

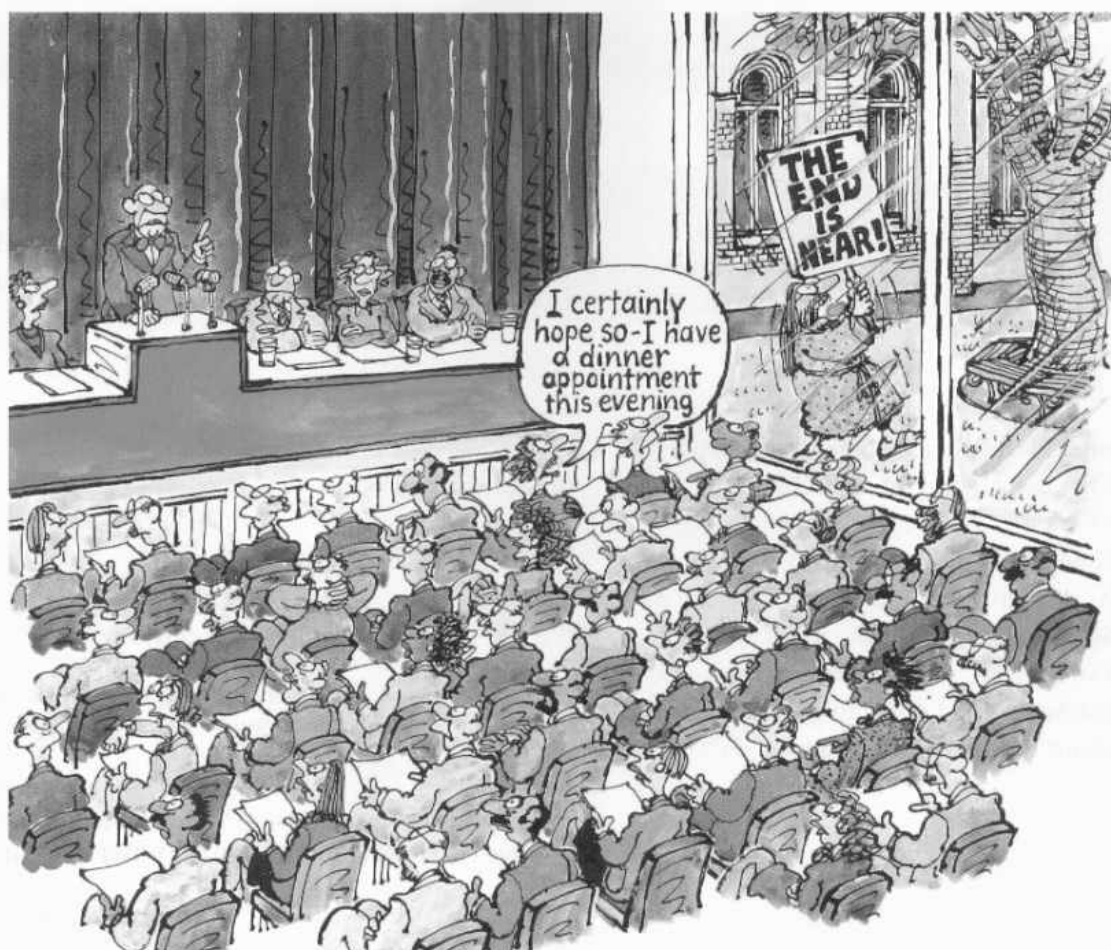
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The end is near ... this is the end

