz, Winning Speech delivered at National Speech Association*

End with a Question

Asking a question at the end is one way to reengage the audience. It helps them think about what your topic might mean for them.

Watch this clip for how David Eagleman
reminds us about why his topic is important
and then ends with a question.
Notice how he pauses before his final question and
how he changes the pace of his speech for the final sentence.
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



So I think there's really no end to the possibilities on the horizon for human expansion. Just imagine an astronaut being able to feel the overall health of the International Space Station, or, for that matter, having you feel the invisible states of your own health, like your blood sugar and the state of your microbiome, or having 360-degree vision or seeing in infrared or ultraviolet. So the key is this: As we move into the future, we're going to increasingly be able to choose our own peripheral devices. We no longer have to wait for Mother Nature's sensory gifts on her timescales, but instead, like any good parent, she's given us the tools that we need to go out and define our own trajectory. **So the question now is, how do you want to go out and experience your universe?**

David Eagleman, Can We Create New Senses for Humans?

Watch this clip for how Lera Boroditsky ends with a personal note and a powerful final question.
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



I want to leave you with this final thought. I've told you about how speakers of different languages think differently, but of course, that's not about how people elsewhere think. It's about how you think. It's how the language that you speak shapes the way that you think. And that gives you the opportunity to ask, "Why do I think the way that I do?" "How could I think differently?" And also, **"What thoughts do I wish to create?"**

Lera Boroditsky, How Language Shapes the Way We Think

End with Inspiration

"Inspiring your audience
is all about helping them
see their own vision, not yours."

Anonymous

You may want to end your speech with inspiring and encouraging words. Pick words that resonate with most of your audience and deliver them in such a way that your audience feels your lift in emotion.

Watch this clip for how Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie ends with an inspiring final note and a powerful last few words "regain a kind of paradise"
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity.

The American writer Alice Walker wrote this about her Southern relatives who had moved to the North. She introduced them to a book about the Southern life that they had left behind. “They sat around, reading the book themselves, listening to me read the book, and a kind of paradise was regained.”

I would like to end with this thought: That when we reject the single-story, when we realize that there is never a single story about any place, **we regain a kind of paradise.**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, The Danger of a Single Story

> ***Watch this clip for how Dan Pink ends with an inspiring final note.***
> *(I have the video cued to play just the closing)*
>
> 
>
>
> *Let me wrap up. There is a mismatch between what science knows and what business does. Here is what science knows. One: Those 20th century rewards, those motivators we think are a natural part of business, do work, but only in a surprisingly narrow band of circumstances. Two: Those if-then rewards often destroy creativity. Three: The secret to high performance isn’t rewards and punishments, but that unseen intrinsic drive– the drive to do things for their own sake. The drive to do things cause they matter.*

> *And here’s the best part. We already know this. The science confirms what we know in our hearts. So, if we repair this mismatch between what science knows and what business does, if we bring our motivation, notions of motivation into the 21st century, if we get past this lazy, dangerous, ideology of carrots and sticks, we can strengthen our businesses, we can solve a lot of those candle problems, and maybe, maybe —**we can change the world.I rest my case.***
>
> *Dan Pink, The Puzzle of Motivation*

End with Well Wishing

There are several types of closings where the speaker wished the audience well.

The Benediction Close: May God bless and keep you….
The Presidential Close: God bless you and may God bless the USA
The Congratulatory Close: I congratulate you on your accomplishment and wish you continued success.

End with Humor

You can end on a fun lighthearted note. It is important to always run your humor by a variety of people to make sure you are funny, and your humor is appropriate.

Watch this clip for how Andrew Dunham uses humor throughout his speech and ends with a funny one-liner.
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



I wish you all the best as we begin this journey on our paths and I sincerely hope and pray that your time and success have proven to be as memorable and spiritually rewarding as mine. If not, there's always summer school.

Andrew Dunham, Valedictorian Comes Out As Autistic During Speech

End with a Call to Action

If you are delivering a persuasive speech, let the audience know exactly what you want them to do.

End with a Feeling of Resolve

Paul Harvey made famous the line "And now you know…the rest of the story." Your closing should allow us to know the rest of the story or to know how a situation was resolved.

Watch this clip for how Lucy Hone
ends this tough but inspiring talk with a feeling of resolve
(I have the video cued to play just the closing)



> *If you ever find yourself in a situation where you think there's no way I'm coming back from this, I urge you to lean into these strategies and think again. I won't pretend that thinking this way is easy and it doesn't remove all the pain. But if I've learned anything over the last five years, it is that thinking this way really does help. More than anything it has shown me that it is possible to live and grieve at the same time.* ***And for that I will be***

> ***always grateful.***
>
> *Lucy Hone, The Three Secrets of Resilient People*

End with a Prop

Nancy Duarte says you should give your audience, SOMETHING THEY will ALWAYS REMEMBER–S.T.A.R. One way to do that is with an action or statement that will have the audience talking about it for a long time. President Obama did it with a mic drop.



Memorize Your Conclusion

Know your ending so well you can say it without looking at your notes. The audience is deciding what they think about you and your topic so end strong by having a plan, sticking with your plan, using strong eye contact, and a clear strong voice.

End on Time

Audiences stop listening when the time is up. If you go over, they will start checking their watches, looking at the door, or just mentally check out.

Do not diminish the effect of a great speech
with a bloated,
aimless conclusion.
Dan Rothwell.



Never End a Speech This Way

So, we've talked about ending with power, now let's talk about ways not to end your talk– be sure to avoid these.

“Times about up.”

Don’t end with any references to time. It is like a giant stop sign saying, “stop listening.” Don’t highlight that you ran over time or that it is almost time for lunch. You want them to think about your speech, not the clock.

“Any Questions?”

You want them to feel a sense of closure for your speech. End with something powerful and let them applaud. After the applause, you can offer to answer questions. Similarly, projecting your last slide with the words, “Any Questions” is a weak ending.

“Let Me Add This Point I Missed”

If you forget something in the body of your speech, it is usually best to leave it out. Most of the time you are the only one who will miss it.

“Thank You to the Team”

There is a time to thank the organizers and those who helped you but it is not at the end of your speech. Your focus should be on your audience and what they need and what they need to hear is your idea. Send a thank you letter to the team if you want them to feel your appreciation.

“I’m Sorry”

“Sorry again for the technology issue,” “I apologize for going over time, ” “I regret I have no answer to this.” These are all negative phrases. Keep to your topic that is what they need to hear and stay focused.

“I’ll Close with this Video”

No, you should close with talking about the big idea.

Rambling

> *If you don’t have a plan at the end, you will ramble. “Steer clear of meandering endings they kill a story,” according to the Moth Storytelling website. “Your last line should be clear in your head before you start. Yes, bring the audience along with you as you contemplate what transpires in your story, but remember, you are driving the story, and must know the final destination. Keep your hands on the wheel!”*

To Thank or Not to Thank, That is the Question

There is a debate amongst speech professionals, speech teachers, and speech coaches about whether or not you should thank the audience. Here are their main arguments.

Why You Should <u>Not</u> Say Thank You

1. You want to end with powerful words. “Thank you” are not strong words.
2. The recency effect suggests they will remember the last words you spoke. You want them to remember more than just “thank you.”
3. It is not a very creative way to end.
4. It can be a sign of a lazy speaker, “I have no idea how to end this, I’ve run out of good things to say so I’ll say ‘Thank you’ so you will clap now.”

Why You Should Say Thank You

1. It has come to be the expected ending in many settings. Violating their expectations can cause them to have a negative reaction.
2. It clearly signals you are finished so the audience knows when to clap. The relieves the pressure from both you and the audience.
3. It expresses gratitude.

I will leave it up to you to decide what works for you. As for me, I plan on trying to find more creative ways to end other than just saying “thank you.”

✔ Maximizing the Primacy Recency Effect

If I were to read you a list of thirty things on my grocery list and then asked you to list all that you can remember, chances are you would remember the first times on the list and the last items on the list (and any ones you found interesting from the middle). When people engage in listening, they tend to remember the first and last things they hear, it is called the primacy-recency effect. This is just one more reason that your introduction and conclusion should be so well planned out. It is those first words and last words that the audience is going to remember.

The primacy recency effect influences, not only what people pay attention to in a speech, but also which speech we pay the most attention to in a series of speeches. For example, if there is a lineup of six speakers, the first and last speakers tend to get the most attention.

As a speaker, you can use this information to your advantage by volunteering to go first or last. If you are giving a long presentation, you can break it up by allowing the audience to move around or talk to a neighbor. When you come back from break, you have re-engaged that primacy effect and moved them back to a high state of attention.

Do You Have Everything You Need for a Strong Closing?

- Have I signaled my speech is coming to an end with my words or my voice?
- Have I restated my main points?
- If I am persuading my audience, do they know what I want them to do or think?
- Have I written the last three to five words in such a way that I end with powerful words?
- Have I memorized my closing?

Getting Off the Platform is Part of Your Closing

Plan on making a strong exit. Whether you are stepping off a stage or simply going to your seat, you should consider that the audience is watching you.

I have had students who finished their speech and then walked over to the trashcan and in a large, exaggerated movement, they threw their notecards in the trash. In our minds, we threw their message away with those cards. I’ve seen speakers, sit in their chairs and then announce, “I can’t believe my hands were shaking so much.” I’ve sat there and thought, “I didn’t notice.” I then realized that the comments they made influenced my perception of them and my perception of their topic.

You said your last word and the audience is applauding, now what? Look at your audience and smile and nod in appreciation before walking off the stage. If you will be answering questions, wait until after the applause stops to begin your question and answering period.

When practicing your speech, it is a good idea to start from your chair, walk up to a spot and then give your speech, and then walk back to your chair and sit down. Your “speech” impression begins and ends from your chair.

Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- A speech closing should include a review of the main points and a purposeful closing sentence.
- Persuasive speech endings should tell the audience specifically what they should do or think about.
- The recency effect suggests that people remember the most recent things they have heard which is one reason the closing is so important.
- Chance the pace of your speech and the tone of your voice to signal the end of the speech.

Please share your feedback, suggetions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?

Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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President Obama ended his speech with two words-Obama Out and then did a mic drop at the White House Correspondents Dinner. Image from giphy.com

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6.7: Keeping Your Speech Moving

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the importance of transitions within a speech.
2. Identify and be able to use a variety of transition words to create effective transitions within a speech.
3. Understand how to use a variety of strategies to help audience members keep up with a speech's content: internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts.



Figure 6.7.1: REWIND (CC BY-SA 2.0; Chris Marquardt via Flickr)

Have you ever been listening to a speech or a lecture and found yourself thinking, "I am so lost!" or "Where the heck is this speaker going?" Chances are one of the reasons you weren't sure what the speaker was talking about was that the speaker didn't effectively keep the speech moving. When we are reading and encounter something we don't understand, we have the ability to reread the paragraph and try to make sense of what we're trying to read. Unfortunately, we are not that lucky when it comes to listening to a speaker. We cannot pick up our universal remote and rewind the person. For this reason, speakers need to really think about how they keep a speech moving so that audience members are easily able to keep up with the speech. In this section, we're going to look at four specific techniques speakers can use that make following a speech much easier for an audience: transitions, internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts.

6.7.1 Transitions between Main Points

A transition is a phrase or sentence that indicates that a speaker is moving from one main point to another main point in a speech. Basically, a transition is a sentence where the speaker summarizes what was said in one point and previews what is going to be discussed in the next point. Let's look at some examples:

- Now that we've seen the problems caused by lack of adolescent curfew laws, let's examine how curfew laws could benefit our community.
- Thus far we've examined the history and prevalence of alcohol abuse among Native Americans, but it is the impact that this abuse has on the health of Native Americans that is of the greatest concern.
- Now that we've thoroughly examined how these two medications are similar to one another, we can consider the many clear differences between the two medications.
- Although he was one of the most prolific writers in Great Britain prior to World War II, Winston Churchill continued to publish during the war years as well.

You'll notice that in each of these transition examples, the beginning phrase of the sentence indicates the conclusion of a period of time (now that, thus far). Table 10.1 "Transition Words" contains a variety of transition words that will be useful when keeping your speech moving.

Table 10.1 Transition Words

Addition	also, again, as well as, besides, coupled with, following this, further, furthermore, in addition, in the same way, additionally, likewise, moreover, similarly

Consequence	accordingly, as a result, consequently, for this reason, for this purpose, hence, otherwise, so then, subsequently, therefore, thus, thereupon, wherefore
Generalizing	as a rule, as usual, for the most part, generally, generally speaking, ordinarily, usually
Exemplifying	chiefly, especially, for instance, in particular, markedly, namely, particularly, including, specifically, such as
Illustration	for example, for instance, for one thing, as an illustration, illustrated with, as an example, in this case
Emphasis	above all, chiefly, with attention to, especially, particularly, singularly
Similarity	comparatively, coupled with, correspondingly, identically, likewise, similar, moreover, together with
Exception	aside from, barring, besides, except, excepting, excluding, exclusive of, other than, outside of, save
Restatement	in essence, in other words, namely, that is, that is to say, in short, in brief, to put it differently
Contrast and Comparison	contrast, by the same token, conversely, instead, likewise, on one hand, on the other hand, on the contrary, nevertheless, rather, similarly, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless, in contrast
Sequence	at first, first of all, to begin with, in the first place, at the same time, for now, for the time being, the next step, in time, in turn, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, the meantime, later, while, earlier, simultaneously, afterward, in conclusion, with this in mind
Common Sequence Patterns	first, second, third…
	generally, furthermore, finally
	in the first place, also, lastly
	in the first place, pursuing this further, finally
	to be sure, additionally, lastly
	in the first place, just in the same way, finally
	basically, similarly, as well
Summarizing	after all, all in all, all things considered, briefly, by and large, in any case, in any event, in brief, in conclusion, on the whole, in short, in summary, in the final analysis, in the long run, on balance, to sum up, to summarize, finally
Diversion	by the way, incidentally
Direction	here, there, over there, beyond, nearly, opposite, under, above, to the left, to the right, in the distance
Location	above, behind, by, near, throughout, across, below, down, off, to the right, against, beneath, in back of, onto, under, along, beside, in front of, on top of, among, between, inside, outside, around, beyond, into, over

Beyond transitions, there are several other techniques that you can use to clarify your speech organization for your audience. The next sections address several of these techniques, including internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts.

6.7.2 Internal Previews

An internal preview is a phrase or sentence that gives an audience an idea of what is to come within a section of a speech. An internal preview works similarly to the preview that a speaker gives at the end of a speech introduction, quickly outlining what he or she is going to talk about (i.e., the speech's three main body points). In an internal preview, the speaker highlights what he or she is going to discuss within a specific main point during a speech.

Ausubel was the first person to examine the effect that internal previews had on retention of oral information (Ausubel, 1968). Basically, when a speaker clearly informs an audience what he or she is going to be talking about in a clear and organized manner, the audience listens for those main points, which leads to higher retention of the speaker's message. Let's look at a sample internal preview:

To help us further understand why recycling is important, we will first explain the positive benefits of recycling and then explore how recycling can help our community.

When an audience hears that you will be exploring two different ideas within this main point, they are ready to listen for those main points as you talk about them. In essence, you're helping your audience keep up with your speech.

Rather than being given alone, internal previews often come after a speaker has transitioned to that main topic area. Using the previous internal preview, let's see it along with the transition to that main point.

Now that we've explored the effect that a lack of consistent recycling has on our community, let's explore the importance of recycling for our community (transition). To help us further understand why recycling is important, we will first explain the positive benefits of recycling and then explore how recycling can help our community (internal preview).

While internal previews are definitely helpful, you do not need to include one for every main point of your speech. In fact, we recommend that you use internal previews sparingly to highlight only main points containing relatively complex information.

6.7.3 Internal Summaries

Whereas an internal preview helps an audience know what you are going to talk about within a main point at the beginning, an internal summary is delivered to remind an audience of what they just heard within the speech. In general, internal summaries are best used when the information within a specific main point of a speech was complicated. To write your own internal summaries, look at the summarizing transition words in Table 10.1 "Transition Words" Let's look at an example.

To sum up, school bullying is a definite problem. Bullying in schools has been shown to be detrimental to the victim's grades, the victim's scores on standardized tests, and the victim's future educational outlook.

In this example, the speaker was probably talking about the impact that bullying has on an individual victim educationally. Of course, an internal summary can also be a great way to lead into a transition to the next point of a speech.

In this section, we have explored how bullying in schools has been shown to be detrimental to the victim's grades, the victim's scores on standardized tests, and the victim's future educational outlook (internal summary). Therefore, schools need to implement campus-wide, comprehensive antibullying programs (transition).

While not sounding like the more traditional transition, this internal summary helps readers summarize the content of that main point. The sentence that follows then leads to the next major part of the speech, which is going to discuss the importance of antibullying programs.

6.7.4 Signposts

Have you ever been on a road trip and watched the green rectangular mile signs pass you by? Fifty miles to go. Twenty-five miles to go. One mile to go. Signposts within a speech function the same way. A signpost is a guide a speaker gives her or his audience to help the audience keep up with the content of a speech. If you look at Table 10.1 "Transition Words" and look at the "common sequence patterns," you'll see a series of possible signpost options. In essence, we use these short phrases at the beginning of a piece of information to help our audience members keep up with what we're discussing. For example, if you were giving a speech whose main point was about the three functions of credibility, you could use internal signposts like this:

- The first function of credibility is competence.
- The second function of credibility is trustworthiness.
- The final function of credibility is caring/goodwill.

Signposts are simply meant to help your audience keep up with your speech, so the more simplistic your signposts are, the easier it is for your audience to follow.

In addition to helping audience members keep up with a speech, signposts can also be used to highlight specific information the speaker thinks is important. Where the other signposts were designed to show the way (like highway markers), signposts that call attention to specific pieces of information are more like billboards. Words and phrases that are useful for highlighting information can be found in Table 10.1 “Transition Words” under the category “emphasis.” All these words are designed to help you call attention to what you are saying so that the audience will also recognize the importance of the information.

6.7.4.1 Key Takeaways

- Transitions are very important because they help an audience stay on top of the information that is being presented to them. Without transitions, audiences are often left lost and the ultimate goal of the speech is not accomplished.
- Specific transition words, like those found in Table 10.1 “Transition Words”, can be useful in constructing effective transitions.
- In addition to major transitions between the main points of a speech, speakers can utilize internal previews, internal summaries, and signposts to help focus audience members on the information contained within a speech.

6.7.5 Exercises

1. Using the main points you created earlier in this chapter, create clear transitions between each main point. Look at the possible transition words in Table 10.1 “Transition Words” See which words are best suited for your speech. Try your transitions out on a friend or classmate to see if the transition makes sense to other people.
2. Take your most complicated main point and create an internal preview for that main point and then end the point with an internal summary.
3. Think about your current speech. Where can you use signposts to help focus your audience’s attention? Try at least two different ways of phrasing your signposts and then decide which one is better to use.

6.7.6 References

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6.8: Transitions- Bridging Ideas for a Seamless Presentation



Good transitions
can make a speech more important to the audience
because they feel they are being taken
to a positive conclusion
without having to travel a bumpy road.
– Joe Griffith

Transitions

The difference between a novice speaker and an advanced speaker is in how they bridge the gap between ideas. Learning to use transitions effectively will help take your speaking to the advanced level. Transitions can be one word, a phrase, or a full sentence.

> *The audience is dying to know the relationship between ideas. Their brains are hard-wired for that. It's more important when you are speaking than when you are writing because the listeners can't go back – they have to get it when it happens. If the brain is bored, or gets tired because it's overwhelmed, or gets confused – it can't stay in that place, so it daydreams, creating its own interest.*
> *Speech Coach Max Dixon, Westside Toastmasters.*

So, let's get started. I have included various transition types for you to consider. These do little good if you read them and do not use them. This list works best if you read it now and then revisit it every time you write a speech.

Beginning

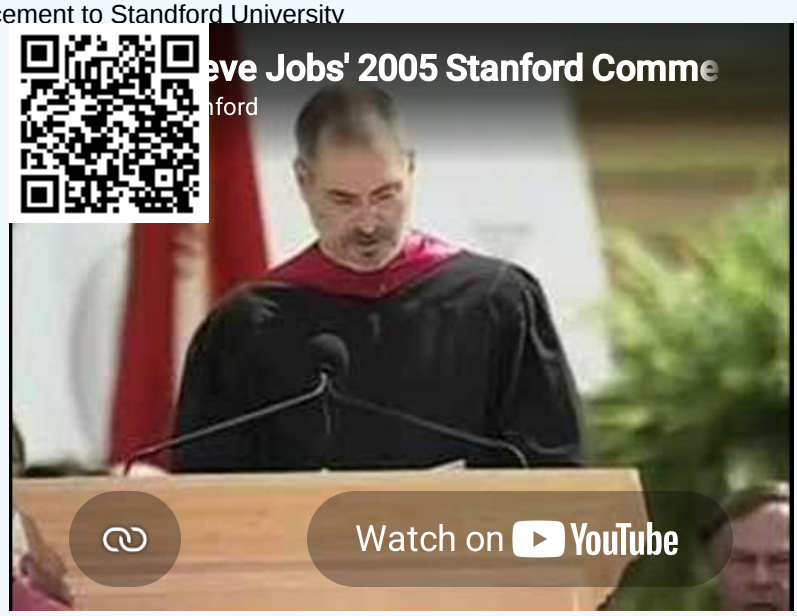
- Let's begin with…
- First, I'd like to share with you…
- Now that you're aware of the overview, let's begin with…
- Our first stop is…
- I will first cover…
- My first point covers…
- To get started, let's look at…

The Order of Things

- After that…
- Next…
- Second thing…

- Our next stop is…
- Let me tell you about your next step.

Steve Jobs Commencement to Standford University



Steve Jobs clearly previews his main points, “Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That’s it. No big deal. Just three stories.” He flows smoothly between points with clear transitions.

- “The first story is about connecting the dots.”
- “My second story is about love and loss.”
- “My third story is about death.”

Between Similar Points

- In the same way…
- In addition…
- Likewise…
- Similarly…

Between Disagreeing Points

- Conversely…
- Despite this…
- The flip side of the issue…
- However…
- On the contrary…
- On the other hand…
- However …
- On the other side …
- Yet, we cannot ignore …
- The opposing argument …
- If we examine the opposite side, we see …

Introduce an example

- This is best illustrated by an example…
- For instance…
- Take the case of…
- For example…
- To understand this…

- Let me illustrate this by…

Introduce Research

- To make the point…
- As illustrated by…
- For instance…
- Case in point…
- To solidify this point…
- As researched by…

Cause and effect

- Therefore…
- Thus…
- Consequently…
- As a result…
- This is significant because…
- Hence…
- Resulting in…
- For that reason …
- The effect is…

Elaboration

- Also…
- Besides…
- What's more…
- In addition/additionally…
- Moreover…
- Furthermore…

Transition to a Demonstration

- Let me show you how this works…
- Let me demonstrate this…
- Now that we've covered the theory, let's see it in action …
- Next, I'd like to let you see this for yourselves…

Introducing Your Visual

- As you can see from this chart…
- I'd like you to notice that…
- The table indicates…

Questions as Transitions

- Now that you know the problem, what do you think will solve it?
- What do you think will solve this crisis?

Vocabulary



Connective:
A word or phrase that connects the ideas of a speech and indicates the relationship between them.

Transitions:
A word or phrase that indicates when a speaker had finished one thought and it moving on to another.

Internal preview:
A statement in the body of the speech that tells the audience what the speaker is going to discuss next.

Internal summary:
A statement in the body of the speech that summarizes the speaker's preceding point or points.

Signpost:
A very brief statement that indicates where a speaker is in the speech or that focuses attention on key ideas.

From the *Art of Public Speaking* by Stephen Lucas

Thoughts from a Former Student

One thing I learned in class that made me a better speechwriter was to pay attention to the transitions. In our outlines, there was space for our main points, but also our transitions between them. At the beginning of the semester, I thought this was a waste of time planning out my transition for a speech and that I would just wing it the day of, but I soon realized how important they were. Transitions are like the finishing touches that make everything fall together in a speech.

You may have some interesting points or facts to give to your audience, but without transitions, you have nothing to connect your points and create a narrative. An audience is much more interested in a talk if there is a continuing idea or theme, and transitions help create this. I found this out by watching the other students in my class as they learned to use transitions as well. I loved the speeches that were clearly organized and had a common idea with transitions.

Zoe Lawless, Honors Public Speaking, University of Arkansas



Imagine the stage as a baseball diamond. Move to each base as you move between speech points. Begin and end at home plate.

Movement as Transition

Many people don't think about movement as a type of transition, but it can be a very powerful way to help your audience transition between ideas.

- Setting out a visual or putting it away signals a change in ideas.

- Some speakers will imagine a baseball diamond laid out on the floor and move to each base throughout the speech. Their opening comment is at home plate. Point one is delivered on first, point two on second, and point three on third. They stand back on their home plate to deliver the final closing statements.
- One speaker that I met said he always has a special place that is his big idea place. He may move around during his speech but when he wants the audience to know it is an important point, he stands in the big idea place.

Silence as a Transition

> *John Chappelear, speech consultant, suggests that the use of silence can be powerful. It is powerful, but it is not easy. Being able to stand silently in front of a large audience for 15-45 seconds requires practice. Sometimes you can use silence as a way to let the audience catch up and think deeply about what you just said.*

Transitioning Between Slides

- As the next slide shows…
- As you can see…
- Next, I will show you…

Transitioning to Visuals

- As you can see from this chart…
- I'd like to direct your attention to…
- This diagram compares…
- Now, I'd like to illustrate this with…

Signaling the End is Near

- In conclusion…
- To sum it up…
- Lastly…
- In a nutshell…
- To recap…
- I'd like to leave you with…
- Finally, I'd like to say…
- The takeaway from all of this is…
- In conclusion…
- To summarise…



Moving to the Next Speaker

- I told you about the most credible theories about climate change, now John will share with you some examples of what you can do.
- I'm going to turn it over to Malachi, who will take you through the next few points.
- Next, Angie will come up and talk about…
- To help us understand this topic better, we have Beatrice, who will talk us through…

- Look to the next speaker and motion towards them as they walk to the podium, Twila will tell you more…

Problems with Transitions

These are some of the most common problems with transitions:

- Not planning out transitions and just "winging it."
- Using fancy phrases inconsistent with the rest of the speech.
- Saying, "I have five points" and then having only four or miscounting the points.
- Overusing the same transitional phrase.
- Long pauses before transitions as the speaker tries to figure out what to say next.

Tricks on Smoothly Presenting Transitions

Now you have a list of ideas to use when you write your next speech, let's talk about how to use transitions effectively. Speakers typically struggle as they end one point and seek to move to the next idea. This usually happens because of poor planning, not enough practice, and poor note management. Let's talk about these one at a time. First, poor planning happens because a speaker does not put enough time and effort into writing the speech. Second, not enough practice happened because even when a speech is practiced, it is practiced with regards to getting through the main points and not about moving smoothly between points. Finally, poor note management. Let me give you some tricks.

- Make your notes large-larger than you think you need.
- Give ample space between main ideas so you can look down and see the gap and know another point is coming.
- On your notecards, make each main idea a different color.
- I usually have a "T" in a circle to remind me that this is a transition statement.
- Practice your speech twice by just reading the transition statements and the next sentence.
- The night before your speech, visualize how you will manage the transitions.

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- Using transitions will help your speech flow smoothly.
- Practice using your transitions.
- Plan transitions for impact.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

7: What Words?

7.1: Six Elements of Language
7.2: Professional Speechwriting- Using Colorful Language in Your Speech
7.3: Professional Speechwriting- Metaphor, Simile, and Theme
7.4: Professional Speechwriting- Vivid and Sensory Words Make Your Speech Come Alive
7.5: The Power of Story- The Secret Ingredient to Making Any Speech Memorable

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7.1: Six Elements of Language

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the six elements of language important for public speakers.
2. Utilize the six elements of language in your own public speeches.

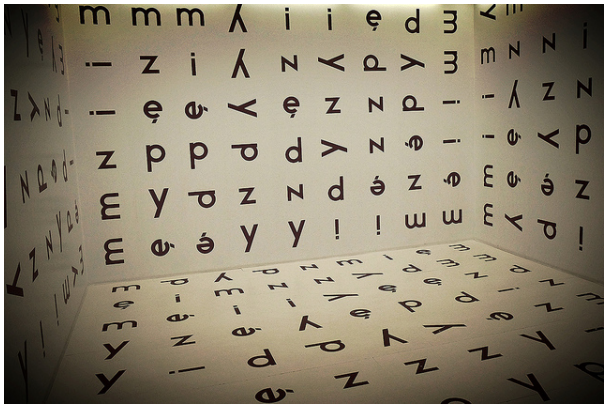


Figure 7.1.1: Language (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Jurek d. via Flickr)

Language is a very important aspect of anyone's public speaking performance. Whether a speaker uses lots of complicated words or words most people have in their vocabularies, language will determine how an audience experiences the speech. To help you think through your language choices, we are going to talk about six important elements of language and how they affect audience perceptions.

7.1.1 Clarity

The first important element of language is clarity, or the use of language to make sure the audience understands a speaker's ideas in the way the speaker intended. While language, or verbal communication, is only one channel we can use to transmit information, it is a channel that can lend itself to numerous problems. For example, as discussed earlier, if people have different connotative definitions for words, the audience can miss the intended meaning of a message.

Imagine you're listening to a speaker talking and he or she uses the phrase, "Older female relative who became aerodynamic venison road kill," or "Obese personification fabricated of compressed mounds of minute crystals." If you're like most people, these two phrases just went right over your head. We'll give you a hint, these are two common Christmas songs. The first phrase refers to "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer," and the second one is "Frosty the Snowman." Notice that in both of these cases, the made-up title with all the polysyllabic words is far less clear than the commonly known one. While you are probably unlikely to deliberately distort the clarity of your speech by choosing such outlandish words to express simple thoughts, the point we are illustrating is that clear language makes a big difference in how well a message can be understood.

7.1.2 Economy

Another common mistake among new public speakers is thinking that more words are more impressive. In fact, the opposite is true. When people ramble on and on without actually making a point, audiences become bored and distracted. To avoid this problem, we recommend word economy, or the use of only those words necessary to accurately express your idea. If the fundamental idea you are trying to say is, "that stinks," then saying something like "while the overall outcome may be undesirable and definitely not recommended" becomes overkill. We do have one caveat here: you want to make sure that your language isn't so basic that it turns off your audience. If you are speaking to adults and use vocabulary appropriate for school children, you'll end up offending your audience. So while economy is definitely important, you don't want to become so overly basic that you are perceived as "talking down" to your audience.

7.1.3 Obscenity

Obscenity, or indecent language, consists of curse words or pornographic references. While it may be fun to use obscene language in casual conversations with your friends, we cannot recommend using obscene language while delivering a speech. Even if you're

giving a speech related to an obscene word, you must be careful with your use of the word itself. Whether we agree with societal perceptions of obscenity, going out of our way to use obscenity will end up focusing the audience on the obscenity and not on our message.

7.1.4 Obscure Language/Jargon

Obscure language and jargon are two terms that closely relate to each other. Obscure language refers to language choices that are not typically understood or known by most of your audience. Imagine you're listening to a speech and the speaker says, "Today I've given you a plethora of ideas for greening your workplace." While you may think the word "plethora" is commonly known, we can assure you that many people have no idea that plethora means many or an abundance of something. Similarly, you may think most people know what it means to "green" a workplace, but in fact many people do not know that it means to make the workplace more environmentally friendly, or to reduce its impact on the environment. In the case of this example, plethora simply means the speaker has given many ideas for greening the workplace. You can still use the word "plethora," but you should include a definition so that you're sure all of your audience will understand.

Jargon, on the other hand, refers to language that is commonly used by a highly specialized group, trade, or profession. For example there is legal jargon, or the language commonly used by and understood by lawyers. There is also medical jargon, or the language commonly used by and understood by health care practitioners. Every group, trade, or profession will have its own specific jargon. The problem that occurs for many speakers is not realizing that jargon is group, trade, or profession specific and not universal. One common form of jargon is the acronym, a word formed by taking the first letters or groups of letters of words, such as NASDAQ (National Association of Securities Dealers Automated Quotations), PET (positron emission tomography) scan, or IHOP (International House of Pancakes). Another form of jargon is initialism, formed by pronouncing the initials rather than the name of an organization or other entity. For example, CDC stands for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fMRI stands for Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging, and B of A stands for Bank of America. In political discussions, you may come across various CFRs, or Codes of Federal Regulations. If you are going to use a specific acronym or initialism within your speech, you need to explain it the first time you use it. For example, you could say,

According to the United States Code of Federal Regulations, or CFR, employment discrimination in the Department of Homeland Security is not allowed based on biological sex, religion, sexual orientation, or race. Furthermore, the US CFR does not permit discrimination in receiving contracts based on biological sex, religion, sexual orientation, or race.

By defining the jargon upon first mention, we are subsequently able to use the jargon because we can be certain the audience now understands the term.

7.1.5 Power

Power is an individual's ability to influence another person to think or behave in a manner the other person would not have otherwise done. DeVito examined how language can be used to help people gain power over others or lose power over others (DeVito, 2009). Table 13.3 "Powerful and Powerless Language" provides examples of both powerful language and powerless language a speaker can use during a speech. Powerless language should generally be avoided in public speaking because it can damage audience perceptions of the speaker's credibility.

Table 13.3 Powerful and Powerless Language

Language Strategy	Definition	Example
Powerful Language		
Direct Requests	Asking the audience to engage in a specific behavior.	"At the conclusion of today's speech, I want you to go out and buy a bottle of hand sanitizer and start using it to protect your life."
Bargaining	An agreement that affects both parties of a situation.	"If you vote for me, I promise to make sure that our schools get the funding they so desperately need."
Ingratiation	Attempting to bring oneself into the favor or good graces of an audience.	"Because you are all smart and talented people, I know that you will see why we need to cut government spending."

Language Strategy	Definition	Example
Powerless Language		
Hesitations	Language that makes the speaker sound unprepared or uncertain.	“Well, as best I was able to find out, or I should say, from what little material I was able to dig up, I kind of think that this is a pretty interesting topic.”
Intensifiers	Overemphasizing all aspects of the speech.	“Great! Fantastic! This topic is absolutely amazing and fabulous!”
Disqualifiers	Attempts to downplay one’s qualifications and competence about a specific topic.	“I’m not really an expert on this topic, and I’m not very good at doing research, but here goes nothing.”
Tag Questions	A question added to the end of a phrase seeking the audience’s consent for what was said.	“This is a very important behavior, isn’t it?” or “You really should do this, don’t you think?”
Self-Critical Statements	Downplaying one’s own abilities and making one’s lack of confidence public.	“I have to tell you that I’m not a great public speaker, but I’ll go ahead and give it a try.”
Hedges	Modifiers used to indicate that one isn’t completely sure of the statement just made.	“I really believe this may be true, sort of.” “Maybe my conclusion is a good idea. Possibly not.”
Verbal Surrogates	Utterances used to fill space while speaking; filler words.	“I was, like, err, going to, uhhh, say something, um, important, like, about this.”

7.1.6 Variety

The last important aspect of language is variety, or a speaker’s ability to use and implement a range of different language choices. In many ways, variety encompasses all the characteristics of language previously discussed in this chapter. Often speakers find one language device and then beat it into the ground like a railroad spike. Unfortunately, when a speaker starts using the same language device too often, the language device will start to lose the power that it may have had. For this reason, we recommend that you always think about the language you plan on using in a speech and make sure that you use a range of language choices.

7.1.6.1 Key Takeaways

- Public speakers need to make sure that they are very aware of their language. Six common language issues that impact public speakers are clarity, economy, obscenity, obscure language/jargon, power, and variety.
- When public speakers prepare their speeches, they need to make sure that their speeches contain clear language, use as few words as possible to get their point across, avoid obscenity, be careful with obscure language/jargon, use powerful language, and include variety.

7.1.7 Exercises

1. Find a passage in a specialized book or upper-level textbook that expresses a complex idea. Rewrite the passage so that it is clear and avoids jargon. Test out your explanation by seeing if the message is clear to someone unfamiliar with the topic and by seeing if it is an accurate revision to someone who is very familiar with the topic.
2. Find a written copy of a speech at least one page in length (Vital Speeches of the Day is an excellent source for this exercise). Summarize the speech accurately and completely in one paragraph. Then reduce your summary to twenty words. How did you go about changing your language for greater economy of word use?

7.1.8 References

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7.2: Professional Speechwriting- Using Colorful Language in Your Speech



Antithesis is not only a revered literary device that only the best wield,
but it's a rhetoric device some of the most famous speakers in history
have used to emphasize their points.
It's rousing in a speech when you juxtapose
two opposites to show a contrasting effect that's as wide as the ocean.
Prowriting Aid

Taking your speech to the next level means being intentional with each word. In this chapter, I will demonstrate how several different colorful language devices are used in speeches. By carefully crafting your word choices, you can deliberately control the tone and emotion in your speech. I believe the best way for you to learn is to be saturated by great examples and then be challenged to use what you have learned in your own speeches. To get the most out of this chapter, take your time and read these examples out loud. Feel the emotion, get into the rhythm, let yourself experience the difference that these language devices make.

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of initial sounds in neighboring words. When Emily Dickinson said, "The soul selects her own society," she was using an alliteration. A well-used alliteration sounds pleasing and elevates your content. it helps emphasize certain words and can help create the mood. Read these examples of alliteration to understand how they operate.

Repeated D

> *President Mandela, we salute you, for you are a man that had a **d**ream, a **d**ream **d**edicated to **d**esire, the **d**esire to make the world a better place.*
> *Tribute Speech to Nelson Mandela by Tanica van As, University of Arkanas*

Repeated P

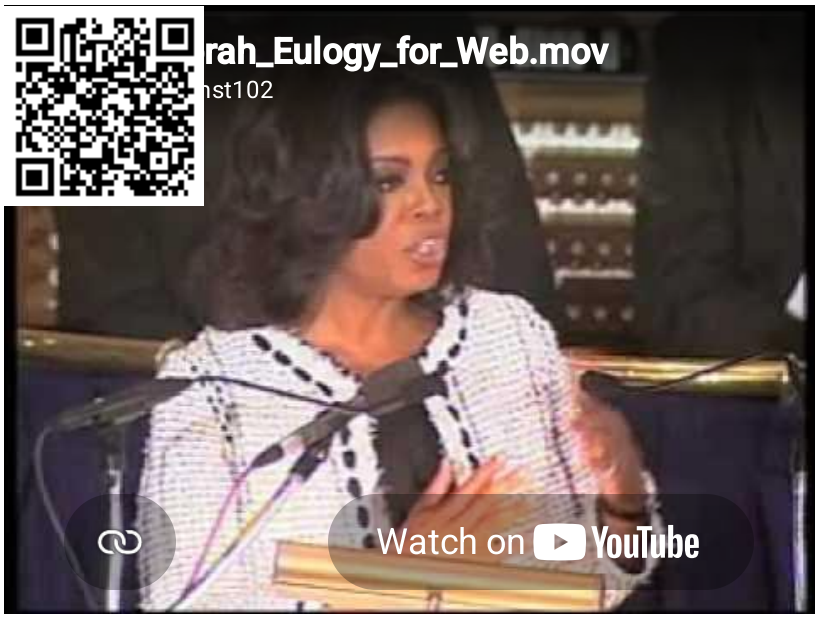
> *We have seen **p**eace **p**revail in most **p**laces for a half century.*
> *Women's Rights are Human Rights by Hillary Clinton*
>
> *And here's the last **p**art. It's up to you to couple every **p**rotest with **p**lans and **p**olicies, with organizing and mobilizing and voting.*
> *Don't Ever Let Anyone Tell You That You Are Too Angry, Commencement Speech by Michelle Obama*

There are too many alliterations to count in this two-minute persuasive speech. I take that back, there are not too many to count– you should listen and try to count them. Take it as a challenge.



Repeated G

> *And after our first meeting, I realized that **G**od uses **g**ood people to do **g**reat things. Eulogy to Rosa Parks by Oprah Winfrey*



Repeated M

> *You've got **more** role **m**odels, more road **m**aps, **more** resources than the civil rights generation did. You've got more **t**ools, **t**echnology and **t**alents than my generation did. No generation has been better positioned to be warriors for justice and remake the world. Graduation Speech 2020 by Barack Obama*

Parallel Construction

The next rhetorical device is parallel construction. In short, it means to repeat the same word or phrase. If it occurs at the beginning, it is called an anaphora, if it occurs at the end, it is an epistrophe. These are the easiest of the advanced techniques to write and it has the application in the most places. It can be used in almost any type of speech.

Anaphora: Repeat the Beginning

Anaphora (to bring again) (an-NAF-ruh). An anaphora is the repetition of words or phrases at the beginning of sentences. The repetition of words creates a building sensation lending to a sense of importance. Anaphora helps create rhythm, gives emphasis, and boosts speech to a higher level. Look at the following examples for how it can be used in various types of speeches.

Anaphora in Eulogy

> ***He taught me***
> *that I don't always have to be the same as the crowd.*
> ***He taught me***
> *that no matter what my passion is, I should follow it.*
> ***He taught me***
> *that you can't wait for opportunities to fall into your lap,*
> *you have to go get them.*
> *Eulogy to Grandpa by Logan Dold.*

Anaphora in Tribute Speech

> *Magic in one way or another*
> *had a huge part to play in our childhood.*
> ***Maybe you*** *thought you were a fairy princess*
> ***Maybe you*** *believed in Santa Clause or the Tooth fairy*
> ***Maybe you*** *were like me*
> *and made "potions" in your bathroom sink.*
> *Tribute to Harry Potter's Influence on My Childhood by Blake Cole*

Anaphora in Graduation Speech

> ***It feels like just yesterday,*** *you Casey, Kara, and I were playing stuck in the mud, hot lava upstairs in the game room, monopoly, and orange juice pong at the lake.*
> ***It feels like just yesterday,*** *Casey was the first of us girls to get a pair of platform heels. Size 5, chunky, black, and we were dying to wear them, but we had to wait until it was our turn.*
>
> ***It feels like just yesterday,*** *you were writing boy's names in chalk on the driveway with little hearts around it, drooling over them because they were a 'hunk a hunk a cheese.'*
> ***It feels like just yesterday,*** *you were a sophomore in high school.*
> *Graduation Speech to Her Little Sister by Kendall Cleveland*

Anaphora in Persuasion Speech



Indifference elicits no response.
Indifference is not a response.
Indifference is not a beginning; it is an end.
And, therefore, indifference is always the friend of the enemy, for it benefits the aggressor — never his victim, whose pain is magnified when he or she feels forgotten.
The political prisoner in his cell, the hungry children, the homeless refugees — not to respond to their plight, not to relieve their solitude by offering them a spark of hope is to exile them from human memory. And in denying their humanity, we betray our own.

Indifference, then, is not only a sin, it is a punishment.
The Perils of Indifference, Elie Wiesel

> ***It is a violation of human rights*** *when women and girls are sold into the slavery of prostitution for human greed — and the kinds of reasons that are used to justify this practice should no longer be tolerated.*
> ***It is a violation of human rights*** *when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire, and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small.*
> ***It is a violation of human rights*** *when individual women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war.*
> ***It is a violation of human rights*** *when a leading cause of death worldwide among women ages 14 to 44 is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes by their own relatives.*
> ***It is a violation of human rights*** *when young girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation.*
> *Women's Rights are Human Rights by Hillary Clinton*

Anaphora in Political Speech

> ***Let there be*** *justice for all.*
> ***Let there be*** *peace for all.*
> ***Let there be*** *work, bread, water, and salt for all.*
> *Nelson Mandela, Inaugural Address*
>
> ***Yes we can*** *to justice and equality.*
> ***Yes we can*** *to opportunity and prosperity.*

> ***Yes we can*** *heal this nation.*
> ***Yes we can*** *repair this world.*
> ***Yes we can.***
> *New Hampshire Speech by Barack Obama*

> ***If there's a*** *child on the south side of Chicago who can't read, that matters to me, even if it's not my child.*
> ***If there's a*** *senior citizen somewhere who can't pay for her prescription and has to choose between medicine and the rent, that makes my life poorer, even if it's not my grandmother.*
> ***If there's an*** *Arab American family being rounded up without benefit of an attorney or due process, that threatens my civil liberties.*
> *Democratic National Convention Speech by Barack Obama*

> *Senators, let me be clear:*
> *We are more determined than our opponents, and we will keep fighting.*
> ***When*** *bad actors try to use our site,*
> ***we will*** *block them.*
> ***When*** *content violates our policies,*
> ***we will*** *take it down.*
> *And* ***when*** *our opponents use new techniques,*
> ***we will*** *share them so we can strengthen our collective efforts.*
>
> *Opening Statement to Congress on Facebook Accountability by Sheryl Sandberg*

Parallel Construction - Epistrophe: Repeat the Ending

Epistrophe (after stroke) (eh-PiSS-truh-FEE–rhymes–rhymes with apostrophe) is the repetition of the same word or words at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences. The repetition makes the lines more memorable. Depending on the execution, it can give a cadence to eh speak and makes the speech feel dramatic. It is especially effective when the repeated word connects to the overall speech theme.

