



SECOND
EDITION

THE **PUBLIC SPEAKING PLAYBOOK**

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Your Play-by-Play Guide to Better Presentations



The Public Speaking Playbook, Second Edition, was developed to coach students on preparing, practicing, and presenting speeches for diverse audiences. This theme is woven throughout the text, repeatedly demonstrating for students that preparation and practice will take the fear out of public speaking.

PREPARE, PRACTICE, AND PRESENT SPEECHES

- **New speech examples** throughout provide students with a deeper understanding of effective speech construction through review and critique.
- Includes expanded and updated coverage of **presenting online!**
- New **sample student speech videos** show students effective models for presenting and structuring their speeches.
- **More than 80 speech clips**, available in YouSeeU, highlight best practices and common student errors.
- Infused with relevant coverage of **real-world public speaking** issues from speaking ethically, to researching effectively, to presenting online



"The text does a great job of providing clear discussion and examples to assist novice speakers. It is written in a clear and concise manner with extensive illustrations and examples."

—Erica Cooper, Roanoke College

"A useful textbook for speech that covers several topics you don't normally find covered in detail, like language usage, and also has great exercises for in-class activities."

—Dr. Christy Mesaros-Winckles, Adrian College

- **Special occasion speeches are covered extensively** in Chapter 22, introducing students to eight types of ceremonial speaking, including the speech of introduction, the eulogy, and the after-dinner speech, along with a sample speech illustrating every occasion.
- **Game Plans** help highlight areas where students excel or need improvement and set the tone for building skills and confidence through routine practice.

“The theme of Gamble and Gamble’s book makes the content feel more accessible from the start and makes for a book that is trying to move students from practice to ‘the real game’ that they will encounter after graduation.”

—John Jarvis, *Bay Path College*

“I love the idea of coaching. Practice is what students need, and the authors give students plenty of activities to do that.”

—Kathleen M. Golden, *Edinboro University of Pennsylvania*

“Excellent examples, easy to use, and appropriate for beginning and more advanced students.”

—Amy Lenoce, *Naugatuck Valley Community College*

“I am so glad the topic of storytelling was included. Stories are so vital for speakers and for the success of our students in the workplace—stories are how we sell ourselves and how we learn and teach the organizational culture.”

—Debbi Vavra, *Blinn College*



GAME PLAN

Preparing for a Webinar Presentation

- I've identified the format for my webinar.
- I've organized my information to fit the time constraints.
- I've planned for interactivity and a means by which audience members can ask questions or respond to a poll.
- I've prepared visuals to integrate into the webinar.
- I've prepared an introduction for myself and any other presenters.
- I've prepared an explanation of how a webinar works, its interactive nature, and how the audience can participate by asking questions.
- I've rehearsed and held dry runs prior to holding the webinar.
- I've made a plan to record the webinar to make it available for those unable to participate in real time.

- **End-of-Chapter Exercises** provide next steps that take students from speech tips, to analyzing speech situations, to approaching the speaker’s stand.

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THE
PUBLIC 
SPEAKING
PLAYBOOK

We dedicate this book to our parents, Martha and Marcel Kwal and Nan and Wesley Gamble, and our children Lindsay and her husband Dan, and Matthew and his love Tong, who through the years have taught us so much about persistence, passion, and what really matters in life.

SAGE was founded in 1965 by Sara Miller McCune to support the dissemination of usable knowledge by publishing innovative and high-quality research and teaching content. Today, we publish over 900 journals, including those of more than 400 learned societies, more than 800 new books per year, and a growing range of library products including archives, data, case studies, reports, and video. SAGE remains majority-owned by our founder, and after Sara's lifetime will become owned by a charitable trust that secures our continued independence.

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SECOND
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THE

PUBLIC SPEAKING PLAYBOOK



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Preface

How exciting it is for us to have completed the second edition of *The Public Speaking Playbook*. We hope you find it even more engaging and useful than this text's first edition. Our goal in writing the second edition remained faithful to our goal for the first edition—to create a resource that coaches students on how to prepare, practice, and present speeches for diverse audiences of varying sizes who gather in an array of forums—from classrooms to community centers, from organizational to public venues, from face-to-face settings to online.

Playbooks, of course, serve multiple audiences—athletes, actors, musicians, dancers, politicians, community organizers, leaders, and speakers—who rely on them to learn their craft, hone their skills, and accomplish their goals. All work under pressure, achieve individually or as part of a team or ensemble, and regularly plan and practice and evaluate in order to grow and improve performance outcomes. We weave the analogy throughout the pages of this text, repeatedly demonstrating for students how practicing and executing the right plays takes the fear out of public speaking and frees them to share their interests and knowledge, passions and concerns with others.

While the contents of the second edition have been streamlined, the *Playbook* retains its interactive focus, coaching students in building skills and training them actively in public speaking fundamentals. Every section of the *Playbook* includes brief learning modules that let students get to the “how-to” quickly, giving them the essentials they need to work both independently and collaboratively in preparing, rehearsing, and presenting a speech. The *Playbook* is spiral bound and tabbed for easy reference. Its eight main tabbed parts are divided into a series of sections or “plays” that facilitate students working play-by-play to deliver winning presentations at higher and higher levels. Embedded in every section are objectives, self-evaluation opportunities, coaching tips, and exercises to build skills and reinforce key competencies.

Also woven through the *Playbook*, and central to our goals, is a concern for diversity, ethics, and civic engagement, which we so hope students come to share. Bigotry, personal attacks, and divisiveness have no positive role to play in public speaking. Taking this to heart, this new edition of *The Public Speaking Playbook* now gives students the tools they need to build bridges of understanding between themselves and the audiences they address.

We hope you find *The Public Speaking Playbook* a resource not only worth using, but also worth keeping. Consider it a resource that you can consult throughout your life, honing your skills to reach the top of your game.

New in the Second Edition

The *Second Edition* of *The Public Speaking Playbook* incorporates many changes informed by feedback from instructors and students.

- **Streamlined for clarity and focus.** We have carefully edited each chapter to highlight the most important content and skills, allowing students to get to the information they need quickly and efficiently. We retained our focus on all of the key components to effective speechmaking, while reducing the overall length of the book by nearly 100 pages.
- **Updated for currency and relevance.** We have updated examples extensively throughout the text to provide students with more contemporary and relatable models for effective speeches.
- **New annotated speeches for deeper analysis.** We have provided four new annotated speech examples to promote deeper understanding of effective speech construction through review and critique. The new examples include a new sample commencement address, President Barack Obama's eulogy of Muhammad Ali, and two new persuasive speech samples from students on social media and football-related brain injuries.
- **Expanded and updated coverage of presentation aids.** Chapter 17 has been heavily revised and updated to include the most recent scholarship on presentation aids, covering everything from pie charts to Prezi. Additional coverage includes a new table outlining the pros and cons to using common presentation software to help students select the right tools for their presentations.
- **More than 80 new speech video clips.** Available through **YouSeeU for The Public Speaking Playbook** (more details under “Digital Resources” section below), the new edition provides dozens of new videos of *real students* delivering *real speeches* tied directly to each chapter’s learning objectives. Many videos showcase both “needs improvement” and exemplary speech excerpts to help students grow their skills. Over 15 full speeches are available for students to review for guidance.

DIGITAL RESOURCES



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We know that high-quality resources are essential to effectively teach public speaking. Our goal has been to create resources that not only support but enhance the book’s coaching theme. SAGE edge offers a robust online environment featuring an impressive array of tools and resources for review, study, and further exploration, keeping both instructors and students on the cutting edge of teaching and learning. SAGE edge content is open access and available on demand. Learning and teaching has never been easier! We gratefully acknowledge Sorin Nastasia, Kristyn Hunt Cathey, Gillie Haynes, and Suzanne Atkin, for developing the digital resources on this site.

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- **Chapter-specific discussion questions** help launch engaging classroom interaction while reinforcing important content.
- **Video and multimedia resources** that bring concepts to life make learning easier.
- Editable, chapter-specific **PowerPoint® slides** that offer flexibility when creating multimedia lectures so you don't have to start from scratch but can customize to your exact needs.
- **Sample course syllabi** with suggested models for structuring your course that give you options to customize your course in a way that is perfect for you.
- **Lecture notes** that summarize key concepts on a chapter-by-chapter basis to help you with preparation for lectures and class discussions.
- **Integrated links to the FREE interactive eBook** that make it easy for your students to maximize their study time with this “anywhere, anytime” mobile-friendly version of the text. It also offers access to more digital tools and resources, including SAGE Premium Video.
- Comprehensive list of suggested **student speech assignments** for each chapter with relevant web resources to jump-start research.
- **Best practice guide** to aid instructors in teaching public speaking courses (both on-site and online), with tips on integrating online resources and media in lectures.
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- Chapter-specific **learning objectives** that reinforce the most important material.
- Chapter-by-chapter **study questions** to help students prepare for quizzes and tests.
- Carefully selected chapter-by-chapter **video and multimedia content** which enhance classroom-based explorations of key topics.