AIMS

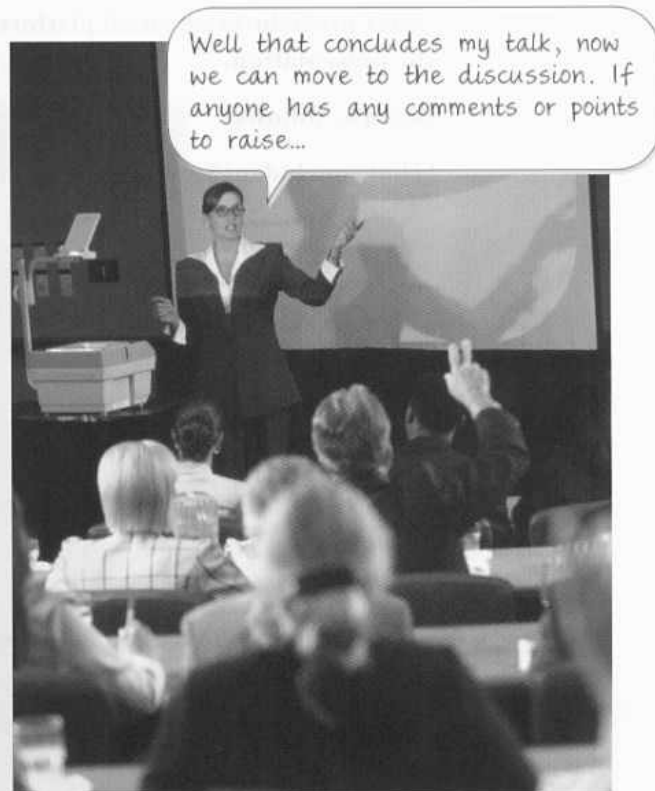
- Structure (3) The end
- Summarising and concluding
- Questions and discussion

1 Structure (3) The end



- 1 What does the end of a presentation contain?
- 2 What is the difference, if any, between a *summary* and a *conclusion*?

- 3 Comment on the different approaches used by the two speakers in the cartoons.
Can you suggest reasons for the different endings?



- 4 In which of the following situations do you think a *discussion* is more appropriate than *questions*?

- A sales representative's presentation of a new product.
- A chief executive's statement on corporate policy.
- A politician's speech on transport policy.
- A team leader's talk to colleagues on the next phase of a project.
- A manager's proposal to a group of senior executives on improving productivity.

2 Summarising and concluding

- 1 Listen to the end of a presentation by Ben Ingleton, Marketing Director of Foss Ltd., an agricultural machinery manufacturer. His talk is about company valuation. What is his key message?
- 2 Listen again. Is this a summary or a conclusion or is it both? Explain your answer.
- 3 Listen again and complete the following phrases.
 - a) 'I'd like to _____ with a short _____ of the _____.'
 - b) 'So, what are _____ that _____ can _____ from this?
I think most importantly, we _____ build up ...'

Practice 1

Look at the following overhead transparencies used in a presentation on safety procedures on an oil platform. Use them to reconstruct the end of the presentation.

Begin as follows:

'That concludes the main part of my talk. Now I'd like to ...'

Summary

1. Three incidents in the year show communication problems.
2. 35% of incidents in the last five years contain some degree of communication problem.
3. Existing communication procedures are not considered satisfactory.

Conclusion



1. Training must place more emphasis on communication procedures.
2. Programme of regular revision of communication procedures should be introduced.



Now compare your version with a recording of a model answer.

3 Questions and discussion



-  1 Listen to a recording of two different ways of ending the same sales presentation by Marisa Repp about an automatic warehouse system, the Storo. Decide if they:
- a) invite the audience to ask questions
 - b) are a lead-in to a discussion
 - c) invite the audience to ask questions and have a discussion
 - d) request comments.
- 2 Suggest alternative endings for the presentation you have just heard.
-  3 Listen to three examples of possible endings to other sales presentations. Match each one to the comments below.
- a) A **hard-sell** approach, mainly interested in selling the product. ☐
 - b) **Weak**, as if the speaker lacks confidence. ☐
 - c) **Customer-friendly**, wants to help the customer. ☐
- 4 Read the following text and identify:
- a) a potential problem at the end of a presentation
 - b) three ways to avoid the problem.

Open for questions: The silent disaster

A nightmare scenario is as follows: the speaker finishes his talk with the words 'Any questions?' This is met by total silence. Not a word. Then an embarrassed shuffling, a cough ... How can this be avoided? A possible answer is that if the presentation has been good and the audience is clearly interested, *someone* will have *something* to say.

- 5 Another way to avoid the nightmare of utter silence is to end with an instruction to the audience. This should ensure immediate audience response. Giving an instruction is often useful in sales presentations and where the audience has special requirements. Here are two examples:

A sales presentation

After talking about his or her products or services, the speaker wants the audience to explain their needs and says:

- 10 'Okay – I've told you about the ways Snappo can help companies like yours. Now for us to do that, we need to know more about the way you work. For example, tell me about your particular situation, tell me what in particular may interest you ...'