> *This is not, however, just America's* ***fight.***
> *And what is at stake is not just America's freedom.*
> *This is the world's* ***fight.***
> *This is civilization's* ***fight.***
> *This is the fight of all who believe in progress and pluralism,*
> *tolerance and freedom.*
> *Address to a Joint Session of Congress Following 9/11 Attacks by George Bush*

> *For no government is better than the men who compose it,*
> *and I want* ***the best****,*
> *and we need* ***the best****,*
> *and we deserve* ***the best****.*
>
> *Wittenburg College Speech by John F. Kennedy*

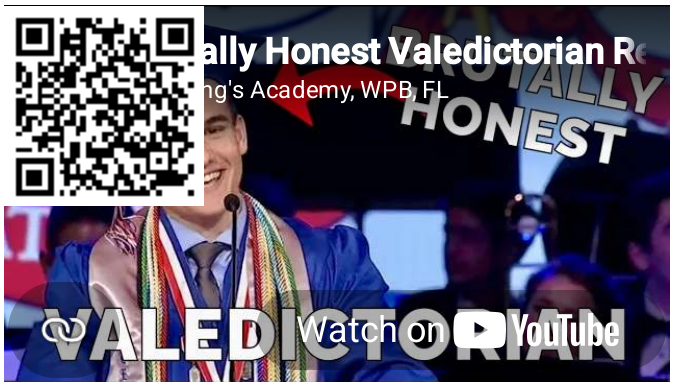
> *I would like to thank all the people who make the King's Academy excellent*

To the Board of Governors for the wisdom you bring, the prayers that you pray, and the vision you lay out for TKA, ***we thank you***

For the administration, for the godly oversight you bring ot the school and for making the tough calls when needed, ***we thank you***

To the faculty who give your all eachand every day laboring to provide us with an education and pushing us to do our best even on the days that we don't want to learn all the while talking the extra time to buld relationships that for some will last a life time, ***we thank you***

To the staff who worked tirelessly coordinating our lives and events while supporting us and the faculty, ***we thank you***



Graduation Speech to The King's Academy by Kyle Martin

This time last year, I found out that I was in the running for this title,
it was then I decided I wanted ***it,***
so I worked hard ***for it,***
I sacrificed ***for it,***
and yes, I stressed ***for it,***
and I got ***it.***

Graduation Speech to The King's Academy by Kyle Martin

Market forces cannot educate us or equip us for this world of rapid technological and economic change.
We must do it ***together****.*
We cannot buy our way to a safe society.
We must work for it ***together****.*
We cannot purchase an option on whether we grow old. We must plan for it ***together****.*
We can't protect the ordinary against the abuse of power by leaving them to it; we must protect each other. That is our insight. A belief in society.
Working ***together****.*
Blackpool by Tony Blair



Watch this speech by Queen Rania Al Abdullah as she speaks before the United Nations. Notice her repeated use of parallel construction as she starts of her speech with, I wish…, I wish…, I wish…

Tricolon–Repeat it three times.

Omne Trium Perfectum means everything that comes in threes is perfect. Humans love threes. In our culture, three provides a sense of the whole, complete, roundness. The rule of threes suggests that ideas presented in threes are easier to remember, more interesting, and more enjoyable. The three could mean have three main points of the three could mean have the items to a sentence. It could also mean explaining something in three different ways.

Also discussed in the chapter on speech organization

The time for healing the wounds has come
The moment to bridge the chasms that divide us has come.
The time to build is upon us.
Inaugural Address by Nelson Mandela

***The** flame **would be** lit.*
***The** fight **would be** won.*
***The** spirit **would be** affirmed.*
Eulogy to Muhammad Ali by Bill Clinton



And when the night grows dark,
When injustice weighs heavy on our hearts,

> *When our best-laid plans seem beyond our reach,*
> *Let us think of Madiba*
> *Barack Obama Memorial to Nelson Mandela*

Personification:

A personification gives abstractions and inanimate objects human qualities. These qualities may be physical, spiritual, or emotional qualities. The easiest example I can think of is the saying, "My computer hates me! I know it is out to get me because it acts up every time, I have an important paper due." A computer is not alive. A computer cannot hate. Look at these speech examples for how personification is used in a variety of contexts.

> *My father taught himself how to read, taught himself how to write, decided in the midst of Jim Crowism, as* ***America was breathing*** *the last gasp of the Civil War, my father decided he was going to stand and be a man, not a black man, not a brown man, not a white man, but a man. The Wisdom of a Third Grade Dropout Will Change Your Life -Graduation Speech by Rick Rigsby.*

> *It's [COVID-19] one of these scenarios which we have been warning against for a couple of weeks already — that countries have to be prepared for the* ***virus literally knocking at their door****. Christian Lindmeier, Feb 2020 WHO Press Briefing*

> *To the fans in Chicago, St. Louis, and Atlanta, I wanna say 'thank you' for your support. Your chanting of 'B-r-u-u-u-c-e' as I entered the game always gave me chills. I wish I could trot out there and get that feeling again, but* ***Father Time has caught up with me****. First,* ***he took my arm,*** *then* ***he took my hair****, then* ***he took the color from my beard****. But* ***he cannot take the great friendships and memories I have from being a baseball player.*** *Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Address, Bruce Sutter.*

Antithesis

The Klingon in Star Trek said it best, "It's better to die on our feet than to live on our knees." This is an excellent example of an antithesis. An antithesis is the pairing of opposites in a parallel arrangement. To be an antithesis, there need to be two contrasting ideas. It is not enough that the ideas are opposite, they must also be intentionally juxtaposed in a balanced form. In my opinion, this is the highest form of rhetorical device. Effectively writing and using the antithesis will put you in league with the masters!

Let's start off by looking at some famous examples. Probably the most famous of all was uttered by Neil Armstrong when he said, "that's one small step for a man, one giant leap for all mankind." Talk about quotable! A well-written antithesis rolls off the tongue and begs people to nod and gasp a little. That is just what happens when famous speakers use them and it is also what happens when my students use them in class. Look at these examples for inspiration.

> *The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of*
> *being a beginner again less sure about everything.*
> *Commencement to Stanford by Steve Jobs*

> *And when I say, "Life doesn't happen to you, it happens for you." I really don't know if that's true. I'm just making a conscious choice to perceive challenges as something beneficial so that I can deal with them in the most productive way. You'll come up with your own style. That's part of the fun.*
> *Graduation Speech, Jim Carrey*

> *There is nothing wrong with America*
> *that cannot be cured by what is right with America.*
> *First Inaugural Address by Bill Clinton*

> *We think we know what we want*
> *but we often have no idea what we need.*
> *USC School of Dramatic Arts Commencement by Kristin Bell*

If you want to be really impressed, check out four antitheses in a row

> *We find ourselves rich in goods*
> *but ragged in spirit,*
> *reaching with magnificent precision for the moon*
> *but falling into raucous discord on earth.*
> *We are caught in war,*
> *wanting peace.*
> *We're torn by division,*
> *wanting unity.*
>
> *First Inaugural Address, Richard Nixon*

Watch my students in action as they master the antithesis in eulogy speeches

> *A woman whose spirit was always soaring*
> *even when her feet were planted firmly on the ground.*
> *Kayla Cross, Eulogy for her grandmother who was a pilot. University of Arkansas*

> *I realize that it was never about your flower garden.*
> *It was really about tending to the things of the heart*
> *Tasha Smith, Tribute to Grandma. University of Arkansas*

Recipe for a Powerful Antithesis

A. Statements that are Opposites

The first ingredient of an antithesis is opposites. I find it easiest to see the opposites by creating a box like this.

cannot help	many who are poor
save	few who are rich

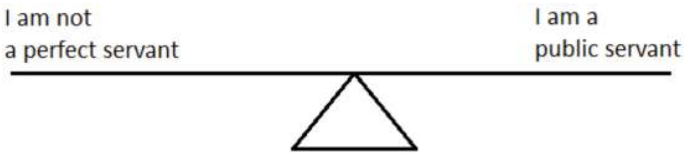
If a free society cannot help the many who are poor,
how can they save the few who are rich. John Kennedy

live together	brothers
perish together	fools

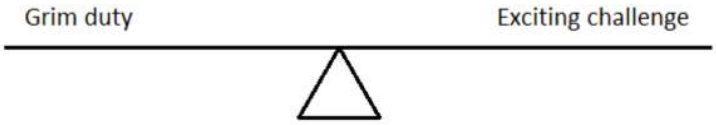
We must learn to live together as brothers
or perish together as fools. Martin Luther King, Jr.

B. Evenly Balanced

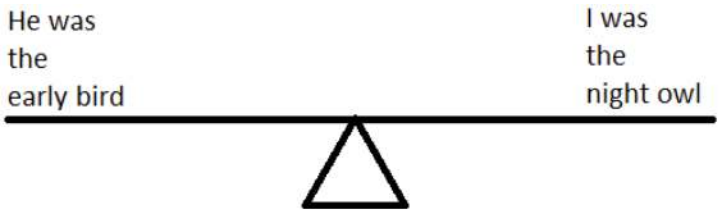
> *Ronald Carpenter suggests drawing a teeter-tooter and putting words on either side to see if they are balanced. The phrases should be closely balanced in terms of how many beats are on each side. Let us look at an example.*
>
> *I am not a perfect servant.*
> *I am a public servant*
> *doing my best against the odds.*
> *Jesse Jackson*



> *Let us accept his challenge, not as grim duty, but as an exciting challenge.*
> *Richard Nixon, Presidential nomination acceptance speech.*



> *He was the early bird*
> *and I was the night owl.*
> *Eulogy to Kobe Bryant by Vanessa Bryant*



Consider Bill Clinton's acceptance address to the 1992 Democratic Convention. "And yet just as we have won the cold war abroad, we are losing the battles for economic opportunity and social justice here at home. While this sentence has opposites, it does not have balance. As Ronald Carpenter suggests "a simple change would have made it not only opposite, but balanced: "We have won the cold ware for political democracy abroad but are losing the heated battle for economic opportunity at home." A little bit of balancing made a good statement great.

Here is one more example that improves with a little fix. This is George Bush's Graduation speech at West Point.

> *We're determined that before the sun sets on this terrible struggle, our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom on one hand and of overwhelming power on the other.*

A simple addition of three words, "and a symbol," on the second phrase takes this good sentence and gives it balance:

> *We're determined that before the sun sets on this terrible struggle, our flag will be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of freedom on one hand and a symbol of overwhelming power on the other.*

Go back and read those examples again to feel the difference. Now, read Martin Luther King Jr's famous quote and notice that it has both a pairing of opposites and balance.

> *I have a dream that my four little children*
> *will one day live in a nation*
> *where they will not be judged by the color of their skin*
> *but by the content of their character.*
> *I have a dream today!*
> *I Have a Dream by Martin Luther King, Jr.*



And that's what John Lewis teaches us. That's where real courage comes from.

Not from turning on each other, but by turning towards one another.
Not by sowing hatred and division, but by spreading love and truth.
Not by avoiding our responsibilities to create a better America and a better world,
but by embracing those responsibilities with joy and perseverance and discovering that in our beloved community, we do not walk alone.

President Obama Eulogy for John Lewis

Can You Identify the Antithesis that is Opposite and Balanced?

Which of the following antithesis has the most symmetry from balancing opposites?

A. After this initial defeat, we seek ultimate peace

B. After this defeat, we seek victory and ultimate peace.

C. After this initial defeat in war, we seek ultimate victory in peace.

D. After an initial defeat, we seek ultimate peace.

E. After defeat in war, we seek ultimate victory and lasting peace.

From Choosing Powerful Words: Eloquence That Works.
The correct answer is C.

C. End the Antithesis with the Positive Statement

You should have a pairing of opposites that are evenly balanced, but you can really impact an audience by the order of the opposites. Listeners will pay the most attention to the last word in the antithesis, if you want it dark, end in a heavy word, if you want it hopeful, end in a positive word. Most of the time, you want to end with a positive word. Look at the difference between these two, which one sounds better? One ends in darkness and the other ends with a candle.

> *When other people cursed the darkness, she lit a **candle.***

> *She lit a candle when other people cursed the **darkness.***

Yes, of course, it sounds better to end with, "she lit a candle." Always try to end on the upbeat.

D. Use as Few Words as Possible.

So now we have a pairing of opposites that are evenly balanced that end with the positive and now we want to add economy of words. Say the same thing with as few words as possible.

> *Because life doesn't happen to you,*
> *it happens for you.*
> *Maharishi International University Commencement by Jim Carrey.*

> *A real dream is something that not only hangs on to you*
> *but you will hang onto it.*
> *Steven Spielberg, Some Good News Graduation*

? Test Your Skills: There are five antitheses and one parallel construction in this speech, can you find them all?

Now, John McCain is my colleague and my friend.
He has served our country with honor and courage.
But we don't need four more years … of the last eight years.
More economic stagnation … and less affordable healthcare.
More high gas prices … and less alternative energy.
More jobs getting shipped overseas … and fewer jobs created here.
More skyrocketing debt … home foreclosures … and mounting bills that are crushing our middle-class families.
More war … less diplomacy.
More of a government where the privileged come first … and everyone else comes last.

Democratic National Convention by Hillary Clinton

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- Using rhetorical devices, colorful language, in your speech can elevate your speech writing, create impact, produce rhythm, and help the audience remember your message. There are numerous devices that are effective in speech.
- Alliteration-Repeat initial sounds of words.
- Parallel Construction–Repeat words or phrases at the beginning or end.
    - Anaphora–Repeat words or phrases at the beginning.
    - Epistrophe–Repeat words or phrases at the end.
- Personification–Giving innate things human characteristics.
- Tricolon–Make lists or statements in threes.
- Antithesis–Pairing of opposite phrases in parallel sentences.

Side Note: I have tried to include speech samples from various cultures, various people groups, and various political leanings. I purposefully chose speeches that represent a variety of topics to show all the different ways these speech devices are used. You may not agree with the point of view of some of the speakers (there are some of them I do not agree with), but that doesn't keep us from respecting their ability to construct a good speech.

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7.3: Professional Speechwriting- Metaphor, Simile, and Theme



Tombstone of a Jewish woman depicting broken candles as a visual metaphor for the end of life.

It's time to take your speechwriting to the professional level. To do that, you need to learn how to effectively use metaphors and similes and you need to learn how to weave those into a theme.

Let's start with some definitions. Similes and metaphors both make comparisons. A simile makes an explicit comparison usually using like and as. According to Merriam Webster, a metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase literally denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy. You can use a variety of metaphors throughout a speech, but if you stick to one consistent topic, you have a theme. A theme is where you pick a comparison, and you use it throughout your speech. This gives a sense of unity and overall elevates the level of your speech.

What is needed for an effective metaphor?

An effective metaphor uses emotional phrases properly

> *According to an article in Psychology Today, "Metaphors are not just a literary technique; they are a very potent psychological technique." In a study, people were told about climate change using a war metaphor or a race metaphor. Those hearing the war metaphor found the climate change situation more urgent and were more likely to increase their conservation behaviors.*

> *Metaphors have a profound impact on how we think and act on social issues. In the study by Thibodeau and Boroditski, participants read about a crime-ridden city where the criminal element was a beast preying upon innocent citizens (animal metaphor), or was a disease that plagued the town (disease metaphor). When subjects were asked for a solution on how to solve the problem, those who heard about the animal metaphor supported strategies such as increasing police presence and imposing stricter penalties. Those who heard the disease metaphor favored seeking out the primary cause of the crime wave and bolstering the economy. The researchers concluded, "We find that exposure to even a single metaphor can induce substantial differences. People chose information that was likely to confirm and elaborate the bias suggested by the metaphor – an effect that persisted even when people were presented with a full set of possible solutions." In short, the metaphor influenced how they saw the problem and what type of solution would fit the problem.*
>
> *Interestingly, while the metaphor influenced their opinions on the issues, they remembered the issue and not the metaphor. The researchers suggested that even when the metaphor is covert, it affected the subject's decisions.*

An effective metaphor uses something simple to help the audience understand something complex.

> *Metaphors take hard-to-understand ideas and compare them to simple-to-understand ideas. Take, for example, the ever famous, "Life is a box of chocolates." It takes something abstract, in this case, love, and compares it to something familiar and understandable, a box of chocolates.*

An effective metaphor is one that is understood by the listeners.

> *A good metaphor works because the audience understands the thing that is being compared. When I told my son, he sounded like a "broken record," he had not idea what I was talking about. One speaker told me that he made a reference to the "one ring to rule them all" to realize that only half of the audience had never seen the Lord of the Rings movies. He said, "I used a metaphor of a movie they had never seen to explain a concept they didn't understand. Any understanding they might have had of the concept was lost because their attention was now focused on trying to understand a movie. "*

An effective metaphor fits the cultural context.

> *In a study, students were given an argument about whether their university should require a senior thesis. Football phrases such as "handoff," "touchdown," and "fumble" were used. The results suggested that those who liked sports found the metaphor more engaging than those who did not like sports. For the non-sports fan, the metaphor had no more effect than the arguments that contained no metaphor.*

An effective metaphor fits the situation.

> *The right metaphor is one that fits the occasion. Metaphors such as "passed on" and "candle dimmed" are used in eulogy speeches. "Beginning a new chapter" and "starting a new journey" are used for graduation speeches. "Retirement is a blank sheet of paper. It is a chance to redesign your life into something new and different." This quote by Patrick Foley is an example of how retirement metaphors work. Other retirement phrases may be "unshackled" or "beginning a new highway."*

Check out this website about international metaphors for death

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The greatest thing by far
is to be a master of metaphor
Aristotle

The big idea here is that it must be the right metaphor for the subject and the audience. Metaphors can help you understand complex ideas and can take everyday ideas and make them more interesting. To some degree, metaphors help you show, not tell. A well-told metaphor can help you create visuals in the mind of your audience. When it comes to this advanced language technique, I like to show, not tell. Let's look at how metaphors have been used in speech, I'll start with examples of metaphors in presidential speeches.

Presidential Metaphors

Presidential speeches

Watch this movie version of the 272-word Gettysburg Address and listen for references to birth and conception.



Let's look at a few more examples of how presidents have used metaphors in their speeches.

- We are now engaged in a great Civil War, testing whether this nation or any nation **so *conceived*** and so dedicated can long endure. Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address
- And you have changed the face of Congress, the Presidency, and the political process itself. Yes, you, my fellow Americans, have **forced the spring.** Now we must do the work the season demands." Bill Clinton Inaugural Address
- You can be the new majority who can lead this nation out of a***long political darkness* –** Democrats, Independents, and Republicans who are tired of the division and distraction that has **clouded** Washington; who know that we can disagree without being disagreeable; who understand that if we mobilize our voices to challenge the money and influence that's stood in our way and challenge ourselves to reach for something better, there's no problem we can't solve – no destiny we cannot fulfill. Barack Obama
- America was targeted for attack because *we're the* **brightest beacon** for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that **light** from shining. George W. Bush, Speech after 911 Attacks.

Persuasive Metaphor

> *Metaphors can be very persuasive. Picking a metaphor that the audience relates to is especially important–most people can relate to pizza so that is the comparison that this TED speaker chose. Al Vernacchio criticizes the use of baseball as a metaphor for sex where there is a winner and loser– scoring, getting to first base, etc. He suggests instead that people think of sex as shared pleasure, discussion, and agreement–he suggests the metaphor of pizza. It's an eight minute, easy to listen to speech, you won't want to miss this.*



Metaphor in Leadership

Simon Lancaster says metaphors are one of the most powerful pieces of political and leadership communication because they move us towards things or make us recoil. He looks at phrases like the “financial storm” and the “dung heap of capitalism” as ways in which the use of words influences our perception of an issue.
(Watch the four-minute clip where he talks about metaphor. It is cued to start at the part where he talks about metaphor.)



If you have time, watch the whole talk to see how he shares his six rhetorical techniques: Three breathless sentences, three repetitive sentences, balancing statements, metaphor, exaggerative statements, rhyming statements

Enduring Metaphors

There are metaphors that seem to stick around through the years. You will see these come up a lot in literature, in songs, and in speeches. These are sometimes referenced as archetypal metaphors. According to communication scholar Michael Osborn, “archetypal metaphors are grounded in prominent features of experience, in objects, actions, or conditions which are inescapably salient in human consciousness.” Because the human experience aspect is so crucial to these metaphors, you tend to find them in some of the most significant speeches in history. The timelessness of these metaphors increases the likelihood that the speech will outlive its author.

Here are a few of the most prominent enduring metaphors. I’ll give you examples of each.

- Light, Dark
- Storm, Sea, Set Sail
- Disease
- Battle, war
- Seasons, Sunrise, Sunset
- Journey, Road

Seasons, Sunrise, Sunset

Winter in our Hearts

At the dawn of spring last year, a single act of terror brought forth the long, **cold winter in our hearts**. The people of Oklahoma City are mourning still.
Al Gore, Oklahoma Bombing Memorial Address

Winds of Change
The wind of change is blowing through this continent. Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.
Harold MacMillian, British Prime Minister

New Birth of Spring

This year a new **birth** will occur. The physical being that will be its **offspring** will be like the **new beginning** which occurs when the **spring** rains wash away the dead leaves of winter and give life to the summer green which, as an expression of the rhythm of the seasons, blankets our earth. That **new birth** will signal the wonder that we have begun to construct a new social

order.
Nelson Mandela, Address to the African National Congress

Light and Dark Metaphor

"If you want a love message to be heard,
it has got to be sent out.
To keep a lamp burning,
we have to keep putting oil in it."
Mother Teresa

Only when it's **dark** enough can you see the stars.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I See the Promised Land Speech

The **light** has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. For the **light** that shone in this country was no ordinary light. The **light** that has **illumined** this country for these many years will **illumine** this country for many more years, and a thousand years later that **light** will still be seen in this country, and the world will see it and it will give solace to innumerable hearts.
Jawaharlal Nehru, Eulogy to Mahatma Gandhi

The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this Island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, **sunlit** uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a **new Dark Age** made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the **lights** of perverted science
Winston Church Hill, The Finest Hour

John Kerry will be sworn in as president, and John Edwards will be sworn in as vice president, and this country will reclaim its promise, and **out of this long political darkness, a brighter day** will come.
Barack Obama, Democratic National Convention

Journey, Travel, Destination

I believe we can give our middle-class relief and provide working families with a **road** to opportunity.

I believe that we have a righteous wind at our backs and that as we stand on the **crossroads of history**, we can make the right choices, and meet the challenges that face us.

Barrack Obama, 2001 Democratic National Convention

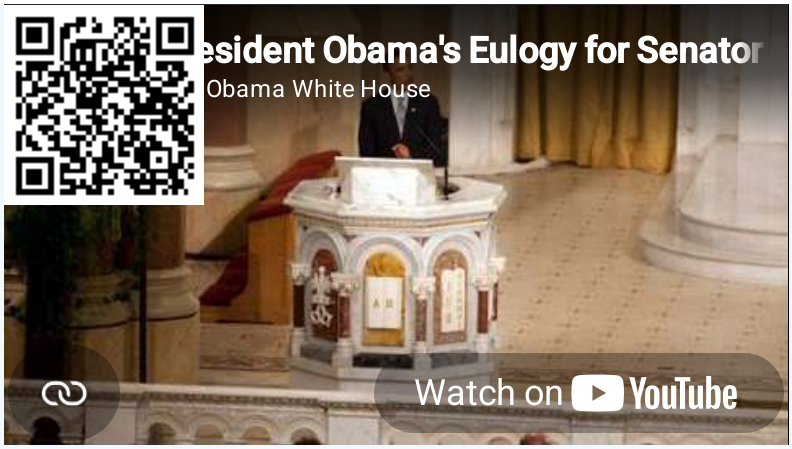
Storm, Sea, Sail

Storm

That **storm** sweeps across the human habitat. Like the spring rains, it seeks to drive away the pestilences that continue to afflict the world of living beings, the universal malignancies which seem to have found a home in our diseased society.
Nelson Mandela, Address to African National Congress

Stormy Sea
It's been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some **stormy seas.** And at the end, together, we are reaching our destination.
Ronald Reagan, Farewell Address

Navigate Choppy Waters
It's been my privilege to launch Baylor upon this exciting journey of Baylor 2012 and lead the university beyond the inertia of the status quo. Now that the **voyage** is well underway, it's time for someone new to **navigate** these sometimes **choppy waters** while continuing to aim for the carefully **charted destination** ahead. President Robert B. Sloan, Baylor University



Sails into the Wind

Ted Kennedy has gone home now, guided by his faith and by the **light** of those he has loved and lost. At last, he is with them once more, leaving those of us who grieve his passing with the memories he gave, the good he did, the dream he kept alive, and a single, enduring image – the image of a man on a boat; white mane tousled; smiling broadly as he **sails** into the wind, ready for what **storms** may come, carrying on toward some new and wondrous place just beyond the horizon. Barack Obama Eulogy for Ted Kennedy.

Battle, War

In an analysis of war metaphors in public discourse, researchers concluded that war metaphors are omnipresent because they draw on a common theme that can be communicated in many different situations. War metaphors work because they express an urgent negative emotion that captures attention and can motivate action.

Here are a few examples of the battle/war metaphor that come up in speech.

- I am battling a headache.
- My friend beat cancer.
- He confronted his worst fear.
- I've got to tackle my taxes tonight.
- He attacked every weak point in my argument.
- His criticisms were right on target.
- I demolished his argument.
- I've never won an argument with him.
- If you use that strategy, he'll wipe you out.
- He shot down all of my arguments.
- Attack a position.
- Physicians battle against death.
- The disease attacks our bodies.
- War on poverty/plastic/drugs/Christmas

I challenge you to spend one day writing down all the war and battle metaphors you hear, I think you will be surprised. Now that we agree that they are ever-present, let's look at a few speech examples.

We are engaged in a great civil war and this campus is one of the many **battlegrounds.** The **war** I'm referring to is cultural rather than military, but something very vital is at stake. Today the **battle** is for your hearts and minds, for the freedom to think the way you choose to follow that moral compass that points to what is right.
Charlton Heston, NRA, Free Thought and Freedom

So, will you join in the **battle** to give every citizen the full equality which God enjoins and the law requires, whatever his belief, or race, or the color of his skin? Will you join in the **battle** to give every citizen an escape from the crushing weight of poverty? Lyndon B. Johnson, The Great Society

Simile

A simile makes a comparison using like or as.

A room without books is like a body without a soul. Cicero

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving. Albert Einstein

A mind is like a parachute. It doesn't work if it is not open. Frank Zappa, Musician

When I joined Apple in 1998, I couldn't believe my luck. I was going to get to spend the rest of my professional life working for Steve Jobs. But **fate comes like a thief in the night.** The loneliness I felt when we lost Steve was proof that there is nothing more eternal, or more powerful, than the impact we have on others. Tim Cook, Ohio State Commencement.

Rain, somebody said, **is like confetti from heaven**. So even the heavens are celebrating this morning, joining the rest of us at this wonderful commencement ceremony." USSC Justice John Roberts, Cardigan Commencement Address

Theme

The use of theme and figurative language separates the amateurs from the pros. Sometimes a theme is referred to as an extended metaphor. Taking your comparisons and weaving them into an overall speech theme takes work, but it elevates your speech. It's time you learn to be one of the pros. I want to demonstrate how to brainstorm a theme and then give you numerous examples to show you how it works in a speech.

Do This Before You Begin to Write Your Speech

> *When using a theme, make a chart of the word and all the synonyms you can think of. After you have exhausted your ideas, then you should look into a thesaurus. Write any words related to the topic. For example, when looking at the word, "foundation," the words "build" and "construct" are related. Finally, make a column of all the opposite words you can think of on your topic.*

Brainstorm the Word Foundation	Words Related to Foundation	Words Opposite of Foundation
• Foundation • Bedrock • Firm footing • Solid Ground • Well-grounded • Understructure • Underpinning • Substructure • Footing • Groundwork • Base • Backbone • Root • Fundamental • ABC's • Genesis	• Support • Build • Construct • Bridge • Build up • Nuts and bolts • Infrastructure • Genesis • Spring • Grounds • Architecture • Fabrication • Develop • Keystone • Pillar • Establish	• Shaky ground • Crumbling foundation • Sand • Groundless • Teardown • Cut out from under • Undermine • Undercut • Destroy • Decrease • Capstone • Climax • Crown • Pinnacle • Culmination

> *A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the* ***foundation*** *of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the* ***foundation of America.*** *These acts shattered steel but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve.*
> *George W. Bush, Speech After 911 Attacks*

When you are developing your speech, you can use a stand-alone metaphor, or you can weave it into a theme. Ceremonial speeches lend themselves to themes. Funerals, tributes, graduation speeches, and toasts, all work well when given a theme. Sometimes that theme is picked because it carries the emotion and sometimes, the theme is picked because it fits the person. Let me give you some examples. In the first example, Tasha Smith a student in my class was giving a tribute to her grandmother who was a gardener. It lends itself to a speech wide theme:

> *Plucking the **weeds** out of my life and out of the lives of others. I realize that it was never about your **flower garden.** It was really about **tending** to the things of the heart. Tasha Smith, Tribute to Grandma.*

For the next example, my student, Drew Oglesby gave a best man toast. Because he and his friend often took road trips together, he used the theme of travel. He told stories of their road trips, of maps, of getting lost, and of the journey. In the wedding toast, he passes the map and the title of "road trip captain" off to the new bride.

> *I trust these hints are helpful the next time you two are **traveling.** Remember, it is not the **road trip** that I will always cherish, but the great guy I was able to share it with. So today, I raise a glass to you two. Mr. and Mrs. ___ because I know you are going to experience far greater **adventures** than I could ever imagine. I am confident you two will love each other with every **wrong turn** in life and you will love each other with **every flat tire** and **detour.** I know you will always be there for each other, and I am positive you (the bride) will make the perfect **road trip captain!***

Filmmaker, Steven Spielberg used the theme of dreams in his 2020 graduation address.

> ***Dreams** are a great test. Because a dream is going to test your resolve, and you're going to know a **dream** from a **pipe dream**. You're going to know a **dream** from a casual brush with something that you got excited about, and then it evaporates. A real **dream** is something that not only hangs on to you but you will hang onto it. And it will power you through every obstacle that people and your environment will throw against you.*
>
> *Because if we're in service of our **dreams** versus our **dreams** being in service to us it becomes something greater. It allows us to be game and it allows us to get over our fear to go forward no matter what obstacles are thrown in our path.*

Former president Ronald Reagan spoke to the nation after the space shuttle challenger crashed. He masterfully used the theme of exploration. Listen carefully as he uses words such as "Pioneer, daring and brave."



President Ronald Reagan used the exploration, pioneer, and frontier theme in his speech about the Challenger crash.

> *For the families of the seven, we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy. But we feel the loss, and we're thinking about you so very much. Your loved ones were* ***daring*** *and* ***brave****, and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says, "Give me a* ***challenge*** *and I'll meet it with joy." They had a hunger to* ***explore*** *the universe and discover its truths. They wished to serve, and they did. They served all of us.*
>
> *We've grown used to wonders in this century. It's hard to dazzle us. But for 25 years the United States space program has been doing just that. We've grown used to the idea of space, and perhaps we forget that we've only just begun. We're still* ***pioneers.*** *They, the members of the Challenger crew, were* ***pioneers.***
>
> *And I want to say something to the school children of America who were watching the live coverage of the shuttle's takeoff. I know it is hard to understand, but sometimes painful things like this happen. It's all part of the process of* ***exploration*** *and* ***discovery****. It's all part of* ***taking a chance*** *and* ***expanding man's horizons****. The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted; it belongs to the* ***brave****. The Challenger crew was* ***pulling us into the future****, and we'll continue to* ***follow*** *them.*
>
> *I've always had great faith in and respect for our space program, and what happened today does nothing to diminish it. We don't hide our space program. We don't keep secrets and cover things up. We do it all up front and in public. That's the way* ***freedom*** *is, and we wouldn't change it for a minute. We'll continue our* ***quest*** *in space. There will be more shuttle flights and more shuttle crews and yes, more volunteers, more civilians, more teachers in space. Nothing ends here; our* ***hopes*** *and our* ***journeys continue.***
>
> *There's a coincidence today. On this day 390 years ago, the great explorer* ***Sir Francis Drake*** *died aboard ship off the coast of Panama. In his lifetime the great* ***frontiers*** *were the oceans, and a historian later said, "He lived by the sea, died on it, and was buried in*

> *it." Well, today we can say of the Challenger crew: Their **dedication** was, like Drake's, **complete.***
>
> *The crew of the space shuttle Challenger honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their **journey** and waved good-bye and "slipped the surly bonds of earth" to "touch the face*

When Using a Theme, Use Consistent Metaphors

When creating a speech with a unifying theme, it is helpful to be consistent with your metaphor. Not only does it help listeners to understand, but it also elevates the theme. Just for fun, look at this mixed metaphor from President Obama.

> *Even though most people agree that I'm being reasonable; that most people agree I'm presenting a fair deal; the fact they don't take it means I should somehow do a Jedi mind-meld with these folks and convince them to do what's right.*
> *Barack Obama messing up Star Wars and Star Trek references while working with Republicans in Congress.*

I think this is likely a mess up rather than a mixed metaphor, it does bring up the point that our minds struggle when given two different metaphors to work with.

? Kenneth Burke's Four Master Tropes

Literary theorist Kenneth Burke popularized a vocabulary that allows us to think about various rhetorical devices so we can make sense of experiences. He believed that by understanding them we could discover and describe "the truth." Let's begin with a definition. What is a trope? It is a way of presenting thought in language. So, Burke wanted to look at how we think based on the language that is being used.

Do you need to know these words to write a good speech? Not at all. This discussion is here to help you understand the theory that you will need in other classes, it is here to give you a vocabulary to impress your friends, but most of all it is here to help you consider the thought behind the language.

1. **Metaphor:** A metaphor substitutes one word for another or one idea for another based on some semblance.
2. **Synecdoche:** Synecdoche substitutes one part for the whole. A coach who says he needs "fresh legs" or "fresh eyes" means that they want the whole person–not just the eyes. To have "boots on the ground" means to have the whole soldier on the ground. When someone is "counting heads" they are counting more than just the head and the Navy a navy officer saying, "All hands on deck" is expecting more than just hands.
3. **Metonymy:** A metonymy elaborates by reducing a concept. It reduces a larger idea to a single word or phrase. When we say, "the White House issues a statement" we don't mean the building itself. "Hollywood is corrupt" is a reference to something larger and "beware of the bottle" is not a warning about a bottle, but about the effect of alcohol.
4. **Irony:** Substitutes a statement for its opposite. What is said contradicts what is meant. When you see that you have a flat tire and say, "That's great." You mean just the opposite.

Kenneth Burk in *Grammar of Motives*

? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- A metaphor is a comparison.
- A simile is a comparison that uses "like" or "and."
- A theme is a type of extended metaphor.
- An effective metaphor: uses emotional phrases properly, uses a simple thing to help the audience understand something complex, is understood by listeners, fits the cultural context

Side Note: I have tried to include speech samples from various cultures, various people groups, and various political leanings. I purposefully chose speeches that represent a variety of topics to show all the different ways these speech devices are used. You may not agree with the point of view of some of the speakers (there are some of them I do not agree with), but that doesn't keep us from respecting their ability to construct a good speech.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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University of Arkansas Student Speech Samples from Tasha Smith, Tribute to Grandma, Drew Oglesby, Roadtrip Captain.

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7.4: Professional Speechwriting- Vivid and Sensory Words Make Your Speech Come Alive



"I want pictures in my mind," I tell my students. "Paint me pictures. Give me word pictures." The more I can see, feel, taste, and smell what is happening in the speech, the more I am engaged. This chapter is about how to give your students a sensory experience when you speak. It is about using vivid and sensory words to engage the audience. I want to "show" you what this looks like by giving you several quality speeches to experience for yourself.

The tongue can paint
what the eyes can't see.
Chinese proverb.

Listen as Will Smith describes jumping out of an airplane. By describing the light colors and what is going on in his mind, we begin to feel his story.



Consider This

Which of these two sentences gets your attention?

The glass shattered into tiny pieces
or
the glass broke

If you are like most people, the sentence that says the "glass shattered into tiny pieces" captured your attention and caused you to visualize the breaking glass. You might have even thought of the last time you broke a glass. It works because it used vivid language.

Listen as Matthew Dicks explains what it is like to be homeless and taken in by a family that has a pet goat that chews on his hair at night and then he continues to tell his story of being robbed at gunpoint. Notice how you can "see" his story in your mind's eye.



In an experiment of investing in the market, researchers tested whether or not language would affect investor judgment. They tested vivid words versus pallid words. In this study, a vivid phrase was "sales *jumped*...analysts viewed this as very *impressive" and the pallid phrase was "* sales *increased*..analysts view this performance as *positive*." The vivid phrase showed stronger results. In other words, how you tell people to invest can impact the outcome. This is just one of many studies that show the impact of vivid language on thoughts and behaviors.

In other research studies, vivid messages created greater desirability for the product, caused people to have more favorable beliefs toward an idea and even influenced judgments. Why do they work? Vivid messages work, in part, because they hold our attention.

For vividness to be effective, it must do all the following:

(a) Emotionally interesting.
(b) Vivid enough to produce sensations or visual images.
(c) Relatable. It must be consistent with the audience's experiences and knowledge.
(d) Related to the central thesis.

At the center of it all, is the audience. The key to making vividness work is audience understanding. For example, A cenote is a pool of water made by a sinkhole that exposes groundwater. This water is usually very clear, very clean, and very cool. Unless you've been to a cenote, you may have no idea what a cenote is and therefore would have no idea when a speaker says the lake water was like the cool, clear, water of a cenote. Instead of evoking images, it only produces confusion. Vividness works when the audience can relate, and they can call up the sensations or visual images.

It is also important that the vivid statements relate to the thesis. Researchers Guadagno, Rhoads, and Sagrins tested why sometimes vividness worked and other times it did not. With testing, they found that vivid words persuaded only when the message was strong and the vivid words regarded the central thesis. When vivid information was introduced that did not relate to the main point, it became a distraction. It seems that vividness enhances persuasion, but only when purposefully used, otherwise it is just a distraction that undermines persuasion. Oh yeah, no surprise here, but vividness can't save a weak argument.

Angelina Jolie Speaks at World Refugee Day

Let's look at a strong speech that uses vividness.

- Stripped of home and country, refugees are buffeted from every ill wind that blows across this planet.
- They guided me into a small dirt house with no roof to keep out the scorching heat, and they dusted off the two old mats that they ate, slept and prayed on. And we sat and we talked, and they were just the loveliest women. And then with a few twigs and a single tin cup of water, they made the last of their tea and insisted on me to enjoy it.
- He had a dusty face, the brightest green eyes I have ever seen but such a sad look but she explained that he's always asking for more food. And it hurts her to say that they have nothing. And she asked if we would consider taking him, would we take her sons so he could eat. And she said it with tears in her eyes with such desperation.
- He sat on the dusty floor; he's been shot on the back and left paralyzed. And he crawled forward to shake my hand, he was no more than fifteen. He had big pretty eyes, big wide sparkling smile, and after all he'd been through, he's full of laughter and love. Later that night I asked whether he'd not been taken to a hospital or at least given a wheelchair and I was told that the boy's entire family had been killed so there was no one to look after him.



Angelina Jolie World Refugee Day transcript

After you read this chapter, revisit this speech. While looking at the transcript, try to make a list of all the vivid and sensory words. Categorize them based on the sense they activate.

Use Sensory Words

One type of vividness comes from sensory words. Research demonstrates that we process those words faster than other words. By sensory words, I'm talking about words that have to do with seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching. For just a moment, imagine you are in Paris and you look up to see the top of the Eiffel tower where the structure touches the sky. Chances are, as you thought about this, your eyes went up. You sensed with your body the words that were being spoken. When you hear or read sensory words that you can relate to, your brain lights up. Your brain lights up in the same area that the actual experience would occur–it is as if you are experiencing the word and not just hearing it. When someone talks about the "sweet, gooey cookie pulled out of the oven, and the sweet aroma fills the air and you look down at the partially melted chocolate chips and are eager to take a bite. " This sentence caused many of you to taste and see the cookie and your brain lights up as if you are eating one. Words that evoke a mental image are the most likely to evoke a sensory image. The more you create "word pictures" that we see in the movie of our minds, the more likely we are to experience it with other senses.

What follows is a chart of the main senses and with examples of the words associated with that sense.

The Power of Sensory Words

Touch Sensory Words

Tactile words describe the texture of how something feels. You can also use them to describe feelings and abstract concepts.

gritty, creepy, slimy, sticky, rough

Examples of touch words:

- *Two minutes into the interview, I knew his **abrasive** personality would be an issue if we hired him.*
- *With a forced smile, I put on the **itchy** Christmas sweater my grandmother bought me.*

Sound Sensory Words

Words related to hearing often describe the sound.

crashing, thumping, piercing, thundering, squeaking

Examples of hearing words:

- *He had a big, **booming** voice.*
- *The sound of **screeching** tires was soon followed by the **deafening** sound of a car horn.*

Sight Sensory Words

Visual words describe the appearance of something. They may indicate color, shape, or appearance.

gloomy, dazzling, bright, foggy, vibrant

Sight word examples:

- *Her **golden** hair looked **disheveled** thanks to the gust of wind.*
- *He was a **towering** presence.*

Taste and Sensory Words

Taste words are interesting because often they are a metaphor for something else. For example, a “bitter rejection” has nothing to do with taste.

zesty, tantalizing, sweet, stale

Examples of taste words:

- *It’s a **bittersweet** situation.*
- *The **scrumptious** jalapeno poppers comforted Karl after his **bitter** rejection.*

Smell Sensory Words

Words related to smell describe — yes, you guessed it — how things smell. Often underutilized, sensory words connected with smell can be very effective.

putrid, flowery, stinky

Examples of smell words:

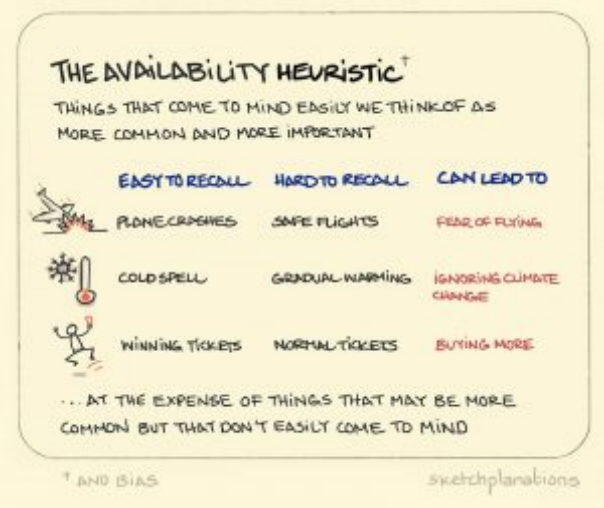
- *The **pungent** smell was unmistakable: someone in this elevator was wearing Axe Body Spray.*
- *No matter the expiration date, it was clear from its **rancid** stench the milk had gone bad.*

Many of these examples are from smartblogger.com and exchangedmarketing.com.

Notice how Brene Brown describes a situation–She has on white slacks and a pink sweater set and how she dropped her coffee on the tile floor, and it splashed on her. She goes on to say that she blamed her husband. She uses it to make a powerful point about blame and accountability and demonstrates for us the power of how vivid descriptions can draw us in and make us want to listen.



Considerations of Using Vividness



The easier that information is for me to think about, remember, and recall, the more that information influences my decisions. Your goal should be to give the information in such a way that people can process that information. The availability heuristic suggests that when making decisions we tend to base those decisions on things that come to our mind easily. If information is recent, vivid, and fits into our thought patterns, it is more available and therefore is more likely to influence our decision-making.

We are likely to think crime is a threat if there has been a recent break-in in our neighborhood. We are more likely to feel afraid if we watch a lot of crime shows or if there has been a featured news story on assaults. Since that information is recent in our mind and the stories were told to us in a vivid manner, we are more likely to pay attention to that information and then bring it to mind when someone suggests taking a self-defense course.

This collection of motivational stories is powerful because they are real and because in each case, they are told with vividness.



In this next video, the founder of charity water, Scott Harrison tells how he got involved in charity water and what his organization does. Watch this documentary and speech video as he talks about drinking from “scummy swamps.” And how he describes how the women are “breaking their backs to get it.” (You can stop watching at the statistics part –but I warn you it may be hard to stop). What is the point here? The point is for you to notice how he infuses speech, powerful visuals, and vivid words to persuade us to act and to help others to get clean water.



If you watched the video, you saw a worm in the water. Some of you likely had a visceral reaction. For many of you, it caused you to sympathize with the cause, for others, it may have gone too far, and you protected yourself by not watching or by making fun of the video.

If you try to take vividness too far, it can backfire on you. Thoughts that are too uncomfortable, might cause people to suppress the information or deny it altogether. This is particularly true when creating messages that instill fear.

The Extended Parallel Process Model looks at how people respond to messages that create fear as a way to drive positive health outcomes. For example, to get someone to wear a condom, a speaker might activate fear and make them afraid that they will get a sexually transmitted disease. A speaker might share statistics, gruesome stories, and even show slides of infections (flashback to high school health class). The challenge is that people have different reactions to fear-invoking situations–they either minimize their fear–"That's not going to happen to me, I could tell if my partner has an infection" or they minimize the danger and wear a condom. So what makes the difference?