YouSeeU for *The Public Speaking Playbook*

SAGE Video Assignments powered by YouSeeU for *The Public Speaking Playbook, Second Edition*, offers a better way to develop and enhance your students' public speaking skills through engaging, easy-to-use, video recording and assessment tools. Directly tied to the chapter learning objectives in the text and accessible within your school's LMS, YouSeeU makes it possible for students to apply what they learn by video recording speech assignments within the YouSeeU platform, specifically customized for *The Public Speaking Playbook, Second Edition*. Instructors and peers can access the recordings to provide targeted, frame-by-frame feedback, allowing for more robust advice and more effective learning—all adapted to meet the unique needs of each student. Students also gain exclusive access to **more than 80 sample speech video clips** within the YouSeeU platform, paired with assessment questions specifically tailored to reinforce chapter content and learning objectives. Add YouSeeU to your course and build your students' confidence as you prepare them for real-life success beyond the classroom!

We've made it easy for students to get SAGE Video Assignments powered by YouSeeU for *The Public Speaking Playbook, Second Edition*, all in one convenient package at a student-friendly price when bundled with the second edition of the text. Contact your SAGE representative today to request a demo and see how YouSeeU offers a better way to teach and learn communication skills.

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Get Ready to Speak

Chapter 1: Public Speaking and You: Building Confidence

Chapter 2: Give Your First Speech

Chapter 3: Ethics and Public Speaking in a Global World





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1

Public Speaking and You: Building Confidence

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Demonstrate how developing public speaking skills can help you realize personal, professional, and societal goals
2. List and explain the essential elements of communication
3. Assess your confidence as a speaker
4. Identify the sources of public speaking anxiety
5. Use systematic desensitization, power posing, cognitive restructuring, centering, and skills training to alleviate symptoms of speech apprehension and build confidence

Contents

A **playbook** is a **game plan**—a plan of action designed to help you become a peak performer.¹ We wrote this playbook because we believe every public speaking student needs a game plan to succeed. Why? Because effective speakers prepare, practice, and present speeches that others judge to be of high quality. To rise to this level, effective speakers first master and then apply skills. And just like elite athletes and others who appear in public, they perform under pressure, either individually or as members of a team. They also practice consistently so that every one of their presentations is as good as or better than their last. With practice, you can join their ranks.

We place a high value on public speaking ability because it is such a vital means of **communication**. The ability to speak in public is a powerful skill to be honed. Audiences have been drawn to the words of Tony Robbins, Oprah Winfrey, Bill Clinton, Suze Orman, and the late Steve Jobs because each has been able to inspire, reassure, convince, or simply reach out to audiences. Being able to speak in public without injecting vitriol, is similarly powerful. What will you do? You can be the smartest person in the room, but if deficient speaking skills keep others from understanding your ideas, being smart isn't enough. A class in public speaking gives you and your peers the opportunity to work together on improving your public speaking skills.

Section 1.1 Identify Speechmaking's Benefits

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COACHING TIP

"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

—Benjamin Franklin

Merely reading and talking about public speaking won't make you a better speaker. Only involving yourself in the process and doing it will help you improve. The more you speak in public, the easier it will become, and the more you will improve. Doing it builds confidence.



Identify Speechmaking's Benefits

1.1a Benefits for Your Personal Life

1.1b Benefits for Your Career

1.1c Benefits for Society

Becoming a skilled public speaker has benefits for the individual, both personal and professional, and for society as a whole.

1.1a Benefits for Your Personal Life

Speaking in public precipitates self-discovery and builds confidence and can even trigger self-discovery as well as creative self-expression. For instance, as a result of researching a topic of interest, such as the problems faced by soldiers returning from a war zone, you might discover that you have the desire to engage in service learning by volunteering at a veteran's facility.

As a public speaker you are expected to reflect on your interests, to explore where you stand on controversial issues, and to consider the needs and concerns of others. You would need to consider your position and how to best make your argument so that even those who disagreed with your stance initially would listen to and understand it.

Becoming a more confident speaker will also make you a more confident student. By developing the ability to speak in public, you develop your ability to speak up in class—any class.

At the same time, as you build speaking confidence, you might find yourself wanting to become more civically engaged, speaking up and sharing ideas beyond the classroom as well.

While mastering the material in a major field is necessary, whether your major is business, computer programming, nursing, or any other subject, unless you also can present information clearly and effectively, no matter how intelligent you are, others may question your credibility and knowledge. By mastering the ability to communicate your ideas in public, you harness the power of speech. By being better able to control yourself and your ideas, you enhance your ability to control your environment.

1.1b Benefits for Your Career

Success in public speaking helps you grow professionally. Your ability to attain professional success is related to your ability to communicate effectively what you think, know, and can do. This is especially helpful in a job interview, since prospective employers favor candidates who have public speaking abilities.²

How far you advance in your career may well depend on how capable you are in addressing, impressing, and influencing others and in communicating your ideas clearly and effectively.³ The executives and entrepreneurs of tomorrow need to be skilled public speakers—masters of the art of speaking before groups of all sizes, including the news media and online audiences.

1.1c Benefits for Society

Developing public speaking skills gives you a voice in influencing the direction of your college, community, and society as a whole. It gives you opportunities to let others know the issues you care about and want them to care about, too. By speaking up, and listening to others who speak up, you exercise effective citizenship. Freedom of speech has always been viewed as an essential ingredient in a democracy. What does freedom of speech mean? It means

1. You can speak freely without fear of being punished for expressing your ideas.
2. You can expose yourself freely to all sides of a controversial issue.
3. You can debate freely all disputable questions of fact, value, or policy.
4. You can make decisions freely based on your evaluation of the choices confronting you.

Our political system depends on a commitment by citizens to speak openly and honestly and to listen freely and carefully to all sides of an issue. It depends on our ability to think critically about what we listen to, so that we are able to accept or reject the speaker's goal. In so doing, we can make informed decisions about our future. Democracy depends on our willingness to understand and respond to expressions of opinion, belief, and value that are different from our own.



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Rally around ideas. How can a speech influence your political attitudes and choices?



1.2a Picture the Parts Working Together

1.2b Consider Audience Expectations

Understand the Context of Public Speaking

Skilled public speakers have unique powers to influence. But like other forms of communication, public speaking is a circle of give-and-take between presenter and audience. The better you understand how communication works, the better your ability to make it work for you. The following elements are an integral part of the process:

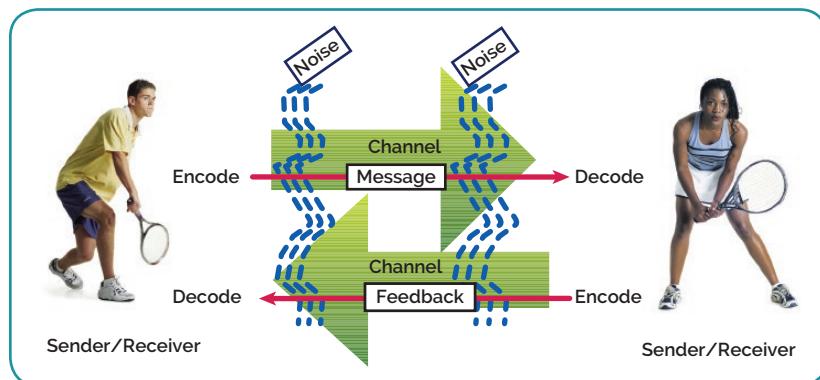
- The source
- The receiver
- The message
- The channel
- Noise
- Feedback
- Situational and cultural contexts

One way to study the interactions of these elements is with a model of the communication process in action (see Figure 1.1).

Look closely at the variables depicted in Figure 1.1 to identify how they relate to each other dynamically during public speaking. Both the speaker, or **source**, and the listener, or **receiver**, participate in communication. Each party simultaneously and continually performs both sending functions (giving out messages) and receiving functions (taking in messages). Neither sending nor receiving is the exclusive job of any person.

Between the source and receiver, **messages**—both verbal and nonverbal—are sent and received. The words and visuals we use to express our ideas and feelings, the sounds of our voices, and our body language (or nonverbal communication) make up the content of our communication and convey information. Everything we do as senders and receivers has potential message value for those observing us. If a speaker's voice quivers or a receiver checks his or her watch, it conveys a message.

FIGURE 1.1
The Communication Process in Action



Channels are pathways or media through which messages are carried. The auditory channel carries our spoken words; the visual channel carries our gestures, facial expressions, and postural cues; and the vocal channel carries cues such as rate, quality, volume, and pitch of speech. Communication is usually a multichannel event.

Noise is anything that interferes with our ability to send or receive a message. Noise need not be sound. Physical discomfort, a psychological state, intellectual ability, or the environment also can create noise. As the model in Figure 1.1 shows, noise can enter the communication event at any point; it can come from the context, the channel, the message, or the persons themselves. Different languages, translators, generational terms, jargon, and technical terms play a role in the day-to-day noise of communication in our diverse world.

The **situational/cultural context** is the setting or environment for communication. Because every message occurs in a situation with cultural and social meanings, conditions of place and time influence both behavior and the outcome of the communication event. The after-dinner speaker addressing a large number of people who have just eaten and are full will need to give a different kind of speech than the person whose task is to address the members of a union protesting a layoff.

Feedback is information we receive in response to a message we have sent. Feedback tells us how we are doing. Positive feedback, like applause, serves a reinforcing function and causes us to continue behaving as we are, whereas negative feedback, such as silent stares, serves a corrective function and leads us to eliminate any ineffective behaviors. Internal feedback is that which you give yourself (you laugh at a joke you tell); external feedback comes from others who are party to the communicative event (receivers laugh at your joke, too).



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It's all about the audience. Your goal as a public speaker is to anticipate and interpret listener feedback and adjust your message accordingly.

1.2a Picture the Parts Working Together

All parts of the communicative model continuously interact with and affect each other—they are interconnected and interdependent. When something happens to one variable, all the other variables in the process are affected. Communication is also cumulative; the communicative experiences we have add up and have the potential to alter our perceptions and behaviors. The **effects of communication** cannot be erased; they become part of the total field of experience we bring to the next communication event. Ultimately, our **field of experience**—the sum of all our experiences—influences our attitudes toward the speech event and our receivers, affecting both our desire to communicate and the way we do it.

Your success as a source ultimately depends on your ability to

- Establish common ground with your receivers
- Encode or formulate a message effectively
- Adapt to cultural and situational differences
- Alleviate the effects of noise
- Understand and respond to the reactions of those with whom you are interacting

Your effectiveness depends not only on what you intend to communicate, but also on the meanings your receivers give to your message. A self-centered communicator is insensitive to the needs of receivers, which limits his or her effectiveness. Keep your eyes on your communication goal, instead of focusing solely on yourself.



Know your parts. As you put your presentation together, keep your eyes on your goal to create a more dynamic and influential speech.

1.2b Consider Audience Expectations

Although being able to (1) organize ideas logically, (2) encode or express ideas clearly, and (3) analyze and adapt to receivers readily are skills every communicator needs, they are particularly important for public speakers.

Receivers usually have higher expectations for public speakers than for other communicators. For example, we expect public speakers to use more formal standards of grammar and usage, pay more attention to their presentation style and appearance, fit what they say into a specific time limit, and anticipate and then respond to questions their receivers will ask.

So, when speaking in public you will need to polish, formalize, and build on your basic conversational skills to reach your goal.



Consider your audience's goals. How does your speech connect to their interests, needs, and knowledge?

COACHING TIP

"We live in an era where the best way to make a dent on the world may no longer be to write a letter to the editor or publish a book. It may be simply to stand up and say something . . . because both the words and the passion with which they are delivered can now spread across the world at warp speed."

—Chris Anderson, *TED TALKS: The Official TED Guide to Public Speaking*

Picture the model in Figure 1.1. Communication and understanding are key. Focus on your audience. Make it easy for those in it to understand you. You just might significantly affect their lives.



1.3a Understand Public Speaking Anxiety

1.3b Address the Physical Effects of Speech Anxiety

1.3c Address the Mental Effects of Speech Anxiety

1.3d Use Skills Training

1.3e Anxiety Can Be Transformative

Build Confidence

You are in good company if the thought of speaking in public causes you some concern. Speakers are not alone in experiencing fear or feeling stressed at the thought of performing in public. Athletes, dancers, actors, and musicians also have to handle their fear and emotional stress, which, if not channeled effectively, can interfere with their ability to perform.⁴ When they control their fear, however, the stress becomes useful, helping them gain a competitive edge, boosting their energy, and readying them to deliver a peak performance. How does this happen? Quite simply, athletes and others who perform in public focus, face their fears, and train to handle pressure. And they do this gradually over time, not once, but regularly.⁵ You can, too. Start by confronting your feelings about giving a speech.

Self-Assessment: How Confident Are You About Public Speaking?

In the space before each of the following statements, enter the number in the rating scale that best represents your feelings about each statement:

Not at all concerned 1 2 3 4 5 Extremely concerned

1. I will forget what I plan to say.
2. My thoughts will confuse listeners.
3. My words will offend listeners.
4. Audience members will laugh at me when I don't mean to be funny.
5. I'm going to embarrass myself.
6. My ideas will have no impact.
7. I will look foolish in front of my audience because I won't be able to look them in the eye and I won't know what to do with my hands.
8. My voice and body will shake uncontrollably.
9. I will bore my audience.
10. Audience members will stare at me unresponsively.

TOTAL

To determine your score, add the numbers you selected:

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| 41–50 | You have speech anxiety. |
| 31–40 | You are very apprehensive. |
| 21–30 | You are concerned to a normal extent. |
| 10–20 | You are very confident. |

Although this self-survey is by no means a scientific indicator of your oral communication confidence, it can help you face your concerns. This is your first step in gaining control of your excess energy and using it to elicit a strong public speaking performance.

1.3a Understand Public Speaking Anxiety

Public speaking anxiety, also known as PSA, is a variant of communication anxiety that affects some 40 to 80 percent of all speakers.⁶ PSA has two dimensions, process anxiety and performance anxiety.

- **Process anxiety** is fear of preparing a speech. For example, when you experience process anxiety, you doubt your ability to select a topic, research it, and organize your ideas.
- **Performance anxiety** is fear of presenting a speech. It finds you stressful about delivering the speech, fearful that you'll tremble, forget what you want to say, do something embarrassing, be unable to complete the speech, not make sense to receivers, or simply be assessed as a poor speaker.⁷

Why are some of us afraid to speak before a group? What makes us fear public speaking more than we fear snakes, heights, bee stings, or death?⁸

Fear of Failure

We all fear failure.⁹ If you choose not to take risks because you visualize yourself failing rather than succeeding, if you disagree with what you hear or read but choose to keep your thoughts to yourself, then you are probably letting your feelings of inferiority limit you.

Fear of the Unknown

Some fear what they do not know or have not had successful experience with. The unknown leaves much to the imagination—and far too frequently, we irrationally choose to imagine the worst thing that could happen when making a speech.

Fear of Evaluation

Some speechmakers also fear that others will judge their ideas, how they sound or look, or what they represent. When faced with such an option, we prefer not to be judged.

Fear of Being the Center of Attention

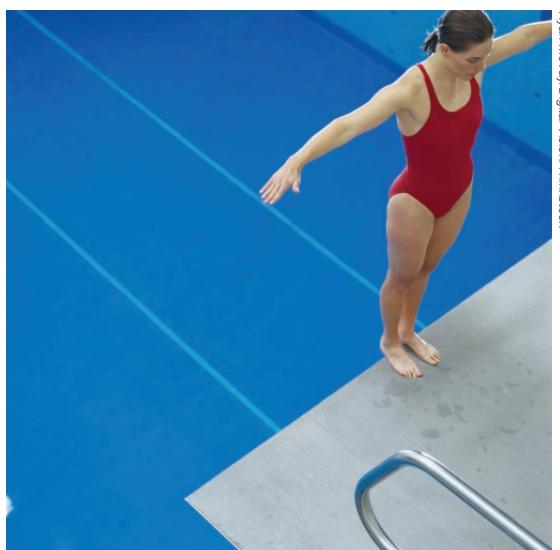
We may also fear being conspicuous or singled out. Audience members usually focus directly on a speaker. Some speakers interpret receivers' gazes as scrutinizing and hostile rather than as revealing a genuine interest in them.

Fear of Difference

Ethnocentrism—the belief that one's own group or culture is better than others—makes some speakers think they share nothing in common with the members of their audience. Feelings of difference make it harder to find common ground, which in turn increases the anxiety about making a speech.

Fear Imposed by Culture

Culture can influence attitudes toward speaking in public. For example, according to research, Puerto Ricans, Filipinos, Israelis, and other Middle Eastern peoples are typically less apprehensive about public speaking than Americans.¹⁰ In these cultures, children are rewarded for merely trying, making judgment and communication anxiety a less intrusive force.¹¹



Ryan McVay/Digital Vision/Thinkstock

Conquering fear. Like an athlete visualizing a dive, visualize yourself giving a successful speech days, hours, and minutes beforehand to help combat public speaking anxiety.



Talking about practice. Practicing the proper posture and keeping an open power stance can physically promote confidence for your speech.

1.3b Address the Physical Effects of Speech Anxiety

When we experience the physical effects of anxiety, adrenalin is released into our systems and our respiration rate and heart rate increase. When our anxiety levels get too high, we need to manage the physical effects of speech fright. For example, if we're runners, we could go for a run. If not, we could take a moment to stretch our limbs.

Another technique is systematic desensitization, a way to reduce the physical responses of apprehension.¹² The principle behind systematic desensitization is that after being tensed, a muscle relaxes. Try these methods:

Tense/Relax

Tense your neck and shoulders. Count to 10. Relax. Continue by tensing and relaxing other parts of your body including your hands, arms, legs, and feet. As you continue this process, you will find yourself growing calmer.

Strike a Powerful Pose

How we stand can affect our speaking success. Merely practicing a “power pose” in private before presenting a speech lowers speaker stress levels, thereby reducing outward signs of stress and enhancing confidence:¹³

- Stand tall.
- Stand tall and lean slightly forward.
- Stand tall and open your limbs expansively.
- Leaning slightly forward, stake out a broad surface with your hands.

Leaning slightly forward engages an audience. Opening the limbs expresses power. Staking out a broad surface conveys a sense of control. In contrast to power poses, low-power cues increase stress and decrease confidence. Adopting a close-bodied posture conveys powerlessness, touching your neck or face is a symptom of anxiety, and folding your arms comes off as defensive. Use power poses that convey authority instead. Doing so will boost confidence at the same time.

1.3c Address the Mental Effects of Speech Anxiety

Far too often, our **self-talk**—our internal communication—fans the flames of our fears instead of extinguishing them.¹⁴ We create a self-fulfilling prophecy, meaning that we form an expectation and adjust our behavior to match. As a result, the expectation we created becomes true. This can cause unnecessary problems if our thoughts are negative.

The goal is to use **thought stopping** to make self-talk work in your favor. Every time you find yourself thinking an upsetting or anxiety-producing thought, every time you visualize yourself experiencing failure instead of success, say to yourself, “Stop!” and tell yourself, “Calm.” Thought stopping is an example of **cognitive restructuring**, a technique that focuses attention on our thoughts rather than on our bodily reactions. Cognitive restructuring works by altering the beliefs people have about themselves and their abilities.

A second technique is **centering**.¹⁵ When centering, we direct our thoughts internally. Key in this procedure is the **centering breath**, designed to help us focus on the task mentally. Try it. Take a deep breath. Follow it with a strong exhalation and muscle relaxation. This done, you’ll be better able to narrow your focus on the external task.

Using thought stopping and centering together allows you to gain control by diverting attention from thoughts that threaten your success to positive ones.



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Deep thoughts. Taking deep breaths and relaxing your muscles can help mitigate the effects that negative thoughts have on your speeches.

COACHING TIP

“There are two types of speakers—those that are nervous and those that are liars.”
—Mark Twain

Nerves are not your enemy. Face them, control them, and you transform normal anxiety into a positive. Harnessing the excess energy that accompanies any apprehension you feel energizes you and enhances your development as a speaker.

1.3d Use Skills Training

We can combat both the physical and the mental effects of speech anxiety by making an effort to

- Speak on a topic about which we truly care
- Prepare thoroughly for the speechmaking event
- Keep in mind that our listeners are unlikely to perceive our signs of anxiety

Because you are just beginning your training to become a better speaker, it is reasonable to expect you may still feel anxious about speaking in public. As you increase your skill level by learning how to prepare and deliver speeches, you become consciously competent and aware of your competence. The idea of public speaking becomes less threatening.¹⁶ By making your anxiety work for you, by converting it into positive energy, you learn to fear anxiety less, and you learn to like public speaking more.



GAME PLAN

Conquering Speech Anxiety

- I have assessed my own feelings and fears about giving a speech.
- I have chosen a topic that I know and about which I feel passionate.
- Last night, I practiced a powerful pose—I stood tall, I leaned forward, and opened my arms to the audience, staking out a broad surface with my hands.
- The morning before my speech, I went for a walk, a run, or a swim.
- Just before my speech, I took a moment to center my breathing and thoughts.
- I am ready to deliver my speech.

1.3e Anxiety Can Be Transformative

Contrary to what you may think, as a speaker you neither can nor should rid yourself of all speech anxiety. Rather, using your anxiety to perform more effectively is better than experiencing none at all.

In the book *Face of Emotion*, author Eric Finzi suggests that “putting on a happy face” not only erases a frown, it actually can lift your mood.¹⁷ Nonverbal communication expert Paul Ekman agrees, acknowledging the possibility that facial expressions can affect our moods.¹⁸ It follows then that changing any negative thoughts you have about giving a speech to positive ones can similarly influence your performance. With that in mind, follow these suggestions:

Prepare Thoroughly and Rehearse

Preparation helps instill confidence. It includes everything you do between thinking up a topic and speech delivery. Prepared speakers are competent speakers.

Visualize a Positive Experience

Instead of focusing on your negative thoughts and fears, focus on the potential positives of your performance. Visualize yourself being successful from start to finish.

Remind Yourself That Receivers Usually Cannot See or Hear Your Fear

Although you may feel the flutters that speech anxiety causes, the audience generally cannot detect these in your performance. In fact, observers usually underestimate the amount of anxiety they believe a speaker is experiencing.¹⁹

Choose a Topic You Are Knowledgeable About and Are Comfortable With

One of the best means of controlling your fear and laying the groundwork for a successful speech is to choose a topic that is important to you, that you know something about, and about which you want to find out even more. Highly anxious speakers rarely do this. As a result, they spend far too much preparation time trying to interest themselves in or master a subject, and far too little time rehearsing the presentation itself.²⁰

Focus on Your Audience, Not on Yourself

Highly anxious speakers tend to be self-obsessed, but more effective speakers focus their attention on their listeners. When you avoid focusing on your anxiety and concentrate on your audience instead, you shine the communication spotlight on those you are speaking to and you minimize your anxiety.

COACHING TIP

“Think you can or think you can’t; either way you will be right.”

—Henry Ford

It is important to believe in yourself. You can become a skilled, confident, and proficient public speaker. Do you believe in you?



Exercises

GET A STRONG START

Becoming proficient at public speaking, like any other skill, is accomplished with practice. With introspection comes insight; with practice comes mastery. Take advantage of every opportunity to build your speaking skills.

1. Deliver a Tip on How to Enhance Confidence

For practice, customize a topic related to speech apprehension, such as “Taking the Fear Out of Public Speaking,” “The Uses of Hypnosis,” or “How to De-stress.” Once you select a topic, research it, and explain the guidelines given to reduce apprehension.

2. TED on Power Poses

Watch the TED Talk about power poses available at http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are.html. In this presentation, Amy Cuddy reveals the extent to which body language shapes assessments of a person. Based on what you learn, identify what you can do to help others judge you to be a “powerful” presenter.

3. Analyze This: The Opening Monologue

View the opening monologue of an afternoon or late-night TV show such as *Saturday Night Live*, *The Tonight Show With Jimmy Fallon*, or *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*. Assess the host’s confidence delivering the opening monologue. What was the host’s topic? Did it appeal to the audience? Why? Did the host come across as knowledgeable? Why? Did she or he come across as confident? Why? What signs of anxiety, if any, did you see the host exhibit? Was the host’s focus on the audience or on him- or herself? How do you know? What three adjectives would you use to describe the host’s performance? What aspects of your analysis can you apply to your performance as a speaker?

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Choose one of the following assignments and share your thoughts with your peers in a two- to three-minute presentation. Structure your presentation so it has a clear introduction, definite body, and strong conclusion.

- a. Interview another member of the class to identify a number of interesting facts about that person. Be as creative as possible in organizing and sharing what you discovered about your partner and what it has taught you.
- b. Describe a significant personal experience that challenged your sense of ethics.
- c. Based on a review of recent news stories, share a concern you have regarding the ability of members of society to respect one another and get along.
- d. Bring to class a picture, object, or brief literary or nonfiction selection that helps you express your feelings about a subject of importance to you. Share the selection with the class, discuss why you selected it, and explain how it helps you better understand yourself, others, or your relation to the subject.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Demonstrate how developing public speaking skills can help you realize personal, professional, and societal goals.** Public speaking precipitates self-discovery and the art of creative self-expression. It enhances self-confidence and the ability to influence or control one's environment. In addition, prospective employers favor persons with public speaking abilities. And society benefits from people who are able to function as responsible citizens and participate in the exchange of ideas.
- List and explain the essential elements of communication.** The following elements are integral to communicating: the source formulates and delivers a message; the receiver interprets the source's message; the message is the content of the speech; the channel is the pathway that carries the message; noise is anything that interferes with the sending or receiving of a message; the cultural context is the environment in which communication occurs; feedback is information received in response to a sent message; effect is the outcome or exchange of influences occurring during communication; and the field of experience is the sum of all the experiences that a person carries with him or her when communicating.
- Assess your confidence as a speaker.** Public speaking anxiety is composed of process anxiety (the fear of preparing a speech) and performance anxiety (the fear of presenting a speech). It is important to acknowledge and face whatever fear you have so that you are able to harness the excess energy that accompanies it.
- Identify the sources of speechmaking anxiety.** Among the common sources of speechmaking anxiety are fear of failure, fear of the unknown, fear of evaluation, fear of being the center of attention, fear of difference, and fear imposed by culture.
- Use systematic desensitization, power posing, cognitive restructuring, centering, and skills training to alleviate the symptoms of speech apprehension.** A variety of strategies can help you address both the physical and mental effects of speech anxiety. Practice tensing and relaxing your muscles, strike a powerful pose, focus on changing your own negative thoughts, and take comfort in honing your own competence by practicing and delivering speeches.

KEY TERMS

Centering 13	Feedback 7	Public speaking anxiety 11
Centering breath 13	Field of experience 8	Receiver 6
Channel 7	Message 6	Self-talk 13
Cognitive restructuring 13	Noise 7	Situational/cultural context 7
Communication 3	Performance anxiety 11	Source 6
Effects of communication 8	Process anxiety 11	Thought stopping 13
Ethnocentricity 11		



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2

Give Your First Speech

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Understand the basic moves used in speechmaking
2. Approach public speaking systematically
3. Deliver a brief first speech
4. Score your first speech performance to establish a baseline on which to build your skills



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Contents

Imagine yourself standing smack in the middle of a sports field. “What am I doing here?” you ask yourself. You don’t play sports. You are unprepared to participate in the game that’s about to start. Because of your lack of familiarity with the sport, lack of training, and lack of equipment, you have absolutely no idea what to do as more skilled players take the field, milling about, looking at you. You feel like an idiot.

Now let’s change the setting. You are seated in your public speaking class. And your instructor has just told you that you’re going to have to come to the front of the room and give a speech. But public speaking is something you’ve had no formal training in and little, if any, experience with. You feel unknowledgeable, unprepared, and unconditioned. “What?” you ask, stunned. “The course has just begun and you already want me to give a speech. How am I supposed to do that?”

Though few, if any, coaches would expect you to have mastered a game by your first practice, they would expect you to be familiar with how it is played—and to have a sense of the kinds of rules and moves you will be expected to learn. So let’s begin by previewing the four primary plays involved in giving a speech for the first time.

Every play is made up of one or more key steps—each necessary for the play’s success. The four key plays to delivering your first speech are (1) topic selection; (2) speech development, support, and organization; (3) practice and delivery; and (4) post-presentation analysis.

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COACHING TIP

Believe everything you say.

When you share your message, you share yourself. Having a personal connection affects the delivery of your speech and your relationship with your audience. Belief in the significance and relevance of your words is contagious.



2.1a Analyze Yourself

2.1b Consider Your Audience and the Occasion

2.1c Criteria for Choosing Your Topic

Select Your Topic

This move is made up of three basic steps. First, analyze your interests and use this information to select a general subject area. Second, compare this general subject area to your audience and the occasion. Third, vet the topic, selecting your goal and narrowing your subject.

2.1a Analyze Yourself

Learning what motivates you and makes you tick will help you become a better speaker.¹ In fact, conducting a **self-analysis** is a prerequisite. Although at times you may be handed a specific topic assignment, most often the choice of topic will be yours. Even if given a topic, we recommend that you still conduct a self-analysis to uncover aspects of yourself that may be particularly interesting or appealing to others.

Conduct a Life Overview

Whatever your age, divide your life into thirds—early life, midlife, more recent life. Compose a sentence to summarize your life during each stage, for example, “During high school, I lived in Norman, Oklahoma, where my dad worked for an oil company, and I went to Sooner football games.” Under each summary statement list your main interests and concerns during that life period. Examine your list. Which topics still interest or concern you?

Focus on This Moment in Time

Fold a sheet of paper in half. On the left side, list sensory experiences—whatever you are able to see, hear, taste, smell, or touch right now. On the right side, list topics suggested by each sensory experience. For example, if you wrote “balloon” on the left side, you might enter “party planning” on the right side.

Be Newsy

Peruse a newspaper, newsmagazine, or online news aggregator to find potential topics. Read a story and list topics suggested by it. For example, the February 19, 2016, *New York Times* featured an article titled “The Résumé and References Check Out. How About Social Media?” Imagine the possible speech topics the article suggests: how to prepare a résumé, how to use social media responsibly, interviewing skills, and so on.

Use Technology

Explore websites such as About.com, eHow.com, or YouTube, searching for sample presentations. Additionally, the speech topic resources at edge.sagepub.com/gamblepsp2e can prove helpful.

- ▶ See **Chapter 6** for more information on selecting a topic.

2.1b Consider Your Audience and the Occasion

Once you've conducted your self-analysis, you turn your attention to your audience, conducting an audience analysis. Why? Because if you consider only your interests and don't take the needs and interests of your audience into account, audience members are more likely to experience boredom and become easily distracted. If this happens, you lose the attention of receivers, which prevents your message from getting through.

Pay attention to your audience, and they will pay attention to you. This means you will want to consider how familiar audience members are with your selected topic area, what their attitudes toward it are, and what they would like to know about it. Take into account some of the demographic characteristics of the audience, such as their genders and ages, the cultures represented, their socioeconomic backgrounds. Think about how factors like these could influence how they feel about your topic and, consequently, how you should frame it. For example, if you decide to speak about student services for on-campus residents, but your class is made up primarily of students who commute to campus, a substantial number of students could find your talk irrelevant.

Take the time needed to get to know your receivers. Talk to them, asking about their interests and concerns. For this first assignment, chatting with three to five students should be sufficient. Ask them what they already know about your topic, whether it appeals to them, and what else they'd be interested in finding out about it. Their answers will help you narrow your subject and relate it more directly to them.

- ▶ **Chapter 5** will help you analyze your audience and adapt your presentation to them.



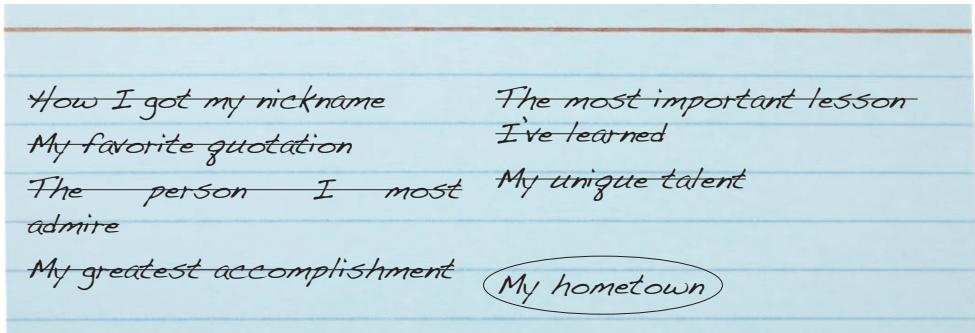
Getting to know you. Speak more directly to your audience by knowing their demographic characteristics and relationship to your speech topic.

2.1c Criteria for Choosing Your Topic

There are a number of other criteria aside from your interests to consider when selecting a topic for your initial speech.

1. Avoid overused topics, unless you will be taking an unusual slant or offering a fresh perspective. Thus, rather than speaking on the legalization of marijuana, speak on how it helps deter the ill-effects of chemotherapy.
2. Select an appropriate topic—not one that will be alienating or that you or your receivers have no interest in learning more about. Make the effort to meet their needs and expectations.
3. Limit the scope of your topic so that it fits the time allotted for your speech. For example, speaking on The Story of My Life or The History of the Computer could be too broad, making it impossible for you to cover the topic in the time available.
4. Make sure you have access to the material you will need to prepare the speech.

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Choices matter. What topics would be engaging, fresh, and easily understood by your audience?

It is of paramount importance that your selected topic interests your audience. Among the topics students have used for a first speech are

- My Favorite Ancestor
- What I Learned Studying Abroad
- My Greatest Fear
- A Difficult Choice I Had to Make
- Why You Need a Mentor
- How Discrimination Affects Me
- How to Avoid Boredom
- The Dangers of Texting and Driving
- How to Get the Most Out of College

Which of these, if any, interests you? What topics would you like to hear about?

- **Chapters 5 and 6 will give you more strategies for selecting a topic that is appropriate for your audience.**



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Don't procrastinate. Choosing a topic isn't necessarily easy, so start weeks in advance to have ample time to prepare.



2.2a State Your Speech's Purpose

2.2b Compose a Thesis Statement

2.2c Identify Your Speech's Main Points

2.2d Research and Select Materials to Support Main Points

2.2e Outline Your Speech Indicating Transitions and Signposts

2.2f Consider Presentation Aids

Develop, Support, and Organize Your Speech

Once you have chosen a topic, decide what you want to share about it with receivers. This becomes your speech's goal. For example, is your goal to inform, persuade, or mark a special occasion? Once you answer this question, you are ready to formulate your speech's purpose.

2.2a State Your Speech's Purpose

Your speech should have a specific purpose—a single sentence specifying your goal. For example, if your goal was to inform receivers about self-driving cars, your specific purpose might be “to inform my audience about three ways self-driving cars will impact society.” You then use the specific purpose to develop your central idea or thesis.

- ▶ **Chapter 6** will show you how to develop the general and specific purpose of your speech.

2.2b Compose a Thesis Statement

A **thesis statement** expresses the central idea of your speech in just one sentence. Here are three examples of thesis statements:

Self-driving cars will change the way we live and get around in three ways: (1) by reducing accidents, (2) by permitting overnight travel, and (3) by fundamentally changing the taxicab and ride-sharing industries.

Excessive personal debt is burdensome, inhibits a person's quality of life, and also results in financial instability.

Fears of an epidemic of birth defects due to the Zika virus and questions about how to respond are prevalent in society.

The thesis statement, along with the specific purpose, acts as a road map for building your speech. Your next move is to develop the main points that flesh out the thesis.

- ▶ **Chapter 6** will show you how to create an effective thesis statement.

2.2c Identify Your Speech's Main Points

If your specific purpose and thesis are clearly formulated, it will be easy for you to identify your speech's main points—the major ideas your speech will relay to receivers. Most of your speeches will contain two or three main points, with each main point supporting your expressed thesis. For example, let's look at the last thesis statement identified in the previous section. Its two main points might read:

- I. There is fear of a surge in birth defects due to the Zika virus.
- II. There are questions about how to protect the population and prevent birth defects in the event that Zika becomes widespread.

We see the speaker plans to first confront the fears about Zika and then discuss questions about how to control and treat the disease if it develops into a pandemic. Once you formulate the main points, your next move is to locate and select supporting materials.

- **Chapter 10** will help you to establish your main points.

2.2d Research and Select Materials to Support Main Points

At this point, your focus is on conducting research and gathering supporting materials for your speech. To develop your speech, for example, you will use personal experiences, examples and illustrations, definitions, expert testimony, statistics, and analogies. The better your research and selection of support, the more credible receivers will find your speech.

- **Chapters 7 and 8** will show you how to find relevant research and use it in your speech.



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Support your points. Research adds credibility to your speech.

2.2e Outline Your Speech Indicating Transitions and Signposts

Every speech can be divided into three major parts: the introduction, the body, and the conclusion. Develop the **body of the speech**, the part that elaborates on the main points, first. When it is done, you then bring it together with an **introduction** and a **conclusion**. In the introduction, orient the audience to your topic, pique their attention and interest, state your thesis, and preview your main points. In the conclusion, restate your thesis in a memorable way, remind receivers of how your main points supported it, and motivate them—leaving them thinking and/or ready to act.

An **outline** provides the skeleton upon which you hang your main ideas and support. Two principles guide its creation: **coordination** (the main points should be relatively equal in importance) and **subordination** (the support underlying your main points). The outline of your speech's body will look something like this:

```
graph TD; INTRODUCTION[INTRODUCTION] --> BODY[BODY]; BODY --> I["I. Main Point 1"]; BODY --> II["II. Main Point 2"]; BODY --> III["III. Main Point 3"]; I --> A1["A. First level of subordination"]; A1 --> 1_1["1. Second level of subordination"]; A1 --> 1_2["2. Second level of subordination"]; II --> A2["A. First level of subordination"]; A2 --> 2_1["1. Second level of subordination"]; A2 --> 2_2["2. Second level of subordination"]; III --> A3["A. First level of subordination"]; A3 --> 3_1["1. Second level of subordination"]; A3 --> 3_2["2. Second level of subordination"]; CONCLUSION[CONCLUSION]
```

When outlining your speech, you'll want to keep each of the speech's main sections in mind—paying careful attention to the introduction, body, and conclusion. The first component in your introduction should be an attention getter, followed by your thesis statement, then a statement of what's in it for the audience (why they should care), a credibility enhancer for yourself (why they should listen to you), and a preview of your main points. Similarly, the outline of your conclusion should contain a summary of your main points and your “home run”—a move that clinches audience support for and belief in your message.

► **Chapters 9 and 10 will demonstrate how to organize and outline your speech.**

Once the outline is complete, you'll want to create transitions that connect the parts. You can use signposts, such as "first," "next," and "finally," to let receivers know where you are in your speech, and brief statements, such as "most important," to help focus the audience's attention.

2.2f Consider Presentation Aids

Once your outline is done, consider whether visual or audio aids such as physical objects, drawings, charts, graphs, photographs, or sound recordings will enhance the understanding and interest of receivers. Be sure to indicate in the outline when you will use such aids, if you choose to do so.

► **Chapter 17 will offer you tips on using presentation aids effectively.**



Consider presentation aids. When used effectively, visual aids can reinforce your main points.



2.3a Rehearse and Revise as Needed

2.3b Anticipate Questions From the Audience

2.3c Take the Podium, Harness Nervous Energy, and Present the Speech

Practice Delivery

How well you do in your first speech depends in part on how effectively you have prepared, practiced, and overcome any anxiety. Instead of reading a speech word for word or, worse, choosing to wing it, practice speaking in front of a mirror or friends. Make it a habit to plan and prepare the structure of your speech and all content including supporting materials and visuals. Then rehearse extensively so that on the day you present your speech, you are comfortable using your notes to remind yourself of its content.

2.3a Rehearse and Revise as Needed

You will want to become so familiar with the contents of your speech that you can deliver it seemingly effortlessly. Focus on the word *seemingly* for a moment. Preparing and presenting a speech require real effort on your part. But if you work diligently and conscientiously, your audience will see only the end results—to them it will seem as if you are a natural.

When it comes to vocal cues, for example, you'll want to regulate your volume, rate, pitch, and vocal variety, being especially careful not to speak in a monotone, and being certain to use correct pronunciation and clear articulation so you convey ideas accurately and clearly. Beyond words, you'll also want to use appropriate facial expressions, sustain the right amount of eye contact, and use gestures and movement in support of your message.

Practice delivering the speech at least four to six times, initially to a mirror, and then to a small audience of family and friends. Stand when you practice. Always say your speech aloud. Use a timer. Revise your words or presentation as needed. Replicate the same conditions you will have when delivering it for real. Practice from the speech's beginning to its end without stopping. You might even record a rehearsal to assess how you're doing.

- See **Chapters 14, 15, and 16** for more help with the delivery of your speech.

2.3b Anticipate Questions From the Audience

When you've finished speaking, audience members may have questions to ask you. When prepping for your presentation, think about what you would ask if you were a member of the audience. Also solicit questions from the rehearsal audiences made up of family and friends.

- ▶ **Chapter 27** will prepare you for questions that the audience may ask about your speech.

2.3c Take the Podium, Harness Nervous Energy, and Present the Speech

You've prepared. You have rehearsed and revised, and now it's time to have fun! Harness any nervous energy and remember to use the confidence building techniques you learned in Chapter 1. Visualize yourself succeeding!

- ▶ See **Chapter 1** for tips on managing speech anxiety and building your confidence before you speak.



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Effortlessly. Practice a lot so your speech flows naturally—you'll have more confidence and more credibility with the audience.

COACHING TIP

See yourself enjoying your speech.

Enjoy delivering your speech, and the audience will enjoy it too! Enjoyment is an attractor. It is also inclusive.



2.4a Assess Your Performance

Conduct a Post-Presentation Analysis

Like an athlete or any performer, you'll want to review and critique your own performance, comparing and contrasting your expectations with your actual experience. Try to learn as much as possible from the first speech so you can apply these lessons to your next one. Complete a self-assessment scorecard or checklist that you can compare to the one your professor and/or peers offer.

- ▶ **Chapter 4** will help you listen effectively in order to analyze your fellow students' speeches and assess your own presentation.



Self-review. What are some goals and areas about your performance that you can highlight prior to your speech for review after?



COACHING TIP

A scorecard is a speaker's friend.

How are you doing? Use a scorecard to track your progress. Needing to improve isn't a negative. It's a step on the road to mastery. It's time to measure up!

2.4a Assess Your Performance

Use the accompanying preliminary scorecard to assess your performance. Score yourself on each item using a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 meaning least effective and 5 meaning extremely effective.

POST-PRESENTATION SCORECARD

Introduction: How Well Did I Do?

- Capturing attention _____
- Conveying my thesis _____
- Previewing my main points _____
- Relating the topic to my audience _____

Body: How Well Did I Do?

- Communicating each main point _____
- Transitioning between main points _____
- Integrating support for each main point _____

Conclusion: How Well Did I Do?

- Restating the thesis _____
- Summarizing my main points _____
- Motivating receivers to think and/or act _____

Delivery: How Well Did I Do?

- Using vocal cues to create interest and convey meaning _____
- Using eye contact to connect with receivers _____
- Using gestures and movement that were natural and effective _____

Overall, I would give myself _____ points out of 5.