- This places a responsibility on the audience to respond – unless of course they have a completely negative view of both the presenter and the message! Assuming they are
- 15 well disposed towards the potential supplier, it is probably in their interests to offer some information and begin discussion.

A Training Manager

Speaking to an audience of department managers, vice-presidents, or potential trainees, the Training Manager has outlined recommendations and explained what is available. He / She can end with:

'Right! I've told you what we can offer. Now tell me: what are your impressions, what are your priorities and what else do you need to know now?' 20

Another option is for the speaker to have a question prepared. Ask something which you know the audience will have to answer. This often breaks the ice and starts discussion. It may be possible to single out an individual who is most likely to have a question to ask you or a comment to make, or it may be apparent from earlier contact perhaps during the reception 25 or a coffee break, that a particular individual has something to say or to ask.

- 5 Handling questions is thought by many speakers to be the most difficult part of a presentation. Why do you think this is? How do you think difficulties can be minimised?



Listen to Penny Yates talking about the difficulties that can arise in dealing with questions after a presentation. As you listen, tick any of the following pieces of advice that she gives.

- Be polite. ☐
- Listen very carefully. ☐
- Ask for repetition or clarification. ☐
- Keep calm. ☐
- Tell the truth (most of the time!). ☐
- Don't say anything you'll regret later. ☐
- Check understanding if necessary by paraphrasing. ☐
- Agree partially before giving own opinion: 'Yes, but ...' ☐



- 6 A conference on land development in Europe included presentations on financial support for business. Listen to four extracts of different speakers' handling of questions and discussion. Use the table below to mark which extracts are examples of good (✓) or bad (X) technique. Give reasons for your answers.

Technique (✓/X)	Why?
1 _____	_____
2 _____	_____
3 _____	_____
4 _____	_____

Practice 2

Imagine that you have given a talk on *Marketing in Japan* at a conference on business trends. What would you say in these situations?

- 1 At the end of your presentation, move to comments / discussion / questions.
- 2 A member of the audience suggests that you said that many small retail outlets, small shops, had actually closed down in recent years. In fact, you said this process has been going on for a long time. Politely correct the other person.
- 3 Ask the audience for comments on why this has happened.
- 4 Agree with someone's suggestions, but suggest other factors. One is the increasing number of takeovers of smaller companies.
- 5 A member of the audience says the following: 'I ... I understand that a report showed that 700 new soft drinks came out in Japan in 2000 and one year later 90% had failed. That's a pretty amazing figure ...' Paraphrasing this, ask if in the USA or Europe that could not happen.
- 6 Someone suggests that in Japan there has always been an emphasis on quality and on products. In the West market research has been more developed. Agree, but say the situation is changing.
- 7 A speaker says something you don't understand. What do you say?

Practice 3

Divide into groups of four. Each person should prepare, in about two to three minutes, part of a short presentation on any topic he / she knows well.

Describe just one or two aspects of the topic in some detail for about three to four minutes. Then end what you say with a brief summary and / or conclusion. Finally, move to questions / comments or discussion.

Your colleagues should:

- ask questions
- ask for more details
- ask for clarification / repetition
- paraphrase part(s) of what you said
- offer more information based on their knowledge and / or experience.

For each contribution, respond appropriately.

Repeat the exercise until everyone in the group has been in the hot seat.

TRANSFER

Give the end of a presentation on a topic of your choice. Include either a summary or a conclusion and move to questions and / or discussion.

Language Checklist

The end of the presentation

Ending the main body of the presentation

Right, that ends (the third part of) my talk.

That's all I want to say for now on ...

Beginning the summary and / or conclusion

I'd like to end by emphasising the main point(s).

I'd like to finish with ...

- a summary of the main points.
- some observations based on what I've said.
- some conclusions / recommendations.
- a brief conclusion.

Concluding

There are two conclusions / recommendations.

What we need is ...

I think we have to ...

I think we have seen that we should ...

Inviting questions and / or introducing discussion

That concludes (the formal part of) my talk.

(Thanks for listening) ... Now I'd like to invite your comments.

Now we have (half an hour) for questions and discussion.

Right. Now, any questions or comments?

So, now I'd be very interested to hear your comments.

