

Speech Structure & Feedback Tips

The organization of a speech is more explicit than writing a paper because unlike a written document, the audience can't reread it if they don't understand. They can't scan through and see headlines, subheadings, underlines, italics, and bolded words. You must *show* this grammar and organization with your voice, body, and visual aids. Though each presentation will vary depending on the context, goals, audiences, etc., below is a basic outline for organizing a speech:

- 1.) Hook (this is the very first thing you do/say in front of the audience; grab their attention and orient to topic; be creative and violate their expectations – stories, visual aids, activities, demonstrations, interesting facts and figures, etc.)
- 2.) Thesis & preview of main points (explicitly state the purpose of your speech and the 3-4 main points; creates a roadmap for the audience; can be done creatively: mnemonic devices, handouts, visual aids, interaction with audience, etc.)
- 3.) Credibility statement (express your knowledge/experience with the topic)
- 4.) Reason to listen (why should the audience care what you have to say? Why is this important for them to know? Make various appeals so the speech is relevant to everyone in the room).
- 5.) Transition into main body of speech
- 6.) Main Point 1
 - a. Supporting points for main point (examples, stories, visual aids, facts and figures, testimonies, definitions, compare/contrast, demonstrations, etc.)
- 7.) Transition to main point 2 (moves speech forward, shows relationships between ideas; typical transition phrases to show similarity: also, in the same way, similarly; to contrast: but, however, in spite of, although; to provide additional support: additionally, again, also, and, further; to provide examples: for example, specifically; to summarize: to summarize)
- 8.) Main point 2
 - a. Supporting points for main point (examples, stories, visual aids, facts and figures, testimonies, definitions, compare/contrast, demonstrations, etc.)
- 9.) Transition to next point (repeat for however number of main points)
- 10.) Review main points (explicitly restate your main points; can be done in creative, interactive way)
- 11.) Conclusion (should summarize and end with a bang)

Here are some common ways to organize main points:

Speech Structure & Feedback Tips

1. Topical (organize by subtopics)
2. Chronological (past, present, future; biographical)
3. Problem/Solution
4. Causes/Effects (show relationship between ideas)
5. Compare/Contrast (comparative advantages)
6. Spatial (geographical)

Providing feedback on presentations:

Being able to give constructive feedback on presentations involves an attention to both delivery and content. Below are some questions to consider when giving feedback on the content and organization of the presentation:

- Did the speech meet the parameters of the assignment (purpose, time limit, etc.)?
- What did you learn from the speech?
- In what ways could the speech be more engaging and interactive?
- How could the speaker incorporate visual aids to help clarify and demonstrate ideas, evoke the audience, provide clearer organization, and help the audience remember information?
- Did the speaker hook you from the beginning? Was the attention-getter creative, making you want to know more and orienting you to the topic?
- Was the thesis clearly stated and main points previewed?
- Did the speaker establish their credibility?
- Did the speaker establish multiple reasons to listen, adapting to the particular audience for their presentation?
- Does the organization make sense for the content? Could it be better organized?
- Were transitions used that help move the speech forward and connect main points? Could these be made more clear and creative?
- Were main points supported with a variety of supporting statements and materials (stories, examples, compare/contrast, facts and figures, visual aids, demonstrations, quotes, etc.)?

Speech Structure & Feedback Tips

- Did the speaker make an earnest effort to consider objections and present multiple perspectives? In other words, did they present the complexity of the issue and seek to identify with the audience?
- Did the speaker review main points and thesis?
- Was there an evocative conclusion?
- Were sources appropriately cited?
- Was the speech properly worded (specific, concise, understandable language)? Were their parts that were vague, indirect, unclear? Did the speaker use imagery and figures of speech (alliteration, metaphor, simile, etc.) to help evoke the audience and make the ideas come alive? Were there too many intensifiers (ex. too, very much, incredibly, really, extremely, etc.)? Were there too many generalities and/or absolutes stated (ex. all, none, no one, never, always, everyone, every, etc.)?

Good delivery involves using your voice and body to reinforce and illustrate your content, and to communicate confidence, emotion, and enthusiasm. Below are some tips and questions to consider when providing feedback on delivery:

- Notecards could be used to trigger recall and allow for interaction. **You should not read from them.**
 - Tips for using notecards:
 - When prepping, memorize outline then write down keywords, specific quotes, stats, sources on notecards to help jog memory.
 - Stick to 1-2 points per notecard. Only write on front.
 - Make text big with lots of space between lines.
 - Write in shorthand.
 - Write delivery cues (visual aids, transitions, *how* to present)
 - When presenting, hold naturally. Don't try to hide them.

Voice:

- Was the speaker's volume appropriate? Did it vary to emphasize points and engage the audience?
- Was the speaker's rate appropriate? Did it vary to emphasize points, convey emotion, etc.?
- Did the speaker change pitch to emphasize points, convey emotion? Think of pitch as the italics/underlines of your speaking grammar.
- Did the speaker use pauses appropriately? Think of pauses as the periods/commas/colons of your speaking grammar.

Speech Structure & Feedback Tips

- Did the speaker use distracting vocal fillers (uh, um, like, etc.)?

Body:

- Did the speaker have any distracting nonverbal cues?
- Did the speaker spread eye contact around the room? Did their eye contact convey sincerity and confidence?
- Did the speaker's posture convey confidence and engagement?
- Did the speaker use gestures to illustrate and reinforce ideas?
- Did the speaker use appropriate facial expressions to show emotion, emphasize ideas? Was the speaker smiling? Did they seem sincere?
- Did the speaker use movement purposefully and in an engaging way? Did they use their movement to help transition and interact with the audience?

Visual aids:

- What kinds of visual aids were used (bodies, dress, objects, photos, videos, graphs, drawing/writing, PowerPoint, etc.)? What were their functions?
- Was the visual aid interactive? Did the visual aid help aid the argument? Evoke the audience? Provide clearer organization? Help credibility? Help the audience understand ideas?
- Did the speaker introduce the visual aid and explain its significance, providing context, and actually *use* it? Did they *rely* on it, perhaps reading it, or just showing it and moving on without introducing it and explaining its significance?
- Did the speaker read from notecards and/or screen?

During the speech-making process if students are thinking about creating a PowerPoint consider the following advice and questions: