

7.2 Delivering effective presentations on technical topics

In order to tune your audience and maintain their attention throughout the presentation, it is wise to resort to signpost language, i.e. phrases that announce the stage/section of the presentation and mark the shift from one section to another by signalling out what has been presented and what will follow. Similarly with the function of signposts in traffic, signpost language performs a guiding function and ensures maintenance of audience's interest in the topic or its recovery in case it has been diverted.

The following chart provides examples of signpost language correlated with the stage of the presentation:

Stage of presentation	Signpost language items
Introduction (announcing the topic)	The subject/topic/focus of my presentation/speech/talk is ... Today's topic is ... My topic today is... My presentation is concerned with ... I'm going to present/talk about ... As you can see on the slide, my topic today is ...
Pointing out topic relevance	This topic is of particular interest to anyone interested in ... This presentation addresses professionals who take special interest in ... The topic is essential for those as it brings forward ... The presentation is particularly relevant to professionals who work in the field of ...
Giving an overview of your presentation (announcing the structure of the presentation and the main points covered)	I'm going to divide my presentation into three parts. In my presentation, I will focus on three core issues related to ... Basically/ Briefly, I have three main areas to touch. I'd like to begin/start by explaining ... I'll start off by briefly describing the current status of Let's begin/start by ... First (of all), I'll be looking at ..., then/second , ... third ... , finally
Stating the purpose of the presentation	The purpose/goal/aim of this presentation is ... My objective is to ... I'd like to update you on ... During the next 20 minutes I'll be reporting/explaining ...

Starting a section	<p>The next issue/topic/area I'd like to focus on ...</p> <p>I'd like to expand/elaborate on the latest technology ...</p> <p>I'd like now to discuss...</p> <p>This leads to the next point, which is ...</p> <p>Let's move on to the next point</p> <p>Let's look now at the next section</p> <p>Let's turn now to the next issue</p> <p>Now I'll move on to...</p> <p>Turning to...</p> <p>Moving on now to ...</p>
Ending a section	<p>So that's the background/brief insight ...</p> <p>So much for ...</p> <p>This brings me to the end of the last section</p> <p>That's all I have to say about ...</p> <p>We've looked at ...</p>
Summarising and concluding	<p>To sum up ...</p> <p>To summarise ...</p> <p>To recap ...</p> <p>Let's recap on the main points</p> <p>If I can just sum up the main points ...</p> <p>I'd like to sum up the main points</p> <p>I'd like to run through my main points again ...</p> <p>Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've looked into ...</p> <p>Let me briefly summarize what I've said so far</p> <p>Let's summarise briefly what we've looked at...</p> <p>Right, let's sum up, shall we?</p>
Giving examples	<p>For example, ...</p> <p>X is a case in point</p> <p>X is illustrative of ...</p> <p>A good example in this respect is ...</p> <p>To give you an example, ...</p> <p>To illustrate this point ...</p> <p>As an illustration, ...</p> <p>X perfectly exemplifies ...</p>
Analysing a point and making recommendations	<p>The unexpected outcome of this is ...</p> <p>The significance of this is...</p>

	<p>Based on the figures/results we have, I'm quite confident that ...</p> <p>Where does that lead us?</p> <p>Let's consider the last issue in more detail...</p> <p>What does this mean for...?</p> <p>Translated into real terms...</p> <p>Why is this important?</p>
Paraphrasing and clarifying	<p>Simply put...</p> <p>To put it more simply....</p> <p>To put it another way....</p> <p>Let me rephrase ...</p> <p>In other words ...</p> <p>So what I'm saying is....</p>
Invitation to ask questions	<p>Please feel free to ask questions.</p> <p>Does anyone have any questions or comments?</p> <p>If you would like me to elaborate on any point, please ask.</p> <p>Would you like to ask any questions?</p> <p>Are there any questions?</p> <p>I'm happy to answer any queries/ questions.</p>