Handling questions

Understood but difficult or impossible to answer

That's a difficult question to answer in a few words.

- It could be ...
- In my experience ...
- I would say ...
- I don't think I'm the right person to answer that. Perhaps (Mr Holmes) can help ...
- I don't have much experience in that field ...

Understood but irrelevant or impossible to answer in the time available

I'm afraid that's outside the scope of my talk / this session. If I were you I'd discuss that with ...

I'll have to come to that later, perhaps during the break as we're short of time.

Not understood

Sorry, I'm not sure I've understood. Could you repeat?

Are you asking if ... ?

Do you mean ... ?

I didn't catch (the last part of) your question.

If I have understood you correctly, you mean ... ? Is that right?

Checking that your answer is sufficient

Does that answer your question?

Is that okay?

Skills Checklist

Structure (3) Ending the presentation

A summary

- Restates main point(s).
- Restates what the audience must understand and remember.
- Contains no new information.
- Is short.

A conclusion

- States the logical consequences of what has been said.
- Often contains recommendations.
- May contain new and important information.
- Is short.

Questions

- Inviting questions implies that the audience are less expert than the speaker.
- Beware of the 'nightmare scenario' – total silence! Have one or two prepared questions to ask the audience.
- Keep control of the meeting.

Discussion

- Inviting discussion gives the impression that the audience have useful experience, so is often more 'diplomatic'.
- You still need to control the discussion.

Inviting discussion and questions

- Often the best solution.
- Keep control, limit long contributions, watch the time.

Handling questions

- Listen very carefully.
- Ask for repetition or clarification if necessary.
- Paraphrase the question to check you understand it.
- Give yourself time to think – perhaps by paraphrasing the question.
- Check that the question is relevant. If not, don't answer if you don't want to.
- Refer questioner to another person if you can't answer.
- Suggest you'll answer a question later if you prefer.
- Check that the questioner is happy with your answer: eye contact and a pause is often sufficient.
- Keep control.
- Don't allow one or two people to dominate.
- Be polite.
- Signal when time is running out – 'Time for one last question'.
- At the end, thank the audience.

Quick Communication Check

1 Introducing a summary or a conclusion

Choose the correct word.

- 1 That *ends* / *brings* / *leaves* the main part. Now we *meet* / *come to* / *can do* the conclusion.
- 2 That's really all I *wanted* / *can* / *think* to say. I'd like to *recommend* / *summarise* / *conclude* the three things I have described.
- 3 Can I *finish* / *recommend* / *suggest* now with some recommendations?
- 4 To conclude, I'd like to *speak* / *tell* / *say* what I think is the most important thing

2 Summarising, concluding and recommending

Change the two paragraphs below with words from the boxes.

Okay, I think that is the (a) _____ of the (b) _____ part of my talk. I'd now (c) _____ to say a few words in (d) _____. What we have to remember is the importance of good research. In order to get good (e) _____ we must provide enough (f) _____, so I would like to ask for more people and more money. It's as simple as that. Money and people are the vital resources we need. That's all.

main
end
conclusion
like
resources
information

summarise
said
concludes
then
described
conclusion
first

That (g) _____ what I want to say so can I (h) _____ the main points? (i) _____ I talked about the objectives of the Calypso project. (j) _____ I (k) _____ the problems, essentially the lack of resources and the time difficulties we had. We also had personnel problems. Finally I (l) _____ that during this time, our competitors have introduced new products. In (m) _____, therefore, it is now extremely important to launch a new Calypso product during the current year. Thank you for listening.

3 Introducing questions and discussion

Make correct phrases by matching the verb on the left to the correct words on the right.

- | | | |
|-------------|----------|---------------------|
| 1 conclude | <u>b</u> | a) your views |
| 2 hear | _____ | b) my talk |
| 3 have time | _____ | c) some comments |
| 4 make | _____ | d) a question |
| 5 ask | _____ | e) for a discussion |

Key
1 ends, come to, 2 wanted, summarise, 3 finish, 4 say
2
(a) end, (b) main, (c) like, (d) conclusion, (e) information, (f) resources, (g) concludes, (h) summarise, (i) First, (j) Then, (k) described, (l) said, (m) conclusion
3
1 b), 2 a), 3 e), 4 c), 5 d)