A speaker who is trying to use research and analogies that produce fear has to find the "sweet spot" in order to get the audience to react in a way that produces a positive health outcome. If the danger feels like it is too much, the listener will just panic or deny the danger. Describing things in too vivid of detail can often backfire and cause people to worry but do nothing or deny that the situation is real.

The goal should be to use just enough vividness that it is memorable and to direct examples towards the specific audience, so they are relatable. Most importantly, fear messages work best when coupled with a specific plan of action. If people feel like there is a do-able way to get rid of the fear, and they are capable of doing it, they are more likely to react.

To recap. For an audience to be impacted, the message has to be relatable. It should be vivid enough to be memorable and activate the senses–but not so vivid that it overwhelms the main message. Vivid descriptions should support the central message. If you are trying to persuade an audience and you use vividness to produce fear, you need to offer them specific, manageable ways to act. Vividness is one more tool in your public speaking toolbelt. Use it wisely!

Key Takeaways

Remember this!

- For vivid words to work they must be emotionally interesting, vivid enough to produce sensations or visual images, relatable to the audience, and related to the central thesis.
- Vivid messages are easier to remember and can be more persuasive.
- When using fear appeals, make sure you could the fear with an action that the audience is capable of performing.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

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7.5: The Power of Story- The Secret Ingredient to Making Any Speech Memorable



Ideas are not really alive
if they are confined to one person's mind.

Nancy Duarte, Speech coach and author

We love stories because they are engaging, they ignite the imagination, and they have the potential to teach us something. You have likely sat around a campfire or the dinner table telling stories? That is because stories are the primary way we understand the world causing communication scholar Rhetorical scholar Walter Fisher to call us *homo narrans–storytelling humans.* Not only is storytelling important in conversation, but it is also important to speechmaking. It is no surprise then, that when researchers looked at 500 TED Talks, they found of the TED talks that go viral, 65% included personal stories.

Professional speakers, college students, politicians, business leaders, and teachers are all beginning to understand the benefits of telling stories in speeches. Increasingly, business leaders are encouraged to move away from the old model of sharing the vision and the mission to a new model of telling the story of the business. Academic literature points out that teachers who use stories can help students understand and recall information. For years, politicians have been coached to include a story in their speeches. They do it because it works, and it is bound in science.

In short, people don't pay attention to boring things. The story is one way to engage and help ideas come alive. Cognitive psychologist Daniel Willingham says, "The human mind seems exquisitely tuned to understand and remember stories—so much that psychologists sometimes refer to stories as 'psychologically privileged,' meaning that they are treated differently in memory than other types of material."

The goal of public speaking is to plant an idea into the minds of your listeners and the most effective way to accomplish that is through a story. I want to share with you three major principles about storytelling and give you concrete ways to incorporate them into your own storytelling.

1. Stories, when told properly, will ignite both the reason center and the emotion center of your audience's brains making them not only more effective in the moment but also more memorable in long run.
2. Stories activate the little voices in the audience's heads and help them think creatively about problems. This activation encourages audiences to act on the idea as opposed to just being passive listeners.
3. The best way to tell a story is to connect it to a message, offer concrete details, and follow a predetermined plotline.

(Editorial note: One of the advantages of digital textbooks is I can add videos. In my opinion, the best way to learn about how to write a good story is to see numerous examples of good stories in action. I have provided you with numerous videos illustrating how the story is used in business, used in law, used in entertainment, and used in education so that you can see the many applications. This chapter is different from standard textbooks on the subject because it includes more examples than text. You will only get deep learning if you take the time to watch the video clips.)

Tell me the fact and I'll learn.
Tell me the truth and I'll believe.
But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.

–Ancient proverb

Stories Engage the Audience and Make a Point

In under four minutes, Mark Bezos, tells a memorable story. He makes us laugh, allows us to see the situation, and then uses all the emotion and visualization he has created to make a powerful point. A good story draws us in and helps us connect with the person and their idea.



The brain doesn't pay attention to boring things.

– John Medina, author of Brain Rules

Stories Help Ideas Stick

Stories are sticky. A well-told story "sticks" to our brains and attaches to our emotions. A speaker can tell a story in such a way that the audience "sees" the story in their mind's eye and "feels" the emotions of the story. In some situations, an audience may become so involved in the story they "react" by making facial expressions or gasping in surprise. By "seeing the story" and physically reacting to the story, the audience is moved from a passive listener to an active participant.

Think about college teachers you have had who told stories as part of their lectures. Did it help you to listen? Did it help you to learn? Chances are it did. Researchers Kromka and Goodby put it to the test on one hundred ninety-four undergraduate students. One group listened to a lecture that included a lesson with a story, while others just heard the lesson's key points. Students that heard the narrative had more sustained attention to the lecture and they did better on a test of short-term recall. The stories helped them remember the material, but there was an added benefit. The students who heard the narrative liked the teacher more and were more likely to take another course from the instructor in the future.

One of the top TED Talks of all time is *My Stroke of Insigh*t by Jill Bolte Taylor. In this talk, she weaves a story so engaging that the audience is afraid to blink because they might miss what happens next. Watch as she tells you about the "morning of the stroke."



> *On the morning of the stroke, I woke up to a pounding pain behind my left eye. And it was the kind of caustic pain that you get when you bite into ice cream. And it just gripped me — and then it released me. And then it just gripped me — and then it released me. And it was very unusual for me to ever experience any kind of pain, so I thought, "OK, I'll just start my normal routine."*
>
> *So I got up and I jumped onto my cardio glider, which is a full-body, full-exercise machine. And I'm jamming away on this thing, and I'm realizing that my hands look like primitive claws grasping onto the bar. And I thought, "That's very peculiar." And I looked down at my body and I thought, "Whoa, I'm a weird-looking thing." And it was as though my consciousness had shifted away from my normal perception of reality, where I'm the person on the machine having the experience, to some esoteric space where I'm witnessing myself having this experience.*
> *Jill Bolte Taylor*

? Try This

I'd like to illustrate to you the connection between thinking and doing.

- Imagine you are looking at the Eiffel tower.
- Think of two words that start with "b."
- Think of two words that start with "p."
- Imagine that I am cutting a lemon in half and then squeezing the juice in a glass.
- Imagine fingernails running down a chalkboard.

When imagining the Eiffel tower, most people's eyes scan up.

When thinking of the words that begin with "b" and "p", most people will mouth the words.

When imagining the lemon, many people will salivate.

When imagining fingernails on a chalkboard, many people will tighten their facial muscles.

We respond physically because a connection exists between our imagination and our physical response. When we say things in our speech that cause a physical response, the audience becomes actively engaged with our talk.

Stories Help the Audience Become Emotionally Engaged

"Emotions are the condiments of speech," according to speech coach Nancy Duarte. They add spice and flavor to your talk. Emotions such as passion, vulnerability, excitement, and fear are particularly powerful. Researchers at Ohio State have a word for that sense of being carried away into the world of a story. They call it *transportation.* Their research demonstrated that people can get so immersed in a story they hardly notice the world around them. Audiences can be transported by stories as facts and stories as fiction. Narrative transportation theory proposes that when people lose themselves their intentions and attitudes may change to align with the characters in the story. As speakers, our goal should be to help our audience get lost in the story. Sometimes that means telling our own stories, sometimes it means telling the stories of others, and other times telling a hypothetical story.

You've probably heard of an fMRI. It's the machine that measures blood flow to the brain. Scientists used fMRI machines to measure what happened when someone is telling a story and when someone is listening to that story. What they found is exciting. When they compared the speaker's brain to the listener's brains, they noticed the brains were lighting up in the same places. When the speaker described something emotional, the audience was feeling the emotion and the emotional centers of their brains were lighting up. Princeton researcher, Uri Hanson calls this brain synching, "neural coupling."

Consider a study at Emory University that noticed differences in how brains respond to texture words, "she had a rough day" versus non-texture words "she had a bad day." The texture words activated sensory parts of the brain. When telling a story, find creative and tactile descriptions to engage your audience.

Texture Words	Nontexture words
He is a smooth talker	*He is persuasive*
The logic was fuzzy	*The logic was vague*
She is sharp-witted	*She is quick-witted*
She gave a slick performance	*She gave a stellar performance*
She is soft-hearted	*She is kind-hearted*

Imagine you pull up to a flashing red stoplight at an intersection. Seeing it in your mind activates the visual part of your brain. Now, imagine a loved one giving you a pat on the back. Once you imagine it, your tactile center will light up. This is quite powerful when you think about it. When you hear a story, you don't just hear it, but you *feel it*, *visualize* it, and *simulate* it.

Dopamine, oxytocin, and endorphins are what David Philips calls the "angel's cocktail." He suggests speakers should intentionally create stories to activate each of these hormones. By telling a story in which you build suspense, you increase dopamine which increases focus, memory, and motivation. Telling a story in which the audience can empathize with a character increases oxytocin, the bonding hormone which is known to increase generosity and trust. Finally, making people laugh can activate feel-good endorphins which help people feel more relaxed, more creative, and more focused.

Because of neural coupling (our brain waves synching) and transportation (getting lost in a story), the audience members begin to see the world of the person in the story. Because of hormonal changes, they feel their situation and can empathize. A thoughtfully crafted story has the power to help the audience believe in a cause and care about the outcome.



Time and time,
when faced with the task of persuading a group of managers

to get enthusiastic about a major change,
storytelling was the only thing that worked.
Steve Denning, the Leaders Guide to Storytelling

Stories Inspire Action

The conventional view has always been when you speak, you try to get the listeners to pay attention to you. The way you get them to pay attention is to keep the little voice inside their heads quiet. If it stays quiet, then your message will get through. Stephen Denning in *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling* suggests an alternative view. He challenges speakers to tell stories to work in harmony with the voices in people's heads. He says that you don't want your audience to ignore their voice; you want to tell a story in a way that awakens their little voice to tell its own story. You awaken their voice and then you give it something to do. He advocates using stories as springboards to help the audience think about situations so they can begin to mentally solve problems. In this way, you are not speaking to an audience but rather you are inviting the audience to participate with you.

Consider this story told by Jim Ferrell about the local garbage man and how it engages you and creates both mental images and new ideas.



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Stories Help the Ideas Stick in a Way that the Audience Remembers and Understands

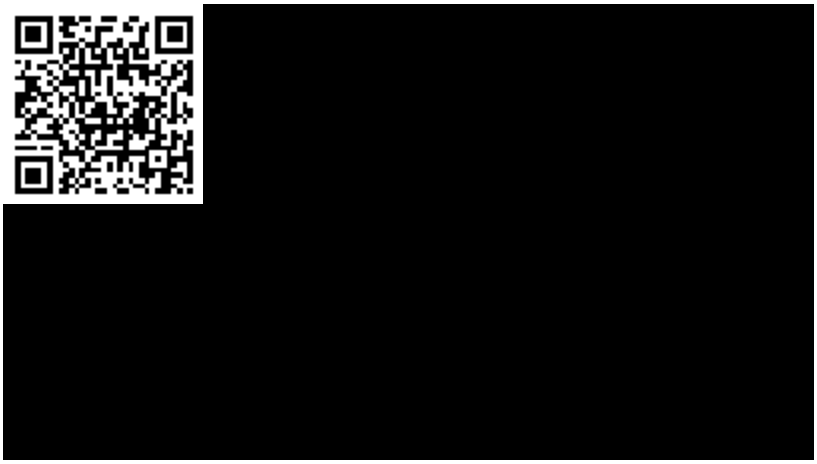
Steven Covey, considered one of the twenty-five most influential people by Time Magazine, teaches on business, leadership, and family. In his books and seminars, he uses stories to help the audience remember his lessons. In this video, *Green and Clean*, he uses a story to help the audience understand servant leadership. As you watch, ask yourself if you will remember this story and the lesson that it offers?



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Stories Help Win Law Cases–Example of a Story Analogy

Gerry Spence is considered one of the winningest lawyers and he credits his ability to tell stories to his success. In this video clip, you can see him in action as he tells this jury the story of the old man and the bird. Imagine yourself as a member of the jury, how might this affect you?



> *"Here's the story of the bird that some of you wanted to hear again. This is one I've used many, many times. It's a nice method by which you can transfer responsibility for your client to the jury. Ladies and gentlemen, I am about to leave you, but before I leave you I'd like to tell you a story about a wise old man and a smart-alec boy. The smart-alec boy had a plan, he wanted to show up the wise old man, to make a fool of him. The smart-alec boy had caught a bird in the forest. He had him in his hands. The little bird's tail was sticking out. The bird is alive in his hands. The plan was this: He would go up to the old man and he would say, "Old man, what do I have in my hands?" The old man would say, "You have a bird, my son." Then the boy would say, "Oldman, is the bird alive or is it dead?" If the old man said that the bird was dead, he would open up his hands and the bird would fly off free, off into the trees, alive, happy. But if the old man said the bird was alive, he would crush it and crush it in his hands and say, "See, old man, the bird is dead." So, he walked up to the old man and said, "Old man, what do I have in my hands?" The old man said, "You have a bird, my son." He said, "Old man, is the bird alive or is it dead?" And the old man said, "The bird is in your hands, my son." Ladies and gentlemen of the jury my client is in yours." Gerry Spence*

Stories Help People Engage With Topics

Alan Alda founded the Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science because he wanted to help scientists learn how to best communicate what they know to a lay audience. In this video clip, he shares his lesson on using stories to draw in an audience.



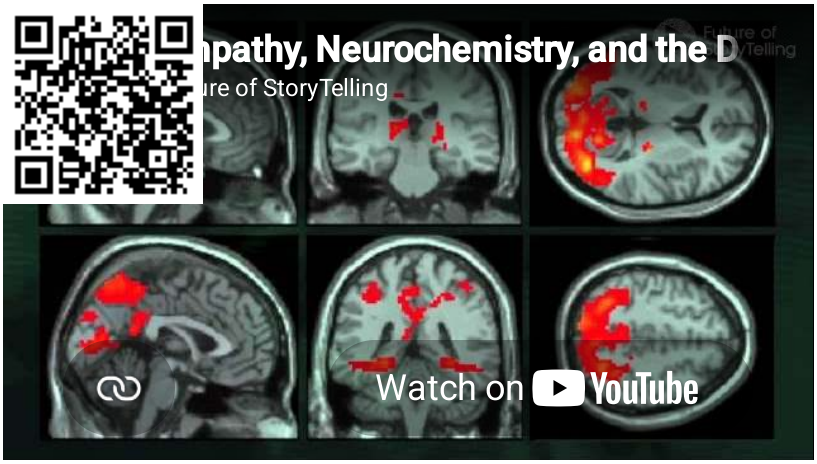
Example from a Corporate Trainer

The Leader Who Withheld Their Story
by Robert “Bob” Kienzle

Our communication training firm was hired to conduct a storytelling workshop for a major client. I quickly realized a major problem: the leader refused to tell a story in the storytelling workshop. We brought the water to the horse and the horse wouldn’t drink. Read the full story of Bob explaining how he taught one of his corporate clients to use storytelling.

Story Changes the Brain Chemistry in Listeners

Paul Zak told audience members a story and then measured the chemicals their bodies released during this story. His conclusion is that story changes brain chemistry and makes individuals more empathetic. In this case, they were more likely to donate money to charity. Watch this video as Zak talks about a universal story structure that includes exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.



Stories Can Have Drawbacks

While storytelling can be used positively, it can have drawbacks. A story can be more memorable than the point. If the audience remembers your story without the purpose of the story, you missed it. In the teacher’s study mentioned before, students had better short-term recall when the teacher told a narrative. The study also reported that listening to stories increased student cognitive load and some students basically used up their “brainpower” to remembering extraneous information instead of the lesson. The lesson here is to make sure the story reinforces a point and to make sure that the point is clear.

Because stories draw people in emotionally, there can be ethical challenges. Is it ethical to tug at an audience’s heartstrings to get them to donate money? How about giving you money? Speakers need to consider the ethical obligation to consider the impact of the story. Stories tap into emotions and create lasting memories. Stories told with the wrong motives can be manipulative.



The Formula for a Good Story

Tension-Release

So now you see the clear advantage in telling a story, let's talk about the formula for a good story. A good story should help the audience see the events in their mind's eye. Your story should play out like a movie in their head. This movie happens because you help them see the setting, characters, and details. To be fully engaged, the audience must *feel* some sort of tension.

The formula is tension and release.

The best stories create tension or conflict and then in some way resolve conflict. In persuasion, a story can create tension that can be released only by acting on the persuasion. Haven defines a story as "A character-based narration of a character's struggles to overcome obstacles and reach an important goal." Notice the focus on struggle and overcoming the struggle. Once you decide on the story that you want to tell, work on helping the audience feel the tension and release.

> *If the point of life is the same as the point of a story, the point of life is character transformation. If I got any comfort as I set out on my first story, it was that in nearly every story, the protagonist is transformed. He's a jerk at the beginning and nice at the end, or a coward at the beginning and brave at the end. If the character doesn't change, the story hasn't happened yet. And if story is derived from real life, if story is just condensed version of life then life itself may be designed to change us so that we evolve from one kind of person to another.*
> *Donald Miller, A Million Miles in a Thousand Years: What I Learned While Editing My Life.*

Dale Carnegie's formula for storytelling includes three parts: Incident, action, and benefit. In the incident phase, the storyteller shares a vivid personal experience relevant to the point. Next, they give the action phrase, and they share the specific action that was taken. Finally, the speaker tells the benefit of taking the action. It still fits the tension-release formula, it just expands it to make sure that the speaker clearly lets the audience know what conclusion they are supposed to draw.

Dave Lieber illustrates this tension and release in his opening story and explains how it works. (You have to watch only the first five minutes to get the point, but I warn you it is hard to stop listening once he has you hooked) According to Dave Lieber, the formula is to meet the character; there is a low part in the story; the hero pushes up against the villain and overcomes.



Good stories represent a change

One part of the tension-release model is how the character changes. Matthew Dick Moth storytelling champion suggests that stories, where no change took place in the storyteller, are just anecdotes, romps, drinking stories, or vacation stories, but they leave no real lasting impression.

> *The story of how you're an amazing person who did an amazing thing and ended up in an amazing place is not a story, it is a recipe for a douchebag. The story of how you are a pathetic person who did a pathetic thing and remained pathetic, is also not a story, it is a recipe for a sadsack. You should represent a change in behavior, a change in heart, a change in attitude. It can be a small change or a very large change. A story cannot simply be a series of remarkable events. You must start out as one version of yourself and end as something new. The change can be infinitesimal. It need not reflect an improvement in yourself or your character, but change must happen.*
> *Matthew Dick.*
>
> *I once was this, but now I am this*
>
> *I once thought this, but now I think this*
>
> *I once felt this, but now I feel this.*
>
> *I once was hopeful, but now I am not*
>
> *I once was lost, but now I am found*
>
> *I once was happy, but now I am sad*
>
> *I once was sad, but now I am happy*
>
> *I once was uncertain, but now I know*
>
> *I once was angry, but now I am grateful*
>
> *I once was afraid, but now I am fearless*
>
> *I once doubted, but now I believe*

Stories Often Follow Common Plots

According to Heath and Heath of *Made to Stick*, there are common story plots. Each of these can be used in most speech types and can be adapted to the tension-release model.

Challenge Plot

- Underdog story
- Rags-to-riches story
- Willpower over adversity

they inspire us to act.

- To take on challenges
- To work harder

Connection Plot

- Focusing on relationships
- Making and developing friendships
- Discovering and growing in love

they inspire us in social ways.

- To love others
- To help others
- To be more tolerant of others

Creativity Plot

- Making a mental breakthrough
- Solving a longstanding puzzle
- Attacking a problem in an innovative way

they inspire us to do something differently.

- To be creative
- To experiment
- To try something new

Elements to a Good Story

For the audience to experience the tension and release, they must be invested in the story. Good stories help the audience see the setting, know the characters, and feel the action.

1. Setting

Think of the setting as a basket to hold your story. If you start with the basket, the audience has a place to hold all the other details you give them. For this reason, many storytellers begin by describing the setting.

2. Characters

When you describe how the characters look or how they felt, we can see them as if we are watching them in a movie. The trick is to tell enough details we can create a mental picture of the character without giving so much information that we get bogged down.

3. Action

When you describe the action that is taking place, the audience begins to *feel* the action. If you describe something sad that happened, the audience will feel the sadness. If you describe something exciting that happened to you or a character, the audience will feel that excitement.

Watch the first two minutes of this video and notice how Matthew starts with the setting and the characters and you can see the events unfold. You can see the action take place in your mind's eye and you become invested in his story.



It's December 23, 1988, I'm 17 years old. I'm coming out of the record store and I have a shopping bag in my hand. I see my friend Pat, he's coming towards me. He sees the bag and he asks me what's in it. I tell him it's a concert t-shirt. It's a Christmas present. It's a surprise Christmas present for our friend Benji, my best friend. Pat looks at me a little funny–and Pat's only 15–but he's already cooler than I will ever be in my entire life. So when he looks at me like this, I've learned to pay attention. Pat tells me that guys don't buy Christmas presents for other guys. He tells me they especially don't buy surprise Christmas presents for other guys. He tells me that he has dated girls for six months and never bought them a single thing so for me to buy Benji a surprise Christmas present is really strange. I'm suddenly feeling very self-conscious about the betta fish in the back seat of my car, the one I bought for Pat like an hour ago at the pet store and the comic books I bought for Coug and the sweatshirt I bought for Tim. I have filled my car with Christmas presents for my friends and I know that Pat is right. It is strange to buy surprise Christmas presents for your friends, but it's been a long time since I've had a good Christmas and I want this year to be different. Through a combination of failing marriage and persistent poverty and a terrible stepfather, the last Christmases have just been a disaster. Matthew Dicks

Flavor Crystals–The Little Extras

As a child, I used to love breath mints that would have blue flecks in them. They were called flavor crystals and they were there as little taste surprises that would enhance the flavor. You can enhance your story with little flavor crystals–little details that make it more interesting. Flavor crystals are those extra details that will impact your audience.

Ruben Gonzalez and Olympic Champion luger is a motivational speaker. As you watch this video clip, notice how he incorporates details in his story so we can see what's happening.



Make Sure Your Story is Relatable

When you pick your story, make sure that you pick themes others can relate to in some way. Watch World Champion Presiyan Vasilev and notice how he uses little examples that everyone can relate to, like how you always get a flat tire when you are dressed up.



Why do flat tires always happen when you're dressed up? Is there something collapsed in your life? Your knowledge may be limited. Your skills may be rusty. But no doubt, you will be changed when you reach out.

? Do This: Keep a Story Log



Notetaking Challenge

Matthew Dicks suggests sitting down every day and asking yourself, "What happened today that is storyworthy?" Keep a notebook and write down a few ideas every day.

The Magical Science of Storytelling TED Speaker David Philips has a similar suggestion. He encourages people to not only write down your stories but you index them based on the emotional reaction you wanting to get.

✔ Theory Application

Literary theorist Kenneth Burke asks us to think of life as a drama where people are actors on a stage. What is their motivation for what they do and what they say? He offered five strategies for viewing life that he called *dramatistic pentad.*

1. **Act:** What happened? What is the action? What is going on? What action; what thoughts?
2. **Scene:** Where is the action happening? What is the background situation?
3. **Agent:** Who is involved in the action? What are their roles?
4. **Agency:** How do the agents act? By what means do they act?
5. **Purpose:** Why do the agents act? What do they want?

How does all this relate to telling a story in a speech? The first thing you can do is to use this list when brainstorming how to fully develop your story. You can also use it as a way to evaluate the completeness of your story. The third way to use it is as a tool to evaluate your audience and how they view life. Why do they do what they do and what do they need to hear in order to be inspired, motivated, or persuaded?

In this TED Talk, *My Invention that Made Peace with Lions*, Richard Turere makes the audience wonder how a problem like lions killing livestock can possibly be solved. Richard draws us into his story and makes us want to know how a young boy could solve such a large problem. Watch this video and see if you can apply each of Burke's Five Items.



? Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- A story is a powerful tool because it engages the audience on not just a logical but also an emotional level.
- Good stories offer a setting, a description of the characters, and add enough detail for the audience to see the story take place in their mind's eye. The action of a story should be told in a way that the audience can see the events unfold in their mind's eye.
- Good stories have tension and release.
- Good stories have characters and situations that demonstrate a change.

Please share your feedback, suggestions, corrections, and ideas

I want to hear from you.

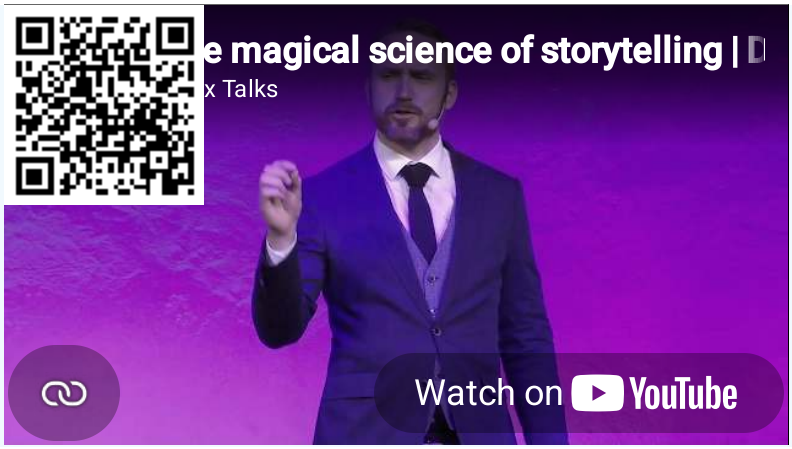
Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

Click here to share your feedback.

Bonus Features

There is so much information on this topic, that I struggled with what to include and what to leave out or put as optional. Here are a few videos that I like to think of as the BONUS FEATURES. In addition, there is a supplemental chapter on story that includes more videos and activities.

✔ The Magical Science of Storytelling



David Philips uses stories to illustrate how storytelling can activate what he calls the angel's cocktail: dopamine, oxytocin, and endorphins.

Angel's Cocktail

- **Dopamine**
  - What it does: Increases focus, motivation, memory.
  - How to do it: Build suspense, launch a cliffhanger, create a cycle of waiting and expecting.
- **Oxytocin**
  - What it does: Increases generosity, trust, bonding.
  - How to do it: Create empathy for whatever character you build.
- **Endorphin**
  - What it does: Increases creativity and focus and people become more relaxed.
  - How to do it: Make people laugh.

? The Structure of Story

Nancy Duarte studied hundreds of speeches and found the same storytelling technique. In her TED talk, she provides this chart. It is a story that is easy to digest, remember and retell.

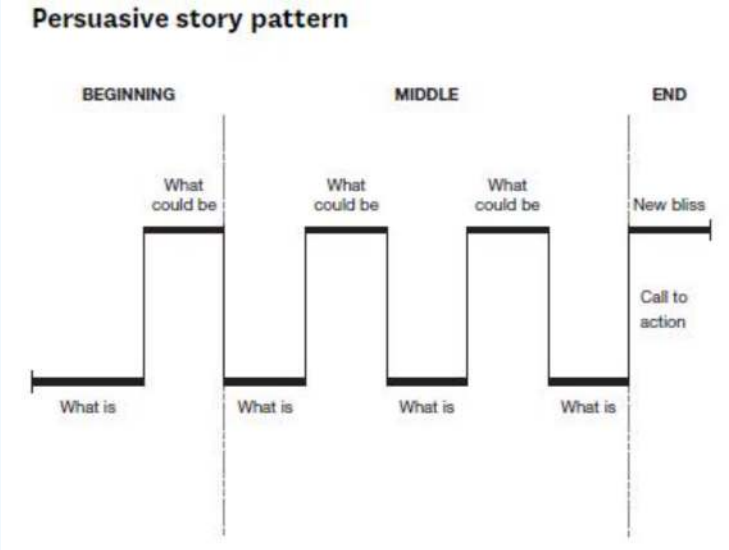


Figure 1: Nancy Duarte-Persuasive Story Pattern



✔ Examples of Storytelling

- Storytelling in a Eulogy: Brook Shield's Eulogy to Michael Jackson:



- Storytelling in Business: Steve Denning Discovered the Power of Leadership:



- Storytelling and Education: Speak Less, Expect More. Matthew Dicks:



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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: My Turn?

8.1: Methods of Speech Delivery
8.2: Types of Outlines
8.3: Using Notes Effectively
8.4: Practicing for Successful Speech Delivery
8.5: Practicing Your Delivery
8.6: Nonverbal Delivery
8.7: Delivery Advice- Do Not Imagine the Audience Naked! Managing Eye Contact, Movement, and Gestures

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8.1: Methods of Speech Delivery

What follows are four methods of delivery that can help you balance between too much and too little formality when giving a speech. Each has its own strengths and weaknesses, but you will most likely want to focus on the extemporaneous approach, since that is probably what your instructor will want from you.

8.1.1 Impromptu Speaking

Impromptu speaking g is the presentation of a short message without advance preparation. You have probably done impromptu speaking many times in informal, conversational settings. Self-introductions in group settings are examples of impromptu speaking: “Hi, my name is Steve, and I’m a volunteer with the Homes for the Brave program.” Another example of impromptu speaking occurs when you answer a question such as, “What did you think of the movie?” Your response has not been preplanned, and you are constructing your arguments and points as you speak. Even worse, you might find yourself going into a meeting and your boss says, “I want you to talk about the last stage of the project. . . “ and you have no warning.

The advantage of this kind of speaking is that it’s spontaneous and responsive in an animated group context. The disadvantage is that the speaker is given little or no time to contemplate the central theme of his or her message. As a result, the message may be disorganized and difficult for listeners to follow.

Here is a step-by-step guide that may be useful if you are called upon to give an impromptu speech in public:

1. Take a moment to collect your thoughts and plan the main point or points you want to make.
2. Thank the person for inviting you to speak. Do not make comments about being unprepared, called upon at the last moment, on the spot, or uneasy. No one wants to hear that and it will embarrass others and yourself.
3. Deliver your message, making your main point as briefly as you can while still covering it adequately and at a pace your listeners can follow.
4. Stay on track. Answer the question or prompt as given; resist the temptation to go elsewhere.
5. 5. If you can, use a structure, using numbers if possible: “Two main reasons . . .” or “Three parts of our plan. . .” or “Two side effects of this drug. . .” Past, present, and future or East Coast, Midwest, and West Coast are common structures.
6. Thank the person again for the opportunity to speak.
7. Stop talking (it is easy to “ramble on” when you don’t have something prepared). If in front of an audience, don’t keep talking as you move back to your seat

Impromptu speeches are generally most successful when they are brief and focus on a single point.

8.1.2 Manuscript Speaking

Manuscript speaking is the word-for-word iteration of a written message. In a manuscript speech, the speaker maintains his or her attention on the printed page except when using visual aids. The advantage to reading from a manuscript is the exact repetition of original words. In some circumstances this can be extremely important. For example, reading a statement about your organization’s legal responsibilities to customers may require that the original words be exact. In reading one word at a time, in order, the only errors would typically be mispronunciation of a word or stumbling over complex sentence structure. A manuscript speech may also be appropriate at a more formal affair (like a funeral), when your speech must be said exactly as written in order to convey the proper emotion or decorum the situation deserves.

However, there are costs involved in manuscript speaking. First, it’s typically an uninteresting way to present. Unless the speaker has rehearsed the reading as a complete performance animated with vocal expression and gestures (well-known authors often do this for book readings), the presentation tends to be dull. Keeping one’s eyes glued to the script prevents eye contact with the audience. For this kind of “straight” manuscript speech to hold audience attention, the audience must be already interested in the message and speaker before the delivery begins.

It is worth noting that professional speakers, actors, news reporters, and politicians often read from an autocue device, such as a TelePrompTer, especially when appearing on television, where eye contact with the camera is crucial. With practice, a speaker can achieve a conversational tone and give the impression of speaking extemporaneously and maintaining eye contact while using an autocue device. However, success in this medium depends on two factors: (1) the speaker is already an accomplished public speaker who has learned to use a conversational tone while delivering a prepared script, and (2) the speech is written in a style that sounds conversational and in spoken rather than written, edited English, for example, with shorter sentences and clearer transitions..

For the purposes of your public speaking class, you will not be encouraged to read your speech. Instead, you will be asked to give an extemporaneous presentation.

8.1.3 Extemporaneous Speaking

Extemporaneous speaking is the presentation of a carefully planned and rehearsed speech, spoken in a conversational manner using brief notes. By using notes rather than a full manuscript, the extemporaneous speaker can establish and maintain eye contact with the audience and assess how well they are understanding the speech as it progresses. And since you will be graded (to some degree) on establishing and maintaining eye contact with your audience, extemporaneous speaking can be extremely beneficial in that regard. Without all the words on the page to read, you have little choice but to look up and make eye contact with your audience. In some cases, your instructor will require you to prepare strong preparation and speaking (notes) outlines as a foundation for your speech; this topic is addressed in Chapter 6.

Speaking extemporaneously has some advantages. It promotes the likelihood that you, the speaker, will be perceived as knowledgeable and credible since you know the speech well enough that you don't need to read it. In addition, your audience is likely to pay better attention to the message because it is engaging both verbally and nonverbally. It also allows flexibility; you are working from the strong foundation of an outline, but if you need to delete, add, or rephrase something at the last minute or to adapt to your audience, you can do so. The outline also helps you be aware of main ideas vs. subordinate ones.

The disadvantage of extemporaneous speaking is that it in some cases it does not allow for the verbal and the nonverbal preparation that are almost always required for a good speech. Adequate preparation cannot be achieved the day before you're scheduled to speak, so be aware that if you want to present a credibly delivered speech, you will need to practice many times. Because extemporaneous speaking is the style used in the great majority of public speaking situations, most of the information in the subsequent sections of this chapter is targeted toward this kind of speaking.

8.1.4 Memorized Speaking

Memorized speaking is the rote recitation of a written message that the speaker has committed to memory. Actors, of course, recite from memory whenever they perform from a script. When it comes to speeches, memorization can be useful when the message needs to be exact and the speaker doesn't want to be confined by notes.

The advantage to memorization is that it enables the speaker to maintain eye contact with the audience throughout the speech. Being free of notes means that you can move freely around the stage and use your hands to make gestures. If your speech uses visual aids, this freedom is even more of an advantage.

However, there are some real and potential costs. First, unless you also plan and memorize every vocal cue (the subtle but meaningful variations in speech delivery, which can include the use of pitch, tone, volume, and pace), gesture, and facial expression, your presentation will be flat and uninteresting, and even the most fascinating topic will suffer. You might end up speaking in a monotone or a sing-song repetitive delivery pattern. You might also present your speech in a rapid "machine-gun" style that fails to emphasize the most important points.

Second, if you lose your place and start trying to ad lib, the contrast in your style of delivery will alert your audience that something is wrong. If you go completely blank during the presentation, it will be extremely difficult to find your place and keep going. Obviously, memorizing a typical seven-minute classroom speech takes a great deal of time and effort, and if you aren't used to memorizing, it is very difficult to pull off. Realistically, you probably will not have the time necessary to give a completely memorized speech. However, if you practice adequately, you will approach the feeling of memorized while still being extemporaneous.

As we said earlier, for the purposes of this class you will use extemporaneous speaking. Many professional speakers who are paid to make speeches use this approach because, while they may largely know what they want to say, they usually make changes and adjustments based on the audience or event. This approach also incorporates most of the benefits of memorized speaking (knowing what you want to say; being very thoroughly rehearsed) and manuscript speaking (having some words in front of you to refer to) without the inherent pitfalls those approaches bring with them.

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8.2: Types of Outlines

Learning Objectives

1. Define three types of outlines: working outline, full-sentence outline, and speaking outline.
2. Identify the advantages of using notecards to present your speaking outline.

When we discuss outlining, we are actually focusing on a series of outlines instead of a single one. Outlines are designed to evolve throughout your speech preparation process, so this section will discuss how you progress from a working outline to a full-sentence outline and, finally, a speaking outline. We will also discuss how using notecards for your speaking outline can be helpful to you as a speaker.



Figure 8.2.1: Blank index card (CC BY 2.0; Dave Gray via Flicker)

8.2.1 Working Outline

A working outline is an outline you use for developing your speech. It undergoes many changes on its way to completion. This is the outline where you lay out the basic structure of your speech. You must have a general and specific purpose; an introduction, including a grabber; and a concrete, specific thesis statement and preview. You also need three main points, a conclusion, and a list of references.

One strategy for beginning your working outline is to begin by typing in your labels for each of the elements. Later you can fill in the content.

When you look ahead to the full-sentence outline, you will notice that each of the three main points moves from the general to the particular. Specifically, each main point is a claim, followed by particular information that supports that claim so that the audience will perceive its validity. For example, for a speech about coal mining safety, your first main point might focus on the idea that coal mining is a hazardous occupation. You might begin by making a very general claim, such as "Coal mining is one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States," and then become more specific by providing statistics, authoritative quotations, or examples to support your primary claim.

A working outline allows you to work out the kinks in your message. For instance, let's say you've made the claim that coal mining is a hazardous occupation but you cannot find authoritative evidence as support. Now you must reexamine that main point to assess its validity. You might have to change that main point in order to be able to support it. If you do so, however, you must make sure the new main point is a logical part of the thesis statement–three main points–conclusion sequence.

The working outline shouldn't be thought of a "rough copy," but as a careful step in the development of your message. It will take time to develop. Here is an example of a working outline:

Working Outline

Name: Anomaly May McGillicuddy

- *Topic*: Smart dust

- *General Purpose*: To inform
- *Specific Purpose*: To inform a group of science students about the potential of smart dust
- *Main Ideas*:
  1. Smart dust is an assembly of microcomputers.
  2. Smart dust can be used by the military—no, no—smart dust could be an enormous asset in covert military operations. (That's better because it is more clear and precise.)
  3. Smart dust could also have applications to daily life.
- *Introduction*: **(Grabber)** (fill in later)
- **(Thesis Statement)** Thus far, researchers hypothesize that smart dust could be used for everything from tracking patients in hospitals to early warnings of natural disasters and defending against bioterrorism.
- **(Preview)** Today, I'm going to explain what smart dust is and the various applications smart dust has in the near future. To help us understand the small of it all, we will first examine what smart dust is and how it works. We will then examine some military applications of smart dust. And we will end by discussing some nonmilitary applications of smart dust.
- **(Transition)** (fill in later)
- *Main Point I*: Dr. Kris Pister, a professor in the robotics lab at the University of California at Berkeley, originally conceived the idea of smart dust in 1998 as part of a project funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).
  1. (supporting point)
  2. (supporting point)
- **(Transition)** (fill in later)
- *Main Point II*: Because smart dust was originally conceptualized under a grant from DARPA, military uses of smart dust have been widely theorized and examined.
  1. (supporting point)
  2. (supporting point)
- **(Transition)** (fill in later)
- *Main Point III*: According to the smart dust project website, smart dust could quickly become a common part of our daily lives.
  1. (supporting point)
  2. (supporting point)
- **(Transition)** (fill in later)
- *Conclusion*: (Bring your message "full circle" and create a psychologically satisfying closure.)

This stage of preparation turns out to be a good place to go back and examine whether all the main points are directly related to the thesis statement and to each other. If so, your message has a strong potential for unity of focus. But if the relationship of one of the main points is weak, this is the time to strengthen it. It will be more difficult later for two reasons: first, the sheer amount of text on your pages will make the visual task more difficult, and second, it becomes increasingly difficult to change things in which you have a large investment in time and thought.

You can see that this working outline can lay a strong foundation for the rest of your message. Its organization is visually apparent. Once you are confident in the internal unity of your basic message, you can begin filling in the supporting points in descending detail—that is, from the general (main points) to the particular (supporting points) and then to greater detail. The outline makes it visually apparent where information fits. You only need to assess your supporting points to be sure they're authoritative and directly relevant to the main points they should support.

Sometimes transitions seem troublesome, and that's not surprising. We often omit them when we have informal conversations. Our conversation partners understand what we mean because of our gestures and vocal strategies. However, others might not understand what we mean, but think they do, and so we might never know whether they understood us. Even when we include transitions, we don't generally identify them as transitions. In a speech, however, we need to use effective transitions as a gateway from one main point to the next. The listener needs to know when a speaker is moving from one main point to the next.

In the next type of outline, the full-sentence outline, take a look at the transitions and see how they make the listener aware of the shifting focus to the next main point.

8.2.2 Full-Sentence Outline

Your full-sentence outline should contain full sentences only. There are several reasons why this kind of outline is important. First, you have a full plan of everything you intend to say to your audience, so that you will not have to struggle with wordings or examples. Second, you have a clear idea of how much time it will take to present your speech. Third, it contributes a fundamental ingredient of good preparation, part of your ethical responsibility to your audience. This is how a full-sentence outline looks:

Note

Name: Anomaly May McGillicuddy

- *Topic*: Smart dust
- *General Purpose*: To inform
- *Specific Purpose*: To inform a group of science students about the potential of smart dust.
- *Main Ideas*:
    1. Smart dust is an assembly of microcomputers.
    2. Smart dust could be an enormous asset in covert military operations.
    3. Smart dust could also have applications to daily life.
- *Introduction*: **(Grabber)** In 2002, famed science fiction writer, Michael Crichton, released his book *Prey*, which was about a swarm of nanomachines that were feeding off living tissue. The nanomachines were solar powered, self-sufficient, and intelligent. Most disturbingly, the nanomachines could work together as a swarm as it took over and killed its prey in its need for new resources. The technology for this level of sophistication in nanotechnology is surprisingly more science fact than science fiction. In 2000, three professors of electrical engineering and computer Science at the University of California at Berkeley, Kahn, Katz, and Pister, hypothesized in the *Journal of Communications and Networks* that wireless networks of tiny microelectromechanical sensors, or MEMS; robots; or devices could detect phenomena including light, temperature, or vibration. By 2004, *Fortune Magazine* listed "smart dust" as the first in their "Top 10 Tech Trends to Bet On."
- **(Thesis Statement)** Thus far researchers hypothesized that smart dust could be used for everything from tracking patients in hospitals to early warnings of natural disasters and as a defense against bioterrorism.
- **(Preview)** Today, I'm going to explain what smart dust is and the various applications smart dust has in the near future. To help us understand the small of it all, we will first examine what smart dust is and how it works. We will then examine some military applications of smart dust. And we will end by discussing some nonmilitary applications of smart dust.
- **(Transition)** To help us understand smart dust, we will begin by first examining what smart dust is.
- *Main Point I*: Dr. Kris Pister, a professor in the robotics lab at the University of California at Berkeley, originally conceived the idea of smart dust in 1998 as part of a project funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).
    1. According to a 2001 article written by Bret Warneke, Matt Last, Brian Liebowitz, and Kris Pister titled "Smart Dust: Communicating with a Cubic-Millimeter Computer" published in *Computer*, Pister's goal was to build a device that contained a built-in sensor, communication device, and a small computer that could be integrated into a cubic millimeter package.
    2. For comparison purposes, Doug Steel, in a 2005 white paper titled "Smart Dust" written for C. T. Bauer College of Business at the University of Houston, noted that a single grain of rice has a volume of five cubic millimeters.
        1. Each individual piece of dust, called a mote, would then have the ability to interact with other motes and supercomputers.
        2. As Steve Lohr wrote in the January 30, 2010, edition of the *New York Times* in an article titled "Smart Dust? Not Quite, But We're Getting There," smart dust could eventually consist of "Tiny digital sensors, strewn around the glove, gathering all sorts of information and communicating with powerful computer networks to monitor, measure, and understand the physical world in new ways."
- **(Transition)** Now that we've examined what smart dust is, let's switch gears and talk about some of the military applications for smart dust.
- *Main Point II*: Because smart dust was originally conceptualized under a grant from DARPA, military uses of smart dust have been widely theorized and examined.
    1. According to the smart dust website, smart dust could eventually be used for "battlefield surveillance, treaty monitoring, transportation monitoring, scud hunting" and other clear military applications.
        1. Probably the number one benefit of smart dust in the military environment is its surveillance abilities.

1. Major Scott Dickson, in a Blue Horizons paper written for the US Air Force Center for Strategy and Technology's Air War College, sees smart dust as helping the military in battlespace awareness, homeland security, and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) identification.
2. Furthermore, Major Dickson also believes it may be possible to create smart dust that has the ability to defeat communications jamming equipment created by foreign governments, which could help the US military not only communicate among itself, but could also increase communications with civilians in military combat zones.

2. According to a 2010 article written by Jessica Griggs in new *Scientist*, one of the first benefits of smart dust could be an early defense warning for space storms and other debris that could be catastrophic.

- **(Transition)** Now that we've explored some of the military benefits of smart dust, let's switch gears and see how smart dust may be able to have an impact on our daily lives.
- *Main Point III*: According to the smart dust project website, smart dust could quickly become a common part of our daily lives.

1. Everything from pasting smart dust particles to our finger tips to create a virtual computer keyboard to inventory control to product quality control have been discussed as possible applications for smart dust.
    1. Steve Lohr, in his 2010 *New York Times* article, wrote, "The applications for sensor-based computing, experts say, include buildings that manage their own energy use, bridges that sense motion and metal fatigue to tell engineers they need repairs, cars that track traffic patterns and report potholes, and fruit and vegetable shipments that tell grocers when they ripen and begin to spoil."
2. Medically, according to the smart dust website, smart dust could help disabled individuals interface with computers.
    1. Theoretically, we could all be injected with smart dust, which relays information to our physicians and detects adverse changes to our body instantly.
    2. Smart dust could detect the microscopic formations of center cells or alert us when we've been infected by a bacterium or virus, which could speed up treatment and prolong all of our lives.