I believe my strong points were _____

_____.

I believe I need to improve when it comes to _____

_____.

Based on this scorecard, I set the following goals for my next speech: _____

_____.



Exercises

FIRST SPEECH

Use these chapter exercises to apply your understanding of this chapter's content. When you commit to a practice regimen, you commit to building your public presentation skills.

1. First Speech Primer

Prepare a list of “do and don’t” suggestions for preparing a first speech. Include the speaker’s role in selecting a topic, formulating a goal, researching, thinking about his or her relationship to the audience, organizing ideas, preparing to present, and assessing the extent to which the speaker and the speech succeeded.

2. Cue the Critiquer

Offer advice to a student whose task it is to critique the first speech. What should he or she look for? How should he or she offer feedback?

3. Analyze This: A First Speech

Let’s look at one student’s first speech. (Comments or annotations on the speech are presented as side notes, or SN.) The topic was “My Hometown.” As you read the speech, imagine it being delivered. Here are some questions for you to consider when evaluating it:

1. How do you think students in your class would respond to the speech? Would they, for example, find the topic as relevant and appealing as the speaker? Why or why not?
2. Is the speech organized effectively? What do you believe is its purpose? Can you identify the thesis? Does the speech have an introduction that captures your attention, a clear body, and a sound conclusion? Are there transitions to link ideas? Is there sufficient support for each of the speaker’s points?
3. What changes, if any, would you suggest making to improve the speech? For example, would you add presentation aids?
4. What questions would you like to ask the speaker?

4. Approach the Speaker Stand: My First Speech

Use what you have learned about topic selection; speech development, support, and organization; presentation, practice, and delivery; and harnessing positive energy to prepare and give a brief speech on your hometown or another topic selected by your instructor. After delivering the speech, offer a self-assessment of your performance.

MY HOMETOWN

Good afternoon. I have learned a lot from all of you about your hometowns in the United States by listening to your speeches over the last few weeks. You've shared fascinating details that have helped me form mental pictures of many places I have never seen. Now I would like to take you to my hometown, the city of Shanghai, China.

Have you ever been to New York City?

Did you know that Shanghai has almost twice as many skyscrapers as New York City, and will soon have 1,000 more? It is one of the biggest and most modern cities in China, and 18 million people live there. Shanghai already has many elevated highways and a subway, and the government is building a new ship terminal. The city even has a high-speed train line, the fastest in the world, that brings visitors from Shanghai's international airport into the city. And there are thousands of cars, many of them taxi cabs in bright gold, red, and blue.

There are big changes taking place in Shanghai today, and they are happening very fast, but first I want to tell you about the city the way I remember it. Try to picture it with me.

Over the past hundred years, many Chinese people were able to improve their lives by moving into "the city about the sea"—that's what the name Shanghai means, the city about the sea. Leaving the undeveloped countryside behind, they came to the city to work and live, and they made their homes in small apartment buildings near the Huangpu riverfront, or at the northern and southern edges of the city. My parents came to the city when they were young, leaving their families behind in the countryside. They worked hard, riding bicycles to their jobs and saving as much as they could. For a long time, they didn't have very much.

I grew up in our two-room apartment on the third floor and knew everyone in our neighborhood. Everyone knew everyone, in fact! We lived on the western riverbank, near the famous Shanghai Bund, which is a thoroughfare about a mile long of historic old buildings in the Western style. Our own neighborhood was also old, but crowded and full of busy apartment buildings. Our building was separated from the others by narrow lanes filled with bicycles and motorbikes, and there was laundry hanging everywhere to dry. I could often hear our neighbors laughing, arguing, or playing the radio, and the smell of food cooking was always in the air.

continued

 **SN 1** In the opening, the speaker relates the present speech to preceding ones. The use of the active verb "take" positions receivers to travel along imaginatively with the speaker.

 **SN 2** The speaker's use of a question is involving. The speaker builds rapport by comparing what receivers know about New York City with his own city of Shanghai.

 **SN 3** The speaker demonstrates a deep emotional connection to the topic. The sense of change is in the air.

 **SN 4** The speaker's use of narrative draws receivers into the body of the presentation.

 **SN 5** The speaker's use of description and sensory images resonate.

continued

I walked or rode my bicycle to school, and my route took me past the open-air markets and street vendors selling all kinds of food. Sometimes it was hard not to stop and buy something, or to linger by the park where there was always a little crowd of people performing their morning tai chi exercises, but I would never want to shame my parents by being late for school.

Sometimes when we had a school holiday, my friends and I would go to Nanjing Donglu. That is the big shopping area in the middle of Shanghai, where there are all kinds of stores. There are places to buy food of all kinds, like duck, sausages, fish, oysters and shrimp, and of course tea, and you can also find tools, hardware, art, clothes, and even pets. My friends at home have told me that, because one part of it is now closed to cars, Nanjing Donglu has even more tourists than ever before. These are mostly Chinese tourists, from other parts of the country, who enjoy coming to Shanghai to see the sights.

SN 6 The speaker changes tone to make clear the downside of modernization.



There were still cars allowed in Nanjing Donglu when I was growing up in Shanghai, but as I said there are many changes happening there. One of the biggest is the change in old neighborhoods like mine, which are being torn down to make way for the new skyscrapers I told you about, and other developments like new ports, factories, shipyards, and parks and pavilions. The World Expo took place in Shanghai some years back, and the government was very anxious and worked really hard to make the city as modern and as developed as possible, and it did this very quickly at great cost. There are many people who worked to preserve as much of old, historic Shanghai as they could, but hundreds of people lost their homes in the old town and moved away into the suburbs.

SN 7 In the conclusion, the speaker prompts continued interest by leaving the audience wondering what will happen when the speaker returns to Shanghai.



Next time I return to the city, my neighborhood near the Bund will be the first place I visit. I want to see whether my old home and my neighbors are still there.²

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Understand the basic plays used in speechmaking.** There are four basic plays in speechmaking: (1) topic selection; (2) speech development, support, and organization; (3) practice and delivery; and (4) post-presentation analysis.
- Approach public speaking systematically.** By working your way through all the sections step-by-step, you approach speechmaking systematically.
- Deliver a brief first speech.** Only by preparing and delivering a speech can you tell how well you understand and how effectively you are able to execute the plays involved.
- Score your first speech performance to establish a baseline on which to build your skills.** Like athletes, actors, and musicians, speakers review and critique their own performances, attempting to learn as much as possible from each experience so they can apply the lessons to future events.

KEY TERMS

Body of the speech 26

Introduction 26

Subordination 26

Conclusion 26

Outline 26

Thesis statement 24

Coordination 26

Self-analysis 20



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3

Ethics and Public Speaking in a Global World

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain how cultural understanding affects speakers and audiences
2. Define and discuss the importance of ethics, identifying where you draw the line when faced with specific ethical dilemmas
3. Define plagiarism, explaining why it is an ethical issue
4. Define critical thinking, explaining its significance for speakers and audiences
5. Describe the relationship among ethics, critical thinking, and multiculturalism/cultural understanding

Contents

When traveling in Australia, President George H. W. Bush unintentionally ended up insulting those Australians who came to see him when he raised his hand and gave the V sign. The gesture in America means “Victory.” However, when two fingers are raised and the palm faces inward as President Bush’s did in Australia, to the Australians this is the equivalent of raising the middle finger in the United States. What do cultural diversity, ethics, and critical thinking have to do with public speaking? Winning public speakers practice certain skills to reach diverse groups of receivers and to make each speaking engagement meaningful and respectful. Speakers who take cultural differences into account develop messages with broad appeal. But it doesn’t stop there. **Ethics** matter too. Just as we expect athletes to play by certain rules, and game referees to make fair calls, we expect speakers to make sound ethical choices—to present their ideas, arguments, and information in a fair and balanced way. If a speaker is being unfair, we the audience then need to rely on our critical thinking skills to keep from being unknowingly manipulated. In this chapter, our goal is to help you become a culturally aware, ethical, and sound thinker—equipped with assets you can use not only on your campus, but also well beyond it, including at work and in your community.

Section 3.1 Respect Different Cultures

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- 3.1b Assess Your Understanding of Cultural Diversity, 39
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COACHING TIP

“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.”

— Maya Angelou

Make diversity your friend. Every audience member merits respect. Diversity is not divisive. Its recognition is inclusive. Use diversity to build a new sense of community.



3.1a Attune Yourself to Difference

3.1b Assess Your Understanding of Cultural Diversity

3.1c Reflect Cultural Values

3.1d Understand Cultural Identity

3.1e Consider Preferred Learning Styles

3.1f Understand Difference to Build Bridges and Confidence

Respect Different Cultures

Public speakers can prepare themselves for situations that require them to speak before diverse audiences.¹ **Cultural diversity** is the recognition and valuing of difference. It encompasses such factors as age, gender, race, ethnicity, ability, religion, education, marital status, sexual orientation, and income.

