# Organizational Patterns

https://www.youtube.com/watch/gKnJT9b8D4g

in the immortal words of Hall of Famebaseball player and manager Yogi Berra if you don't know where you're going you might end up someplace else nowhere is that more true than in the development and organization of a speech in this video we'll discuss some of the organizational patterns commonly used in public speaking in the most basic sense there are three parts of a speeches organization the introduction the body and the conclusion Dale Carnegie summarized speech organization by saying tell the audience what you're going to say it and then tell him what you've said the introduction previews and sets everything up for the audience the body provides the substance and details and the conclusion brings it all back around in summary each of these three components is important to the ability of the audience to follow along with and comprehend your speech that's a great place to start but obviously there'smore work to be done effective speech organization requires a speaker to consider how they will organize the main points and information within the body of the speech so that their message will have the greatest possible impact there are a multitude of options for speech organization will focus on the most common methods in this video one popular organizational pattern is chronological organization in chronological organization the information in a speech follows a time sequence some speeches use chronological organization to discuss a process that spans over a large period of time such as in this graphic in which the period covers several years the topic could also have a more modest timeframe such as a speech designed at assisting the millions of people around the world who struggle with making a proper peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich by breaking down that process step-by-step chronological organization is used commonly in informative speeches like those explaining historical events like the Battle of Gettysburg and for demonstration speeches like how tornadoes form what other speech topics can you think of that might use chronological organization another organizational pattern used frequently for informative speeches is spatial inspatial organization the main points of the speech follow a directional pattern like north-to-south top to bottom front to back or left to right the graphic you see here uses a spatial pattern to divide the United States into quadrants with each area comprising a different main point some speeches break down information using a cause-and-effect pattern as you might imagine speeches using cause-and-effect organization typically have two main points one discussing the cause of an event andanother discussing the effect depending on the topic in question cause and effect can be used effectively in either informative or persuasive speeches if the cause and effect are both known and agreed upon such as the connection between prolonged tobacco use and an increased risk of cancer this pattern could be used in an informative speech if either is debatable however like the curse of the goat being responsible for the long drought between World Series championships for the Chicago Cubs the speech would have to be seen as a persuasive effort speeches using problem-solution organization are also typically broken down into two main points one presenting the problem and another offering a solution problem solution is used almost exclusively in persuasive speeches even if the problem is readily evident to everyone in the audience for example the need for a change in the social security system there are likely to be multiple possible solutions to the problem which opens the solution presented by the speaker to debate topical organization allows the speaker to arrange the main points of their speech in a logical way that doesn't fit neatly into one of the other patterns of organization main points are simply broken down in a way that is effective and makes sense for the speaker's overall goals this graphic might represent a topical organizationof a speech on the federal spending in the United States it's not arranged chronologically for a historical perspective or broken-down regionally across the country or examined as a problem to be fixed it simply categorizes the various items in a logical way for further discussion topical organization is flexible enough to be used for both informative and persuasive speeches if your objective is to present both the good and bad aspectsof a singular topic then you might consider using the pro/conorganizational pattern procon uses two broad main points the pros and the cons and then provides items in support of each of these as sub-points an example might be a speech outlining the positives and negatives of homeschooling in educating children comparative organization is somewhat similar to procon but it usually stresses the relative advantages of one idea over another for example acomparative speech might emphasize the benefits of home schooling over sending children to public schools or the relative strength of samsung phones vsiphones because comparative organization typically favors one item over another is most useful for persuasive speeches two other commonly used organizational patterns are need plan and mnemonic or acronym organization in need plan aspeaker first establishes the need for a change in action or policy and then lays out their plan for addressing that need mnemonic or acronym organization is sort of a gimmicky method of organization that uses an acrostic to help the audience follow and retain the main points of a speech one classic example of a mnemonic device is using ROYGBIV to remember that the colors of the rainboware red orange yellow green blue indigo and violet another illustration would be a speech on stroke symptoms awareness that uses the acronym F-A-S-T or fast to help the audience remember the main points of face arm speech and time while knowing about the different organizational patterns is helpful it is important to remember that you have the freedom to organize the information in the way that best helps you accomplish your goals as a speaker these organizational methods are intended as useful tools don't feel like you absolutely have to manipulate your content to fit neatly into one of these packages however purpose and content should drive the organization of a speech not the other way around in this video we discussed some of the organizational patterns commonly used in public speaking