- **(Transition)** Today, we've explored what smart dust is, how smart dust could be utilized by the US military, and how smart dust could impact all of our lives in the near future.
- *Conclusion*: While smart dust is quickly transferring from science fiction to science fact, experts agree that the full potential of smart dust will probably not occur until 2025. Smart dust is definitely in our near future, but swarms of smart dust eating people as was depicted in Michael Crichton's 2002 novel, *Prey*, isn't reality. However, as with any technological advance, there are definite ethical considerations and worries related to smart dust. Even Dr. Kris Pister's smart dust project website admits that as smart dust becomes more readily available, one of the trade-offs will be privacy. Pister responds to these critiques by saying, "As an engineer, or a scientist, or a hair stylist, everyone needs to evaluate what they do in terms of its positive and negative effect. If I thought that the negatives of working on this project were greater than or even comparable to the positives, I wouldn't be working on it. As it turns out, I think that the potential benefits of this technology far outweigh the risks to personal privacy."

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When you prepare your full-sentence outline carefully, it may take as much as 1 ½ hours to complete the first part of the outline from your name at the top through the introduction. When you've completed that part, take a break and do something else. When you return to the outline, you should be able to complete your draft in another 1 ½ hours. After that, you only need to do a detailed

check for completeness, accuracy, relevance, balance, omitted words, and consistency. If you find errors, instead of being frustrated, be glad you can catch these errors *before* you're standing up in front of your audience.

You will notice that the various parts of your speech, for instance, the transition and main points, are labeled. There are compelling reasons for these labels. First, as you develop your message, you will sometimes find it necessary to go back and look at your wording in another part of the outline. Your labels help you find particular passages easily. Second, the labels work as a checklist so that you can make sure you've included everything you intended to. Third, it helps you prepare your speaking outline.

You'll also notice the full references at the end of the outline. They match the citations within the outline. Sometimes while preparing a speech, a speaker finds it important to go back to an original source to be sure the message will be accurate. If you type in your references as you develop your speech rather than afterward, they will be a convenience to you if they are complete and accurate.

Don't think of the references as busywork or drudgery. Although they're more time consuming than text, they are good practice for the more advanced academic work you will do in the immediate future.

8.2.3 Speaking Outline

Your full-sentence outline prepares you to present a clear and well-organized message, but your speaking outline will include far less detail. Whenever possible, you will use key words and phrases, but in some instances, an extended quotation will need to be fully written on your speaking outline.

Resist the temptation to use your full-sentence outline as your speaking outline. The temptation is real for at least two reasons. First, once you feel that you've carefully crafted every sequence of words in your speech, you might not want to sacrifice quality when you shift to vocal presentation. Second, if you feel anxiety about how well you will do in front of an audience, you may want to use your full-sentence outline as a "safety net." In our experience, however, if you have your full-sentence outline with you, you will end up reading, rather than speaking, to your audience. The subject of reading to your audience will be taken up in Chapter 14 "Delivering the Speech" on speech delivery. For now, it is enough to know you shouldn't read, but instead, use carefully prepared notecards.

Your speech has five main components: introduction, main point one, main point two, main point three, and the conclusion. Therefore we strongly recommend the use of five notecards: one for each of those five components. There are extenuating circumstances that might call for additional cards, but begin with five cards only.

How will five notecards suffice in helping you produce a complete, rich delivery? Why can't you use the full-sentence outline you labored so hard to write? First, the presence of your full-sentence outline will make it appear that you don't know the content of your speech. Second, the temptation to read the speech directly from the full-sentence outline is nearly overwhelming; even if you resist this temptation, you will find yourself struggling to remember the words on the page rather than speaking extemporaneously. Third, sheets of paper are noisier and more awkward than cards. Fourth, it's easier to lose your place using the full outline. Finally, cards just look better. Carefully prepared cards, together with practice, will help you more than you might think.

Plan to use five cards. Use 4 × 6 cards. The smaller 3 × 5 cards are too small to provide space for a visually organized set of notes. With five cards, you will have one card for the introduction, one card for each of the three main points, and one card for the conclusion. You should number your cards and write on one side only. Numbering is helpful if you happen to drop your cards, and writing on only one side means that the audience is not distracted by your handwritten notes and reminders to yourself while you are speaking. Each card should contain key words and key phrases but not full sentences.

Some speeches will include direct or extended quotations from expert sources. Some of these quotations might be highly technical or difficult to memorize for other reasons, but they must be presented correctly. This is a circumstance in which you could include an extra card in the sequence of notecards. This is the one time you may read fully from a card. If your quotation is important and the exact wording is crucial, your audience will understand that.

How will notecards be sufficient? When they are carefully written, your practice will reveal that they will work. If, during practice, you find that one of your cards doesn't work well enough, you can rewrite that card.

Using a set of carefully prepared, sparingly worded cards will help you resist the temptation to rely on overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides to get you through the presentation. Although they will never provide the exact word sequence of your full-sentence outline, they should keep you organized during the speech.

The "trick" to selecting the phrases and quotations for your cards is to identify the labels that will trigger a recall sequence. For instance, if the phrase "more science fact" brings to mind the connection to science fiction and the differences between the real developments and the fictive events of Crichton's novel *Prey*, that phrase on your card will support you through a fairly extended part of your introduction.

You must discover what works for you and then select those words that tend to jog your recall. Having identified what works, make a preliminary set of no more than five cards written on one side only, and practice with them. Revise and refine them as you would an outline.

The following is a hypothetical set of cards for the smart dust speech:

Card 1.

- >*Introduction*: 2002, *Prey*, swarm nanomachines feed on living tissue.
- >Kahn, Katz, and Pister, U C Berkeley engineering and computer sci. profs. hyp.
- >Microelectromechanical (MEMS) devices could detect light, temp, or vib.
- >*Thesis Statement*: Researchers hyp that s.d. could track patients, warn of natural disaster, act as defense against bioterrorism.
- >*Prev*.: What smart dust is and how it works, military aps, nonmilitary aps.
- >*Transition*: To help understand, first, what smart dust is.

Card 2.

- >I. Dr. Kris Pister, prof robotics lab UC Berkeley conceived the idea in 1998 in a proj. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA).
    1. 2001 article by Bret Warneke et al titled "Smart Dust: Communicating with a Cubic-Millimeter Computer" publ. in *Computer*, Pister wanted sensors, comm. devices, and computer in a cubic millimeter package.
    2. Doug Steel of CT Bauer College of Bus at Houston noted grain of rice = 5 cm.
        1. Each mote could interact w/ others.
        2. (see extended quotation, next card)

Card 3.

- >*Quotation*: Steve Lohr, NYT Jan 30 2005, "Smart Dust? Not Quite, but We're Getting There." Smart dust could eventually consist of "Tiny digital sensors, strewn around the globe, gathering all sorts of information and communicating with powerful computer networks to monitor, measure, and understand the physical world in new ways."

Card 4.

- >II. Orig conceptualized under DARPA, military uses theor. and examined.
    1. Smart Dust website, battlefield surveill., treaty monitor., transp. monitor., + scud hunting.
        1. benefit, surveill.
            1. Maj. Scott Dickson, Blue Horizons Paper for Ctr for Strat and Tech for USAF air war college, sees s.d. as help for battlespace awareness, homeland security, and WMD ID.
            2. could also defeat comm. jamming equipt by communicating among itself and w/ civilians in combat zones.
    2. 2010 article Jessica Griggs *New Scientist*, early defense, storms and debris.
- >*Transition*: Switch gears to daily lives.

Card 5.

- >III. s.d. project website: s.d. could become common in daily life.
    1. Pasting particles for virtual computer keyboard to inventory control poss.
        1. Steve Lohr, 2010, NYT, "The applications for sensor-based computing, experts say, include buildings that manage their own energy use, bridges that sense motion and metal fatigue to tell engineers they need repairs, cars that track traffic patterns and report potholes, and fruit and vegetable shipments that tell grocers when they ripen and begin to spoil."

2. Medically, accdng to SD project website, help disabled.
    1. interface w/ computers
    2. injected, cd. relay info to docs and detect body changes instantly
        1. cancer cells, bacteria or virus, speed up treatment, and so on.
- >*Transition*: We expl. What SD is, how SD cd be used military, and how SD cd impact our lives.

Card 6.

- >*Conclusion*: Transf fiction to fact, experts agree potential 2025. Michael Crichton's Prey isn't reality, but in developing SD as fact, there are ethical considerations. Pister: privacy.
- >Dr. Kris Pister: "As an engineer, or a scientist, or a hair stylist, everyone needs to evaluate what they do in terms of its positive and negative effect. If I thought that the negatives of working on this project were larger or even comparable to the positives, I wouldn't be working on it. As it turns out, I think that the potential benefits of this technology far far outweigh the risks to personal privacy."

Using a set of cards similar to this could help you get through an impressive set of specialized information. But what if you lose your place during a speech? With a set of cards, it will take less time to refind it than with a full-sentence outline. You will not be rustling sheets of paper, and because your cards are written on one side only, you can keep them in order without flipping them back and forth to check both sides.

What if you go blank? Take a few seconds to recall what you've said and how it leads to your next points. There may be several seconds of silence in the middle of your speech, and it may seem like minutes to you, but you can regain your footing most easily with a small set of well-prepared cards.

Under no circumstances should you ever attempt to put your entire speech on cards in little tiny writing. You will end up reading a sequence of words to your audience instead of telling them your message.

8.2.3.1 Key Takeaways

- Working outlines help you with speech logic, development, and planning.
- The full-sentence outline develops the full detail of the message.
- The speaking outline helps you stay organized in front of the audience without reading to them.
- Using notecards for your speaking outline helps with delivery and makes it easier to find information if you lose your place or draw a blank.

8.2.4 Exercises

1. With respect to your speech topic, what words need to be defined?
2. Define what you mean by the terms you will use.
3. How does your definition compare with those of experts?

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8.3: Using Notes Effectively

Learning Objectives

1. Know how to use notecards to free you from your manuscript.
2. Know how to use notecards to stay organized while you make audience contact.
3. Understand how to develop effective notecards for a speech.

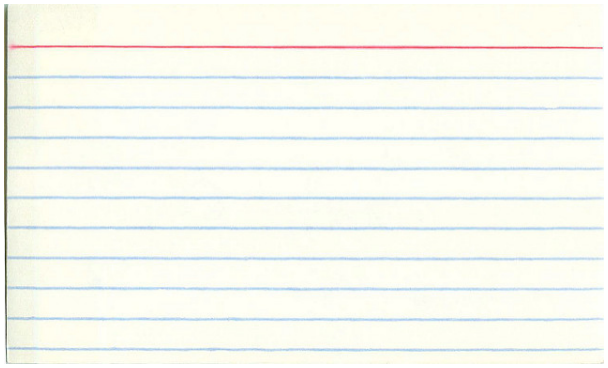


Figure 8.3.1: Blank index card! (CC BY 2.0; Dave Gray via Blank index card!)

It's a great deal of work to prepare a good speech, and you want to present it effectively so that your audience will benefit as much as possible. We've already said that extemporaneous speaking provides the best opportunity for speaker-audience contact and that speaking extemporaneously means you do not have your full manuscript or outline with you. Instead, you will use notecards. The cards should have notes, not the full text of your speech. This can also be done with an autocue device—the TelePrompTer does not have to provide a full word-for-word script.

We have developed a system for creating highly effective notecards. Our system has been used effectively both in public speaking courses and in freshman composition courses. Surprisingly, the system consists of only five cards. For many people, this does not sound like nearly enough cards. We would make the case that you can do a good job with five cards, and we have seen many students do just that.

8.3.1 The Purpose of Speaker Notes

Using notes adds to your credibility as a speaker. If you depend on a full manuscript to get through your delivery, your listeners might believe you don't know the content of your speech. Second, the temptation to read the entire speech directly from a manuscript, even if you're only carrying it as a safety net, is nearly overwhelming. Third, well-prepared cards are more gracefully handled than sheets of paper, and they don't rattle if your hands tremble from nervousness. Finally, cards look better than sheets of paper. Five carefully prepared cards, together with practice, will help you more than you might think.

8.3.2 Key Tips for Using Notes

Plan on using just five cards, written on one side only. Get 4 × 6 cards. Use one card for the introduction, one card for each of your three main points, and one card for the conclusion.

8.3.3 Include Only Key Words

Your cards should include key words and phrases, not full sentences. The words and phrases should be arranged in order so that you can stay organized and avoid forgetting important points.

One exception to the key word guideline would be an extended or highly technical quotation from an authoritative source. If it is critically important to present an exact quotation, you may add one additional card that will contain the quotation together with its citation. If you plan to use such a quotation, make sure it has central importance in your speech.

8.3.4 Hold Your Notes Naturally

Notes are a normal part of giving a presentation. You do not need to conceal them from the audience; in fact, trying to hide and use your notes at the same time tends to be very awkward and distracting. Some instructors recommend that you avoid gesturing with

your notes on the grounds that nervous shaking is more noticeable if you are holding your notes in your hand. If this is the case for you, practice gesturing with your free hand, or put your cards down if you need to use both hands. Other instructors recommend treating notecards as a natural extension of your hand, as they believe it is distracting to put your notes down and pick them up again. Whichever "rule" you follow, remember that the goal is for your use of notecards to contribute to your overall appearance of confidence and credibility.

8.3.5 Prepare Notecards to Trigger Recall

The "trick" to selecting the words to write on your cards is to identify the keywords that will trigger a recall sequence. For instance, if the word "Fukushima" brings to mind the nuclear power plant meltdown that followed the earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan in 2011, then that one word on your notecard should propel you through a sizable sequence of points and details. Once you have delivered that material, perhaps you'll glance at your card again to remind yourself of the key word or phrase that comes next.

You must discover what works for you and then select those words that tend to jog your recall. Having identified what works, make a preliminary set of five cards, written on one side only. Number the cards, and practice with them. Revise and refine them the way you would an outline. If you must, rewrite an entire card to make it work better, and test it the next time you practice.

Always practice with your notecards—and with any visual aids you plan to use. Practicing is also the best way to find out what kinds of things might go wrong with your notes in the presented speech and what steps you should take to make things go smoothly.

8.3.6 Write in Large Letters

You should be able to read something on your card by glancing, not peering at it. A few key words and phrases, written in large, bold print with plenty of white space between them, will help you. If the lighting in your speech location is likely to have glare, be sure to write your notes in ink, as pencil can be hard to read in poor lighting.

8.3.7 Using Notecards Effectively

If you use as much care in developing your five notecards as you do your speech, they should serve you well. If you lose your place or go blank during the speech, you will only need a few seconds to find where you were and get going again. For instance, if you know that you presented the introduction and the first main point, which centers on the Emancipation Proclamation, you can readily go to your second card and remind yourself that your next main point is about the Thirteenth Amendment to the US Constitution.

In addition, the use of your notecards allows you to depart from the exact prepared wordings in your manuscript. In your recovery from losing your place, you can transpose a word or phrase to make your recovery graceful. It allows you to avoid feeling pressured to say every single word in your manuscript.

Under no circumstances should you ever attempt to put your entire speech on cards in little tiny writing. You will end up reading words to your audience instead of telling them your meaning, and the visual aspect of your speech will be spoiled by your need to squint to read your cards.

8.3.7.1 Key Takeaways

- Good notecards keep you from reading to your audience.
- Good notecards are carefully based on key words and phrases to promote recall.
- Good notecards should enhance your relationship with listeners.

8.3.8 Exercises

1. Using the introduction to your speech, create a 4 × 6 notecard that includes the grabber, the thesis statement, and the preview. Test it by standing as you would during a speech and using it to guide you.
2. Answer these questions: Is it absolutely crucial to utter every word on your outline? Are there some words or phrases that are crucially important? How can you use your notecards to focus on the most important ideas?
3. Select key terms from your speech that you believe will trigger your recall of the sequence of main ideas in your speech. Use them as the basis of your next four notecards. Test the cards by practicing with them to see whether your selected terms are the ones you should use.

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8.4: Practicing for Successful Speech Delivery

Learning Objectives

1. Explain why having a strong conversational quality is important for effective public speaking.
2. Explain the importance of eye contact in public speaking.
3. Define vocalics and differentiate among the different factors of vocalics.
4. Explain effective physical manipulation during a speech.
5. Understand how to practice effectively for good speech delivery.



Figure 8.4.1: Speech (CC BY 2.0; Christian Pierret via Speech)

There is no foolproof recipe for good delivery. Each of us is unique, and we each embody different experiences and interests. This means each person has an approach, or a style, that is effective for her or him. This further means that anxiety can accompany even the most carefully researched and interesting message. Even when we know our messages are strong and well-articulated on paper, it is difficult to know for sure that our presentation will also be good.

We are still obligated to do our best out of respect for the audience and their needs. Fortunately, there are some tools that can be helpful to you even the very first time you present a speech. You will continue developing your skills each time you put them to use and can experiment to find out which combination of delivery elements is most effective for you.

8.4.1 What Is Good Delivery?

The more you care about your topic, the greater your motivation to present it well. Good delivery is a process of presenting a clear, coherent message in an interesting way. Communication scholar Stephen E. Lucas tells us:

Good delivery…conveys the speaker's ideas clearly, interestingly, and without distracting the audience. Most audiences prefer delivery that combines a certain degree of formality with the best attributes of good conversation—directness, spontaneity, animation, vocal and facial expressiveness, and a lively sense of communication (Lucas, 2009).

Many writers on the nonverbal aspects of delivery have cited the findings of psychologist Albert Mehrabian, asserting that the bulk of an audience's understanding of your message is based on nonverbal communication. Specifically, Mehrabian is often credited with finding that when audiences decoded a speaker's meaning, the speaker's face conveyed 55 percent of the information, the vocalics conveyed 38 percent, and the words conveyed just 7 percent (Mehrabian, 1972). Although numerous scholars, including Mehrabian himself, have stated that his findings are often misinterpreted (Mitchell), scholars and speech instructors do agree that nonverbal communication and speech delivery are extremely important to effective public speaking.

In this section of the chapter, we will explain six elements of good delivery: conversational style, conversational quality, eye contact, vocalics, physical manipulation, and variety. And since delivery is only as good as the practice that goes into it, we conclude with some tips for effective use of your practice time.

8.4.2 Conversational Style

Conversational style is a speaker's ability to sound expressive and to be perceived by the audience as natural. It's a style that approaches the way you normally express yourself in a much smaller group than your classroom audience. This means that you

want to avoid having your presentation come across as didactic or overly exaggerated. You might not feel natural while you're using a conversational style, but for the sake of audience preference and receptiveness, you should do your best to appear natural. It might be helpful to remember that the two most important elements of the speech are the message and the audience. You are the conduit with the important role of putting the two together in an effective way. Your audience should be thinking about the message, not the delivery.

Stephen E. Lucas defines conversational quality as the idea that "no matter how many times a speech has been rehearsed, it still *sounds* spontaneous" [emphasis in original] (Lucas, 2009). No one wants to hear a speech that is so well rehearsed that it sounds fake or robotic. One of the hardest parts of public speaking is rehearsing to the point where it can appear to your audience that the thoughts are magically coming to you while you're speaking, but in reality you've spent a great deal of time thinking through each idea. When you can sound conversational, people pay attention.

8.4.3 Eye Contact

Eye contact is a speaker's ability to have visual contact with everyone in the audience. Your audience should feel that you're speaking to them, not simply uttering main and supporting points. If you are new to public speaking, you may find it intimidating to look audience members in the eye, but if you think about speakers you have seen who did not maintain eye contact, you'll realize why this aspect of speech delivery is important. Without eye contact, the audience begins to feel invisible and unimportant, as if the speaker is just speaking to hear her or his own voice. Eye contact lets your audience feel that your attention is on them, not solely on the cards in front of you.

Sustained eye contact with your audience is one of the most important tools toward effective delivery. O'Hair, Stewart, and Rubenstein note that eye contact is mandatory for speakers to establish a good relationship with an audience (O'Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein, 2001). Whether a speaker is speaking before a group of five or five hundred, the appearance of eye contact is an important way to bring an audience into your speech.

Eye contact can be a powerful tool. It is not simply a sign of sincerity, a sign of being well prepared and knowledgeable, or a sign of confidence; it also has the power to convey meanings. Arthur Koch tells us that all facial expressions "can communicate a wide range of emotions, including sadness, compassion, concern, anger, annoyance, fear, joy, and happiness" (Koch, 2010).

If you find the gaze of your audience too intimidating, you might feel tempted to resort to "faking" eye contact with them by looking at the wall just above their heads or by sweeping your gaze around the room instead of making actual eye contact with individuals in your audience until it becomes easier to provide real contact. The problem with fake eye contact is that it tends to look mechanical. Another problem with fake attention is that you lose the opportunity to assess the audience's understanding of your message. Still, fake eye contact is somewhat better than gripping your cards and staring at them and only occasionally glancing quickly and shallowly at the audience.

This is not to say that you may never look at your notecards. On the contrary, one of the skills in extemporaneous speaking is the ability to alternate one's gaze between the audience and one's notes. Rehearsing your presentation in front of a few friends should help you develop the ability to maintain eye contact with your audience while referring to your notes. When you are giving a speech that is well prepared and well rehearsed, you will only need to look at your notes occasionally. This is an ability that will develop even further with practice. Your public speaking course is your best chance to get that practice.

8.4.4 Effective Use of Vocalics

Vocalics, also known as paralanguage, is the subfield of nonverbal communication that examines how we use our voices to communicate orally. This means that you speak loudly enough for all audience members (even those in the back of the room) to hear you clearly, and that you enunciate clearly enough to be understood by all audience members (even those who may have a hearing impairment or who may be English-language learners). If you tend to be soft-spoken, you will need to practice using a louder volume level that may feel unnatural to you at first. For all speakers, good vocalic technique is best achieved by facing the audience with your chin up and your eyes away from your notecards and by setting your voice at a moderate speed. Effective use of vocalics also means that you make use of appropriate pitch, pauses, vocal variety, and correct pronunciation.

If you are an English-language learner and feel apprehensive about giving a speech in English, there are two things to remember: first, you can meet with a reference librarian to learn the correct pronunciations of any English words you are unsure of; and second, the fact that you have an accent means you speak more languages than most Americans, which is an accomplishment to be proud of.

If you are one of the many people with a stutter or other speech challenge, you undoubtedly already know that there are numerous techniques for reducing stuttering and improving speech fluency and that there is no one agreed-upon "cure." The Academy Award–winning movie *The King's Speech* did much to increase public awareness of what a person with a stutter goes through when it comes to public speaking. It also prompted some well-known individuals who stutter, such as television news reporter John Stossel, to go public about their stuttering (Stossel, 2011). If you have decided to study public speaking in spite of a speech challenge, we commend you for your efforts and encourage you to work with your speech instructor to make whatever adaptations work best for you.

8.4.5 Volume

Volume refers to the loudness or softness of a speaker's voice. As mentioned, public speakers need to speak loudly enough to be heard by everyone in the audience. In addition, volume is often needed to overcome ambient noise, such as the hum of an air conditioner or the dull roar of traffic passing by. In addition, you can use volume strategically to emphasize the most important points in your speech. Select these points carefully; if you emphasize everything, nothing will seem important. You also want to be sure to adjust your volume to the physical setting of the presentation. If you are in a large auditorium and your audience is several yards away, you will need to speak louder. If you are in a smaller space, with the audience a few feet away, you want to avoid overwhelming your audience with shouting or speaking too loudly.

8.4.6 Rate

Rate is the speed at which a person speaks. To keep your speech delivery interesting, your rate should vary. If you are speaking extemporaneously, your rate will naturally fluctuate. If you're reading, your delivery is less likely to vary. Because rate is an important tool in enhancing the meanings in your speech, you do not want to give a monotone drone or a rapid "machine-gun" style delivery. Your rate should be appropriate for your topic and your points. A rapid, lively rate can communicate such meanings as enthusiasm, urgency, or humor. A slower, moderated rate can convey respect, seriousness, or careful reasoning. By varying rapid and slower rates within a single speech, you can emphasize your main points and keep your audience interested.

8.4.7 Pitch

Pitch refers to the highness or lowness of a speaker's voice. Some speakers have deep voices and others have high voices. As with one's singing voice range, the pitch of one's speaking voice is determined to a large extent by physiology (specifically, the length of one's vocal folds, or cords, and the size of one's vocal tract). We all have a normal speaking pitch where our voice is naturally settled, the pitch where we are most comfortable speaking, and most teachers advise speaking at the pitch that feels natural to you.

While our voices may be generally comfortable at a specific pitch level, we all have the ability to modulate, or move, our pitch up or down. In fact, we do this all the time. When we change the pitch of our voices, we are using inflections. Just as you can use volume strategically, you can also use pitch inflections to make your delivery more interesting and emphatic. If you ordinarily speak with a soprano voice, you may want to drop your voice to a slightly lower range to call attention to a particular point. How we use inflections can even change the entire meaning of what we are saying. For example, try saying the sentence "I love public speaking" with a higher pitch on one of the words—first raise the pitch on "I," then say it again with the pitch raised on "love," and so on. "*I* love public speaking" conveys a different meaning from "I love *public* speaking," doesn't it?

There are some speakers who don't change their pitch at all while speaking, which is called monotone. While very few people are completely monotone, some speakers slip into monotone patterns because of nerves. One way to ascertain whether you sound monotone is to record your voice and see how you sound. If you notice that your voice doesn't fluctuate very much, you will need to be intentional in altering your pitch to ensure that the emphasis of your speech isn't completely lost on your audience.

Finally, resist the habit of pitching your voice "up" at the ends of sentences. It makes them sound like questions instead of statements. This habit can be disorienting and distracting, interfering with the audience's ability to focus entirely on the message. The speaker sounds uncertain or sounds as though he or she is seeking the understanding or approval of the listener. It hurts the speaker's credibility and it needs to be avoided.

The effective use of pitch is one of the keys to an interesting delivery that will hold your audience's attention.

8.4.8 Pauses

Pauses are brief breaks in a speaker's delivery that can show emphasis and enhance the clarity of a message. In terms of timing, the effective use of pauses is one of the most important skills to develop. Some speakers become uncomfortable very quickly with the

"dead air" that the pause causes. And if the speaker is uncomfortable, the discomfort can transmit itself to the audience. That doesn't mean you should avoid using pauses; your ability to use them confidently will increase with practice. Some of the best comedians use the well-timed pause to powerful and hilarious effect. Although your speech will not be a comedy routine, pauses are still useful for emphasis, especially when combined with a lowered pitch and rate to emphasize the important point you do not want your audience to miss.

8.4.9 Vocal Variety

Vocal variety has to do with changes in the vocalics we have just discussed: volume, pitch, rate, and pauses. No one wants to hear the same volume, pitch, rate, or use of pauses over and over again in a speech. Your audience should never be able to detect that you're about to slow down or your voice is going to get deeper because you're making an important point. When you think about how you sound in a normal conversation, your use of volume, pitch, rate, and pauses are all done spontaneously. If you try to overrehearse your vocalics, your speech will end up sounding artificial. Vocal variety should flow naturally from your wish to speak with expression. In that way, it will animate your speech and invite your listeners to understand your topic the way you do.

8.4.10 Pronunciation

The last major category related to vocalics is pronunciation, or the conventional patterns of speech used to form a word. Word pronunciation is important for two reasons: first, mispronouncing a word your audience is familiar with will harm your credibility as a speaker; and second, mispronouncing a word they are unfamiliar with can confuse and even misinform them. If there is any possibility at all that you don't know the correct pronunciation of a word, find out. Many online dictionaries, such as the Wiktionary (http://wiktionary.org), provide free sound files illustrating the pronunciation of words.

Many have commented on the mispronunciation of words such as "nuclear" and "cavalry" by highly educated public speakers, including US presidents. There have been classroom examples as well. For instance, a student giving a speech on the Greek philosopher Socrates mispronounced his name at least eight times during her speech. This mispronunciation created a situation of great awkwardness and anxiety for the audience. Everyone felt embarrassed and the teacher, opting not to humiliate the student in front of the class, could not say anything out loud, instead providing a private written comment at the end of class.

One important aspect of pronunciation is articulation, or the ability to clearly pronounce each of a succession of syllables used to make up a word. Some people have difficulty articulating because of physiological problems that can be treated by trained speech therapists, but other people have articulation problems because they come from a cultural milieu where a dialect other than standard American English is the norm. Speech therapists, who generally guide their clients toward standard American English, use the acronym SODA when helping people learn how to more effectively articulate: substitutions, omissions, distortions, and additions.

- **Substitutions** occur when a speaker replaces one consonant or vowel with another consonant (*water* becomes *wudda*; *ask* becomes *ax*; *mouth* becomes *mouf*).
- **Omissions** occur when a speaker drops a consonant or vowel within a word (*Internet* becomes *Innet*; *mesmerized* becomes *memerized*; *probably* becomes *prolly*).
- **Distortions** occur when a speaker articulates a word with nasal or slurring sounds (*pencil* sounds like *mencil*; *precipitation* sounds like *persination*; *second* sounds like *slecond*).
- **Additions** occur when a speaker adds consonants or vowels to words that are not there (*anyway* becomes *anyways*; *athletic* becomes *athaletic*; *black* becomes *buhlack*; *interpret* becomes *interpretate*).

Another aspect of pronunciation in public speaking is avoiding the use of verbal surrogates or "filler" words used as placeholders for actual words (like *er*, *um*, *uh*, etc.). You might be able to get away with saying "um" as many as two or three times in your speech before it becomes distracting, but the same cannot be said of "like." We know of a student who trained herself to avoid saying "like." As soon as the first speech was assigned, she began wearing a rubber band on her left wrist. Each time she caught herself saying "like," she snapped herself with the rubber band. It hurt. Very quickly, she found that she could stop inflicting the snap on herself, and she had successfully confronted an unprofessional verbal habit.

8.4.11 Effective Physical Manipulation

In addition to using our voices effectively, a key to effective public speaking is physical manipulation, or the use of the body to emphasize meanings or convey meanings during a speech. While we will not attempt to give an entire discourse on nonverbal communication, we will discuss a few basic aspects of physical manipulation: posture, body movement, facial expressions, and dress. These aspects add up to the overall physical dimension of your speech, which we call self-presentation.

8.4.12 Posture

“Stand up tall!” I’m sure we’ve all heard this statement from a parent or a teacher at some point in our lives. The fact is, posture is actually quite important. When you stand up straight, you communicate to your audience, without saying a word, that you hold a position of power and take your position seriously. If however, you are slouching, hunched over, or leaning on something, you could be perceived as ill prepared, anxious, lacking in credibility, or not serious about your responsibilities as a speaker. While speakers often assume more casual posture as a presentation continues (especially if it is a long one, such as a ninety-minute class lecture), it is always wise to start by standing up straight and putting your best foot forward. Remember, you only get one shot at making a first impression, and your body’s orientation is one of the first pieces of information audiences use to make that impression.

8.4.13 Body Movement

Unless you are stuck behind a podium because of the need to use a nonmovable microphone, you should never stand in one place during a speech. However, movement during a speech should also not resemble pacing. One of our authors once saw a speaker who would walk around a small table where her speaking notes were located. She would walk around the table once, toss her chalk twice, and then repeat the process. Instead of listening to what the speaker was saying, everyone became transfixed by her walk-and-chalk-toss pattern. As speakers, we must be mindful of how we go about moving while speaking. One common method for easily integrating some movement into your speech is to take a few steps any time you transition from one idea to the next. By only moving at transition points, not only do you help focus your audience’s attention on the transition from one idea to the next, but you also are able to increase your nonverbal immediacy by getting closer to different segments of your audience.

Body movement also includes gestures. These should be neither overdramatic nor subdued. At one extreme, arm-waving and fist-pounding will distract from your message and reduce your credibility. At the other extreme, refraining from the use of gestures is the waste of an opportunity to suggest emphasis, enthusiasm, or other personal connection with your topic.

There are many ways to use gestures. The most obvious are hand gestures, which should be used in moderation at carefully selected times in the speech. If you overuse gestures, they lose meaning. Many late-night comedy parodies of political leaders include patterned, overused gestures or other delivery habits associated with a particular speaker. However, the well-placed use of simple, natural gestures to indicate emphasis, direction, size is usually effective. Normally, a gesture with one hand is enough. Rather than trying to have a gesture for every sentence, use just a few well-planned gestures. It is often more effective to make a gesture and hold it for a few moments than to begin waving your hands and arms around in a series of gestures.

Finally, just as you should avoid pacing, you will also want to avoid other distracting movements when you are speaking. Many speakers have unconscious mannerisms such as twirling their hair, putting their hands in and out of their pockets, jingling their keys, licking their lips, or clicking a pen while speaking. As with other aspects of speech delivery, practicing in front of others will help you become conscious of such distractions and plan ways to avoid doing them.

8.4.14 Facial Expressions

Faces are amazing things and convey so much information. As speakers, we must be acutely aware of what our face looks like while speaking. While many of us do not look forward to seeing ourselves on videotape, often the only way you can critically evaluate what your face is doing while you are speaking is to watch a recording of your speech. If video is not available, you can practice speaking in front of a mirror.

There are two extremes you want to avoid: no facial expression and overanimated facial expressions. First, you do not want to have a completely blank face while speaking. Some people just do not show much emotion with their faces naturally, but this blankness is often increased when the speaker is nervous. Audiences will react negatively to the message of such a speaker because they will sense that something is amiss. If a speaker is talking about the joys of Disney World and his face doesn’t show any excitement, the audience is going to be turned off to the speaker and his message. On the other extreme end is the speaker whose face looks like that of an exaggerated cartoon character. Instead, your goal is to show a variety of appropriate facial expressions while speaking.

Like vocalics and gestures, facial expression can be used strategically to enhance meaning. A smile or pleasant facial expression is generally appropriate at the beginning of a speech to indicate your wish for a good transaction with your audience. However, you should not smile throughout a speech on drug addiction, poverty, or the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. An inappropriate smile creates confusion about your meaning and may make your audience feel uncomfortable. On the other hand, a serious scowl might look hostile or threatening to audience members and become a distraction from the message. If you keep the meaning of your speech foremost in your mind, you will more readily find the balance in facial expression.

Another common problem some new speakers have is showing only one expression. One of our coauthors competed in speech in college. After one of his speeches (about how people die on amusement park rides), one of his judges pulled him aside and informed him that his speech was “creepy.” Apparently, while speaking about death, our coauthor smiled the entire time. The incongruity between the speech on death and dying and the coauthor’s smile just left the judge a little creeped out. If you are excited in a part of your speech, you should show excitement on your face. On the other hand, if you are at a serious part of your speech, your facial expressions should be serious.

8.4.15 Dress

While there are no clear-cut guidelines for how you should dress for every speech you’ll give, dress is still a very important part of how others will perceive you (again, it’s all about the first impression). If you want to be taken seriously, you must present yourself seriously. While we do not advocate dressing up in a suit every time you give a speech, there are definitely times when wearing a suit is appropriate.

One general rule you can use for determining dress is the “step-above rule,” which states that you should dress one step above your audience. If your audience is going to be dressed casually in shorts and jeans, then wear nice casual clothing such as a pair of neatly pressed slacks and a collared shirt or blouse. If, however, your audience is going to be wearing “business casual” attire, then you should probably wear a sport coat, a dress, or a suit. The goal of the step-above rule is to establish yourself as someone to be taken seriously. On the other hand, if you dress two steps above your audience, you may put too much distance between yourself and your audience, coming across as overly formal or even arrogant.

Another general rule for dressing is to avoid distractions in your appearance. Overly tight or revealing garments, over-the-top hairstyles or makeup, jangling jewelry, or a display of tattoos and piercings can serve to draw your audience’s attention away from your speech. Remembering that your message is the most important aspect of your speech, keep that message in mind when you choose your clothing and accessories.

8.4.16 Self-Presentation

When you present your speech, you are also presenting yourself. Self-presentation, sometimes also referred to as poise or stage presence, is determined by how you look, how you stand, how you walk to the lectern, and how you use your voice and gestures. Your self-presentation can either enhance your message or detract from it. Worse, a poor self-presentation can turn a good, well-prepared speech into a forgettable waste of time. You want your self-presentation to support your credibility and improve the likelihood that the audience will listen with interest.

Your personal appearance should reflect the careful preparation of your speech. Your personal appearance is the first thing your audience will see, and from it, they will make inferences about the speech you’re about to present.

8.4.17 Variety

One of the biggest mistakes novice public speakers make is to use the same gesture over and over again during a speech. While you don’t want your gestures to look fake, you should be careful to include a variety of different nonverbal components while speaking. You should make sure that your face, body, and words are all working in conjunction with each other to support your message.

8.4.18 Practice Effectively

You might get away with presenting a hastily practiced speech, but the speech will not be as good as it could be. In order to develop your best speech delivery, you need to practice—and use your practice time effectively. Practicing does not mean reading over your notes, mentally running through your speech, or even speaking your speech aloud over and over. Instead, you need to practice with the goal of identifying the weaknesses in your delivery, improving upon them, and building good speech delivery habits.

When you practice your speech, place both your feet in full, firm contact with the floor to keep your body from swaying side to side. Some new public speakers find that they don’t know what to do with their hands during the speech. Your practice sessions should help you get comfortable. When you’re not gesturing, you can rest your free hand lightly on a lectern or simply allow it to hang at your side. Since this is not a familiar posture for most people, it might feel awkward, but in your practice sessions, you can begin getting used to it.

8.4.19 Seek Input from Others

Because we can't see ourselves as others see us, one of the best ways to improve your delivery is to seek constructive criticism from others. This, of course, is an aspect of your public speaking course, as you will receive evaluations from your instructor and possibly from your fellow students. However, by practicing in front of others before it is time to present your speech, you can anticipate and correct problems so that you can receive a better evaluation when you give the speech "for real."

Ask your practice observers to be honest about the aspects of your delivery that could be better. Sometimes students create study groups just for this purpose. When you create a study group of classroom peers, everyone has an understanding of the entire creative process, and their feedback will thus be more useful to you than the feedback you might get from someone who has never taken the course or given a speech.

If your practice observers seem reluctant to offer useful criticisms, ask questions. How was your eye contact? Could they hear you? Was your voice well modulated? Did you mispronounce any words? How was your posture? Were your gestures effective? Did you have any mannerisms that you should learn to avoid? Because peers are sometimes reluctant to say things that could sound critical, direct questions are often a useful way to help them speak up.

If you learn from these practice sessions that your voice tends to drop at the ends of sentences, make a conscious effort to support your voice as you conclude each main point. If you learn that you have a habit of clicking a pen, make sure you don't have a pen with you when you speak or that you keep it in your pocket. If your practice observers mention that you tend to hide your hands in the sleeves of your shirt or jacket, next time wear short sleeves or roll your sleeves up before beginning your speech. If you learn through practice that you tend to sway or rock while you speak, you can consciously practice and build the habit of *not* swaying.

When it is your turn to give feedback to others in your group, assume that they are as interested in doing well as you are. Give feedback in the spirit of helping their speeches be as good as possible.

8.4.20 Use Audio and/or Video to Record Yourself

Technology has made it easier than ever to record yourself and others using the proliferation of electronic devices people are likely to own. Video, of course, allows you the advantage of being able to see yourself as others see you, while audio allows you to concentrate on the audible aspects of your delivery. As we mentioned earlier in the chapter, if neither video nor audio is available, you can always observe yourself by practicing your delivery in front of a mirror.

After you have recorded yourself, it may seem obvious that you should watch and listen to the recording. This can be intimidating, as you may fear that your performance anxiety will be so obvious that everyone will notice it in the recording. But students are often pleasantly surprised when they watch and listen to their recordings, as even students with very high anxiety may find out that they "come across" in a speech much better than they expected.

A recording can also be a very effective diagnostic device. Sometimes students believe they are making strong contact with their audiences, but their cards contain so many notes that they succumb to the temptation of reading. By finding out from the video that you misjudged your eye contact, you can be motivated to rewrite your notecards in a way that doesn't provide the opportunity to do so much reading.

It is most likely that in viewing your recording, you will benefit from discovering your strengths and finding weak areas you can strengthen.

8.4.21 Good Delivery Is a Habit

Luckily, public speaking is an activity that, when done conscientiously, strengthens with practice. As you become aware of the areas where your delivery has room for improvement, you will begin developing a keen sense of what "works" and what audiences respond to.

It is advisable to practice out loud in front of other people several times, spreading your rehearsals out over several days. To do this kind of practice, of course, you need to have your speech be finalized well ahead of the date when you are going to give it. During these practice sessions, you can time your speech to make sure it lasts the appropriate length of time. A friend of ours was the second student on the program in an event where each student's presentation was to last thirty to forty-five minutes. After the first student had been speaking for seventy-five minutes, the professor in charge asked, "Can we speed this up?" The student said yes, and proceeded to continue speaking for another seventy-five minutes before finally concluding his portion of the program. Although we might fault the professor for not "pulling the plug," clearly the student had not timed his speech in advance.

Your practice sessions will also enable you to make adjustments to your notecards to make them more effective in supporting your contact with your audience. This kind of practice is not just a strategy for beginners; it is practiced by many highly placed public figures with extensive experience in public speaking.

Your public speaking course is one of the best opportunities you will have to manage your performance anxiety, build your confidence in speaking extemporaneously, develop your vocal skills, and become adept at self-presentation. The habits you can develop through targeted practice are to build continuously on your strengths and to challenge yourself to find new areas for improving your delivery. By taking advantage of these opportunities, you will gain the ability to present a speech effectively whenever you may be called upon to speak publicly.

8.4.21.1 Key Takeaways

- Conversational style is a speaker's ability to sound expressive while being perceived by the audience as natural. Conversational quality is a speaker's ability to prepare a speech and rehearse a speech but still sound spontaneous when delivering it.
- Eye contact helps capture and maintain an audience's interest while contributing to the speaker's credibility.
- Vocalics are the nonverbal components of the verbal message. There are six important vocalic components for a speaker to be aware of: volume (loudness or softness), pitch (highness or lowness), rate (fastness or slowness), pauses (use of breaks to add emphasis), vocal variety (use of a range of vocalic strategies), and pronunciation (using conventional patterns of speech formation).
- Physical manipulation is the use of one's body to add meaning and emphasis to a speech. As such, excessive or nonexistent physical manipulation can detract from a speaker's speech.
- Good delivery is a habit that is built through effective practice.

8.4.22 Exercises

1. Find a speech online and examine the speaker's overall presentation. How good was the speaker's delivery? Make a list of the aspects of delivery in this chapter and evaluate the speaker according to the list. In what areas might the speaker improve?
2. Record a practice session of your speech. Write a self-critique, answering the following questions: What surprised you the most? What is an area of strength upon which you can build? What is *one* area for improvement?

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8.5: Practicing Your Delivery

There is no foolproof recipe for good delivery. Each of us is unique, and we each embody different experiences and interests. This means each person has an approach, or a style, that is effective for her or him. This further means that anxiety can accompany even the most carefully researched and interesting message. But there are some techniques you can use to minimize that anxious feeling and put yourself in the best possible position to succeed on speech day.

If you've ever watched your favorite college football team practice, you may have noticed that sometimes obnoxiously loud crowd noise is blaring over the speaker system in the stadium. The coaches know that the crowd, whether home or away, will be raucous and noisy on game day. So to prepare, they practice in as realistic an environment as possible. You need to prepare for your speech in a similar way. What follows are some general tips you should keep in mind, but they all essentially derive from one very straight-forward premise:

Practice your speech beforehand, at home or elsewhere, the way you will give it in class.

8.5.1 Practice Your Speech Out Loud

We sometimes think that the purpose of practicing a speech is to learn the words and be prepared for what we will need to say. Certainly that is part of it, but practice also lets you know where potential problems lie. For example, if you only read your speech in your head, or whisper the words quietly, you're not really practicing what you will be doing in front of the class. Since you will be speaking with a normal volume for your assignment, you need to practice that way, even at home. Not only will this help you learn the speech, but it will help identify any places where you tend to mispronounce or stumble over words. Also, sentences on paper do not always translate well to the spoken medium. Practicing out loud allows you to actually hear where your sentences and phrases are awkward, unnatural, or too long, and allows you to correct them before getting up in front of the audience.

8.5.2 Practice Your Speech Standing Up

In all the time that the authors of this book have been teaching speech, not once have either of us come into a classroom and seen a bed behind the lectern for students to speak from. This is to say that when you practice at home, lying on your bed reading your speech really only prepares you for one thing: lying on a bed reading a speech. Since you will be standing in front of your class, you need to practice that way. As we mention in more detail below, the default position for delivering a speech is with your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent. Practicing this way will help develop muscle memory and will make it feel more natural when you are doing it for real. We also suggest you wear the same shoes you will be wearing on the day of your speech.

8.5.3 Practice Your Speech with a Lectern

One of the biggest challenges with practicing a speech as you're going to give it is usually the fact that most of us don't own a lectern. This is problematic, since you don't want to practice giving your speech while holding your notes in front of you because that is what will feel comfortable when you give your speech for real. So the solution is to practice your speech while standing behind something that approximates the lectern you will have in your classroom. Sometime this may be a kitchen counter or maybe even a dresser you pull away from the wall. One particularly creative idea that has been used in the past is to pull out an ironing board and stand behind that. The point is that you want to get experience standing behind something and resting your speech on it.

Of course, if you really want to practice with an actual lectern, it might be worth the time to see if your classroom is empty later in the day or find out if another classroom has the same type of lectern in it. Practicing with the "real thing" is always ideal.

8.5.4 Practice Your Speech with an Audience

Obviously on the day you give your speech you will have an audience of your fellow students and your professor watching you. The best way to prepare for the feeling of having someone watch you while giving a speech is to have someone watch you while you practice giving a speech. We don't mean a collection of stuffed animals arranged on your bed or locking your pets in the room with you, but actual human beings. Ask your parents, siblings, friends, or significant other to listen to you while running through what you will say. Not only will you get practice in front of an audience, but they may be able to tell you about any parts that were unclear or problems you might encounter when you give it for a grade.

Not to overcomplicate the issue, but remember that when you speak to your class, you will have an entire room full of people watching. Therefore, if you only have one person watching you practice, be sure to simulate an entire audience by looking around the room and not focusing on just that one person. When you give your speech for real, you will want to make eye contact with the

people on the left side of the room as well as the right; with the people in the front as well as in the back. You also want the eye contact to be around five seconds long, not just a glance; the idea is that you are talking to individuals, not just a glob of people. During practice, it may help to pick out some strategically placed objects around the room to occasionally focus on just to get into the habit of looking around more often.



8.5.5 Practice Your Speech for Time

You will undoubtedly be given a time limit for each of your speeches, and points will probably be deducted from your grade if you go over or under that time. Therefore, you want to make sure you are well within time. As a general rule, if your speech window is 5-7 minutes, your ideal speech time is going to be 6 minutes; this gives you an extra 60 seconds at the beginning in case you talk very fast and race through it, and 60 seconds on the back end in case you get lost or want to add something at the last minute. If you practice at home and your 5-7 minute speech lasts 5:06, you are probably going to be in trouble on speech day. Most likely your nerves will cause you to speak slightly faster and put you under the 5:00 mark. If your times are vastly different, you may have to practice four or more times.

When practicing your speech at home for time, it is a good idea to time yourself at least three times. This way you can see if you are generally coming in around the same time and feel pretty good that it is an accurate reflection of how long you will speak. Conversely, if during your three rehearsals your times are 5:45, 5:12, and 6:37, then that is a clear indicator that you need to be more consistent in what you are saying and doing.

Although we are using examples of practicing for classroom speeches, the principle is even more important for non-classroom speeches. One of the authors had to give a very important presentation about the college to an accreditation board. She practiced about 15 times, to make sure the time was right, that her transitions made sense, that she was fluid, and that the presentational slides and her speech matched. Each time something improved.

8.5.6 Practice Your Speech by Recording Yourself

There is nothing that gets us to change what we're doing or correct a problem more quickly than seeing ourselves doing something we don't like on video. Your instructor may record your speech in class and have you critique it afterwards, but it may be more helpful to do that in advance of giving your speech. By watching yourself, you will notice all the small things you do that might prove to be distracting and affect your grade during the actual speech. Many times students aren't aware that they have low energy or a monotone/monorate voice, or that they bounce, sway, pull at their clothes, play with hair or jewelry, or make other unusual and distracting movements. At least, they don't know this until they see themselves doing it. Since we are generally our own harshest critics, you will be quick to notice any flaws in your speech and correct them.

It is important enough that it deserves reiterating:

Practice your speech beforehand, at home or elsewhere, the way you will give it in class.

FFollowing these steps will not only prepare you better for delivering the speech, but they may also help reduce anxiety since you will feel more familiar with the situation you find yourself in when faced with a speaking engagement. Additionally, the more you speak publicly, whether for practice or in front of a live audience, the more fluid you will become for later speeches.

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8.6: Nonverbal Delivery

Learning Objectives
- Describe the importance of nonverbal delivery in public speaking
- Highlight common non-verbal pitfalls
- Utilize specific techniques to enhance non-verbal delivery

Have you played charades? Many of you have likely "acted out" a person, place, or a thing for an audience, using only your body and no words. Charades, like many games, demonstrates the heightened or exaggerated use of nonverbals – through acting out, the game highlights how powerful nonverbal communication can be for communicating with an audience.

When speaking, similar to charades, your job is to create a captivating experience for your audience that leads them to new information or to consider a new argument. Nonverbals provide an important facet of that experience by accentuating your content and contributing to the aesthetic experience.

The nonverbal part of your speech is a presentation of yourself as well as your message. Like we discussed in Chapter 7, public speaking is embodied, and your nonverbals are a key part of living and communicating in and through your body. Through the use of eye contact, vocals, body posture, gestures, and facial expression, you enhance your message and invite your audience to give their serious attention to it—and to you. Your credibility, your sincerity, and your knowledge of your speech become apparent through your nonverbal behaviors.

In this chapter, we explore various nonverbal components that influence your message to create an aesthetic experience for your audience. Rather than a check-list of skillsets, we invite you to read these as a series of inter-related behaviors and practices, beginning with eye contact.

8.6.1 Eye Contact

Imagine bringing in 2 qualified applicants for a job opening that you were responsible to fill. The interview is intimate, and each applicant sits directly across from you and 3 other colleagues who are assisting.

While answering questions, applicant 1 never breaks eye contact with you. It's likely that, as the interview progresses, you begin to feel uncomfortable, even threatened, and begin shifting your own eyes around the room awkwardly. When the applicant leaves, you finally take a deep breath but realize that you can't remember anything the applicant said.

The second applicant enters and, unlike the first, looks down at their notes, and they never make direct eye contact. As you try to focus on their answers, they seem so uncomfortable that you aren't able to concentrate on the exchange.

Both approaches are common mistakes when integrating eye contact into a speech. We have likely all seen speakers who read their presentation from notes and never look up. It's also common for a speaker to zoom in on one audience member (like the teacher!) and never break their gaze.

Eye contact creates an intimate and interpersonal experience for individual audience members and it assists in maintaining rapport. Part of creating a meaningful aesthetic experience is through eye contact, and the general rule of thumb is that 80% of your total speech time should be spent making eye contact with your audience (Lucas, 2015, p. 250). When you're able to connect by using eye contact, you create a more intimate, trusting, and transparent experience.

Looking Forward: We'll discuss rehearsal techniques to assist in amplifying your eye contact in Chapter 11.

It's important to note that you want to establish genuine eye contact with your audience, and not "fake" eye contact. There have been a lot of techniques generated for "faking" eye contact, and none of them look natural. For example, these aren't great:

- ***Three points on the back wall*** – You may have heard that instead of making eye contact, you can just pick three points on the back wall and look at each point. What ends up happening, though, is you look like you are staring off into space and your audience will spend the majority of your speech trying to figure out what you are looking at. This technique may work better for a larger audience, but in a more intimate space (like the classroom), the audience is close enough to be suspicious. Put simply: we can tell you aren't looking at us.
- ***The swimming method*** – This happens when someone is reading their speech and looks up quickly and briefly, not unlike a swimmer who pops their head out of the water for a breath before going back under. Eye contact is more than just physically moving your head; it is about looking at your audience and establishing a connection.

Instead, work to maintain approximately 3 seconds of eye contact with audience members throughout the room. You are, after all, speaking to them, so use your eyes to make contact. This may also reduce some anxiety because you can envision yourself speaking directly to one person at a time, rather than a room full of strangers.

Remember: you have done the work. You are prepared. You have something to say. People want to listen.

8.6.2 Movement

When you (and your body) move, you communicate. You may, for example, have a friend who, when telling exciting stories, frantically gestures and paces the room—their movement is part of how they communicate their story. They likely do this unconsciously, and that's often how much of our informal movement occurs.

Many of us, like your friend, have certain elements of movement that we comfortably integrate into our daily interactions. It's important to know your go-to movements to ask: how can I utilize these (or put them in check) to enhance the audience's experience? In this section, we will introduce how and why movement should be *purposefully* integrated into your public speech. We'll focus on your hands, your feet, and how to move around the space.

Survey a Friend: Not sure what nonverbals you commonly use when communicating? Ask a friend! Your friends are observant, and they can likely tell you if you over-gesture, look down, stay poised, etc. Use this inventory to determine areas of focus for your speeches.

8.6.2.1 Gestures and Hands

Everyone who gives a speech in public gets scared or nervous. Even professionals who do this for a living feel that way, but they have learned how to combat those nerves through experience and practice. When we get scared or nervous, our bodies emit adrenaline into our systems so we can deal with whatever problem is causing us to feel that way. In a speech, you are asked to speak for a specific duration of time, so that burst of adrenaline is going to try to work its way out of your body and manifest itself somehow. One of the main ways is through your hands.

3 common reactions to this adrenaline rush are:

- ***Jazz hands!*** It may sound funny, but nervous speakers can unknowingly incorporate "jazz hands"—shaking your hands at your sides with fingers opened wide— at various points in their speech. While certainly an extreme example, this and behaviors like it can easily becoming distracting.
- ***Stiff as a board***. At the other end of the scale, people who don't know what to do with their hands or use them "too little" sometimes hold their arms stiffly at their sides, behind their backs, or in their pockets, all of which can also look unnatural and distracting.
- ***Hold on for dear life!*** Finally, some speakers might grip their notes or a podium tightly with their hands. This might also result in tapping on a podium, table, or another object nearby.

It's important to remember that *just because you aren't sure what your hands are doing does not mean they aren't doing something*. Fidgeting, jazz hands, gripping the podium, or hands in pockets are all common and result in speakers asking, "did I really do that? I don't even remember!"

Like we mentioned in this section's introduction, the key for knowing what to do with your hands is to know your own embodied movement and to trust or adjust your natural style as needed.



Al Gore gestures during a campaign appearance.

Are you someone who uses gestures when speaking? If so, great! Use your natural gestures to create purposeful aesthetic emphasis for your audience. If you were standing around talking to your friends and wanted to list three reasons why you should all take a road trip this weekend, you would probably hold up your fingers as you counted off the reasons ("First, we hardly ever get this opportunity. Second, we can…"). Try to pay attention to what you do with your hands in regular conversations and incorporate that

into your delivery. Be conscious, though, of being over the top and gesturing at every other word. Remember that gestures highlight and punctuate information for the audience, so too many gestures (like jazz hands) can be distracting.

Similarly, are you someone who generally rests your arms at your sides? That's OK, too! Work to keep a natural (and not stiff) look, but challenge yourself to integrate a few additional gestures throughout the speech.

8.6.2.2 Feet and Posture

Just like your hands, nervous energy might try to work its way out of your body through your feet. Common difficulties include:

- ***The side-to-side.*** You may feel awkward standing without a podium and try to shift your weight back and forth. On the "too much" end, this is most common when people start "dancing" or stepping side to side.
- ***The twisty-leg.*** Another variation is twisting feet around each other or the lower leg.
- ***Stiff-as-a-board.*** On the other end are speakers who put their feet together, lock their knees, and never move from that position. Locked knees can restrict oxygen to your brain, so there are many reasons to avoid this difficulty.

These options look unnatural, and therefore will prove to be distracting to your audience.

The default position for your feet, then, is to have them shoulder-width apart, with your knees slightly bent. Since public speaking often results in some degree of physical exertion, you need to treat speaking as a physical activity. Public speaking is too often viewed as merely the transmission of information or a message rather than a fully body experience. Being in-tune and attuned to your body will allow you to speak in a way that's both comfortable for you and the audience.

In addition to keeping your feet shoulder-width apart, you'll also want to focus on your posture. As an audience member, you may have witnessed speakers with slumped shoulders or leaning into the podium (if there is one) with their entire body.

Difficulty with good posture is not just a public speaking problem. Think about how often you sit down in a coffee shop, pull out your laptop and, after some time, you realize that you are leaning over and your lower back is wincing in pain. You likely pull your shoulders back and straighten your spine in response. If you don't focus on this posture (and practice reminding yourself to "sit up straight"), your body may slump back into old habits. So, you guessed it: focusing on good posture is just that – something that you must focus on, over time, so that it becomes habitual.

Focusing on good posture and solid grounding will, in addition to increasing your confidence, assist you in maintaining your eye contact and focusing on projecting your voice throughout the space.

Research Spotlight: The "Power Pose." Relaxed yet sturdy posture will aid in your aesthetic delivery, but it might also increase your confidence. Some research (Cuddy, 2012) seems to indicate that standing in a *power pose* with your feet wide and hands on the hips (picture a super hero) may trick your mind into experiencing higher levels of confidence.

8.6.2.3 Moving in the Space

We know that likely you're wondering, "Should I do any other movement around the room?"

Unfortunately, there isn't an easy answer. Movement depends on two overarching considerations: 1) What's the space? And, 2) What's the message?

First, movement is always informed by the space in which you'll speak. We'll cover this more in tips on rehearsal (see Chapter 11), but we'll highlight a few important details here. Consider the two following examples:

- You'll be a giving a presentation at a university where a podium is set up with a stable microphone.
- You're speaking at a local TedTalk event with an open stage.

Both scenarios provide constraints and opportunities for movement.

In the university space, the microphone may constrain your movement if you determine that vocal projection is insufficient to guarantee a level of speaking that can be heard throughout the space.



Using a lectern provides nonverbal opportunities and constraints

In other words, you need tostay planted behind the microphone to guarantee sound. Partially constraining, this does allow a stable location to place your notes, a microphone to assist in projecting, and allows you to focus on other verbal and nonverbal techniques.

In the TedTalk example, you are not constrained by a stable microphone and you have a stage for bodily movement. The open stage means that the entire space becomes part of the aesthetic experience for the audience. However, if you are less comfortable with movement, the open space may feel intimidating because audiences may assume that you'll use the entire space.

In addition to the space, your message and content assist in deciding how or why you might move around the space. It's necessary to ask, "how does movement support, enhance or detract from the message?" and "how might movement support, enhance, or detract from the aesthetic experience for the audience?"

Remember that most public speeches are ephemeral, where the audience is attempting to comprehend your message in one shot or run through. Given these circumstances, it can be tricky for an audience to track the argument progression, especially since you may be dealing with an audience of varying levels of experience with your topic. Similar to the space, thinking through where your movement can assist in translating your information is paramount.

Once you have knowledge of the speaking space and completed speech content, you can start using movement to add dimension to the aesthetic experience for your audience.

One benefit of movement is that it allows you to engage with different sections of the audience. If you are not constrained to one spot (in the case of a podium or a seat, for example), then you are able to use movement to engage with the audience by adjusting your spatial dynamic. You can literally move your body to different sides of the stage and audience. This allows for each side of a room to be pulled in to the content because you close the physical distance and create clear pathways for eye contact.



Some speech stages allow, even expect, movement

Without these changes, sections of the audience may feel lost or forgotten. Consider your role as a student. Have you experienced a professor or teacher who stays solitary and does not move to different sides of the room? It can be difficult to stay motivated to listen or take notes if a speaker is dominating one area of the space.

Changing the spatial dynamics goes beyond moving from side-to-side. You can also move forward and backward (or what theater practitioners might call down or up stage). This allows you to move closer to the audience or back away—depending on what experience you're trying to create.

In addition to engaging with the audience, movement often signals a transition between ideas or an attempt to visually enunciate an important component of your information. You may want to signal a change in time or mark progression. If you're walking your audience through information chronologically, movement can mark that temporal progression where your body becomes the visual marker of time passing.

You may also want to signal a transition between main ideas, and movement can assist with that, too! Moving as main point transitions embodies the connections between your ideas while letting the audience know that "we are going to progress in the

argument." If integrating movement as a transition feels odd, choppy, or awkward, those feelings help signal that the organization of your main points may need some re-working.

Thus, using purposeful movement can enhanced your aesthetics, but *purposeful* is the key word here. While movement can enhance, it can also distract and constrain. Keep these common pitfalls in mind:

- ***The pace-master.*** We all know this distracting pitfall where (likely due to nervousness), a speaker paces back and forth without any clear reason for the movement. "What in the world are they doing?" you might wonder as an audience member. Unfortunately, if you're internally asking that question, you're likely not focusing on the speaker's content. While it's OK to "walk and talk" so to speak, avoid constant walking-and-talking. As a speaker, maintain a solid footing when you aren't moving.
- ***Obstructing the view:*** It's likely that, at some point, you'll use objects or other presentation enhancements like a PowerPoint or a video during your speech. Make sure you aren't moving directly in front of the audience's line of sight. Even if you aren't referencing something, it can be awkward to walk in front of a projection light.
- ***The robot***: As a dance, the robot can be great, but in public speaking, it's usually not as effective. We commonly experience students who use "the triangle" method, where each main point in the speech is mapped onto an invisible triangle. This can be done well, but it can also lead to movement looking unnatural. Work to strike a balance between pre-planned and robotic.

When you speak, moving in the space can be beneficial. As you plan your purposeful movement, be aware of the message you're providing and the space in which you're speaking.

8.6.3 Facial Expressions

Picture being out to dinner with a friend and, as you finish telling a story about a joke you played on your partner, you look up to a grimacing face.

"What?" you ask. But their face says it all.

"Oh, nothing," they reply. Realizing that their face has "spilled the beans" so to speak, they might correct their expression by shrugging and biting their lip – a move that may insinuate nervousness or anxiety. You perceive that they didn't find your story as humorous as you'd hoped.

Facial expressions communicate to others (and audiences) in ways that are congruent or incongruent with your message. In the example above, your friend's feedback of "oh, nothing" was inconcruent with their facial exressions. Their verbal words didn't trump their facial expressions, however, and their nonverbal feedback was part of the communication.

Facial expressions are generally categorized as one of the following: happy, sad, angry, fearful, surprised and disgusted. Your facial expressions matter; your audience will be looking at your face to guide them through the speech, so they're an integral part of communicating meaning and demonstrating to your audience a felt sense.

In fact, if your facial expressions seem incongruent or contradictory from the tone of the argument, an audience may go so far as to feel distrust toward you as a speaker. Children might, for example, say, "I'm fine" or "It doesn't hurt" after falling and scraping their knee, but their face often communicates a level of discomfort. In this case, their facial expression is incongruent with their verbal message. If you're frowning while presenting information that the audience perceives to be positive, they may feel uneasy or unsure how to process that information. So, congruency can increase your ethos.

Instead, work to create congruence between your message and expressions. In class discussions on pathos, we often joke about the ASPCA commercials with the Sarah McLachlan song "In the Arms of an Angel" playing in the background. The music is meant to, of course, communicate feelings of sadness around animal cruelty, and rightfully so. In a speech, similar to using music, your facial expressions can assist in setting the aesthetic tone; they are part of developing pathos.

Given the amount of information that we all encounter daily, including information about global injustices, it's often insufficient to merely state the problem and how to solve it. Audience members need buy in from you as the speaker. Using facial expressions to communicate emotions, for example, can demonstrate your commitment and overall feelings around an issue.

To be clear: facial expressions, like other forms of nonverbal communication, can greatly impact an audience member's perception of the speaker, but not all audiences may interpret your expressions the same. Re-visit Chapter 2 on audiences.

8.6.4 Attire

What you wear, similar to other aesthetic components, can either enhance or detract from the audience's experience. Like facial expressions, you want your attire to be congruent with the message that you're delivering. In Chapter 7, we noted that aesthetics are often dicated by certain contextual norms. Context is relevant here, too, as the purpose and audience will inform appropriate attire.

We recommend considering two questions when selecting your attire:

First, "what attire matches the occasion?" Is this a casual occasion? Does it warrant a more professional or business-casual approach? If you're speaking at an organization's rally, for example, you may decide to wear attire with the organization's logo and jeans. Other occasions, like a classroom or city council meeting, may require a higher level of professional attire.

Second, "have I selected any attire that could be distracting while I'm speaking?" Certain kinds of jewelry, for example, might make additional noise or move around your arm, and audiences can focus too much on the jewelry. In addition to noise-makers, some attire can have prints that might distract, including letters, wording, or pictures.

Your attire can influence how the audience perceives you as a speaker (ahem: your credibility) which, as we've discussed, is key to influencing listeners. Before we conclude this chapter, we return to credibility and reflexivity.

8.6.5 Aesthetics and Credibility

So far in Part 3 on aesthetics, we've discussed how to deliver an aesthetic experience for your audience. As a speaker, it's important to remember that the audience remains a central component of public speaking and is central to consider when making aesthetic choices.

Yes, this means that you should think about your audience (as Chapter 2 discussed at length) when you are a speaker. These aesthetic choices will influence your audience and assist them in determining if you are credible and, frankly, if they want to listen to your message.

For example, an audience may view vocalized pauses as evidence that a speaker lacks confidence around their topic or does not know the material as well. Similarly, you may consider your attire before presenting, assuming that your audience will respect and view you professionally if you select business casual clothing.

Aesthetic choices are also important when you are in the audience, and it is imperative to be critical and reflect (or practice reflexivity) on how you are filtering a speaker's information through their aesthetics. The filter that informs our willingness to view a speaker as credible is often based on a **mythical norm**, or what Audre Lorde (1984) defines generally as young, white, thin, middle-class men. This classification certainly does not fit all speakers, and if you are part of this classification, that's OK! The mythical norm warns us to be conscious of holding these categories as "the best" or preferred, especially around what counts as credibility. In other words, are these categories unconsciously facilitating a more positive aesthetic experience?

For example, you may decide to wear business casual clothing to increase the likelihood that your audience views you as credible, but as an audience member, be careful assuming that someone is not credible because of their attire. Business attire can be a privilege that everyone cannot afford.

Eye contact can also be investigated. We've alluded that eye contact increases trust amongst your audience, and it often does; however, the connection between eye contact and higher levels of credibility is specific to a U.S. American cultural context. Culture thus defines how we interpret and understand certain aesthetic choices, including eye contact. Remember that culture is always a core component of communication. As an audience member, be careful of presumptively judging a speaker based on your own cultural expectations, identities, or positions.

8.6.6 Conclusion

Your nonverbal delivery assists in setting an aesthetic tone for the audience by providing embodied insight into how the audience should think, act, or feel. The space – or literal context in which you'll speak – also contributes nonverbally to the message. We'll discuss space in more detail during Chapter 11 on rehearsal.

Up next: presentation aids.

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8.7: Delivery Advice- Do Not Imagine the Audience Naked! Managing Eye Contact, Movement, and Gestures



You can speak well
if your tongue can deliver the message of your heart.
– John Ford, celebrated Irish American director

In this chapter, I will give you some practical tips to help you strengthen your presentation skills and I want to steer you away from some of the bad advice out there. The best things you can do when it comes to presentation skills are (1) believe you can improve with practice and (2) realize connection, not perfection is the goal.

Believe You Can Improve

When you think about speaking are you tempted to believe, "Some people are just born good speakers" or "I just wasn't made for this public speaking stuff." If that is you, you may have what Stanford researcher, Carol Dweck calls a "fixed mindset." She suggested that we have a *fixed mindset*– people are just born to be good at things or we have a *growth mindset*–people, with effort, can learn new skills.

When it comes to public speaking, you should work on having a growth mindset and acknowledge that effort is needed for mastery. You can improve, but it may take work. Especially with public speaking, practice equals progress. Adjusting your belief to a growth mindset frees your self-limiting beliefs and allows you to move beyond what you thought was possible.

Those who think they got their success from effort often can go farther than those who believe success is due to their natural ability. The key to making the change is to continually recognize your effort: "I gave it my best, I really stretched myself today, I put a lot of time into this, and I can tell it made a difference." In addition, Dweck suggests the simple change of adding the word "yet" to your self vocabulary helps keep you growth-focused. Instead of saying, "I'm not good a public speaking," say "I'm not good at public speaking yet." Believe if you work hard enough, and practice enough, and get help when needed, you can improve and grow.

✔ The Power of YET

Avoid saying, "I can't do this"
but rather say "I can't do this yet"

In one case, you are telling your brain to quit trying
in the other version, you allow yourself to be open to possibilities.

Never say, "I'm not good at public speaking."
but rather say, "I may not be a perfect speaker yet but what I have to say is important
so I will work and keep getting better at it."

Believing you can improve is an important first step. In my many years of teaching public speaking, I have witnessed some of the most insecure, timid speakers rise to become confident, and powerful in only a few months. I have seen a student who ran out of the class crying on her first speech, be voted the best speaker by her last speech. I have watched a student who stumbled over every word, evolve into a powerful speaker who delivers speeches to large groups every week. Some people seem to know how to succeed at public speaking naturally, but for most of us, it takes work. Realize with practice, you can improve as a speaker. If you are one of those lucky natural speakers, realize you too have room to improve. Now, let's talk about two specific presentation skills where you can improve–eye contact and gestures.

To get started, I want to tell you some of the worst speaking advice I have ever been given.

Eye Contact

Bad Advice–Look at Their Foreheads

I had a teacher in high school who told me, “Don’t make eye contact with the audience because they will make you nervous. Don’t look at their eyes–look at their foreheads.” Just for fun, walk up to a friend and begin to speak to their forehead to see how they react. Really, try it. It just looks weird. Chances are your friend will say, “What the heck are you doing?” That is the same thing your audience will think if you stare at their foreheads. Honestly, it is harder to focus on foreheads than it is to look in the eyes.

Bad Advice–Imagine Your Audience Naked

A well-meaning friend told me, “Just imagine your audience naked.” Maybe you too have heard this advice, and it is the worst. If you are in my audience and I imagine you naked, I guarantee there will be NO EYE CONTACT. No eye contact at all! One speech coach said, “Depending on your audience, this is too exciting or too disgusting.” This piece of advice is designed to make you feel more at ease, but it doesn’t work. I do not know about you, but the thought of speaking to a room full of naked people does not make me feel relaxed.

Bad Advice– Stare at Random Spots Above Their Heads

I have heard this one multiple times from well-meaning teachers. “Look at the back wall.” If you look over the person, you miss the person. Ask yourself, why is eye contact so frightening? Is it because there is a person connected to those eyes? Is it because if we look at the person, we have to acknowledge their existence? One nonverbal researcher says, “Eye contact makes interaction an obligation.” If I make eye contact, I must recognize I am speaking to a real person with feelings, expectations, and dreams. If I make eye contact, I must realize a speech is an interaction and I have an obligation to that person. If I make eye contact, I become much more aware they expect something from me and I feel obligated not to waste their time.

The other reason this is bad advice is it makes you look odd, and you will lose credibility with the audience. It is a strange thing to talk to walls. If you are a speaker, it looks strange for you to look over the audience’s heads to stare at the wall. I guarantee the audience feels strange when you do it. Even in a large audience where you can’t make eye contact with everyone, you should at least find people throughout the room to look at.

Bad Advice– Follow the Eye Contact Formula

A lot of well-meaning advisors will say things like “Make eye contact for 3-5 seconds with each person” (the three-second rule) or “scan the audience from left to right” (the lighthouse technique) or “find three places in the room and look to those” (the umpire technique). The advice is not entirely bad, but the problem is it puts too much pressure on the speaker. If I am counting the seconds or working on the perfect eye contact pattern, then I am missing the point of being conversational.

Good Advice on Eye Contact

The most important advice I can give you on eye contact is to JUST DO IT. Find friendly faces around the room and look at them. Find those nice people who smile and nod and then begin looking at them in the room. Looking at them helps you gauge whether they are listening.

When speaking to a large audience, you may have to make audience contact instead of eye contact. Look at various areas where the audience members are seated to create the feeling that you are looking at them.

Benefits of Eye Contact

There are many benefits to making good eye contact. Communication researcher Steven Beebe conducted a study where he discovered an increase in eye contact increases a speaker’s perceived credibility. Other research suggests eye contact impacts focus memory, and recall. Eye contact helps the audience to see you as credible, and to remember your message more–what is not to love about that?

Watch the video, below by Dananjaya Hettiarachchi and notice how he looks directly at audience members. It is obvious why he is the world champion.



Practical Tips for Maximizing Eye Contact

- If you struggle with eye contact, at the top of every page of your notes write–"Make eye contact."
- Have your friends sit at various places throughout the room so you have a few friendly eyes you can talk to.
- Practice with people. Sure, it is helpful to record yourself, to practice talking to a wall, and to speak to a mirror, but those are no substitutes for what happens when you speak to people. Find some friends and practice with them. Chris Anderson, of TED, says: "Perhaps the most important physical act onstage is making eye contact. Find five or six friendly-looking people in different parts of the audience and look them in the eye as you speak. Think of them as friends you haven't seen in a year, whom you're bringing up to date on your work."



Eye Contact in Online Presentations

Increasingly, business presentations are being made in the online environment. The pandemic forced schools to use online learning tools where teachers give lectures online and students give presentations online. In addition, many businesses are conducting job interviews through virtual platforms. It is likely you will encounter an online speech and it is helpful to understand the unique differences. If you are making your presentations online, eye contact means looking into the camera. Draw a smiley face on a notecard and tape it beside your camera to remind you to look at your audience. It is tempting to try to make eye contact with the faces on your screen, and it is OK to look at the faces on the screen to remind you of your audience but spend the majority of your presentation time looking into the eyes of the camera.

It can be helpful to tape your notecards on a wall behind your computer or phone screen so you can glance at them briefly and then speak directly to your audience. Do not try to read your speech off your computer or phone screen; it will be obvious to the audience you are reading.

? Cultural Note

Eye contact can vary from culture to culture and person to person. Just because an audience member looks away from you, it may not mean they are not interested. Consider the following differences.

- In some cultures, it would be considered inappropriate to make eye contact with someone of different gender (or sex).

- When in a high-power culture (a culture where those in power are given higher status and have deferential body language), you may notice those in lower status lower their eyes or avoid eye contact with those of higher status.
- Arabs, Latin Americans, and Southern Europeans tend to make direct eye contact
- Those from Asia and parts of Africa tend to make less eye contact.
- Those on the Autism Spectrum may avoid eye contact to help them focus on the words you are saying.

"All you need is something to say,
and a burning desire to say it…
it doesn't matter where your hands are."
Lou Holtz, former Arkansas Razorback football coach

Gestures

Isn't it funny how we rarely notice what our hands are doing while we are talking? When we get up there to give a speech, suddenly we are aware of our hands, and we can't figure out what to do with them. One of the frequently asked questions I hear is, "What do I do with my hands?" The short answer is to relax and gesture naturally. Vivian Buchan, author of *Make Presentations with Confidence* suggests, "The only place a gesture comes from is inside you. Gestures come from your heart and soul, your instincts, your interests, and your involvement." She suggests focusing on your speech and your passion and the gestures will work themselves out. The more you practice your speech, the more you will feel confident gesturing.

"Great speakers keep their body open" according to Dananjaya Hettiarachchi, 2014 Toastmasters International world champion of public speaking. "Failing to make gestures or holding your hands tightly in front of you makes you look insecure. When you're nervous, you try to cover your vital organs." It is OK to *feel* nervous, the goal is to try and not *look* nervous. Public speaking instructor Cathy Hollingsworth offered this nugget of advice:

> *So many times, when speakers are telling a story to their friends in person or even via the phone, gestures are big and descriptive but when speakers get in front of an audience, all of sudden, arms and hands become appendages that have no apparent purpose. This is what I tell speakers: Use your gestures as "bodily visual aids". Pretend you are in a situation in which there are no electronics to show slides nor is there a whiteboard. How will you get your ideas across to the audience? Easy! Just use your gesturing to take the audience along with you on the speech. Be brave enough to make those gestures big and at least shoulder high. This is not charades, but it is close.*

Gestures help you look like a polished speaker. Vanessa Van Edwards did a study and found the top TED talk speakers made an average of 465 gestures in 18 minutes while the less popular speakers made 272 gestures. The top speakers gestured almost twice as much. Gestures not only increase a speaker's credibility but speakers who gesture are seen as more persuasive and more likable. According to Vanessa van Edwards, "It's not what you say; it's how you say it." She found people rated speakers similarly on charisma, credibility, and intelligence whether they saw the speech with the sound on or off.

When speakers gesture, listeners are better able to learn the content. People who were instructed to gesture while learning new information, had better recall of information. That sounds like a good study tip!

It's not just your audience that will be helped by your gestures, you will be helped as well. Did you know people who are born blind gesture in some of the same ways sighted individuals do? How do they know to gesture? Why do they gesture? They gesture because it seems to be something they are hardwired to do. They gesture because it seems to help the speaker to think and speak more clearly. I often have my students sit on their hands and then tell a story about their weekend or give directions to their favorite restaurant. It is amazing how many of them struggle to think of directions when they can't move. It might be said you think with your hands. In a study where they asked children to talk about a game they played, those who gestured while speaking told more details and they spoke with fewer hesitations. The authors suggested gesturing reduces cognitive load. It is easier to hold up your hands and say "The fish I caught is this big" than it is to say, "the fish I caught was big. He was about 10 inches long." Gestures give us a shortcut to speaking.

In addition, gestures beat out the rhythm of the speech. They help us synchronize our words to our speech. Typically, we speak in chunks of about four to five syllables called a phonemic clause. At the end of that chunk, we tend to gesture. Try it for yourself. I

wrote the phrases as most people say them (phonemic clause). Say these phrases out loud and see what gestures you do naturally.

I don't know where they are

I've looked everywhere

I simply cannot remember

where I put my keys.

They were right there table

last night.

Read it again. This time, notice you naturally gesture right before the last beat of the phrase. Gestures don't come after the phrase, they come during the phrase. You can tell if someone has been speech coached poorly because they will gesture after the phrase. It looks unnatural.



Gestures are Good

- They are good for the audience's attention to your speech.
- They are good for the audience's recall of the speech.
- They help you as a speaker to be more fluid in speaking.
- They help to reduce your cognitive load.
- They help you keep the rhythm in your speech.

With all this information, you know you should gesture throughout your speech. One way to loosen up and find your own gestures is what I call, "getting funky." After you have your speech written, sing your speech, say it in a funny accent, or rap it while in the shower. As silly as this sounds, it will help relax you and in those funky practices, you will find you begin having more free-flowing gestures.

Students in Dale Carnegie classes often do the Box Factory activity to help them learn to use their whole bodies in their speech.

Dale Dunphy posted as part of a Dale Carnegie course, he had to tell a story of the Box Factory with enthusiasm and emphasize certain words. Other participants talked about the importance of telling the story with their whole bodies.

The Box Factory

I found myself yesterday near a huge box factory located on a high hill.
Running all around this building was a picket fence about this high.
I walked up to the factory, threw open the door, walked in, and found myself in a long hallway.
At the far end of the hallway was a spiral staircase.
I walked up this spiral staircase, pushed open a sliding door, and found myself in a big room piled high with boxes.
There were big boxes, middle-sized boxes, and very small boxes.
Suddenly, the boxes came tumbling down around my head!
I woke with a start, yawned, stretched, and went back to sleep.
Watch this short clip from Dale Carnegie Training of Western CT as they do this activity.
https://www.facebook.com/296319280422649/videos/686754148045825
As silly as activities like this one may seem, they help speakers to relax and to use their whole bodies in speeches.

What NOT to Do with Your Hands

- Do NOT put both hands in your pockets.
- Do NOT jingle keys or change in your pocket.
- Do NOT hold hands clasped behind your back.

- Do NOT fidget with your pen, necklace.
- Do NOT tap or pound on the podium.
- Do NOT rest your hands on the podium.
- Do NOT wring hands.
- Do NOT play with your hair.
- Do NOT fidget with your clothing.
- Do NOT pick your fingernails.
- Do NOT fiddle with notecards.

✔ Pro-Tip

When you feel yourself getting nervous, touch your index finger to your thumb, it is a self-soothing gesture

Advanced Gestures

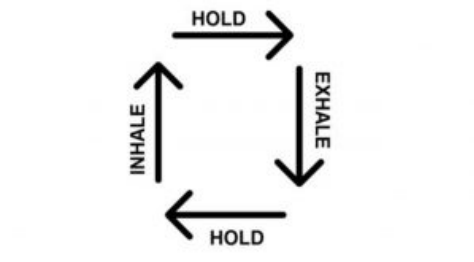
Some of you are still working on relaxing enough to gesture. That is OK, it takes time and like any other skill, with practice, you will get better. Others of you have spoken long enough you are wanting to take your gestures to the next level, this section is for you.

Sabina Nawaz, speech coach recommends people "air out their armpits" when they gesture. That is her way of reminding people to make their gestures large and noticeable and to move their arms away from their torso. Dale Carnegie Trainer, Larry Prevot, says speakers who keep their arms too close to their body remind him of old westerns where the hero is tied up. The rope is around his chest and arms bound tightly, but below the elbow, his hands are free allowing him to finally escape, "Be that hero today. Remove the perceived constraints that are pinning your upper arms against your chest and start using everything at your disposal." Darren Tay, Toastmaster's World Champion, said in a Business Insider interview "It's common for novice public speakers to have their gestures centered either too close to their face, which suggests nervousness, or too low, which is distracting. He said the ideal center is around the belly button."

In addition to making the arm movements large, the next pro tip is to gesture palms up. Toastmaster Champion Hettiarachchi, suggests you look at the back of your hand and then look at the palm of your hand. Which one relaxes your eye? The palm relaxes your eye which is why great public speakers tend to open their palms towards the audience (video included in bonus features below). In the TED talk, *Power in the Palm of Your Hand (video included in bonus features below)*, Allan Pease tells of a study where speakers had 20 minutes to present a proposal using palm-up gestures, palm down gestures, or pointing gestures. Here's what he found: The palm-up speakers were described as laid back, friendly, humorous, and engaging. The speakers with the palm up gesture maintained 40% more retention than the speaker who used the palm-down gesture. The palms down speakers were described as authoritative, and the pointing speakers were described with negative adjectives.

✔ How To Stop Shaking When You Are Nervous

In this video, *How to Stop Shaking when You Are Nervous*, Trace Dominguez explains how New York City Police and Members of the Military stop their hands from shaking when they have an adrenaline response. Tactical and box breathing can help you slow down your rapid heart rate and stimulate the vagus nerve. The slower and deeper you breathe, the more relaxed you feel. This technique is done by taking deep breaths through the nose.



How To Do Box Breathing:

1. Exhale all the breath out of your lungs.
2. Breathe in for four seconds. As your chest rises and air enters let your mind travel up the side of the box.

3. Hold for four seconds and in your mind travel across the top of the box.
4. Breathe out for four seconds and let your mind travel down one side of the box.
5. Relax for four seconds and let your mind travel across the bottom.
6. Repeat at least three times.

According to clinical psychologist, Dr. Symington, This visual of the box "provides a helpful anchor for your attention and quickly allows you to get into the flow of rhythmic breathing."

Watch this short video, *How to Stop Shaking When You're Nervous*, as it relates to box breathing.



Your Body Language

When does your speech credibility begin with an audience? At first glance. People start evaluating you the moment they see you. If you are pacing wildly in the hall, if you are sitting submissively while playing on your phone, if you are in the bathroom before your speech having a pep talk and a member of the audience sees you, that is when they start the credibility meter. The moment you arrive at the speech venue, you should walk, talk, and act with confidence. I once worked for a company that insisted our car was clean inside and out because the client might see it out their office window and begin sizing up our credibility. If you are a college student, consider the fact that every day your classmates see you in class, you are either gaining credibility or losing credibility. If you sit passively in class playing on your cell phone every day, if you wear pajama pants to class, if you slump over dismissively when others give their speeches, you will have diminished credibility with that audience.

Posture

Your body tells people how you wanted to be treated. Your body tells people what you want them to think of you. Confident posture tells your audience you believe you are a person of power, and you know what you are talking about. A confident posture shows your audience you are "comfortable in your own skin." When people see someone with good posture and body confidence, they perceive them to have more positive attributes and to have increased competence and power. Your confident posture helps you as well, as Harvard Researcher Amy Cuddy points out, people who hold themselves confidently also feel confident. Individuals with a confident posture had more positive attitudes and were more persistent when engaging in a complex task.

To Move or Not to Move, That is the Question

In some situations, you are expected to stand behind a lectern and in other settings, you are standing there with nothing between you and the audience. You will have to adapt to various contexts in your speaking career. In most settings, it is recommended you put as few barriers between you and the audience as possible. When thinking about movement remember, you are a tree–plant your feet but move your branches naturally in the wind. Ok, you can be a tree that moves a little. When you do decide to walk around, make sure it looks purposeful and not nervous–there is a difference between engaged movement and pacing.

The video in this chapter, *Body Language –Gestures and Eye Contact in Public Speaking* shows a variety of speakers and how each adapts to the speech situation. As you watch it, pay special attention to their feet and arms. One of the things that I like about this video is that it shows that there is no one definitive way to do gestures. Each speaker's unique personality comes out in their body movements. I tell my students that being a good speaker is about learning to be comfortable in their own skin and learning their unique way of connecting with the audience.

Movement for Advanced Speakers

For you advanced speakers, it is time to be even more intentional with your movement. Some speakers use the baseball method of movement where they "walk their points". Imagine a baseball diamond on the floor. When you make your first point, you walk to first base. On your second point, you walk to the second base, and on your third point, you move to the third base. Walking to home plate signals that your speech has come full circle (or full diamond) and you are restating the thesis to show how you are connecting with where you began. This physical representation of your speech can help anchor ideas in the minds of the audience.

Cathy Hollingsworth suggests you use purposeful movement to take your audience with you on the journey.
"For many speakers, the hardest thing to resist is walking aimlessly the whole speech. Then, that movement looks like nervous wandering. Instead, take a few steps during a transition and **STOP**. Stay awhile and talk! When you move to the next point or start to tell a story, take a few more steps and **STOP.** Stay awhile and talk."

I learned one of my favorite tricks at a teacher's retreat. After about an hour of walking around the room teaching, the conference leader looked at us and asked "Do you see where I am standing? Have you noticed every time I make a big point, I stand in the same place?" He went on to tell us throughout the weekend-long conference he had conditioned us to pay attention to his big idea by standing in the same spot every time he drew a conclusion. When he stood in that spot, we knew what he was about to say was important. This same speaker would stomp with one foot at times as he made a point to get our attention. It was like an exclamation point. He even did a hop using both feet once or twice as a double exclamation point.

The distance you are from the audience and the position of your eyes to the audience can also have an effect. You can create intimacy when telling a personal story by walking closer to the audience or even by sitting down. Moving from behind the podium can signal "I am being vulnerable before you." Making your eyes the same level as the audience can signal we are on the same level (though the room and size of the audience can influence this). The key is whatever you do, make movement intentional and purposeful (imagine me doing a two-footed hop here!).

> **Enlist the Help of a Friend.** Chances are you have some presentation area where you need work. Ask a friend to give you an honest assessment of what you do. For example, I used to rock up and back when I spoke. I had a friend who would move his pointer finger up and back to let me know when I was doing it. It took a lot of practice and several "rockin" speeches, but eventually, I corrected the behavior.

How To Dress for Your Speech

How do you dress for your speech? The answer should be "it depends." It depends on the context, the audience, the topic, and the occasion. Kelly Stoetzel, TED's Content Director says the most important thing is you "wear something you feel great in." She also suggests "Believe it or not, your clothing can earn you an audience connection before you've even spoken a word." Here are a few guidelines to consider:

1. **Consider the context, topic, and purpose.** It may give you credibility to wear a lab coat as you talk about your experience working as a nurse's assistant. Wearing hiking gear would be appropriate for a speech on how to rappel, and yoga pants are appropriate for a speech about the sun salutation poses. I'm not telling you to dress gimmicky, but to consider what is appropriate for the topic.
2. **Dress nicer than your audience to enhance your credibility.** If you are talking to other college students in your class and they are wearing jeans and t-shirts, wear nice pants and a collared shirt. If you are presenting to business professionals in suits, wear a suit. It can be a mistake to overdress your audience. If you dress too formally, they will think you are untrustworthy and insincere, however, if you dress too casually the audience might not take you seriously. Whatever you wear, consider the impact. Typically, there is a balance between looking credible and looking approachable. For example, a study of college teachers found teachers who dressed in professional attire were perceived as more organized and knowledgeable while those dressed casually were perceived as more approachable.
3. **Dress professionally to feel credible.** Martin McDermott said, "People elevate their behavior to match their attire." Dressing professionally can make you feel more confident resulting in enhanced cognition and abstract processing.
4. **Avoid distracting clothing and artifacts.** Unless you are comfortable in high heels, you should avoid them in a speech. Be aware that some dress shoes can be very loud and distracting. If you are tempted to fidget with a ring or necklace, it is best not to wear them when you speak.

5. **Practice in your outfit.** It is a good idea to practice your speech in the outfit you will wear to your speech. It will help you identify any issues like sagging straps or an overly tight shirt that restricts gestures.
6. **Consider the sweat factor.** Typically, people perspire more when they are giving a speech. Wear something that minimizes any sweat stains.
7. **Consider the backdrop.** If you wear black pants and a black shirt, you may get lost in front of a black velvet curtain. If possible, get a picture of or visit the venue where you will be speaking to consider how it will impact your clothing choices.
8. **Consider microphones.** If you will be wearing a lapel microphone, you shouldn't wear a floppy cardigan. If you are wearing a microphone with a battery pack, you will need a belt or defined waistline to clip it onto. If you are wearing an over-the-ear microphone, your dangling earrings may make loud noises that are picked up by the mic. Always ask what the microphone set up will be days before the event so you can dress accordingly.
9. **Zip it**. The best advice about clothing rules I have ever received as a speaker is to always check your fly before you speak.

Social psychologist Erving Goffman asks us to consider we are all like actors on a stage. When we are backstage, we may act one way, and when we are on the front stage, we act another. Actors make intentional choices when performing on the main stage; he called this impression management. As actors, we use props, clothing, artifacts, and nonverbal communication to tell people which "character" we are. If we are successful, the audience will view us the way we want to be viewed. Consider which character you will be and be intentional about how to create that character on your "front stage."

? Thoughts for My Blotchy Friends

Sometimes, I get red blotches that start at my chest and crawl up my neck, and land on my face. I'm not alone. Some of my very best speakers, have the same thing happen. I like to think of it as a sign of great speaking. I don't want my badge of greatness to distract the audience, so I always consider how my clothing choices can magnify the issue. A crisp white shirt next to my red neck highlights the issue, whereas a black shirt with a nice necklace breaks up the red and doesn't highlight it so much. If I pull back my hair in a ponytail, there is more of my red neck exposed, so I wear it long.

Of course, the best solution is not to get red. Easy to say, but not so easy to do, huh? Doing deep breathing before a speech, being well prepared, and caring about your speech topic all help. The biggest thing of all is to be aware of your triggers. I get red when I get passionate. If I say, "I love teaching and making a difference in the lives of my students." I may get red. If I think someone in the audience thinks I'm not competent, I may get red. If I wear a hot, itchy fabric, I may get red. If someone has on a certain perfume or if I eat certain foods, I will get red. For some of us, red happens. If red happens to you, it certainly doesn't mean you avoid speaking.

If this is you, you can minimize it, and more importantly, when it happens, the audience can still enjoy your speech. When I see it happen to my students as they passionately pursue their topic, I forget to notice. If you get red, you are in good company. Dress to minimize it, breathe deeply, and focus on the message and your audience will too.

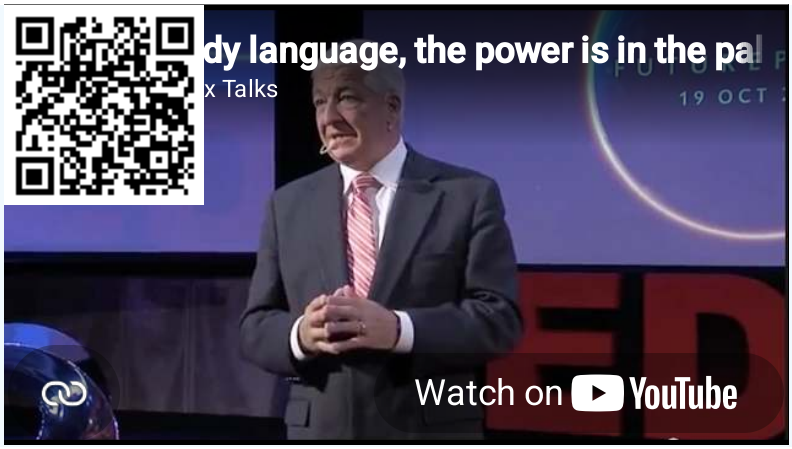
? Key Takeaways

- Public speaking is a skill and with practice, you can improve. Keep an open mindset.
- Make eye contact with the audience being sure to look in different areas of the room.
- Gestures should be natural. Gestures help both the speaker and the listeners.
- Open palms and larger gestures can make you appear more approachable.
- Use confident body posture, not just during your speech, but any time you are in sight of your audience.
- Dress according to the context, speech topic, and audience. Typically, dress a little bit above your audience.

Extra Resources

✔ Watch These Videos That Were Referenced in the Text

He starts talking about the palm at 4.35



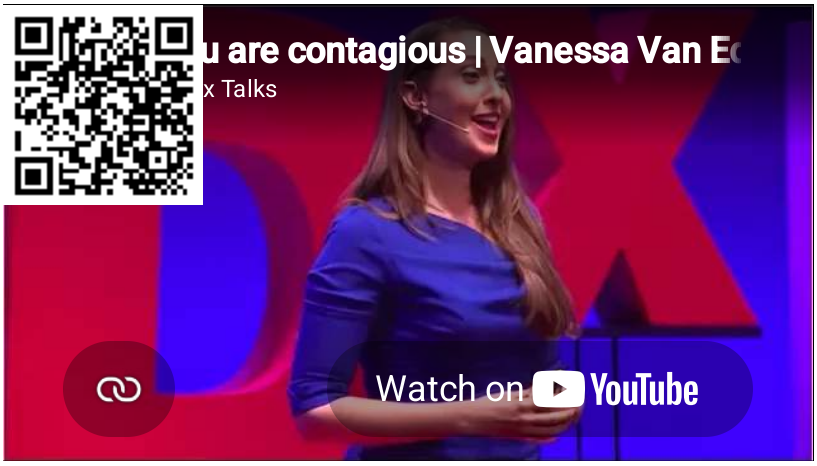




✔ The Power of YET

Carol Dweck explains how “basic human abilities can be grown and how using “Yet” and “Not Yet” influences learning in different classroom settings. Whether you are teaching kids math or teaching yourself to improve as a public speaker, practicing a growth mindset will be crucial for your success.





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I want to hear from you.

Do you have an activity to include?
Did you notice a typo that I should correct?
Are you planning to use this as a resource and do you want me to know about it?
Do you want to tell me something that really helped you?

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

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9.4: Types of Special Occasion Speeches
9.4.1: Tribute Speech- Celebrate the Occasion, the Person, or the Monument
9.5: Public Speaking Online

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9.1: Informative Speaking Goals

Learning Objectives

1. Explain the importance of accuracy, clarity, and listener interest in informative speaking.
2. Discuss why speaking to inform is important. Identify strategies for making information clear and interesting to your speaking audience.

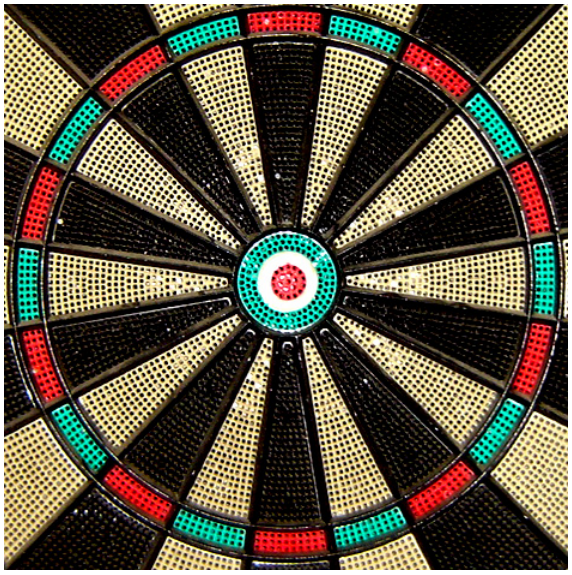


Figure 9.1.1: Target (CC BY 2.0; Cesar bojorquez via Flickr)

A good informative speech conveys accurate information to the audience in a way that is clear and that keeps the listener interested in the topic. Achieving all three of these goals—accuracy, clarity, and interest—is the key to your effectiveness as a speaker. If information is inaccurate, incomplete, or unclear, it will be of limited usefulness to the audience. There is no topic about which you can give complete information, and therefore, we strongly recommend careful narrowing. With a carefully narrowed topic and purpose, it is possible to give an accurate picture that isn't misleading.

Part of being accurate is making sure that your information is current. Even if you know a great deal about your topic or wrote a good paper on the topic in a high school course, you need to verify the accuracy and completeness of what you know. Most people understand that technology changes rapidly, so you need to update your information almost constantly, but the same is true for topics that, on the surface, may seem to require less updating. For example, the American Civil War occurred 150 years ago, but contemporary research still offers new and emerging theories about the causes of the war and its long-term effects. So even with a topic that seems to be unchanging, you need to carefully check your information to be sure it's accurate and up to date.

In order for your listeners to benefit from your speech, you must convey your ideas in a fashion that your audience can understand. The clarity of your speech relies on logical organization and understandable word choices. You should not assume that something that's obvious to you will also be obvious to the members of your audience. Formulate your work with the objective of being understood in all details, and rehearse your speech in front of peers who will tell you whether the information in your speech makes sense.

In addition to being clear, your speech should be interesting. Your listeners will benefit the most if they can give sustained attention to the speech, and this is unlikely to happen if they are bored. This often means you will decide against using some of the topics you know a great deal about. Suppose, for example, that you had a summer job as a veterinary assistant and learned a great deal about canine parasites. This topic might be very interesting to you, but how interesting will it be to others in your class? In order to make it interesting, you will need to find a way to connect it with their interests and curiosities. Perhaps there are certain canine parasites that also pose risks to humans—this might be a connection that would increase audience interest in your topic.

9.1.1 Why We Speak to Inform

Informative speaking is a means for the delivery of knowledge. In informative speaking, we avoid expressing opinion.

This doesn't mean you may not speak about controversial topics. However, if you do so, you must deliver a fair statement of each side of the issue in debate. If your speech is about standardized educational testing, you must honestly represent the views both of its proponents and of its critics. You must not take sides, and you must not slant your explanation of the debate in order to influence the opinions of the listeners. You are simply and clearly defining the debate. If you watch the evening news on a major network television (ABC, CBS, or NBC), you will see newscasters who undoubtedly have personal opinions about the news, but are trained to avoid expressing those opinions through the use of loaded words, gestures, facial expressions, or vocal tone. Like those newscasters, you are already educating your listeners simply by informing them. Let them make up their own minds. This is probably the most important reason for informative speaking.

9.1.2 Making Information Clear and Interesting for the Audience

A clear and interesting speech can make use of description, causal analysis, or categories. With description, you use words to create a picture in the minds of your audience. You can describe physical realities, social realities, emotional experiences, sequences, consequences, or contexts. For instance, you can describe the mindset of the Massachusetts town of Salem during the witch trials. You can also use causal analysis, which focuses on the connections between causes and consequences. For example, in speaking about health care costs, you could explain how a serious illness can put even a well-insured family into bankruptcy. You can also use categories to group things together. For instance, you could say that there are three categories of investment for the future: liquid savings, avoiding debt, and acquiring properties that will increase in value.

There are a number of principles to keep in mind as a speaker to make the information you present clear and interesting for your audience. Let's examine several of them.

9.1.3 Adjust Complexity to the Audience

If your speech is too complex or too simplistic, it will not hold the interest of your listeners. How can you determine the right level of complexity? Your audience analysis is one important way to do this. Will your listeners belong to a given age group, or are they more diverse? Did they all go to public schools in the United States, or are some of your listeners international students? Are they all students majoring in communication studies, or is there a mixture of majors in your audience? The answers to these and other audience analysis questions will help you to gauge what they know and what they are curious about.

Never assume that just because your audience is made up of students, they all share your knowledge set. If you base your speech on an assumption of similar knowledge, you might not make sense to everyone. If, for instance, you're an intercultural communication student discussing multiple identities, the psychology students in your audience will most likely reject your message. Similarly, the term "viral" has very different meanings depending on whether it is used with respect to human disease, popular response to a website, or population theory. In using the word "viral," you absolutely must explain specifically what you mean. You should not hurry your explanation of a term that's vulnerable to misinterpretation. Make certain your listeners know what you mean before continuing your speech. Stephen Lucas explains, "You cannot assume they will know what you mean. Rather, you must be sure to explain everything so thoroughly that they cannot help but understand" (Lucas, 2004). Define terms to help listeners understand them the way you mean them to. Give explanations that are consistent with your definitions, and show how those ideas apply to your speech topic. In this way, you can avoid many misunderstandings.

Similarly, be very careful about assuming there is anything that "everybody knows." Suppose you've decided to present an informative speech on the survival of the early colonists of New England. You may have learned in elementary school that their survival was attributable, in part, to the assistance of Squanto. Many of your listeners will know which states are in New England, but if there are international students in the audience, they might never have heard of New England. You should clarify the term either by pointing out the region on a map or by stating that it's the six states in the American northeast. Other knowledge gaps can still confound the effectiveness of the speech. For instance, who or what was Squanto? What kind of assistance did the settlers get? Only a few listeners are likely to know that Squanto spoke English and that fact had greatly surprised the settlers when they landed. It was through his knowledge of English that Squanto was able to advise these settlers in survival strategies during that first harsh winter. If you neglect to provide that information, your speech will not be fully informative.

Beyond the opportunity to help improve your delivery, one important outcome of practicing your speech in front of a live audience of a couple of friends or classmates is that you can become aware of terms that are confusing or that you should define for your audience.

9.1.4 Avoid Unnecessary Jargon

If you decide to give an informative speech on a highly specialized topic, limit how much technical language or jargon you use. Loading a speech with specialized language has the potential to be taxing on the listeners. It can become too difficult to "translate" your meanings, and if that happens, you will not effectively deliver information. Even if you define many technical terms, the audience may feel as if they are being bombarded with a set of definitions instead of useful information. Don't treat your speech as a crash course in an entire topic. If you must, introduce one specialized term and carefully define and explain it to the audience. Define it in words, and then use a concrete and relevant example to clarify the meaning.

Some topics, by their very nature, are too technical for a short speech. For example, in a five-minute speech you would be foolish to try to inform your audience about the causes of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear emergency that occurred in Japan in 2011. Other topics, while technical, can be presented in audience-friendly ways that minimize the use of technical terms. For instance, in a speech about Mount Vesuvius, the volcano that buried the ancient cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, you can use the term "pyroclastic flow" as long as you take the time to either show or tell what it means.

9.1.5 Create Concrete Images

As a college student, you have had a significant amount of exposure to abstract terms. You have become comfortable using and hearing a variety of abstract ideas. However, abstract terms lend themselves to many interpretations. For instance, the abstract term "responsibility" can mean many things. Among other meanings, it can mean duty, task, authority, or blame. Because of the potential for misunderstanding, it is better to use a *concrete* word. For example, instead of saying, "Helen Worth was responsible for the project," you will convey clearer meaning when you say, "Helen Worth was in charge of the project," "Helen Kimes made the project a success," or "Helen Worth was to blame for the failure of the project."

To illustrate the differences between abstract and concrete language, let's look at a few pairs of terms:

Abstract	Concrete
transportation	air travel
success	completion of project
discrimination	exclusion of women
athletic	physically fit
profound	knowledgeable

By using an abstraction in a sentence and then comparing the concrete term in the sentence, you will notice the more precise meanings of the concrete terms. Those precise terms are less likely to be misunderstood. In the last pair of terms, "knowledgeable" is listed as a concrete term, but it can also be considered an abstract term. Still, it's likely to be much clearer and more precise than "profound."

9.1.6 Keep Information Limited

When you developed your speech, you carefully narrowed your topic in order to keep information limited yet complete and coherent. If you carefully adhere to your own narrowing, you can keep from going off on tangents or confusing your audience. If you overload your audience with information, they will be unable to follow your narrative. Use the definitions, descriptions, explanations, and examples you need in order to make your meanings clear, but resist the temptation to add tangential information merely because you find it interesting.

9.1.7 Link Current Knowledge to New Knowledge

Certain sets of knowledge are common to many people in your classroom audience. For instance, most of them know what Wikipedia is. Many have found it a useful and convenient source of information about topics related to their coursework. Because many Wikipedia entries are lengthy, greatly annotated, and followed by substantial lists of authoritative sources, many students have relied on information acquired from Wikipedia in writing papers to fulfill course requirements. All this is information that virtually every classroom listener is likely to know. This is the current knowledge of your audience.

Because your listeners are already familiar with Wikipedia, you can link important new knowledge to their already-existing knowledge. Wikipedia is an "open source," meaning that anyone can supplement, edit, correct, distort, or otherwise alter the information in Wikipedia. In addition to your listeners' knowledge that a great deal of good information can be found in Wikipedia, they must now know that it isn't authoritative. Some of your listeners may not enjoy hearing this message, so you must find a way to make it acceptable.

One way to make the message acceptable to your listeners is to show what Wikipedia does well. For example, some Wikipedia entries contain many good references at the end. Most of those references are likely to be authoritative, having been written by scholars. In searching for information on a topic, a student can look up one or more of those references in full-text databases or in the library. In this way, Wikipedia can be helpful in steering a student toward the authoritative information they need. Explaining this to your audience will help them accept, rather than reject, the bad news about Wikipedia.

9.1.8 Make It Memorable

If you've already done the preliminary work in choosing a topic, finding an interesting narrowing of that topic, developing and using presentation aids, and working to maintain audience contact, your delivery is likely to be memorable. Now you can turn to your content and find opportunities to make it appropriately vivid. You can do this by using explanations, comparisons, examples, or language.

Let's say that you're preparing a speech on the United States' internment of Japanese American people from the San Francisco Bay area during World War II. Your goal is to paint a memorable image in your listeners' minds. You can do this through a dramatic contrast, before and after. You could say, "In 1941, the Bay area had a vibrant and productive community of Japanese American citizens who went to work every day, opening their shops, typing reports in their offices, and teaching in their classrooms, just as they had been doing for years. But on December 7, 1941, everything changed. Within six months, Bay area residents of Japanese ancestry were gone, transported to internment camps located hundreds of miles from the Pacific coast."

This strategy rests on the ability of the audience to visualize the two contrasting situations. You have alluded to two sets of images that are familiar to most college students, images that they can easily visualize. Once the audience imagination is engaged in visualization, they are likely to remember the speech.

Your task of providing memorable imagery does not stop after the introduction. While maintaining an even-handed approach that does not seek to persuade, you must provide the audience with information about the circumstances that triggered the policy of internment, perhaps by describing the advice that was given to President Roosevelt by his top advisers. You might depict the conditions faced by Japanese Americans during their internment by describing a typical day one of the camps. To conclude your speech on a memorable note, you might name a notable individual—an actor, writer, or politician—who is a survivor of the internment.

Such a strategy might feel unnatural to you. After all, this is not how you talk to your friends or participate in a classroom discussion. Remember, though, that public speaking is not the same as talking. It's prepared and formal. It demands more of you. In a conversation, it might not be important to be memorable; your goal might merely be to maintain friendship. But in a speech, when you expect the audience to pay attention, you must make the speech memorable.

9.1.9 Make It Relevant and Useful

When thinking about your topic, it is always very important to keep your audience members center stage in your mind. For instance, if your speech is about air pollution, ask your audience to imagine feeling the burning of eyes and lungs caused by smog. This is a strategy for making the topic more real to them, since it may have happened to them on a number of occasions; and even if it hasn't, it easily could. If your speech is about Mark Twain, instead of simply saying that he was very famous during his lifetime, remind your audience that he was so prominent that their own great-grandparents likely knew of his work and had strong opinions about it. In so doing, you've connected your topic to their own forebears.

9.1.10 Personalize Your Content

Giving a human face to a topic helps the audience perceive it as interesting. If your topic is related to the Maasai rite of passage into manhood, the prevalence of drug addiction in a particular locale, the development of a professional filmmaker, or the treatment of a disease, putting a human face should not be difficult. To do it, find a case study you can describe within the speech, referring to the human subject by name. This conveys to the audience that these processes happen to real people.

Make sure you use a real case study, though—don't make one up. Using a fictional character without letting your audience know that the example is hypothetical is a betrayal of the listener's trust, and hence, is unethical.

9.1.10.1 Key Takeaways

- One important reason for informative speaking is to provide listeners with information so that they can make up their own minds about an issue.
- Informative speeches must be accurate, clear, and interesting for the listener.
- Strategies to make information clear and interesting to an audience include adjusting the complexity of your information to the audience, avoiding jargon, creating concrete images, limiting information only to what is most relevant, linking information to what the audience already knows, and making information memorable through language or personalization.

9.1.11 Exercises

1. Identify concrete terms with which to replace the following abstractions: motivational, development, fair, natural, and dangerous.
2. Make a list of the arguments both for and against gun control. Make them informative, not persuasive. Your goal is to describe the debate that currently exists without taking a clear position.
3. How might you go about personalizing a speech about water conservation for your classroom audience?

9.1.12 References

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9.2: Persuasive Speaking

Learning Objectives

- Define persuasive speaking
- Explore organizational patterns for persuasive speeches
- Explain the barriers to persuading an audience
- Identify common logical fallacies

On the first day of class, your instructor provided you a "lay of the land." They introduced you to course documents, the syllabus, and reading materials.

"It's important that you read your textbook," they likely shared. "The material will allow you to dive deeper into the course material and, even if you don't initially realize its importance, the reading material will build throughout the semester. The time spent reading will be worth it because without that knowledge, it will be difficult to complete assignments and receive full credit. The time spent reading will benefit you after you leave for the semester, too, and you'll have critical thinking skills that will permeate your life out of the classroom." Sound familiar?

This is persuasion. Your instructor is persuading you that reading the textbook is a good idea—that it's an action that you should take throughout the semester. As an audience member, you get to weigh the potential benefits of reading the textbook in relation to the consequences. But if your instructor has succeeded in their persuasive attempt, you will read the book because they have done a good job of helping you to conclude in favor of their perspective.

Persuasion is everywhere. We are constantly inundated with ideas, perspectives, politics, and products that are requesting our attention. Persuasion is often positively paired with ideas of encouragement, influence, urging, or logic. Your instructors, for example, are passionate about the subject position and want you to succeed in the class. Sadly, persuasion can also be experienced as manipulation, force, lack of choice, or inducement. You might get suspicious if you think someone is trying to persuade you. You might not appreciate someone telling you to change your viewpoints.

In this chapter, we explore persuasive speaking and work through best practices in persuasion. Because persuasion is everywhere, being critical and aware of persuasive techniques will allow you to both ethically persuade audiences and evaluate arguments when others attempt to persuade you. We'll start with the basics by answering the question, "what is persuasion?"

9.2.1 Introducing Persuasive Speaking

Persuasion is "the process of creating, reinforcing, or changing people's beliefs or actions" (Lucas, 2015, p. 306). Persuasion is important in all communication processes and contexts—interpersonal, professional, digital—and it's something that you do every day. Convincing a friend to go see the latest movie instead of staying in to watch TV; giving your instructor a reason to give you an extension on an assignment; writing a cover letter and resume and going through an interview for a job—all of these and so many more are examples of persuasion. In fact, it is hard to think of life without the everyday give-and-take of persuasion. In each example listed, Lucas's definition of persuasion is being implemented: you are asking a person or group to agree with your main idea.

When using persuasion in a public speech, the goal is to create, change, or reinforce a belief or action by addressing community problems or controversies. Remember that public speaking is a long-standing type of civic engagement; when we publicly speak, we are participating in democratic deliberation. **Deliberation**, or the process of discussing feasible choices that address community problems, is important in resolving community concerns because it allows all perspectives to be considered. **Persuasive speaking** means addressing a public controversy and advocating for a perspective that the speaker hopes the audience will adopt. If the issue isn't publicly controversial – if everyone agrees or if there are not multiple perspectives – you are not persuading. You're informing.

So, what's a public controversy? **Public controversies** are community disputes that affect a large number of people. Because they involve a large number of people, public controversies often have multiple perspectives, leading to public deliberation and debate to resolve each dispute.

We experience public controversies daily. Through our social media feeds, we continuously scroll past shared articles, comments, or posts that provide different perspectives on community problems and potential solutions. You might, for example, join your local neighborhood (or dorm) Facebook group where neighbors share information and collaborate on solutions to specific problems

facing the community. Each problem has consequences for different neighbors, and Facebook allows a space to deliberate and organize to address community priorities. They are controversial, however, because not all neighbors agree what which problems should be solved first or what those solutions are.

Sadly, there is no shortage of public controversies, and advocating for solutions to key community problems can feel overwhelming.

"How do I figure out *one* controversy to speak out about?" you may wonder.

Pro-Tip: Use Chapter 3 as a guide to brainstorming and conducting exploratory research around controversies.

Identify public controversies by listening and engaging with your community. What issues are affecting them? What are priorities? Once you're able to locate a key community dispute, ask yourself:

- **What is it?** What is the problem? Are there more than 1? Is this the key problem or are there other hidden issues?
- **What is the impact?** What will happen if the problem is not resolved?
- **Who's affected?** Who's being affected or implicated by this problem? Who are the audiences or stakeholders affected? Are the stakeholders a part of my formal audience?
- **What can solve it?** Are there suggested solutions?

Controversies arise when a community experiences a problem, so your job is to decipher the breadth and depth of that problem. It's impossible to address all issues in one speech, so researching and prioritizing are key to identifying what advocacy you find most urgent. For any controversy that you can address in a persuasive speech, keep context and power in mind.

9.2.1.1 Context

Your public speaking context always informs what's possible to accomplish during a speech. Like we outlined in Chapter 1, the public speaking context refers to both the physical space and cultural context.

The physical context will influence how much information you can provide to your audience. In other words, "Do I have time to talk about this issue?" "What is the most essential information to cover in a limited timeframe?" The broader cultural context can help you in situating your advocacy alongside other community conversations. What else is happening? Have other communities experienced this problem?

9.2.1.2 Power

As persuasive speakers, you are attempting to influence an audience. What you select and how you present that information will alter how audiences understand the world, and that's a pretty powerful thought. When you select an advocacy that addresses a public controversy, you are asking the audience to trust your perspective. To uphold that trust, it's key to examine who is empowered or disempowered by our perspective.

When you're considering a position toward a public controversy, you might ask, who's empowered or disempowered by this problem? Who's left out of the research? How are communities being represented? What am I assuming about those communities? Who is affected by my advocacy?

We can be well-meaning in our advocacies, especially when we select a persuasive insight based on our own experience. We become passionate about issues that we have seen, and that's OK! Such passion can also, however, mean that we represent information in ways that are stereotypical or lead to the disempowerment of others.

If your city, for example, is deciding where to place a landfill, you may advocate against the plant being placed in your neighborhood. That advocacy, on face, makes sense!

"This will reduce our property values and just be plain stinky," you might argue.

When we think about the issue reflexively and with power in mind, however, we may find that landfills are much more likely to be placed in neighborhoods that are predominant people of color (Massey, 2004). Advocating against placing the plant in your home may inadvertently mean the plant is placed in more vulnerable neighborhoods. Those neighbors become disempowered in your attempt to empower your own community.

In this example, practicing reflexivity might include asking: What are the potential solutions? What options do I have to avoid disempowering groups? Using sound research skills, considering other alternatives or perspectives, and listening can be mechanisms to answer these inquiries

There are no easy answers, but we are confident that you can select advocacies that are meaningful and worthwhile.

9.2.2 Formulating Persuasive Propositions

Once you feel comfortable and confident about a controversial issue that is ethical, timely and contextually relevant, you will need to identify what type of persuasive proposition that you'll use in your speech. There are three types of persuasive propositions: propositions of fact, value, or policy. Each type will require different approaches and may have different persuasive outcomes for your audience.

9.2.2.0.1 Propositions of Fact

Propositions of fact answer the question, "is this true?" Speeches with this type of proposition attempt to establish the truth of a statement. There is not a sense of what is morally right and wrong or what should be done about the issue, only that a statement is supported by evidence or not.

These propositions are not facts like "the chemical symbol for water is H20" or "Barack Obama won the presidency in 2008." Propositions or claims of fact are advocacies with evidence on different sides and/or spark disagreement. Some examples of propositions of fact are:

- *Converting to solar energy can save homeowners money.*
- *John F. Kennedy was assassinated by Lee Harvey Oswald working alone.*
- *Coal exacerbates global warming.*
- *Climate change has been caused by human activity.*
- *Granting tuition tax credits to the parents of children who attend private schools will perpetuate educational inequity.*
- *Watching violence on television causes violent behavior in children.*
- *William Shakespeare did not write most of the plays attributed to him.*
- *John Doe committed the crime of which he is accused.*

Notice that no values—good or bad—are explicitly mentioned. The point of these propositions is to prove with evidence the truth of a statement, not its inherent value. Your goal is to persuade the audience to update their understanding or belief about the topic in question. Because you are likely not asking the audience to overtly act, it's necessary to embed arguments that highlight how or why this factual information is meaningful for them or how the factual statement resolves a public controversy.

Propositions of fact are meaningful persuasive claims when new evidence or scientific observations arise that your audience may not know. Facts, statistics, definitions, or expert testimony are common evidence types for these propositions.

9.2.2.0.1 Propositions of Value

Propositions of value argue that something is good/bad or right/wrong. When the proposition has a word such as good, bad, best, worst, just, unjust, ethical, unethical, moral, immoral, advantageous or disadvantageous, it is a proposition of value. Some examples include:

- *Hybrid cars are the best form of automobile transportation available today.*
- *Homeschooling is more beneficial for children than traditional schooling.*
- *The War in Iraq was not justified.*
- *The United States is not the greatest country on earth.*
- *Capital punishment is morally wrong.*
- *White supremacy is wrong.*
- *Mascots that involve Native American names, characters, and symbols are demeaning.*
- *A vegan diet is the healthiest one for adults.*

Communication is a key vehicle in understanding values because communication is how communities collectively determine what is right or wrong. Because values are culturally-situated and not universal, as a speaker, you must ground and describe what value or moral judgement you're utilizing. If a war is unjustified, what makes a war "just" or "justified" in the first place? What makes a form of transportation "best" or "better" than another? Isn't that a matter of personal approach? For different people, "best" might mean "safest," "least expensive," "most environmentally responsible," "most stylish," "powerful," or "prestigious."

Effective propositions of value rely on shared beliefs held by your audience. Developing confidence about your audience will allow you to determine what value systems they rely on and how your proposition relies on similar belief systems. We'll talk more about appealing to your audience below.

9.2.2.0.1 Propositions of Policy

Policy propositions identify a solution to correct the problem. These propositions call for a change in policy (including those in a government, community, or school) or call for the audience to adopt a certain behavior.

Speeches with propositions of policy try to instigate the audience to act immediately, in the long-term, or alter their perspective on an issue. A few examples include:

- *Our state should require mandatory recertification of lawyers every ten years.*
- *The federal government should act to ensure clean water standards for all citizens.*
- *The state of Georgia should require drivers over the age of 75 to take a vision test and present a certificate of good health from a doctor before renewing their licenses.*
- *Wyeth Daniels should be the next governor of the state.*
- *The Supreme Court should rule that migrant detention centers are unconstitutional.*

These propositions are easy to identify because they almost always have the word “should” in them.

Many policy propositions advocate for a solution through a specific organization or government agency. In the examples above, the federal government, the state, and the Supreme Court are all listed as relevant actors to resolve the problem.

Alternatively, you could advocate for your audience to make specific behavioral changes that lead to solutions. If you’re addressing the consequences of climate change in your local community, do solutions require government or non-profit action? Could your audience make in-roads to reducing the negative effects of climate change alone? Thorough research will assist you in determining what actors – organizations or your audience—are best suited to implement your policy solution.

Policy propositions commonly embed a specific **call-to-action.** What should the audience do if they are persuading by your perspective? What actions can and should they take that can support your policy proposition? This can include “call your senator” (though more specificity is often helpful), but your call-to-action should be crafted with audience adaptation and information in mind.

Pro Tip: For topic development, remember insights from Chapter 12 — topics should be focused and unique.

9.2.3 Organizing Persuasive Propositions

Organization plays a key role in comprehending an argument. Chapter 6 on organizing provides you a nice starting place to decide which organizational pattern is best suited for different speech types. In this section, we discuss organizing persuasive speeches with a focus on propositions of policy.

Once you’ve identified your main argument, ask, “what organizational pattern best suits my argument?”

For propositions of fact or value, you might select a categorical organization. Essentially that means that you will have two to four discrete, separate arguments in support of the proposition. For example:

Proposition of Fact: Converting to solar energy can save homeowners money.

1. Solar energy reduces power bills.
2. Solar energy requires less money for maintenance.
3. Solar energy works when the power grid goes down.

For propositions of policy, the problem-solution organization pattern is commonly used. We do not typically feel any motivation to change unless we are convinced that some harm, problem, need, or deficiency exists, and even more, that it affects us personally. As the saying goes, “If it ain’t broke, why fix it?” In a problem-solution pattern, you can spend ample and organized time outlining the consequences to inaction, i.e. the problem.

Although a simple problem-solution organization is permissible for a speech of actuation, you will probably do well to utilize the more detailed format called **Monroe’s Motivated Sequence.**

This format, designed by Alan Monroe (1951), is based on John Dewey’s reflective thinking process to consider audience listening patterns. Monroe’s Motivated Sequence involves five steps, which should not be confused with the main points of the outline. Some steps in Monroe’s Motivated Sequence may take two points. Each step is described below:

- **Attention**. This is the introduction, where the speaker brings attention to the importance of the topic as well as their own credibility and connection to the topic.

- **Need.** Here the problem is defined and defended. It is important to make the audience see the severity of the problem, and how it affects them, their family, or their community. The harm or need can be physical, financial, emotional, educational, or social. It will have to be supported by evidence.
- **Satisfaction.** A need calls for satisfaction in the same way a problem requires a solution. Not only does the speaker present the solution and describe it, but they must defend that it works and will address the causes of the problem as well as the symptoms.
- **Visualization.** This step looks to the future either positively or negatively. If positive, the benefits from enacting or choosing the solution are shown. If negative, the disadvantages of not doing any-thing to solve the problem are shown.
- **Action**. In the action step, the goal is to give specific steps for the audience to take as soon as possible to move toward solving the problem. Whereas the satisfaction step explains the solution overall, the action step gives concrete ways to begin making the solution happen.

The more concrete you can make the action step, the better. Research shows that people are more likely to act if they know how accessible the action can be. For example, if you want students to be vaccinated against the chicken pox virus (after establishing that it is a key public controversy), you can give them directions to and hours for a clinic or health center where vaccinations at a free or discounted price can be obtained.

With any organizational pattern selected, it's imperative to group your main points around clear claims that are supported with evidence and explained with a warrant. As you develop your persuasive arguments, stay appraised of who your audience is and best practices for persuasion.

9.2.4 Developing the Persuasive Speech: Appealing to **an**Audience

Persuasion only occurs with an audience, so your main goal is to answer the question, "how do I persuade the audience to believe my proposition of fact, value, or policy?"

To accomplish this goal, identify your **target audience**—individuals who are willing to listen to your argument despite disagreeing, having limited knowledge, or lacking experience with your advocacy. Because persuasion involves change, you are targeting individuals who have not yet changed their beliefs in favor of your argument.

The **persuasive continuum** (Figure 13.1) is a tool that allows you to visualize your audience's relationship with your topic.

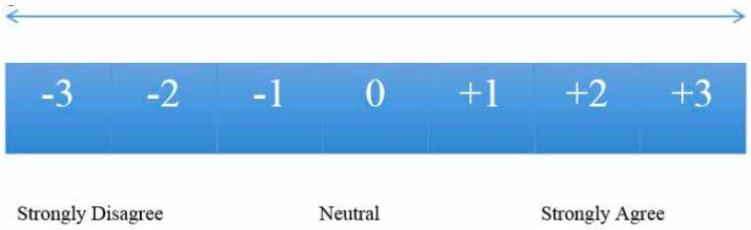


Figure 13.1

The persuasive continuum views persuasion as a line going both directions. Your audience members, either as a group or individually, are sitting somewhere on that line in reference to your thesis statement, claim, or proposition.

For example, your proposition might be, "The main cause of climate change is human activity." In this case, you are not denying that natural forces, such as volcanoes, can affect the climate, but you are claiming that human pollution is the central force behind global warming. To be an effective persuasive speaker, one of your first jobs is determining where your audience "sits" on the continuum.

+3 means strongly agree to the point of making lifestyle choices to lessen climate change (such as riding a bike instead of driving a car, recycling, eating certain kinds of foods).
+2 means agree but not to the point of acting upon it.
+1 as mildly in favor of your proposition; that is, they think it's probably true but the issue doesn't affect them personally.
0 means neutral, no opinion, or feeling uninformed enough to make a decision.
-1 means mildly opposed to the proposition but willing to listen to those with whom they disagree.
-2 means disagreement to the point of dismissing the idea pretty quickly.
-3 means strong opposition to the point that the concept of climate change itself is not even listened to or acknowledged as a valid subject.

Since everyone in the audience is somewhere on this line or continuum, persuasion means moving them to the right, somewhere closer to +3.

Your topic will inform which strategy you use to move your audience along the continuum. If you are introducing an argument that the audience lacks knowledge in, you are moving an audience from 0 to +1, +2, or +3. The audience's attitude will be a 0 because they have no former opinion or experience.

Thinking about persuasion as a continuum has three benefits:

- You can visualize and quantify where your audience lands on the continuum
- You can accept the fact that any movement toward +3 or to the right is a win.
- You can see that trying to change an audience from -3 to +3 in one speech is just about impossible. Therefore, you will need to take a reasonable approach. In this case, if you knew most of the audience was at -2 or -3, your speech would be about the science behind climate change in order to open their minds to its possible existence. However, that audience is not ready to hear about its being caused mainly by humans or what action should be taken to reverse it.

As you identify where your target audience sits on the continuum, you can dig deeper to determine what values, attitude, or beliefs would prohibit individuals from supporting the proposition or values, attitudes, or beliefs that support your proposition. At the same time, avoid language that assumes stereotypical beliefs about the audience.

Throwback: Use Chapter 2 to dig deeper into audience values, beliefs, and attitudes.

For example, your audience may value higher education and believe that education is useful for critical thinking skills. Alternatively, you may have an audience that values work experience and believes that college is frivolous and expensive. Being aware of these differing values will deepen your persuasive content by informing what evidence or insights to draw on and upon for each audience type.

Once you're confident about where your audience is on the continuum and what values they hold, you can select the appropriate **rhetorical appeals** – ethos, pathos, and logos—to motivate your audience toward action. Yes, we've discussed these rhetorical appeals before, but they are particularly useful in persuasive speaking, so let's re-cap.

Ethos is the influence of speaker credentials and character in a speech. Ethos is achieved through citing reliable, authoritative sources, strong arguments, showing awareness of the audience, and effective delivery.

Pathos means using the emotions such as love, anger, joy, hate, desire for community to persuade the audience of the rightness of a proposition.

Finally, logos refers to the organized and logical arguments that are used to support a claim.

So, what do these mean in practice? Suppose that your speech is trying to motivate the audience to support expanding bus routes on your campus. Use Table 13.2 to track the use of rhetorical appeals.

Using Rhetorical Appeals		
Ethos	**Pathos**	**Logos**
"On days with poor weather, rain, or snow, many of you are like me, waiting in a pile up of students to catch the campus bus. As one of those students…" "After speaking with the transportation department on campus…"	"Imagine yourself at the bus stop. Waiting. Your clock ticks as missing class becomes a vivid thought. As more time passes, your heart races, knowing you'll miss a big test with no late work."	"In a study conducted by transportation department on campus, 63% of students reported that unpredictable and slow buses led to missing class."

Table 13.2

In sum, the audience plays a central role in persuasion, so staying tuned-in to audience beliefs and expectations is key.

9.2.5 Barriers to Effective Persuasive Speaking

Persuasive speaking can provide opportunities to advocate for important community solutions. But persuasion is really difficult, and there are often barriers to effectively persuading our audience to change their beliefs or act in a new way.

Persuasion is hard because we have a bias against change. As much as we hear statements like “The only constant is change” or “Variety is the spice of life,” the evidence from research and from our personal experience shows that, in reality, we do not like change. Recent risk aversion research, for example, found that humans are concerned more with what we lose than what we gain. Change is often seen as a loss of something rather than a gain of something else, and that’s stressful. We do not generally embrace things that bring us stress.

Given our aversion to change, audiences often go out of their way to protect their beliefs, attitudes, and values. We (as audience members) selectively expose ourselves to messages that we already agree with, rather than those that confront or challenge us. This selective exposure is especially seen in choices of mass media that individuals listen to, watch, and read. Not only do we selectively expose ourselves to information, we selectively attend to, perceive, and recall information that supports our existing viewpoints (referred to a **selective recall**).

This principle led Leon Festinger (1957) to form the theory of **cognitive dissonance**, which states, among other ideas, that when we are confronted with conflicting information or viewpoints, we reach a state of dissonance, or tension between ideas and beliefs. It often occurs when we’re presented information that’s out of line with our values or experiences. This state can be very uncomfortable, and we will do things to get rid of the dissonance and maintain “consonance.” We don’t want to accept that our beliefs may be wrong or inconsistent; we want to remain harmonious.

In a sense, not changing can outweigh very logical reasons to change. For example, you probably know a friend who will not wear a seatbelt in a car. You can say to your friend, “Don’t you know that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (2009) says, and I quote, ‘1,652 lives could be saved and 22,372 serious injuries avoided each year on America’s roadways if seat belt use rates rose to 90 percent in every state’?” What will your friend probably say, even though you have cited a credible source?

They will come up with some reason for not wearing it, even something as dramatic as “I knew a guy who had a cousin who was in an accident and the cop said he died because he *was* wearing his seatbelt.” They may even say, “Well I am a good driver, so you only need seat belts if you’re driving poorly.” You may have had this conversation, or one like it. Their argument may be less dramatic, such as “I don’t like how it feels” or “I don’t like the government telling me what to do in my car.” For your friend, the argument for wearing a seat belt is not as strong as the argument against it, at least at this moment. Ideally, at least for a public speaker, the dissonance is relieved or resolved by being persuaded (changed) to a new belief, attitude, or behavior.

So, what is a speaker to do to overcome these barriers? We suggest making reasonable requests, articulating the benefits or consequences, and answering oppositional arguments.

9.2.5.1 Make Reasonable Requests

Setting reasonable persuasive goals is the first way to meet audience resistance. Look back to the persuasive continuum scale in Figure 13.1. Trying to move an audience from -3 to +2 or +3 is too big a move. Since change is resisted, we do not make many large or major changes in our lives. We do, however, make smaller, concrete, step-by-step or incremental changes every day. Even moving someone from -3 to -2 is progress, and over time these small shifts can eventually result in a significant amount of persuasion. Aim small, especially within a time constraint, and work to find future room to build.

9.2.5.2 Focus on Benefits and Consequences

When problems aren’t resolved, there are consequences. When problems are resolved, there are positive benefits for the community. Because you are asking the audience to change something, they must view the benefits of acting as worth the stress of the change. A speaker should be able to engage the audience at the level of needs, wants, and values as well as logic and evidence.

Identify the benefits, advantages, or improvements that would happen for the audience members who enacted your advocacy. If you do good audience analysis, you know that audiences are asking, “What’s in it for me?” “Why do I need this?”

Alternatively, you could outline the short and long-term consequences of inaction and detail how the problem would negatively affect the audience and/or their community. In other words, you’re identifying what would occur if the audience does nothing; if they choose not to act. Using Monroe’s Motivated Sequences can assist in organizing these arguments.

9.2.5.3 Answer Oppositional Arguments

During a persuasive speech, audience members are holding a mental dialogue, and they are thinking through rebuttals or oppositional arguments to your advocacy. These mental dialogues could be called the "yeah-buts"—the audience members are saying in their minds, "Yeah, I see what you are arguing, but—". Reservations can be very strong, since, again, our human bias is to be loss averse and not to change our actions or beliefs.

If you're advocating a claim that humans are the primary cause of climate change, your audience may think, "yeah, but these consequences won't happen for a long time," or "yeah, but we have time to resolve these problems."

As a speaker, address these! Refute the arguments that may prohibit your audience from changing.

It's common to call oppositional arguments "misconceptions," "myths," or "mistaken ideas" that are widely held about the proposition. You may answer oppositional arguments around climate change by saying, "One common misconception about climate change is that we won't see the negative impacts for decades. A recent study determined that consequences are already upon us."

After acknowledging oppositional arguments and seeking to refute or rebut the reservations, you must also provide evidence for your refutation. Ultimately, this will show your audience that you are aware of both sides of the issue you are presenting and make you a more credible speaker.

9.2.6 Understanding and Avoiding Fallacies

So far, we've discussed persuasive speaking and strategies to move your audience along the persuasive continuum. Motivating your audience to change, however, must be done ethically while using good reasons.

In Chapter 5, we began discussing best practices in constructing arguments. In this section, we dive deeper into reasoning by highlighting a common pitfall: the use of **fallacies**— erroneous conclusions or statements made from poor analyses. There are actually dozens upon dozens of fallacies, and we identify 9 common fallacies below.

9.2.6.1 False Cause

False cause is a fallacy that assumes that one thing causes another, but there is no logical connection between the two. In a false cause fallacy, the alleged cause might not be strong or direct enough. For example, there has been much debate over the causes of the recession in 2008. If someone said, "The exorbitant salaries paid to professional athletes contributed to the recession" that would be the fallacy of false cause. Why? For one thing, the salaries, though large, are an infinitesimal part of the whole economy. Second, those salaries only affect a small number of people. A cause must be direct and strong, not just something that occurred before a problem arose.

9.2.6.2 Slippery Slope

A **slippery slope** fallacy is a type of false cause which assumes that taking a first step will lead to subsequent events that cannot be prevented. The children's book, *If You Give a Moose a Muffin*, is a good example of slippery slope; it tells all the terrible things (from a child's point of view) that will happen, one after another, if a moose is given a muffin. If A happens, then B will happen, then C, then D, then E, F, G and it will get worse and worse and before you know it, we will all be in some sort of ruin. So, don't do A or let A happen because it will inevitably lead to Z, and of course, Z is terrible.

This type of reasoning fails to look at alternate causes or factors that could keep the worst from happening, and often is somewhat silly when A is linked directly to Z. Slippery slope arguments are often used in discussions over emotional and hot button topics that are linked with strong values and beliefs. One might argue that "If guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns," a bumper sticker you may have seen. This is an example of a slippery slope argument because it is saying that any gun control laws will inevitably lead to no guns being allowed at all in the U.S. and then the inevitable result that only criminals will have guns because they don't obey gun control laws anyway.

In any instance where you're identifying potential consequences if action is or is not taken, credible evidence and ethical warrants are good checks against our tendency to slippery-slope to the audience.

9.2.6.3 Hasty Generalization

Making a **hasty generalization** means making a generalization with too few examples. It is so common that we might wonder if there are any legitimate generalizations. Consider this hastily generalized argument:

A college degree is unnecessary. For example, Mark Zuckerberg dropped out of college, invented Fac e book, and made billions of dollars. As this example demonstrates, dropping out of college leads to great financial success , so a complete degree is pointless.

The key to generalizations is how the conclusions are "framed" or put into language. The conclusions should be specific about the limited nature of the sample.

9.2.6.4 Straw Person

A **strawperson** fallacy is a fallacy that shows only the weaker side of an opponent's argument in order to more easily tear it down. The term "straw person" brings up the image of a scarecrow, and that is the idea behind the expression. Even a child can beat up a scarecrow; anyone can.

A straw person fallacy happens when an opponent in a debate misinterprets or takes a small part of their opponent's position in a debate and makes it a major part of the opponent's position. This is often done by ridicule, taking statements out of context, or misquoting.

Politicians, unfortunately, commit the straw person fallacy quite frequently. If someone states, "College A is not as good as College B because the cafeteria food at College A is not as good" is a pretty weak argument—and making too big of a deal over of a minor thing—for attending one college over another.

9.2.6.5 False Dilemma

False Dilemma is often referred to as the "either-or" fallacy. When you are given only two options, and more than two options exist, that is false dilemma. Usually in false dilemma, one of the options is undesirable and the other is the one the persuader wants you to take. False dilemma is common. "America: Love it or Leave It." "If you don't buy this furniture today, you'll never get another chance." "Vote for Candidate Y or see our nation destroyed."

9.2.6.6 Appeal to Tradition

Appealsto tradition is the argument that "We've always done it this way." This fallacy happens when traditional practice is the only reason for continuing a policy. Tradition is a great thing. We do many wonderful things for the sake of tradition, and it makes us feel good. But doing something only because it's always been done a certain way is not an argument.

You've likely experienced this through politicians. For example, if a politician says that we should support coal mining because "it's a great American tradition and we've coal mined for decades," it certainly highlights values inherent within the speaker, but it's a fallacy.

9.2.6.7 Bandwagon

This fallacy, the **bandwagon**, is also referred to as "appeal to majority" and "appeal to popularity," using the old expression of "get on the bandwagon" to support an idea. Bandwagon is a fallacy that asserts that because something is popular (or seems to be), it is therefore good, correct, or desirable.

You've probably heard that "Everybody is doing it" or "more than 50% of the population supports this idea." Just because 50% of the population is engaging in an activity does not make that a wise choice based on sound reasoning. Historically, 50% of the population believed or did something that was not good or right. In a democracy we make public policy to some extent based on majority rule, but we also have protections for the minority or other vulnerable populations. This is a wonderful part of our system. It is sometimes foolish to say that a policy is morally right or wrong or wise just because it is supported by 50% of the people.

9.2.6.8 Red Herring

A herring is a fish, and it was once used to throw off or distract foxhounds from a particular scent. A **red herring**, then, is creating a diversion or introducing an irrelevant point to distract someone or get someone off the subject of the argument. When a politician in a debate is asked about their stance on immigration, and the candidate responds, "I think we need to focus on reducing the debt. That's the real problem!." they are introducing a red herring to distract from the original topic under discussion.

9.2.6.9 Ad Hominem

This is a fallacy that attacks the person rather than dealing with the real issue in dispute. A person using **ad hominem** connects a real or perceived flaw in a person's character or behavior to an issue he or she supports, asserting that the flaw in character makes the position on the issue wrong. Obviously, there is no connection. In a sense, ad hominem is a type of red herring because it

distracts from the real argument. In some cases, the “hidden agenda” is to say that because someone of bad character supports an issue or argument, therefore the issue or argument is not worthy or logical.

A person using ad hominem might say, “Climate change is not true. It is supported by advocates such as Congressperson Jones, and we all know that Congressperson Jones was convicted of fraud last year.” This is not to say that Congressperson Jones should be re-elected, only that climate change’s being true or false is irrelevant to their fraud conviction. Do not confuse ad hominem with poor credibility or ethos. A speaker’s ethos, based on character or past behavior, does matter. It just doesn’t mean that the issues they support are logically or factually wrong.

9.2.6.10 Section Summary

Fallacies reduce good reasoning and they weaken your argument. To avoid fallacies, think critically about what evidence is being used, and if your claim and warrant are reasonable explanations and articulations of that evidence. A key way to avoid fallacies is to double and triple check your evidence to make sure that a) the evidence is credible, b) there is enough evidence to support your claim, and c) you have explained the evidence using good reasons.

9.2.7 Conclusion

Persuasive speaking is an opportunity to share a passion or cause that you believe will matter to society and help the audience live a better life. Even if you are initially uncomfortable with the idea of persuasion, we use it all the time in different ways. Choose your topic based on your own commitment and experience, look for quality evidence, craft your proposition so that it will be clear and audience appropriate, and put the finishing touches on it with an eye toward enhancing your logos, ethos, and pathos.

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9.2.1: Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning (also called "induction") is probably the form of reasoning we use on a more regular basis. Induction is sometimes referred to as "reasoning from example or specific instance," and indeed, that is a good description. It could also be referred to as "bottom-up" thinking. Inductive reasoning is sometimes called "the scientific method," although you don't have to be a scientist to use it, and use of the word "scientific" gives the impression it is always right and always precise, which it is not. In fact, we are just as likely to use inductive logic incorrectly or vaguely as we are to use it well.

Inductive reasoning happens when we look around at various happenings, objects, behavior, etc., and see patterns. From those patterns we develop conclusions. There are four types of inductive reasoning, based on different kinds of evidence and logical moves or jumps.

9.2.1.1 Generalization

Generalization is a form of inductive reasoning that draws conclusions based on recurring patterns or repeated observations. Vocabulary.com (2016) goes one step further to state it is "the process of formulating general concepts by abstracting common properties of instances." To generalize, one must observe multiple instances and find common qualities or behaviors and then make a broad or universal statement about them. If every dog I see chases squirrels, then I would probably generalize that all dogs chase squirrels.

If you go to a certain business and get bad service once, you may not like it. If you go back and get bad treatment again, you probably won't go back again because you have concluded "Business X always treats its customers badly." However, according to the laws of logic, you cannot really say that; you can only say, "In my experience, Business X treats its customers badly" or more precisely, "has treated me badly." Additionally, the word "badly" is imprecise, so to be a valid conclusion to the generalization, badly should be replaced with "rudely," "dishonestly," or "dismissively." The two problems with generalization are over-generalizing (making too big an inductive leap, or jump, from the evidence to the conclusion) and generalizing without enough examples (hasty generalization, also seen in stereotyping).

In the example of the service at Business X, two examples are really not enough to conclude that "Business X treats customers rudely." The conclusion does not pass the logic test for generalization, but pure logic may not influence whether or not you patronize the business again. Logic and personal choice overlap sometimes and separate sometimes. If the business is a restaurant, it could be that there is one particularly rude server at the restaurant, and he happened to wait on you during both of your experiences. It is possible that everyone else gets fantastic service, but your generalization was based on too small a sample.

Inductive reasoning through generalization is used in surveys and polls. If a polling organization follows scientific sampling procedures (sample size, ensuring different types of people are involved, etc.), it can conclude that their poll indicates trends in public opinion. Inductive reasoning is also used in science. We will see from the examples below that inductive reasoning does not result in certainty. Inductive conclusions are always open to further evidence, but they are the best conclusions we have now.

For example, if you are a coffee drinker, you might hear news reports at one time that coffee is bad for your health, and then six months later that another study shows coffee has positive effects on your health. Scientific studies are often repeated or conducted in different ways to obtain more and better evidence and make updated conclusions. Consequently, the way to disprove inductive reasoning is to provide contradictory evidence or examples.

9.2.1.2 Causal reasoning

Instead of looking for patterns the way generalization does, **causal reasoning** seeks to make cause-effect connections. Causal reasoning is a form of inductive reasoning we use all the time without even thinking about it. If the street is wet in the morning, you know that it rained based on past experience. Of course, there could be another cause—the city decided to wash the streets early that morning—but your first conclusion would be rain. Because causes and effects can be so multiple and complicated, two tests are used to judge whether the causal reasoning is valid.

Good inductive causal reasoning meets the tests of directness and strength. The alleged cause must have a direct relationship on the effect and the cause must be strong enough to make the effect. If a student fails a test in a class that he studied for, he would need to examine the causes of the failure. He could look back over the experience and suggest the following reasons for the failure:

1. He waited too long to study.
2. He had incomplete notes.

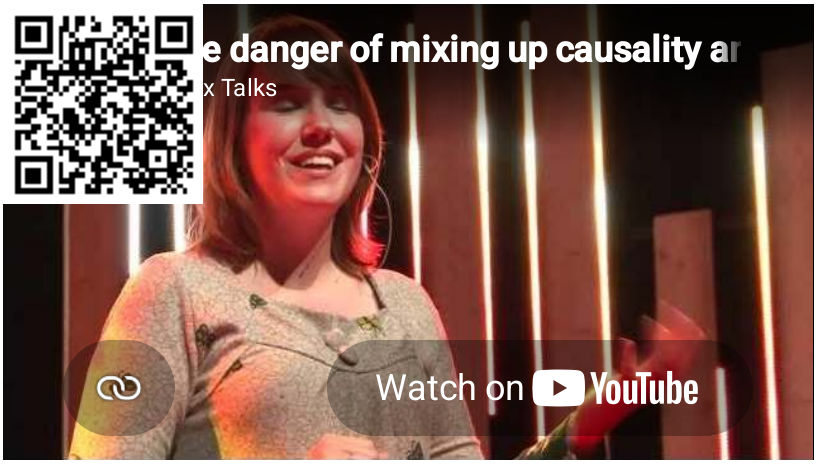
3. He didn't read the textbook fully.
4. He wore a red hoodie when he took the test.
5. He ate pizza from Pizza Heaven the night before.
6. He only slept four hours the night before.
7. The instructor did not do a good job teaching the material.
8. He sat in a different seat to take the test.
9. His favorite football team lost its game on the weekend before.

Which of these causes are direct enough and strong enough to affect his performance on the test? All of them might have had a slight effect on his emotional, physical, or mental state, but all are not strong enough to affect his knowledge of the material if he had studied sufficiently and had good notes to work from. Not having enough sleep could also affect his attention and processes more directly than, say, the pizza or football game. We often consider "causes" such as the color of the hoodie to be superstitions ("I had bad luck because a black cat crossed my path").

Taking a test while sitting in a different seat from the one where you sit in class has actually been researched (Sauffley, Otaka, & Bavaresco, 1985), as has whether sitting in the front or back affects learning (Benedict & Hoag, 2004). (In both cases, the evidence so far says that they do not have an impact, but more research will probably be done.) From the list above, #1-3, #6, and #7 probably have the most direct effect on the test failure. At this point our student would need to face the psychological concept of locus of control, or responsibility—was the failure on the test mostly his doing, or his instructor's?



Causal reasoning is susceptible to four fallacies: historical fallacy, slippery slope, false cause, and confusing correlation and causation. The first three will be discussed later, but the last is very common, and if you take a psychology or sociology course, you will study correlation and causation well. This video of a Ted Talk (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B271L3NtAw) will explain the concept in an entertaining manner. Confusing correlation and causation is the same as confusing causal reasoning and sign reasoning, discussed below.



9.2.1.3 Sign Reasoning

Right now, as one of the authors is writing this chapter, the leaves on the trees are turning brown, the grass does not need to be cut every week, and geese are flying towards Florida. These are all signs of fall in this region. These signs do not make fall happen, and they don't make the other signs— cooler temperatures, for example—happen. All the signs of fall are caused by one thing: the rotation of the earth and its tilt on its axis, which make shorter days, less sunshine, cooler temperatures, and less chlorophyll in the leaves, leading to red and brown colors.

It is easy to confuse signs and causes. **Sign reasoning**, then, is a form of inductive reasoning in which conclusions are drawn about phenomena based on events that precede or co-exist with, but not cause, a subsequent event. Signs are like the correlation mentioned above under causal reasoning. If someone argues, “In the summer more people eat ice cream, and in the summer there is statistically more crime. Therefore, eating more ice cream causes more crime!” (or “more crime makes people eat more ice cream.”), that, of course, would be silly. These are two things that happen at the same time—signs—but they are effects of something else – hot weather. If we see one sign, we will see the other. Either way, they are signs or perhaps two different things that just happen to be occurring at the same time, but not causes.

9.2.1.4 Analogical reasoning

As mentioned above, **analogical reasoning** involves comparison. For it to be valid, the two things (schools, states, countries, businesses) must be truly alike in many important ways–essentially alike. Although Harvard University and your college are both institutions of higher education, they are not essentially alike in very many ways. They may have different missions, histories, governance, surrounding locations, sizes, clientele, stakeholders, funding sources, funding amounts, etc. So it would be foolish to argue, “Harvard has a law school; therefore, since we are both colleges, my college should have a law school, too.” On the other hand, there are colleges that are very similar to your college in all those ways, so comparisons could be valid in those cases.

You have probably heard the phrase, “that is like comparing apples and oranges.” When you think about it, though, apples and oranges are more alike than they are different (they are both still fruit, after all). This observation points out the difficulty of analogical reasoning—how similar do the two “things” have to be for there to be a valid analogy? Second, what is the purpose of the analogy? Is it to prove that State College A has a specific program (sports, Greek societies, a theatre major), therefore, College B should have that program, too? Are there other factors to consider? Analogical reasoning is one of the less reliable forms of logic, although it is used frequently.

To summarize, inductive or bottom-up reasoning comes in four varieties, each capable of being used correctly or incorrectly. Remember that inductive reasoning is disproven by counter evidence and its conclusions are always up to revision by new evidence–what is called “tentative,” because the conclusions might have to be revised. Also, the conclusions of inductive reasoning should be precisely stated to reflect the evidence.

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9.2.2: Deductive Reasoning

The second type of reasoning is called **deductive reasoning**, or deduction, a type of reasoning in which a conclusion is based on the combination of multiple premises that are generally assumed to be true. It has been referred to as "reasoning from principle," which is a good description. It can also be called "top-down" reasoning. However, you should not think of deductive reasoning as the opposite of inductive reasoning. They are two different ways of thinking about evidence.

First, formal deductive reasoning employs the **syllogism**, which is a three-sentence argument composed of a major premise (a generalization or principle that is accepted as true), a minor premise (an example of the major premise), and a conclusion. This conclusion has to be true if the major and minor premise are true; it logically follows from the first two statements. Here are some examples. The most common one you may have seen before.

All men are mortal. (Major premise: something everyone already agrees on)

Socrates is a man. (Minor premise: an example taken from the major premise.)

Socrates is mortal. (Conclusion: the only conclusion that can be drawn from the first two sentences.)

Major Premise: All State College students must take COMM 1110.

Minor Premise: Brittany is a State College student.

Conclusion: Brittany must take COMM 1110.

Major Premise: All dogs have fur.

Minor Premise: Fifi is a dog.

Conclusion: Fifi has fur.

Of course, at this point you may have some issues with these examples. First, Socrates is already dead and you did not need a syllogism to know that. The Greek philosopher lived 2,400 years ago! Second, these seem kind of obvious. Third, are there some exceptions to "All Dalton State College students must take COMM 1110"? Yes, there are; some transfer students do not, and certificate students do not. Finally, there are breeds of dogs that are hairless. Some people consider them odd-looking, but they do exist. So while it is true that all men are mortal, it is not absolutely and universally true that all State College students must complete COMM 1110 or that all dogs have fur.

Consequently, the first criterion for syllogisms and deductive reasoning is that the premises have to be true for the conclusion to be true, even if the method is right. A right method and untrue premises will not result in a true conclusion. Equally, true premises with a wrong method will also not result in true conclusions. For example:

Major premise: All dogs bark.

Minor premise: Fifi barks.

Conclusion: Fifi is a dog.

You should notice that the minor premise is stated incorrectly. We know other animals bark, notably seals (although it is hard to think of a seal named "Fifi"). The minor premise would have to read "Fifi is a dog" to arrive at the logical conclusion, "Fifi barks." (Also, there are dog breeds that do not bark.) However, by restating the major premise, you have a different argument.

Major premise: Dogs are the only animals that wag their tails when happy.

Minor premise: Fifi wags her tail when happy.

Conclusion: Fifi is a dog.

Another term in deductive reasoning is an **enthymeme**. This odd word refers to a syllogism with one of the premises missing.

Major premise: (missing)

Minor premise: Daniel Becker is a chemistry major.

Conclusion: Daniel Becker will make a good SGA president.

What is the missing major premise? “Chemistry majors make good SGA presidents.” Why? Is there any support for this statement? Deductive reasoning is not designed to present unsupported major premises; its purpose is to go from what is known to what is not known in the absence of direct observation. If it is true that chemistry majors make good SGA presidents, then we could conclude Dan will do a good job in this role. But the premise, which in the enthymeme is left out, is questionable when put up to scrutiny.

Major premise: Socialists favor government-run health care.

Minor premise: (missing)

Conclusion: Candidate Fran Stokes favors government-run health care.

The missing statement in the minor premise, “Fran Stokes is a socialist,” is left out so that the audience can make the connection, even if it is erroneous. Consequently, it is best to avoid enthymemes with audiences and to be mindful of them when used by persuaders. They are mentioned here to make you aware of how commonly they are used as shortcuts. Enthymemes are common in advertising. You may have heard the slogan for Smucker’s jams, “With a name like Smucker’s, it has to be good.”

Major premise: Products with odd names are good products. (questionable!)

Minor premise: “Smucker’s” is an odd name.

Conclusion: Smucker’s is a good product.

To conclude, deductive reasoning helps us go from known to unknown and can lead to reliable conclusions if the premises and the method are correct. It has been around since the time of the ancient Greeks. It is not the flipside of inductive but a separate method of logic. While enthymemes are not always errors, you should listen carefully to arguments that use them to be sure that something incorrect is not being assumed or presented.



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SECTION OVERVIEW

9.3: Motivating Others to Action

9.3.1: Motivating Others to Action

9.3.2: Planning the Topic

9.3.3: Gain Attention

9.3.4: Need Step

9.3.5: Satisfaction Step

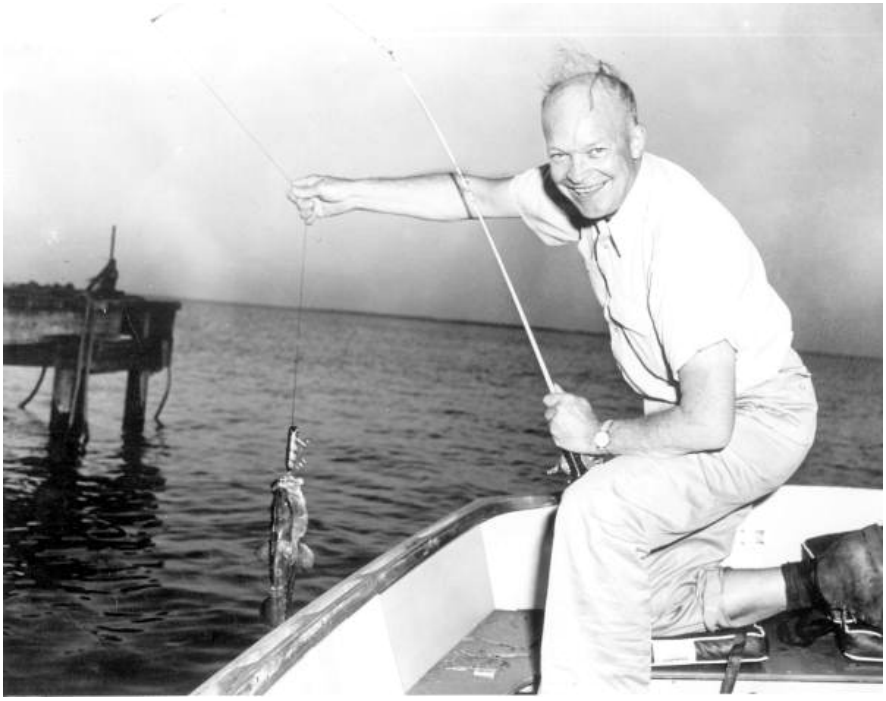
9.3.6: Visualization Step

9.3.7: Call to Action

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9.3.1: Motivating Others to Action

9.3.1.0.1



"Motivation is the art of getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it." —President **Dwight D. Eisenhower**

HomeIn the middle of the 1930s, Purdue University communication professor Alan H. Monroe began noticing that successful persuasive messages all shared a strangely common pattern. He defined "success" as instances where a speaker could motivate one or more listeners to take action, even in situations where it would seem that the listeners appeared to oppose the core of the message itself. Monroe examined the psychological principles of these successful messages and, from analysis of these messages, derived a five-step speaking process, affectionately named **Monroe's Motivated Sequence**. Evidence of this sequence can be found just about everywhere, from static display advertisements like billboards or print publication ads, to more active marketing such as television or internet commercials. Experts estimate that modern individuals living in an urban society subject themselves to anywhere from a conservative estimate of 300 to a more realistic estimate of 1,000 persuasive messages every single day (Gass & Seiter, 2019).

This five-step pattern shares similarities with the earlier pattern of speaking for the purpose of speaking to inform, which has an introduction, three main points, and a conclusion. Monroe's Motivated Sequence also contains an introduction, three main points, and a conclusion, but in using this specific method, each of these steps provides more direction and structure regarding what the speaker should address during each step. As a result, Monroe relabeled the five-step process as follows:

1. **Gain Attention**: This first step performs essentially the same function as the introduction discussed earlier in Chapter 6, but in a speech to motivate others to act, this step becomes even more critical. Failing to grab the audience's attention up front will limit the effectiveness of all subsequent steps.
2. **Present the Need**: Also referred to as the "problem" step, this establishes the first main point of the speech and immediately follows the introduction. In this step, the speaker presents a need to satisfy or a problem to solve. Show the audience the importance of the need and how it affects every listener.
3. **Satisfy the Need**: In the second main point, speakers should attempt to satisfy the need or present a solution to the problem framed in the first main point. They must show the audience not only how to apply the solution in a concrete, step-by-step fashion, but they must also show them that what they suggest will adequately satisfy the need or solve the problem.
4. **Visualization**: In the final main point, speakers verbally paint a picture of the benefits associated with their proposed solution to satisfy the need. Conversely, they may also present the consequences of not applying the solution should the audience choose to ignore the proposal.

5. **Call to Action**: Structured more or less the same way as in the speech to inform from Chapter 6, but this version incorporates a slight twist. The speaker should signal the end and recap each main points, but instead of concluding with a “clincher” that reinforces the central idea, the speech ends with a final call to action, where the speaker directly calls on the audience to act upon the presented solution.

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9.3.2: Planning the Topic

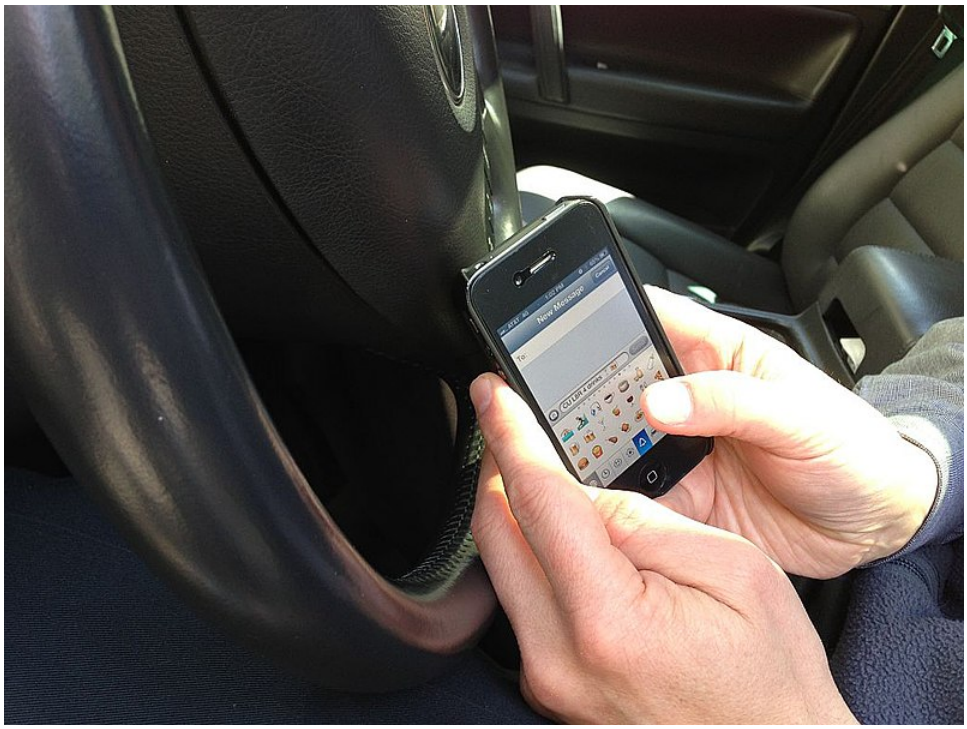
9.3.2.0.1

To examine each of these steps more closely, this chapter provides a sample speech topic to demonstrate how the principles of persuasion theory discussed in Chapter 11 apply to Monroe's Motivated Sequence as outlined above. Pretend a speaker wishes to deliver a speech to persuade audience members not to text and drive. After selecting a topic, the next step involves answering a number of questions that will help lay the groundwork for a persuasive strategy, and help compose significant portions of the speech.

Note to Self

Answering these questions can potentially help you head off a number of creative roadblocks later in the speechwriting process:

1. ***What is the action you want your audience to take?*** Answering this question prevents a disastrous public speaking occurrence from unfolding. By definition, a speech to motivate others to act necessitates the inclusion of an action, and if you do not have 100% clarity on what that action entails, then you will run into major difficulties later on. For example, you may be passionate about speaking out against the death penalty and may want to persuade your audience that it does not belong in a civilized society, but what action do you recommend the audience take? As written, the topic works as a speech to influence others' thoughts. If you had a petition for audience members to sign as a way to send a message to lawmakers, then it would become a speech to motivate others to act.



Example answer: I want my audience to stop texting and driving.

2. ***Home*Why do you want to deliver this speech?** By answering this question, you discover your motivation behind the speech. By understanding your motivation to deliver the speech, you can better understand what motivations you may want to use to tap into your audience's motivation. Answering this question also prepares you to establish your credibility within the Gain Attention (introduction) step.



Example answer: I was struck by a driver who was texting while driving, which resulted in my hospitalization and a six-month rehabilitation before I could walk again.

3. ***Why does your audience need to take the action you propose?*** Be careful with answering this question. Many novice speakers approach this question by describing the benefits to their proposed actions, but that only answers the "what" of the speech, not

the “why” motivating it. Benefits result from an action, they do not spark the driving force behind it; you need to understand the *need* behind your action. Ideally you will state this as the problem you will attempt to solve through the action you propose.



Example answer: Texting and driving, an all-too-common occurrence on roads today, drastically reduces driver attentiveness and creates life-altering hazardous driving conditions.

4. ***How will your audience satisfy this need?*** Answer this question with your concrete, step-by-step set of solutions to the problem you established as a need. State not only your solution, but also specifically how the audience will enact this solution. Be detailed and clear.



Example answer: To stop texting and driving, my listeners will need to shut off their phones whenever they start their cars, put them away in the trunk or glove compartment, or pair their phone with a compatible Bluetooth hands-free system before putting it out of sight.

5. ***If your action satisfies the need, then why is your audience not already doing it?*** Answering this question often guides the research approach for your proposed solution(s) and may require you to conduct an audience analysis survey. If you find your audience already does what you propose, then you may need to refine your topic.



Example answer: Using mobile technology to stay socially connected to others is remarkably addictive, and even the most moral person can find her or himself succumbing to the temptation of glancing down at a recently received notification.

6. ***What obstacles will likely prevent your audience from doing what you propose and what counterarguments could you raise against those objections?*** As mentioned in question 5 above, audience members likely have reasons for not enacting your proposed solution, so prepare for those arguments. As mentioned in Chapter 11, you must not allow potential objections to take root in your audience's minds, so you need to refute these objections early.



Example answer: "Checking a text only takes a second, and I'm a good driver." Refutation: "According to a recent study, the average person glances at their phone for 5 seconds to check a message, and the average crash happens within 3 seconds of driver distraction."

7. ***What are the benefits of doing what you ask?*** Identify the benefits early, before you even write the speech. This may require some research and even a little creativity, but task yourself to identify the most tantalizing benefits possible for your audience. Also, consider what benefits may matter most to your specific audience members. Think critically about where their priorities lie and what motivates them.



Example answer: The benefits of putting your phone away while driving go beyond staying safe, as you will be able to feel free from distraction and worry. You won't need to worry about your phone dinging every few seconds and feeling pressured to respond immediately. You will feel responsible and alert.

8. ***What are the consequences of your audience not acting on your proposed solution?*** Sometimes you may find covering the consequences of not listening to your advice can have far more impact than listing the benefits. Depending on the topic, you may struggle to list benefits, such as with the sample topic. In those instances, cover the negative aspects of the consequences individuals could face if they choose not to follow your proposed solution.



Example answer: Text messaging while driving puts you at a higher risk of getting into a serious crash. Nearly two million auto accidents a year are caused by texting and driving. According to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, texting while driving is six times more likely to cause an auto crash than driving when intoxicated.

By identifying all eight of these responses, speakers can complete nearly half or more of the work involved in composing a motivational speech. They can now confidently compose a specific purpose, such as "My specific purpose is to motivate my audience to stop texting while driving," as well as the central idea, such as "Texting and driving is dangerous, not only to yourself, but to all other drivers sharing the road with you." From here the speakers needs only to fill in the blanks of the outline and starting working on the details within each of the five steps: **Gain Attention**; **Need**; **Satisfaction**; **Visualization**; and **Call to Action**.

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9.3.3: Gain Attention

9.3.3.0.1



While the attention step served an important purpose in an informational speech by setting the tone and providing the audience with a reason to listen, it serves an even more critical role in the speech to motivate others to action. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, if this step does not capture the audience's attention, subsequent steps will not have the psychological effect needed to make the message persuasive. Fortunately, the introduction outlined in Chapter 6 shares the subcomponents of the Gain Attention step with this speech type:

- Grab attention
- Relate topic to audience
- Relate topic to self (establish credibility)
- State central idea and specific purpose
- Preview main points

Look at how the sample topic might look using this formula:

- **Grab attention**: *On February 19, 2011, a young girl named Ashley Jones-Davis was killed in a gruesome automobile accident. She was texting and driving when she swerved out of the center lane and drove head-on into a box truck. Ashley died on the scene. Since that time, her family has dedicated countless hours and emotional energy telling Ashley's story, because they don't want other families to go through the trauma and sense of loss they experienced.*
  - ***Notes***: This speech begins with a story that many can relate to, whether audience members consist of parents, students, women, or simply drivers who have texted while driving before. While brief, the story sets the stage for subsequent information by sharing a personal connection to the topic. This speaker could also show Ashley's photo, juxtaposed with a photo from the crash for added appeal to emotion.
- Home**Relate topic to audience**: *According to my audience survey, nearly 100% of you stated that you have read and/or answered a text while driving before. Though many of you stated that you try to save phone use for stoplights, statistics show that you are not alone. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than 11% of drivers on the road at any given time are distracted by phone use.*
  - ***Notes***: By appealing to the audience survey, this speaker connects directly to the people in the room, but then broadens out the appeal by relating statistics from a credible national organization.
- Home**Relate topic to self (establish credibility)**: *Two years ago, I saw my light turn green, and as I started to drive through the intersection, I was struck from the side by a driver who ran a red light because he was texting while driving. This accident not only totaled my car, but also resulted in extended hospitalization and a six-month rehabilitation before I could walk again.*

- ***Notes***: Copy and pasted from prep question 2 (Why do you want to deliver this speech?), this speaker clearly has a vested interest in sharing a story that motivates others to avoid texting and driving, but more than that, it also relates to the initial story and the statistics shared in the previous step, carefully weaving the three steps together with a common thread, adding to the flow of the message.

- **State central idea and specific purpose**: *Texting and driving is dangerous, not only to yourself, but to all other drivers sharing the road with you. Today, I would like to motivate you all to stop texting while driving before stories like mine and Ashley's become the norm, rather than the exception.*
  - ***Notes***: The central idea and specific purpose encapsulate the core of the speech's message, but they also tie together all threads present within the introduction so far.
- **HomePreview main points**: *I will show you how big of a problem texting and driving has become today* (**point #1**, Need step), *what you can do to stop it* (**point #2**, Satisfaction step), *and how you can personally benefit from doing so* (**point #3**, Visualization step).
  - ***Notes***: The speaker did not reveal too much information too soon, effectively sharing with the audience what they can expect to hear in the next few minutes or so and clue them in to the direction of the conversation.

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9.3.4: Need Step

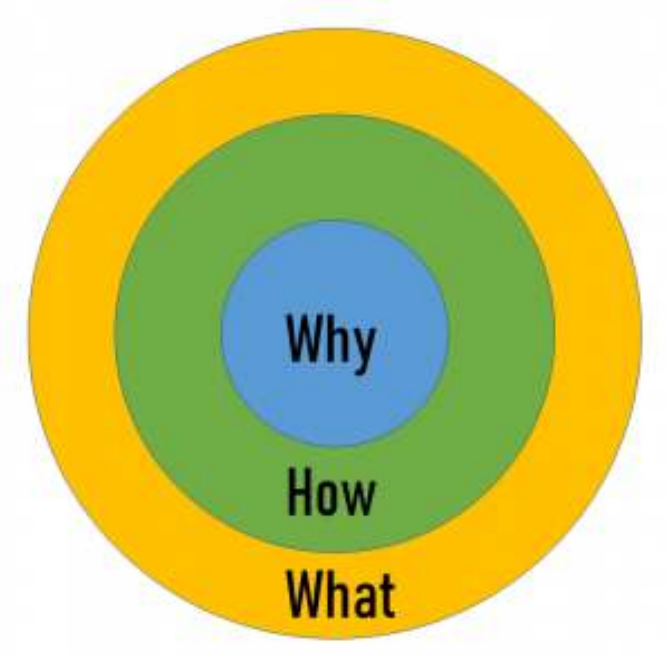
9.3.4.0.1

As opposed to the speech to inform, the first main point must serve as the **Need step**. Here speakers will frame a need for their audience so that they can follow it up with a satisfying solution (i.e., the action they will propose later in this speech). Also referred to as the "problem step," this main point involves explaining the *why* behind the proposed action.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: pb.libretexts.org/matter1/?p=476

HomeIn September of 2009, Simon Sinek, an author and speaker in business and leadership studies, gave a TEDx talk in the Seattle area, where he presented the idea of what he dubbed "The Golden Circle." To explain this, Sinek used the following diagram:



Using this model, Sinek explained that the majority of persuasive messages that people see, read, or hear on a regular basis work from the outside inward. They start with the *what*, or the result, and then explain the *how*, which represents their method or product, but stop there, expecting people to buy into their idea, their services, or their products. The examples Sinek used in his speech included: "Here's our newest model of SUV (*what*). It has dual airbags, great gas mileage, and looks sharp (*how*)." Sinek went on to explain that these messages fail because they come across as uninspiring. They do not tap into the decision-making center of the brain—the limbic system—because they fail to inspire or engage by explaining *why* people need to buy this product.

Sinek then went on to describe the model used by Apple, which uses a highly successful persuasive model because it works from the inside out. As a company, Apple's messages clearly begin with an explanation of *why* they conduct business by communicating with the world that, in everything they do, they believe in challenging the status quo and thinking differently. Only after Apple finishes explaining the *why* do they state that they achieve this goal by creating products that are beautifully designed, easy to operate, and challenge the limits of technology (*how*). Apple's message then ends with the *what* by showing its audiences the products they can expect to benefit their lives.

In motivating an audience to action, speakers must tap into their audience's *why* by explaining to them that a genuine and relatable need exists. They can complete this task by addressing the Need step in four components:

- Show the audience that a need or a problem exists and that it can and will affect each and every member of the audience in some way.
- Explain to the audience why it exists by providing context and history behind the need or problem. In other words, explain where the need arose and perhaps why nothing has been done about it until now.
- Demonstrate to the audience that this problem needs to be solved or this need must be addressed immediately—that it will not simply disappear on its own if left alone.
- Overcome potential objections. Why might the audience not believe that this need or problem affects them personally?

Returning to the example speech from earlier, the breakdown could look as follows:

9.3.4.0.0.1 Need Step

1. Texting and driving is an all too common occurrence on our roads today.
    1. Using mobile technology to stay socially connected to others is remarkably addictive, according to a study performed by Dr. David Greenfield, founder of the Center for Internet and Technology Addiction, when cell phone users compulsively check their devices it is in an effort to stimulate the brain's pleasure centers.
    2. In this way, cell phone use can be compared to gambling or gaming addictions, making even the most moral person succumb to the temptation of glancing down at a recently received notification.

Note: **This half of the Need step provides the audience with context and background, effectively setting up the problem. Additionally, it shows the audience that the problem will not go away.**

2. Texting and driving drastically reduces driver attentiveness and creates life-altering hazardous driving conditions.
    1. According to a recent study, the average person glances at their phone for 5 seconds to check a message, while the average texting-related crash occurs within only 3 seconds of driver distraction.
    2. According to the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, texting while driving is six times more likely to cause an auto crash than driving when intoxicated.

Note: **This half of the Need step relates the problem to the audience, while also demonstrating a severe and life-threatening need to address the problem immediately.**

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9.3.5: Satisfaction Step

9.3.5.0.1



Next comes the **Satisfaction step**, the second main point within the body of the motivational speech designed to elicit audience action. Here the speaker attempts to satisfy the need or solve the problem presented in the previous step. Demonstrate that the solution fully and adequately addresses that need or problem for every aspect of the problem or need that the speaker has presented up to this point.

Note to Self

For example, if you presented a need to cut down on fossil fuel usage because you painted a bleak picture of the Earth in 50 years resembling a toxic wasteland, then in this step, you must clearly and explicitly show how the audience's specific actions will avert such a scenario. It would not be enough to simply suggest the audience carpool or drive hybrid electric vehicles. If you make that suggestion, you would need to include credible research to show that this solution can reliably avert the problem you presented previously.

Avoid presenting a problem or a need that is larger than the solution can fulfill. Ensure that the Need step and the Satisfaction step complement one another perfectly.

Speakers should prepare themselves to address potential objections during this step. As with the eight preparation questions discussed at the beginning of this chapter, think of all the hurdles or barriers that might prevent audience members from adopting the proposed solution to the problem. Then, consider the best way to address and refute those objections *before* they have a chance to take root in the audience's minds.

Overcome objections by looking at the number of steps involved in enacting the solution. Think of the solution as a transaction, and find ways to make that transaction as easy and straightforward as possible.



For example, if a speaker wanted the audience to write letters to their senators and representatives, think of how this person could reduce the number of steps involved. To write such a letter, one must: 1) find the time to sit down and write; 2) compose the letter; 3) print the letter; 4) look up the address; 5) find an envelope; 6) address the envelope; 7) locate a stamp; 8) seal the envelope; and 9) drop it in the mailbox. Regardless of the speech's impact, audience members may stop trying at any of these nine steps due to the many distractions life can manifest. To reduce these specific steps,

the speaker could prewrite the letters for them, place them in preaddressed, stamped envelopes, hand them out to each audience member, and then instruct them to sign them and drop the envelopes in the mailbox after the speech.

Take a look back at the sample speech, and see how the Satisfaction step plays out:

9.3.5.0.0.1 Satisfaction Step

1. The first step in reducing and eliminating texting and driving is to increase your awareness of how much your phone's notification system controls you, and not the other way around.
    1. One way to do this is to instruct a partner to ride with you as a passenger and record the number of times you give in to the temptation of glancing at your phone.
    2. Another method involves the psychological technique of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), where you shut off your phone completely when you get into the car, and as you drive, regularly assess your anxiety levels out loud. For example, every mile or so, talk your way through the anxiety or discomfort you experience as you wonder what you might be missing.

Note: **This half of the Satisfaction step directly addresses the first half of the Need step, employing highly specific and guided actions to address the problem the speaker previously established.**

2. To stop texting and driving, we need to cut it off at the source, which involves shutting off our phones whenever we start our cars.
    1. In addition to shutting them off, I recommend putting them away in the trunk or glove compartment so that they are completely out of sight.
    2. If you have the option available to you, you could pair your phone with a compatible Bluetooth hands-free system before putting it out of sight.
    3. Being out of sight significantly reduces the temptation to use a phone while driving, as you will not be able to physically get to it.
    4. If you find yourself feeling the effects of "nomophobia" (the fear of being without your phone), simply remind yourself that anything anyone has to say to you can wait, as it is not worth your life, your safety, or the well-being of others around you.

Note: **This half of the Satisfaction step addresses the second half of the Need step by providing a concrete solution to the dangers presented earlier, but additionally, it acknowledges and addresses the potential objections (barriers) the speaker identified in the eight preparation questions at the beginning of the chapter.**

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9.3.6: Visualization Step

9.3.6.0.1



The final main point within the body of the speech, the **Visualization step**, attempts to motivate others to act on a specific issue. Its purpose to help the audience "see" the amazing benefits they can expect to enjoy if they apply the solution to the problem or the satisfaction to the need does not mean that the message must remain positive and rosy. Some topics will require adopting a negative approach by outlining undesirable consequences arising as the result of ignoring the proposed solution. The best persuaders understand that negative emotional appeals here act fast, meaning that people may easily get scared into immediate action, but such gains are short-lived, while positive emotional appeal takes longer to manifest but tends to last considerably longer.

Note to Self

How would you structure the Visualization step? Will you focus solely on benefits, solely on negative consequences, or a mixture of both? If you choose a mixture, will you start with the bad news and end on a positive note, or the other way around? These decisions will affect the flow and style of your delivery here, so think critically about this decision.

In this step, use colorful, rich, descriptive language. Also consider saving some of the most prominent visual aids to use here as well. The Visualization step becomes most persuasive when the benefits appear so tantalizing the audience simply cannot imagine life without them. Conversely, this step could persuade audiences if the consequences seem terrifying or off-putting enough to make them adapt the proposed solution without hesitation. Think of this step of the speech as the "What's in it for me?" stage. By this point in the speech, the speaker has successfully presented a stark need and demonstrated to the audience how to satisfy that need, so now, the time has come to show them what they can expect to happen once they enact the solution, or what can happen if they continue allowing the need or problem to persist and worsen. Consider using a lot of vivid imagery, as well as "what ifs" in this step. Engage the audience's imagination and help them picture themselves applying the solutions.

Take a look at this final main point using the sample speech topic:

9.3.6.0.0.1 Visualization Step

1. The benefits of putting your phone away while driving go beyond staying safe, as you will be able to feel free from distraction and worry.
    1. You won't need to worry about your phone dinging every few seconds and feeling pressured to respond immediately.
    2. You will feel responsible and alert, as a properly defensive driver should feel.
2. If you choose not to put your phone away, however, understand that nearly two million auto accidents a year are caused by texting and driving. Text messaging while driving puts you at a 23% higher risk of getting into a serious crash.

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9.3.7: Call to Action

9.3.7.0.1

As with the previous speeches to inform, the speech to motivate others to action on an important issue requires a conclusion, and in Monroe's Motivated Sequence, the whole conclusion is called the **Call to Action**. Begin the conclusion, as before, by signaling the end of the speech, followed by a brief recap of the three main points that address why the audience needs to take action, what the speaker proposes to solve this problem, and what advantages the audience will gain by adapting the solution.



Also, recall that, in a conclusion, the speaker should not introduce any new information or main ideas in this portion of the speech. This portion of the speech serves as a recap, not a chance to insert one more shocking fact that will drive the central idea home. Bringing in new information at this point would only confuse the audience. After finishing the recap, the speaker should end with a clincher that makes the final call to action. This clincher should clearly reinforce the central idea from the beginning of the speech, while explicitly reminding the audience in a simpler fashion what action to take. Be direct and firm. Avoid vague or wishy-washy statements during this step.

A great acronym for assessing a Call to Action is ***C.A.S.T.***, or concise, achievable, specific, and tangible. A call to action should be ***concise***, meaning that it doesn't take long to explain. It should be ***achievable*** by every single person in the room, and furthermore, they should be able to achieve the goal in a relatively short amount of time. It should be ***specific***, and finally, it should also be ***tangible***, meaning that the speaker outlined a concrete action for the audience members to take.

Take a look at the sample topic's conclusion:

9.3.7.0.0.1 Call to Action Step

HomeSignal End: *As you all leave here today, you will undoubtedly check your phones to see if there are any new notifications. It is likely that even I will do this as well.*

Recap Main Points: *However, remember what we talked about today. I showed you how addictive checking our phones can be, even while driving. I also showed you the dangers of giving in to those temptations while operating a motor vehicle, before I showed you some possible solutions, including shutting your phone off when you get into your cars or using a Bluetooth hands-free system. Lastly, I shared with you not only the benefits of doing so, by becoming a safer, more responsible, and more alert driver, but I explained how, if we all continue to do this, the problem can only get worse.*

Clincher (Call to Action): *Texting and driving is dangerous, not only to yourself, but to all other drivers sharing the road with you. Don't allow this (show picture of screen capture from text messages) to lead to this (show picture of my surgery scars while in a wheelchair). Turn off your phones while driving, and keep your eyes on the road where they belong.*

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9.4: Types of Special Occasion Speeches

Unlike the informative and persuasive speeches you were required to give, special occasion speeches are much broader and allow for a wider range of topics, events, and approaches to be employed. However, while the following list of special occasion speeches is long, your instructor will have specific types of special occasion speeches that you will be allowed (or required) to do for class. Since you are like to give many special occasion speeches in your life, we want to cover everything you might need to know to give a good one.

9.4.1 Speeches of Introduction

The first type of special occasion speech is the **speech of introduction**, which is a mini-speech given by the host of a ceremony that introduces another speaker and their speech. Few things are worse than when the introducer of a speaker stands up and says, "This is Wyatt Ford. He's going to talk about stress." While we did learn the speaker's name and the topic, the introduction falls flat. Audiences won't be the least bit excited about listening to Wyatt's speech.

Just like any other speech, a speech of introduction should be a complete speech and have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion—and you should try to do it all in under two minutes. This brings up another "few things are worse" scenario: an introductory speaker who rambles on for too long or who talks about himself or herself instead of focusing on the person being introduced.

For an introduction, think of a hook that will make your audience interested in the upcoming speaker. Did you read a news article related to the speaker's topic? Have you been impressed by a presentation you've heard the speaker give in the past? You need to find something that can grab the audience's attention and make them excited about hearing the main speaker.

The body of your speech of introduction should be devoted to telling the audience about the speaker's topic, why the speaker is qualified, and why the audience should listen (notice we now have our three main points). First, tell your audience in general terms about the overarching topic of the speech. Most of the time as an introducer, you'll only have a speech title and maybe a paragraph of information to help guide this part of your speech. That's all right. You don't need to know all the ins and outs of the main speaker's speech; you just need to know enough to whet the audience's appetite. Next, you need to tell the audience why the speaker is a credible presenter on the topic. Has the speaker written books or articles on the subject? Has the speaker had special life events that make him or her qualified? Lastly, you need to briefly explain to the audience why they should care about the upcoming speech. The outline can be adjusted; for example, you can give the biographical information first, but these three areas should be covered.

The final part of a good introduction is the conclusion, which is generally designed to welcome the speaker to the platform. Many introducers will conclude by saying something like, "I am looking forward to hearing how Wyatt Ford's advice and wisdom can help all of us today, so please join me in welcoming Dr. Wyatt Ford." At this point, you as the person introducing the speaker are "handing off" the speaking duties to someone else, so it is not uncommon to end your speech of introduction by clapping as the speaker comes on stage or shaking the speaker's hand.

9.4.2 Speeches of Presentation

The second type of special occasion speech is the speech of presentation. A speech of presentation is a brief speech given to accompany a prize or honor. Speeches of presentation can be as simple as saying, "This year's recipient of the Lavache Public Speaking prize is Ryann Curley," or could last up to five minutes as the speaker explains why the honoree was chosen for the award. An interesting example of a speech presenting an award is this one by Zoe Saldana for J.J. Abrams



(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x03cGSszr8Q).

When preparing a speech of presentation, it's always important to ask how long the speech should be. Once you know the time limit, then you can set out to create the speech itself. First, you should explain what the award or honor is and why the presentation is important. Second, you can explain what the recipient has accomplished in order for the award to be bestowed. Did the person win a race? Did the person write an important piece of literature? Did the person mediate conflict? Whatever the recipient has done, you need to clearly highlight his or her work. Lastly, if the race or competition was conducted in a public forum and numerous people didn't win, you may want to recognize those people for their efforts as well. While you don't want to steal the show away from winner, you may want to highlight the work of the other competitors or nominees.

9.4.3 Speeches of Acceptance

The complement to a speech of presentation is the speech of acceptance. The speech of acceptance is a speech given by the recipient of a prize or honor. There are three typical components of a speech of acceptance: 1) thank the givers of the award or honor, 2) thank those who helped you achieve your goal, and 3) put the award or honor into perspective. First, you want to thank the people who have given you the award or honor and possibly those who voted for you. We see this done every year during the Oscars, "First, I'd like to thank the Academy and all the Academy voters."

Second, you want to give credit to those who helped you achieve the award or honor. No person accomplishes things in life on his or her own. We all have family members, friends, and colleagues who support us and help us achieve what we do in life, and a speech of acceptance is a great time to graciously recognize those individuals. Lastly, put the award in perspective. Tell the people listening to your speech why the award is meaningful to you. If you know you are up for an award, the odds of your winning are high. In order to avoid blubbering through an acceptance speech, have one ready. A good rule to remember is: Be thankful, be gracious, be short.

9.4.4 Speeches of Dedication

A fourth special occasion speech is the **speech of dedication**. A speech of dedication is delivered when a new store opens, a building is named after someone, a plaque is placed on a wall, a new library is completed, and so on. These speeches are designed to highlight the importance of the project and possibly those to whom the project has been dedicated.

When preparing a speech of dedication, start by explaining how you are involved in the dedication. If the person to whom the dedication is being made is a relative, tell the audience about your relationship and your relative's accomplishments. Second, you want to explain what is being dedicated. If the dedication is a new building or a pre-existing building, you want to explain the importance of the structure. You should then explain who was involved in the project.

If the project is a new structure, talk about the people who built the structure or designed it. If the project is a pre-existing structure, talk about the people who put together and decided on the dedication. Lastly, explain why the structure is important for the community in which it is located. If the dedication is for a new store, talk about how the store will bring in new jobs and new shopping opportunities. If the dedication is for a new wing of a hospital, talk about how patients will be served and the advances in medicine the new wing will provide the community.



9.4.5 Toasts

At one time or another, almost everyone is going to be asked to deliver a **toast.** A toast is a speech designed to congratulate, appreciate, or remember. First, toasts can be delivered for the purpose of congratulating someone for an honor, a new job, or getting married. You can also toast someone to show your appreciation for something he or she has done. Lastly, we toast people to remember them and what they have accomplished.

When preparing a toast, the first goal is always to keep your remarks brief. Toasts are generally given during the middle of some kind of festivities (e.g., wedding, retirement party, farewell party), and you don't want your toast to take away from those festivities for too long. Second, the goal of a toast is to focus attention on the person or persons being toasted—not on the speaker.

As such, while you are speaking, you need to focus your attention toward the people being toasted, both by physically looking at them and by keeping your message about them. You should also avoid any inside jokes between you and the people being toasted because toasts are public and should be accessible for everyone who hears them. To conclude a toast, simply say something like, "Please join me in recognizing Gina for her achievement" and lift your glass. When you lift your glass, this will signal to others to do the same and then you can all take a drink, which is the end of your speech.

9.4.6 Roasts

A **roast** is a very interesting and peculiar speech because it is designed to both praise and good-naturedly insult a person being honored. Because of this combination of purposes, it is not hard to argue that the roast is probably a challenging type of speeches to write given the difficult task of simultaneously praising and insulting the person. Generally, roasts are given at the conclusion of a banquet in honor of someone's life achievements. The television station Comedy Central has been conducting roasts of various celebrities for a few years, and if you've ever watched one, you know that the "roasters" say some harsh things about the "roastees" even though they are friends.

During a roast, the roaster will stand behind a lectern while the roastee is seated somewhere where he or she is clearly on display for the audience to see, thus allowing the audience to take in his or her reactions. Since half the fun of a good roast is watching the roastee's reactions during the roast, it's important to have the roastee clearly visible to the audience.

How does one prepare for a roast? First, you want to really think about the person who is being roasted. Does he or she have any strange habits or amusing stories in their past that you can discuss? When you think through these questions, you want to make sure that you cross anything off your list that is truly private information or will really hurt the person. The goal of a roast is to poke at him, not massacre him.

Second, when selecting which aspects to poke fun at, you need to make sure that the items you choose are widely known by your audience. Roasts work when the majority of people in the audience can relate to the jokes being made. If you have an inside joke with the roastee, bringing it up during roast may be great fun for the two of you, but it will leave your audience unimpressed. Lastly, end on a positive note. While the jokes are definitely the fun part of a roast, you should leave the roastee and the audience knowing that you truly do care about and appreciate the person.

9.4.7 Eulogies

A **eulogy** is a speech given in honor of someone who has died (Don't confuse "eulogy" with "elegy," a poem or song of mourning). Not to sound depressing, but since everyone who is alive will someday die, the chance of your being asked to give a eulogy someday for a friend or family member is significant. However, when the time comes to deliver a eulogy, it's good to know what you're doing and to adequately prepare your remarks.

When preparing a eulogy, first you need to know as much information about the deceased as possible. The more information you have about the person, the more personal you can make the eulogy. While you can rely on your own information if you were close to the deceased, it is always a good idea to ask friends and relatives of the deceased for their memories, as these may add important facets that may not have occurred to you. Of course, if you were not very close to the deceased, you will need to ask friends and family for information. Second, although eulogies are delivered on the serious and sad occasion of a funeral or memorial service for the deceased, it is very helpful to look for at least one point to be lighter or humorous. In some cultures, in fact, the friends and family attending the funeral expect the eulogy to be highly entertaining and amusing.

Take, for example, Tom Arnold's eulogy of Saturday Night Live actor Chris Farley. During his speech at Farley's funeral, Arnold noted, "Chris was concerned about his size, and so he made sure that all of us who knew him well saw him naked at least once" (Glionna, 1998). Picturing the heavy-set comedian naked surely brought some humor to the somber proceedings, but Arnold knew Farley (and his audience) well enough to know that the story would be appropriate.

Knowing the deceased and the audience is vital when deciding on the type and amount of humor to use in a eulogy. It's doubtful statements like Tom Arnold's would fit many eulogies. But it would be appropriate to tell a funny story about Uncle Joe's love for his rattletrap car or Aunt Mary's love of tacky Christmas sweaters. Ultimately, the goal of the humor or lighter aspects of a eulogy is to relieve the tension that is created by the serious nature of the occasion.

If you are ever asked to give a eulogy, that means you were probably close to the deceased and are experiencing shock, sadness, and disbelief at your loved one's passing. The last thing that you will want to do (or be in a mental state to do) is figure out how to structure your eulogy. To that end, here are three parts of a eulogy (i.e. main points) you can use to write one without worrying about being original with structure or organizational patterns: praise, lament, and consolation.

9.4.7.1 Praise

The first thing you want to do when remembering someone who has passed away is remind the audience what made that person so special. So you will want to praise them and their accomplishments. This can include notable achievements (being an award winner; helping with charities), personal qualities ("she was always willing to listen to your problems and help in any way she could"), or anecdotes and stories (being a great mother; how she drove to college to visit you when you were homesick).

9.4.7.2 Lament

The second thing you want to do in a eulogy is to lament the loss. To **lament** means to express grief or sorrow, which is what everyone at a funeral has gathered to do. You will want to acknowledge that everyone is sad and that the deceased's passing will be difficult to get through. Here you might mention all the things that will no longer happen as a result of the death. "Now that Grandpa is gone, there won't be any more Sunday dinners where he cooks chicken on the grill or bakes his famous macaroni and cheese."

9.4.7.3 Console

The final step (or main point) in a eulogy is to **console** the audience, or to offer comfort in a time of grief. What you must remember (and many people often forget) is that a eulogy is not a speech for the person who has died; it is a speech for the people who are still living to try to help them deal with the loss. You will want to end your eulogy on a positive note. Offer some hope that someday, things will get better. If the deceased was a religious person, this is where you might want to incorporate elements of that belief system. Some examples would include ideas like:

> *"Jim has gone home to be with the Lord and is looking down on us fondly today."*
>
> *"We may miss Aunt Linda deeply, but our memories of her will live on forever, and her impact on this world will not soon be forgotten."*

Using the Praise-Lament-Console format for eulogies gives you a simple system where you can fill in the sections with 1) why was the person good, 2) why you will miss him or her, and 3) how you and the audience will get through this loss. It sometimes also helps to think of the three points in terms of Past-Present-Future: you will praise the deceased for what he did when he was alive (the past), lament the loss you are feeling now (the present), and console your audience by letting them know that things will be all right (the future).

With regard to a eulogy you might give in class, you generally have two options for how to proceed: you can eulogize a real person who has passed away, or you can eulogize a fictional character (if your instructor permits that). If you give a eulogy in class on someone in your life who has actually passed away, be aware that it is very common for students to become emotional and have

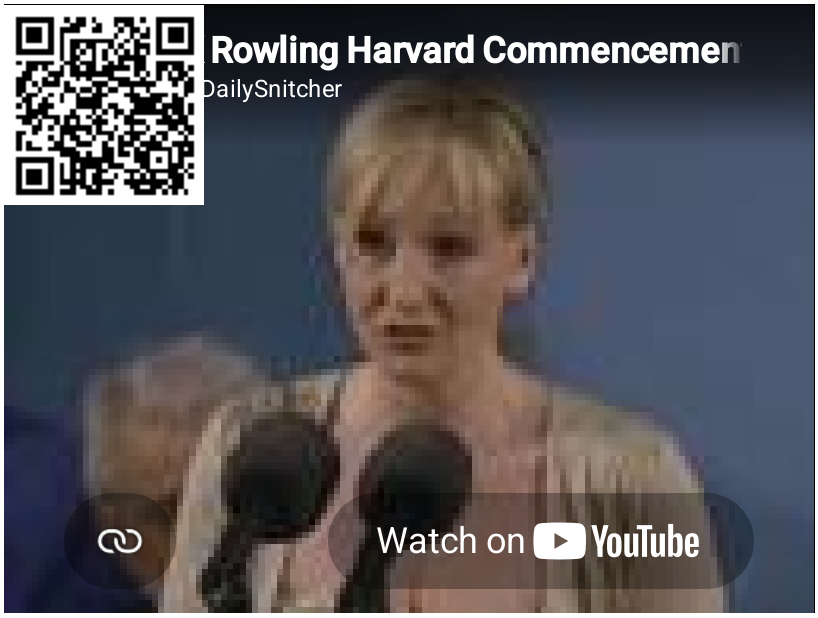
difficulty giving their speech. Even though you may have been fine practicing at home and feel good about giving it, the emotional impact of speaking about a deceased loved one in front of others can be surprisingly powerful. Conversely, if you give a eulogy on a fictional character, you must treat your classroom assignment eulogy as you would a real eulogy. You wouldn't make fun of or trivialize someone's life at an actual funeral, so don't do that in your eulogy for a serious speech assignment either.

9.4.8 Speeches of Farewell

A **speech of farewell** allows someone to say good-bye to one part of his or her life as he or she is moving on to the next part of life. Maybe you've accepted a new job and are leaving your current job, or you're graduating from college and entering the work force. Periods of transition are often marked by speeches of farewell. When preparing a speech of farewell, the goal should be to thank the people in your current position and let them know how much you appreciate them as you make the move to your next position in life. Second, you want to express to your audience how much the experience has meant to you. A farewell speech is a time to commemorate and think about the good times you've had. As such, you should avoid negativity during this speech. Lastly, you want to make sure that you end on a high note.

9.4.9 Speeches for Commencements

A **speech of commencement** (or, as it is more commonly known, a "commencement speech") is designed to recognize and celebrate the achievements of a graduating class or other group of people. These typically take place at graduation ceremonies. Nearly every one of us has sat through commencement speeches at some point in our lives. And if you're like us, you've heard good ones and bad ones. Numerous celebrities and politicians have been asked to deliver commencement speeches at colleges and universities. A famous and well-thought-out commencement speech was given by famed Harry Potter author J. K. Rowling at Harvard University in 2008 (found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkREt4ZB-ck). Rowling's speech has the perfect balance of humor and inspiration, which are two of the main ingredients of a great commencement speech.



If you're ever asked to deliver a commencement speech, there are some key points to think through when deciding on your speech's content.

- If there is a specific theme for the graduation, make sure that your commencement speech addresses that theme. If there is no specific theme, come up with one for your speech. Some common commencement speech themes are commitment, competitiveness, competence, confidence, decision making, discipline, ethics, failure (and overcoming failure), faith, generosity, integrity, involvement, leadership, learning, persistence, personal improvement, professionalism, reality, responsibility, and self-respect.
- Talk about your life and how graduates can learn from your experiences to avoid pitfalls or take advantages of life. How can your life inspire the graduates in their future endeavors?
- Make the speech humorous. Commencement speeches should be entertaining and make an audience laugh.

- Be brief! Nothing is more painful than a commencement speaker who drones on and on. Remember, the graduates are there to get their diplomas; their families are there to watch the graduates walk across the stage.
- Remember, while you may be the speaker, you've been asked to impart wisdom and advice for the people graduating and moving on with their lives, so keep it focused on them.
- Place the commencement speech into the broader context of the graduates' lives. Show the graduates how the advice and wisdom you are offering can be utilized to make their own lives better.

Overall, it's important to make sure that you have fun when delivering a commencement speech. Remember, it's a huge honor and responsibility to be asked to deliver a commencement speech, so take the time to really think through and prepare your speech.

9.4.10 After-Dinner Speeches

After-dinner speeches are humorous speeches that make a serious point. These speeches get their name from the fact that they historically follow a meal of some kind. After-dinner speakers are generally asked to speak (or hired to speak) because they have the ability both to speak effectively and to make people laugh. First and foremost, after-dinner speeches are speeches and not stand-up comedy routines. All the basic conventions of public speaking previously discussed in this text apply to after-dinner speeches, but the overarching goal of these speeches is to be entertaining and to create an atmosphere of amusement.

After-dinner speaking is an extremely difficult type of speaking to do well because it is an entertaining speech that depends on the successful delivery of humor. People train for years to develop comic timing, or the verbal and nonverbal delivery used to enhance the comedic value of a message. But after-dinner speaking is difficult, not impossible. What follows is the method we recommend for developing a successful after-dinner speech.

First, use all that you have learned about informative or persuasive speeches to prepare a real informative or persuasive speech roughly two-thirds the length of what the final speech will become. That is, if you're going to be giving a ten-minute speech, then your "real" informative or persuasive speech should be six or seven minutes in length. This is the "serious message" portion of the speech where you will try to make a point of educating your audience.

Next, go back through the speech and look for opportunities to insert humorous remarks. Once you've looked through your speech and examined places for verbal humor, think about any physical humor or props that would enhance your speech. Physical humor is great if you can pull it off without being self-conscious. One of the biggest mistakes any humorist makes is to become too aware of what his or her body is doing because it's then harder to be free and funny. As for props, after-dinner speakers have been known to use everything from oversized inflatable baseball bats to rubber clown noses. The goal for a funny prop is that it adds to the humor of the speech without distracting from its message.

Last, and probably most important, try the humor out on real, live people. This is important for three reasons. First, the success of humor depends heavily on delivery, and especially timing in delivery. You will need practice to polish your delivery so that your humor comes across. If you can't make it through one of your jokes without cracking up, you will need to either incorporate the self-crackup into your delivery or forgo using that joke.



Second, just because you find something unbelievably funny in your head doesn't mean that it will make anyone else laugh. Often, humor that we have written down on paper just doesn't translate when orally presented. You may have a humorous story that you love reading on paper, but find that it just seems to drone on once you start telling it out loud. Furthermore, remember there is a difference between written and verbal language, and this also translates to how humor is interpreted. Third, you need to make sure the humor you choose will be appropriate for a specific audience. What one audience finds funny another may find offensive. Humor is the double-edged sword of public speaking. On one side, it is an amazing and powerful speaking tool, but on the other

side, few things will alienate an audience more than offensive humor. If you're ever uncertain about whether a piece of humor will offend your audience, don't use it.

So you may now be asking, "What kind of topics are serious that I can joke about?" The answer to that, like the answer to most everything else in the book, is dependent on your audience and the speaking situation, which is to say any topic will work, while at the same time you need to be very careful about how you choose your topic.

Take, for example, the experience one of your authors had while he was attending a large university. One of the major problems that any large university faces is parking: the ratio of parking spaces to students at some of these schools can be 1:7 (one parking space for every seven students). In addressing this topic at a banquet, a student gave an after- dinner speech that addressed the problem of the lack of student parking. To do so, he camouflaged his speech as a faux-eulogy (fake eulogy) for the yellow and black board on the parking lot gates (see Image 15.1) that was constantly and consistently driven through by students wanting to access restricted parking. The student personified the board by noting how well it had done its job and lamented that it would never get to see its little toothpick children grow up to guard the White House. But underneath the humor incorporated into the speech was a serious message: this wouldn't keep happening if adequate parking was provided for students on campus.

9.4.11 Motivational Speeches

A **motivational speech** is designed not only to make an audience experience emotional arousal (fear, sadness, joy, excitement) but also to motivate the audience to do something with that emotional arousal. Whereas a traditional persuasive speech may want listeners to purchase product X or agree with idea Y, a motivational speech helps to inspire people in a broader fashion, often without a clearly articulated end result in mind. As such, motivational speaking is a highly specialized form of persuasive speaking commonly delivered in schools, businesses, religious houses of worship, and club or group contexts. The *Toastmasters International Guide to Successful Speaking* (Slutsky & Aun, 1997) lists four types of motivational speeches: hero, survivor, religious, and success.

The **hero speech** is a speech given by someone who has survived a personal tragedy or who has faced and overcome serious adversity. In the following clip, cancer survivor Becky M. Olsen discusses being a cancer survivor (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuo1u_C9_3g). Becky Olsen goes all over the country talking with and motivating cancer survivors to beat the odds.

The **survivor speech** is a speech given by someone who has survived a personal tragedy or who has faced and overcome serious adversity. In the following clip, cancer survivor Becky M. Olsen discusses being a cancer survivor (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zuo1u_C9_3g). Becky Olsen goes all over the country talking with and motivating cancer survivors to beat the odds.

The **religious speech** is fairly self-explanatory; it is designed to incorporate religious ideals into a motivational package to inspire an audience into thinking about or changing aspects of their religious lives. The final type of motivational speech is the **success speech**, which is given by someone who has succeeded in some aspect of life and is giving back by telling others how they too can be successful.

9.4.12 Summary

As stated at the beginning of this section, you will almost certainly be limited by your professor with regards to which of these types of speeches you can give for your special occasion speech in class, but it is not unrealistic to think that you will be called upon at various points in your life to give one or more of these speeches. Knowing the types and basic structures will help when those moments arise.

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9.4.1: Tribute Speech- Celebrate the Occasion, the Person, or the Monument



A tribute is a type of celebratory speech that honors a person, a monument, a holiday, or an event.

Tribute to a Person

A tribute to a person typically includes one of these items:

- Small descriptions so we can “see” the person in their element.
- Stories of their deeds.
- Stories of how the person affected others.
- Funny or emotional moments.
- The legacy that person is leaving.

Tribute to an Event or Occasion

Tributes to occasions can be any of the following:

- Milestone Birthday, Retirement, Anniversary
- Mother’s day, Father’s Day, Veteran’s Day, Memorial Day, D-Day
- Race for the Cure, We Day
- Family reunion, School reunion

Tributes to occasions typically include:

- Emphasis on shared values
- Appreciation for the people involved
- Origin and evolution of the event
- Stories of people related to the event
- The larger context surrounding the event

Gather all the information

- Who is the audience?
- Are there other speakers?
- What is the time limit?
- Is this formal or informal?
- Will there be a podium? microphone?

Brainstorming a Person

- What life lessons did they teach you?

- How are you different because of this person?
- What are some of their favorite things?
- What are their best qualities? Tell a story about that quality
- What three words best describe this person?
- What makes this person so great?
- What is the funniest thing that you remember?
- What is this person known for?
- What are some sayings—one-liners—they are known for?
- What is something simple that they do that demonstrates their character?
- What is unique about her lifestyle or behavior?
- What is a special gift that they gave you and why is it so special?
- What does this person do for fun?
- What does he do when he is stressed?
- What adventure have you shared with this person?
- What's a story that everyone tells about this person?
- What helpful advice has this person given you?
- Every time you see a _____, you'll think of ____ because ———
- Look through a photo album—what one or two pictures tell about them ?
- What smell do you associate with this person

Make Everyone Feel Included

Notice how this speaker invites all listeners to be part of the memorial.

> *I stand here today to pay tribute to the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building Bombing Memorial in Oklahoma City.*
>
> *This memorial represents the honor and strength as well as all the **pain of every person** who remembers that historical day.*
>
> *It has helped an **immense number of people** to cope with this national tragedy*
>
> *It is a place of reflection, emotion, and healing.*

In this excerpt, Drew speaks to all those who are present at the Doolittle Raider reunion (A reunion of men who in 1942 led the first attack after the bombing of Pearl Harbor)

> *Each of **us** in this room has our own memories of growing up with these men and the reasons why they are so **special to us**. For these men, it is an everyday occurrence that someone thanks them for their service to their country and what they did 65 years ago. So today is my pleasure **to share with you** the reason why these men are my heroes and why one of them impractically means the world to me.*
>
> *I hope each of **you** will always remember the little things these men have done for **you.** L.M. Heroux once said "heroism is not just pulling a child from a burning house or a driver from an icy river or a kitten from a tall tree. Heroism is also holding the door for a frail elderly and driving courteously and cooperatively and listening with an attentive heart to a friend's words. Small daily acts of love are as heroic as big once-in-a-lifetime acts of rescue."*

In this tribute to his teacher, "the greatest swing pusher" Hosea Born reminds the group of a common thing, finding your name on the desk.

> *Walking into a new teacher's classroom is terrifying. We have all been there. You remember. Finding your desk with your name on it. My name tag was an apple. Tribute to the best swing pusher.*

Magnify the Small Things

Caitlyn Steiner wrote a tribute speech about the love her grandparent have for each other. Notice how she uses the little things to demonstrate love.

> *Love appreciates the smallest details the most. My grandpa still puts the toothpaste on both their toothbrushes every morning. My grandma still hangs a towel on the rack for my grandpa every day after he gets in the shower. And they still slow dance together every night in the living room before they go to bed.*

In this example, Fawn Kurtzo gives a birthday tribute to her brother Buck. As you read this manuscript excerpt, I want to draw your attention to the fact that each line is a story for those who know him.

> *We are gathered here today to celebrate another year in the life of Buck.*
>
> *Congratulations Buck? Who am I kidding, CONGRATULATIONS US!*
>
> *We all survived another year of*
>
> *10,000 questions why,*
>
> *mental duels,*
>
> *being outshot with bullets and arrows,*
>
> *countless times of side-splitting laughs as he carried the life of the party //*
>
> *begin terribly humiliated in a game of dominoes //*
>
> *and just flat being outlasted by this kid!*

Celebrate Don't Inform

People in the audience may not know the person you are celebrating. Resist the temptation to give an informative speech about your person, that is the equivalent of reading someone's Wikipedia biography–boring. Instead, pick a few things about them to celebrate.

In this tribute to his hometown dirt roads, Nathan Brock's speech is a good example. He tells us the facts without sounding like an informative speech, I kept this sample in a manuscript format so you could see the emphasis and the rhythm. When you see /// it means to pause.

> ***So, here's to you,*** *dirt roads*
>
> *the defining feature of my hometown.*
>
> *Here's to you, dirt roads, /// the place of my upbringing in middle-of-nowhere America.*
>
> ***Pawnee**, Oklahoma is a town with many dirt roads*
>
> *A town with a population of 2,136//*
>
> *It felt like less.*
>
> ***When** Googling "living in Pawnee, Oklahoma" one can find a list of pros and cons*

> ***Pros*** *include "cost-of-living"*
>
> ***Cons*** *include "unattractive setting*
>
> *That is where you came in, dirt roads.*

Let Us See

Describe the situation or person in vivid detail so we can see the person in their element. Jeremy Stuthard gave a tribute to his Grandma and said they were "Two peas in a pod." Notice how in one sentence you get a sense of grandma's humor and personality. from only one line, "I remember when you dumped a whole bucket of water on me, to wake me up, just to have me help you with your TV." In another example, Patience Beard describes cooking with her grandma, "Nana ALWAYS let me lick the spoon. We would make icing all from scratch she would turn that mixer on and it would never fail– icing would fly everywhere and her laugh …….would echo through the whole room." In each example, you can "see" the interaction in your mind. The speaker didn't tell you that his grandma was a trickster, he showed you that. Patience didn't tell you her grandma cooked for her, she "showed" you that she did.

Teach Little Lesson in the Small Things

In tribute speeches, the little things are often the big things. What I mean by that is you can tell a story that appears to be a simple story but it is really about something deeper. In this speech, Brittany Brunson is telling the story about riding in her dad's lap, but really it is a metaphor for their relationship. I kept this in manuscript form so you couldn't get a feel for how she intended it to be heard.

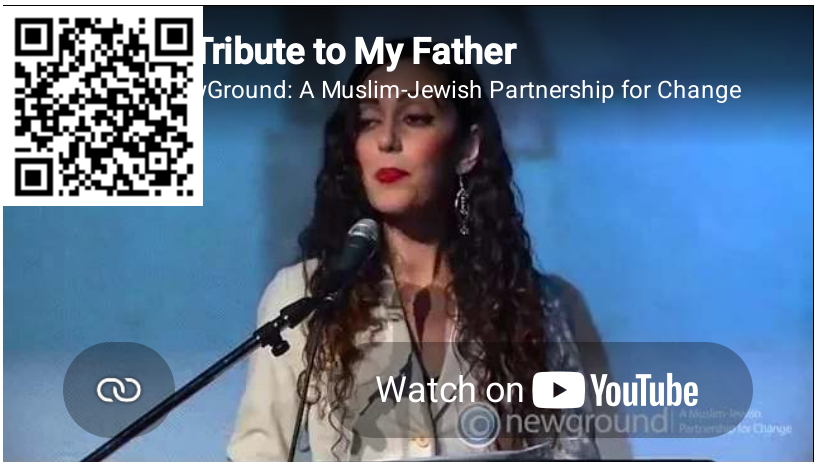
> *I don't remember much from the age of 7//*
>
> *But I do remember getting to sit on my dad's lap and driving down the alley.*
>
> *I couldn't reach the pedals // so my dad was in charge of those//*
>
> *Although I thought I was in charge of the wheel//*
>
> *My dad had ultimate control because if I ever got to close to the wall of the alleyway //*
>
> *my dad would steer me right back to the center.*
>
> *Ironically, I never got in big trouble growing up*
>
> *// except for maybe prank calling the police one time……. but anyways//*
>
> *I never got in big trouble growing up because if I ever got close to that barrier of bad choices /// my dad //steered me right back to the center.*
>
> *Although I thought I had control of the wheel of my life*
>
> *ultimately my dad guided me on to the right path //*
>
> *that led me to hold myself to a higher standard // and stand firm in my beliefs.*

Tell Stories

Watch How Kevin Durant turns his most valuable player award acceptance speech into a tribute to his mother calling her the real MVP. Telling stories that highlight personal stories with the person you are giving tributing can be very powerful.



In this tribute speech to her father, she tells a story of how a Jewish man and a Muslim man can transcend boundaries and become friends.



Yamani, N. (2015). A Tribute to My Father. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jdRCNuBcAWQ

Tribute Speech at We Day



We Day was an annual series of stadium-sized youth empowerment events organized by We Charity, a Canadian charity founded by brothers Marc and Craig Kielburger. WE Day events host tens of thousands of students and celebrate the effect they have made on local and global issues.



Sadhguru (2020). A Tribute to All Healthcare Workers



Notice how Tom Hanks makes specific references to parts from the Star Wars movie in his tribute to George Lucas. His references are things that everyone has in common.

American Film Institute. (2009). Tom Hanks Salutes George Lucas at the AFI Life Achievement Award.



Trump, D. (2018). President Donald Trump Full Speech: Honors 9/11 Victims at Shanksville Memorial. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02YA6Nz70MA

Tribute to Famous Person

When giving a tribute to a famous person that you do not know personally, it is important to resist giving a biographical speech. Instead, you should talk about how that person influenced you in some way. The story of them becomes the story of you and them.

In his tribute to Stan Lee, David Lester wrote,

One of my earliest experiences with his work, is through his comics. When my mom would take forever shopping in Walmart, I would fly to the magazine section find those comic books and my time——— just——— evaporated.

Later he mentions the relationship again

> *The first Marvel movie I remember seeing saw was IRON MAN. I remember seeing Robert Downey Jr. beat up terrorists and change the way we see superheroes, not as just statues but as complex people like us.*

In his conclusion, he brings it around to impact on all of us

> *BUT Do you wanna know who Stan thought the real superheroes were? It's not the ones we talk about all the time. It's not the ones that are played by Chris Evans, Chris Pratt, and Chris Hemsworth. NO! It's us, the fans. We were the heroes all along. Looking out for each other. Supporting people around us who needed it the most. Protecting others from harm. Standing as examples for our community for what we can become. Doing more than the average man would do. That one person can make a difference. That you don't need a cape just to be a hero. He brought us together. He did all of this.*

Tribute to a Reunion by Drew

Today it is my honor to have been asked to speak at the Doolittle Raider of Reunion. As many we all know on April 18th 1942, 80 brave men flew on the first ever joint mission of the Navy and Air Force Reserves to give the United States its first attack on Japanese main land after Pearl Harbor. 600 miles off the shore of Japanese mainland the USS Hornet was spotted by a fishing boat. General Doolittle ordered the men to launch early causing the men not to have enough fuel to make it to unoccupied China as planned. All, but one of the 16 planes either crashed landed or the crew bailed out. Eight men were taken prisoners of war, but only four came home. These four men endured 40 months of being malnourished and tortured.

Of those four men, I have the greatest honor of calling my great-grandfather. For those who do not know these men on a personal level they are heroes for the actions taken on that day 65 years ago, but for those of us who have the honor on knowing these men personally they are heroes for so many other reason.

These men are our fathers, grandfathers and even great-grandfathers.

These men have been and will be apart of our lives in ways that go far beyond the Tokyo Raid.

These men are the crews that have made sure our families lives were on the right path.

Most of you know him as Lt. Col. Robert L Hite, but to me he is Bobby Hite. My great-grandfather is like the parachute he used to bail out of his plane that day. He has guided our family through the years making sure we reached the ground safely. He has done everything from slipping me a few dollars for a college student to taking us to lunch ever Saturday. As a child I can remember waiting on Saturdays for that special honk he had to inform us he was there.

I remember when my Uncle got married, I was so upset because I was going to ruin my perfect attendance record if I came to Fort Smith with my parents. Bobby Hite hating to see me so upset told my parents that he and nanny would wait for me to get out of school on Friday and drive me up because that's what would make me happy.

The times he gave his "driving lessons", told stories of when he managed the Camden Hotel and of course waiting every Christmas morning for nanny and him to arrive before we could see what Santa had brought are all memories that mean the world to me and

my two brothers.

Each of us in this room has our own memories of growing up with these men and reasons why they are so special to us. For these men, it is an everyday occurrence that someone thanks them for their service to their country and what they did 65 years ago. So today is my pleasure to share with you the reason why these men are my heroes and why one of them impractically means the world to me.

I hope each of you will always remember the little things these men have done for you. L.M. Heroux once said “heroism is not just pulling a child from a burning house or a driver from an icy river or a kitten from a tall tree. Heroism is also holding the door for a frail elderly and driving courteously and cooperatively and listening with an attentive heart to a friend’s words. Small daily acts of love are as heroic as big once-in-a-lifetime acts of rescue.”

Key Takeaways

Remember This!

- Spend a lot of time brainstorming, reflecting, researching, and talking to others before you begin to write.
- Write in a manuscript format.
- Structure your speech so your audience feels like they are part of something.
- Celebrate the person’s accomplishments and don’t make it an informative speech about them.
- Tells stories when possible.
- Try incorporating colorful language: Simile, metaphor, antithesis, alliteration, parallel construction.
- Consider using a theme that fits the person or the situation.

References

Durant, K. (2014). 2013-14 NBA Most Valuable player acceptance speech. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GTiCUPZ9kw&t=329s

Lester, D. Tribute to Stan Lee. University of Arkansas Advanced Public Speaking.

Waln, F. (2017). Inspirational Native American Grank Walkn tells his story at WE Day! https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2SE-19WqS8 Standard YouTube License.

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9.5: Public Speaking Online

As we were looking toward this revision of Exploring Public Speaking, we realized that one area of public speaking that our readers might run into is “speaking online.” Although traditional face-to-face public speaking has a 2500-year history and thousands of research articles to support it, speaking online is a relatively new procedure. This appendix will attempt to give some guidelines for this new mode of public speaking, gleaned mostly from business communication sources such as the Harvard Business Review. The websites we used to compile this appendix are given at the end of it.

All online speaking is not created equal. You might take an online class that requires you to send a video of yourself giving a speech for a grade. You might be participating—or leading—a “webinar,” which is a meeting or presentation over the Internet using a tool such as Blackboard Collaborate, Citrix, GoToMeeting, Adobe Connect, or one of many other webconferencing tools. These have become very common in the educational and business world because they save a huge amount of money—employees, students, and learners can meet without having to travel to another location

With this growth in popularity, we have a growth in problems and common behaviors, or misbehaviors, in webconferencing and thus online “public speaking.” Much of the advice on webconference public speaking comes as antidotes to the worst practices that have developed in them, which are:

1. the audience’s multitasking (and thus not fully attending to the webinar)
2. the audience’s being bored to death and going to sleep (which I confess to)

Both of these conditions come from the fact that the communication is mediated and that in many cases the speaker and audience don’t see each other. Even when the participants use their web cameras (which doesn’t always happen), the screen is often covered with a slide and the speaker is invisible. Therefore, the speaker has to depend on something else to address the temptation to multitask or nod off.

9.5.1 Preparation for Online Speaking

First, recognize that this is a different type of venue. You have two main tools: your voice and your visuals (slides).

If monotone and monorate speaking is horrible for face-to-face speaking, it is truly the “Kiss of Death” for web speaking. The key word is “energy”— an energetic voice has variety and interest to it. Since we tend to have a lower energy level when we sit, some experts suggest that web conference speakers stand to approximate the real speaking experience. This suggestion makes sense. As we have mentioned repeatedly through this book, preparing means practicing your speech orally and physically, many times. Audio-recording yourself during your practice on your smartphone or other device is a good first step, followed by critically and honestly thinking about whether your voice if listless, flat, low-energy, and likely to induce snooziness.

Second, your visuals. Most of us are tempted to put far too much text and too many graphics on the slides, and since the slides are the primary thing the audience will see (rather than your full body), the temptation is even stronger. As one expert on web speaking suggested, if your presentation in the workforce is likely to be graph, data, and information heavy because it’s all information the audience must know, send the information in a report ahead of time. We’ve mentioned before that speeches are not good for dumping a great deal of information on audiences.

Therefore, keep your visuals simple. They do not have to have lots of clip art and photographs to keep attention. One rule business speakers like to use is the “10-20-30: rule: No more than 10 slides, no more than 20 words on the slides, and no font smaller than 30 point.” Using 30 point font will definitely minimize the amount of text. Inserting short videos and planning interactivity (such as polls, which the software supports) are also helpful.

Also in the realm of preparation, avoid two other problems that are common in webinars. Since some of your presentation might be visible, be sure your background is “right.” Many people perform webinars in their offices, and let’s be honest, some offices provide backgrounds that are less than optimal. They are either messy and disorganized or have distracting decorations. In other cases, you could be sitting in a neutral place with a blank wall behind you, but that setting can have its own issues. One writer talks about a speaker who wore a white shirt against a white background and almost disappeared.

It goes without saying that the web speaker must be master of the technology, not be mastered by it. Technology messes up. That is a fact of life. One of the sources for this appendix was an archived video of a webinar about web speaking by an expert; during the webinar, his Internet connection was lost! Even if the connection is strong, the speaker must know what buttons to push on the software. For this reason, it might be a good idea to have an “assistant” who handles the technology and makes sure it works so that you can focus on the communication.

Experts give a few other preparation tips:



1. Make sure you will not be interrupted during the webconference. This can be extremely embarrassing as well as ineffective. You have probably seen the priceless video from the BBC of an interview with an expert on Korea. His children photobomb the interview and then the mother tries to clean up the damage. It is hilarious, but the same situation won't be for you. Lock the door, put a big sign on the door not to be disturbed, and turn off the phones
2. Have notes and anything else you need right at hand.
3. If you can be seen, be seen—use the technology to your advantage so that you are not an entirely disembodied voice talking over slides.

Finally, in preparing, think humor. Humor is a great attention-getter (see Chapter 7 on factors of attention). Cartoons, short videos, funny anecdotes, and visual humor can help you work against the audience's temptations to multitask or daydream in a webinar. There is a limit and it should be tasteful and relevant, but humor might be one of your best allies. Plus, it might increase your own energy level and fun with the webinar.

9.5.2 During the Web Speech

One of the helpful suggestions from the business writers used for this appendix was to start on time. This might seem obvious, but if you have ever been in an online meeting or webinar, it's harder said than done–mainly because participants log on at the start of the meeting rather than early and it takes a while for the technology to kick in. Therefore, one suggestion is to have a "soft" introduction for the punctual and a "hard" opening for the late-comers. The soft intro could be the fun, attention-getting one (video, interactivity) and the hard one the "this is why the topic matters let's get down to business" opening.

It goes without saying that you as the speaker should be online well before the beginning of the meeting, and ready to go technology- and presentation-wise.

Web speaking is often scheduled for a longer period of time than a faceto-face speech, which does not add to attention level of the audience. For this reason, your presentation should include time for questions and input from the audience. However, this should be planned at intervals, perhaps between main sections of the speech, so that the speaker isn't interrupting at inconvenient times.

Going deeper, perhaps we should ask the fundamental question of purpose. What is your intent in this webinar speech? To educate? To persuade/ sell? To contribute to or facilitate a decision? Something else? Everything else you do comes from that intent or purpose, just like your face-to-face speech comes from the specific purpose speech. What do you really want to accomplish from this meeting?

The other fundamental question is about your audience. Who are they? Where are they? In fact, in some cases the audience is in a different time zone! And that really matters in how a listener responds.

Other experts suggest the following:

1. Along with standing up for your presentation, smile. People can hear a smile even when they don't see you.
2. Your anxiety does not go away just because you cannot see everyone in your "web audience." Also, you might not have ever met the people to whom you are speaking. Be aware of the likelihood of anxiety— it might not hit until you are "on air." As Ron Ashkenas says, "Anxiety in speaking is like static on the radio."

3. In your use of periodic questions, be specific. The typical “Any questions?-pause- let’s go on” is really pretty ineffective. First, it’s not directed or specific, and second, people need time to formulate their questions and articulate them. Even saying, “What questions do you have?” is better, but even better is to ask specific questions about what you’ve been addressing. Many times you can forecast possible questions, and use those.
4. The issue of a question-and-answer period brings up a logistical question. Some participants will question orally through the web cam set-up. Others, with limited technology, will use the chat feature. It takes time to type in the chat feature. Be prepared for pauses.
5. Remember the power of transitions. Many people think that slides don’t need transitions because, well, they change, isn’t that enough? No, it’s not. The speaker needs to tie the messages of the slides together.
6. Verbal pauses can be helpful. Since one of the things that put audiences to sleep is continual, non-stop flow of words, a pause can get attention.
7. Look at the camera, not the screen. You will appear more professional in those casesa, not the screen. You will appear more professional in those cases where the audience can see you.

9.5.3 Ending

As mentioned before, webconferences and webinars can go long—don’t let it. End on time. Allow participants to email you questions if needed, but don’t take advantage of people’s time by entertaining questions longer than the scheduled time. Software allows for recording and archiving, so the audience should know how to access the recording.

9.5.4 Speaking for an Online Class

This writer teaches an online business communication course where she requires either a face-to-face (if possible) presentation or one done online. In these cases, instructors usually want the presentation given in front of a live audience of a prescribed number of people and/or in a venue like a classroom (not the student’s living room). Many public speaking instructors do not believe this option is as good as an in-class speech, but if you are in this situation, here are some tips.

1. Film your whole body—not just your head and shoulders.
2. Do tech walk-throughs and make sure your camera is working well and picking up your voice.
3. Make sure you can get the recording to your instructor. You probably will not be able to just send it through email because the file will be too big. You will have to post it to the cloud or to the learning management system in some manner.
4. Wear appropriate clothing. Not being in class may tempt you to wear something too informal. This might be an opportunity to go a step beyond in your clothing. Make sure, also, that it looks good on camera in terms of color and lighting in your setting. Some patterns do not look good on camera.
5. Along that line, since you probably won’t have professional lighting, get the room as bright as you possibly can, but do not point the camera in the direction of a bright light. The light should be coming from behind the cright light. The light should be coming from behind the camera.

9.5.5 Conclusion

As mentioned before, this subject is an evolving one. These tips and tactics should help not just avoid the major problems but also cross the finish line into an effective presentation. Links that might help with this topic:

https://www.inc.com/kevin-daum/10-ti...entations.html

https://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-to-give-a-killer-online-presentation/

http://performancesalesandtraining.c...-presentation/

http://web.archive.org/web/20170107231908/https://blog.cengage.com/five-guidelines-for-effective-online-presentations/

https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathycaprino/2013/05/28/how-to-bypass-the-5-worst-mistakes-in-online-presentations/?sh=7471ea913361

http://planyourmeetings.com/10-tips-...presentations/

https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/insights/10-tips-giving-effective-virtual-presentations

https://hbr.org/2014/01/presenting-t...e-presentation https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo



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