Speeches, and our responses to them, demonstrate our understanding of difference and our tolerance for dissent. Beyond mutual respect, however, lies our own self-interest. When we demonstrate respect for cultural diversity, we reduce the chances of alienating members of the audience and increase the chances of eliciting the audience response we seek. By recognizing, for instance, that receivers from different cultures may be offended by different things, and that speakers from other cultures may display more or less expressiveness than their receivers, we become more culturally attuned and less culturally tone-deaf (see Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1 FOCUS ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY

A SPEAKER WHO RESPECTS DIVERSITY	A SPEAKER WHO NEGLECTS DIVERSITY
Develops a complex view of issues	Develops a simplistic view of issues
Does not stereotype, avoiding its consequences	Frequently stereotypes, having to face the consequences
Sees things from others' viewpoints—empathizing with them	Sees things only from his or her perspective; assumes others share his or her values
Is comfortable speaking before a culturally diverse audience	Becomes anxious when speaking before a culturally diverse audience
Does not alienate receivers by trying to impose his or her views on them	Tries to impose his or her views on others, risking open hostility from receivers

3.1a Attune Yourself to Difference

Why should attuning yourself to cultural differences be part of your public speaking training? According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics, the United States is composed of five large ethnic groups who identify themselves as White (207.7 million), Hispanic (38.8 million), African American (36.6 million), Asian American (12.7 million), and Native American (3.5 million).² Given such statistics, there is a good chance you will find yourself speaking before

audiences whose cultural backgrounds and perspectives differ from your own.

Your success depends on your ability to face up to cultural diversity and speak and listen across cultures.

3.1b Assess Your Understanding of Cultural Diversity

When speaking before audiences small or large, if we want to share ideas successfully, we need to take cultural differences into account.

Self-Assessment: Are You Prepared to Speak Before and Listen to People of Diverse Cultures?

To assess your personal preparedness to speak and listen to people of different cultures, respond to each of the following statements by labeling it as either true or false. Answer honestly.

1. I am equally comfortable speaking before people who are like me and speaking before people who are different from me. _____
2. I consider the concerns of all groups in society equally. _____
3. I am aware of how people from other cultures perceive me, including how they receive my words and actions. _____
4. I am equally comfortable listening to people from other cultures and listening to people from my own culture. _____
5. I believe in respecting the communication rules and preferences of people from other cultures, just as I would want people from other cultures to respect the communication rules and preferences of my culture. _____
6. I support the right of people from other cultures to disagree with my values and beliefs. _____
7. I understand that people from other cultures may choose not to participate in a dialogue or debate because of their culture's rules. _____
8. I recognize that some cultures are more expressive than others. _____
9. A culture provides its members with a continuum of appropriate and inappropriate communication behaviors. _____
10. I do not believe that my culture is superior to all other cultures. _____

Interpreting Your Response

The more statements you answered with “true,” the better equipped you are to enrich the public speaking arena by welcoming people from diverse cultures into it.

3.1c Reflect Cultural Values

Culture is the system of knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, behaviors, and artifacts (objects made or used by humans) that we learn, accept, and use in daily life. Typically, cultural norms and assumptions are passed from the senior to the newer members of a group. Adept speakers use these cues to adapt to different audiences.

Co-Cultures

Within a culture as a whole are co-cultures. **Co-cultures** are composed of members of the same general culture who differ in some ethnic or sociological way from the parent culture. In American society, for example, African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Japanese Americans, Arab Americans, the disabled, LGBTQ, and the elderly are just some of the co-cultures belonging to the same general culture³ (see Figure 3.1).

People belonging to a **marginalized group**—a group whose members feel like outsiders—may passively, assertively, or aggressively/confrontationally seek to reach their goals relative to the dominant culture.

- Co-culture members who practice a *passive approach* usually avoid the limelight or the lectern, accepting their position in the cultural hierarchy. They embrace the cultural beliefs and practices of the dominant culture. Recent immigrants to the United States who desire to attain citizenship may choose this path, hoping to blend in.
- Co-culture members who employ an *assertive approach* want members of the dominant group to accommodate their diversity. At the same time, they are receptive to rethinking their ideas, giving up or modifying some, but holding strong with regard to others. For example, many Muslim Americans spoke openly of their support for the War on Terror,

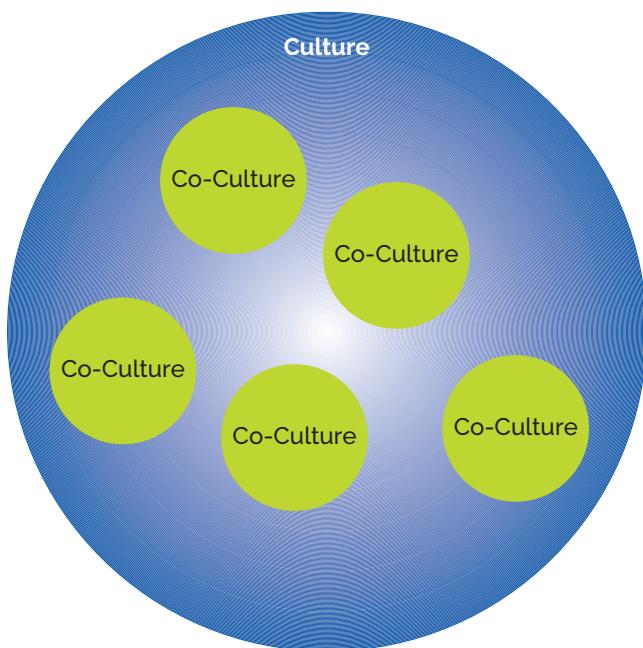
while also expressing their desire to live according to their religious values and beliefs, which were falsely conflated with those of the terrorists behind the attacks of September 11, 2001.

- Co-culture members who take an *aggressive/confrontational approach* more intensely defend their beliefs and traditions, leading to their being perceived by members of the dominant culture as “hurtfully expressive” or “self-promoting.” They make it difficult for members of the dominant culture to ignore their presence or pretend they do not exist.⁴ Co-culture members adopt this strategy in an effort to demarginilize themselves and actively participate in the world of the dominant culture. In their early years, the members of ACT UP, a gay rights organization, employed such an approach.

FIGURE 3.1

A Culture and Its Co-Cultures

The term *co-culture* is preferred over *sub-culture* because the prefix *sub* denotes inferior status. A co-culture is a culture within a culture.



Within the context of cultural diversity, how would you identify yourself? Consider your own classroom or workplace. When you look around, do you recognize groups that constitute co-cultures? When taking a podium, remember to avoid speaking solely to one group. Public speaking is about communicating to as many listeners as possible.

Different Communication Styles

We need to recognize both how the culture we belong to affects our communication and how other peoples' cultures affect theirs.

Individualistic cultures tend to use **low-context communication**, while **high-context communication** is predominant in collectivistic cultures. As members of an individualistic culture, North Americans tend to speak in a low-context way, addressing an issue head-on, while persons from Asian countries usually avoid confrontation, relying on a high-context communication style that allows others to save face.⁵ Thus, a North American speaker may directly contradict what another person has said, while an Asian speaker's comments are likely to be more indirect and subtle, even vague.

In some cultures, dissent and disagreement with friends and relatives is considered normal—it is possible to separate a speaker from her words—while in other cultures, speakers and their words are perceived as one. In the latter case, when you dispute someone's words, you also cast aspersions on his or her character. As a result, rarely will one Saudi Arabian publicly criticize or chastise another because doing so would label that speaker as disloyal and disrespectful.⁶ It is important that speakers and audience members not interpret each other's behavior based on their own frames of reference or cultural norms, but work to understand the cultural dynamics of persons from their own as well as other cultures.

COACHING TIP

"What we have to do . . . is to find a way to celebrate our diversity and debate our differences without fracturing our communities."

—Hillary Clinton

Creating community out of diversity depends on keeping the “isms” at bay. Because they exclude rather than include, ethnocentrism, racism, sexism, and ageism have no place in your speaker’s toolbox.

3.1d Understand Cultural Identity

We also need insight into **cultural identity**, the internalization of culturally appropriate beliefs, values, and roles acquired through interacting with members of our cultural group. Cultural identity also is a product of our group memberships. We all belong to a number of different groups and form identities based on these group memberships, with cultural notions influencing what it means to be a group member.

- **Gender** affects the way males and females present themselves, socialize, work, perceive their futures, and communicate. Men tend to adopt a problem-solving orientation and prefer to use a linear approach to storytelling and presentations, while women typically offer more details and fill in tangential information.⁷
- **Age** influences our beliefs about how persons our age should look and behave. An older person may be perceived as wiser. Age can also influence judgments of credibility and precipitate disagreements about values and priorities. For this reason, persons belonging to different age groups are likely to perceive issues such as Social Security reform, transgender rights, and the value of rap music differently.
- **Racial and ethnic identities**, in addition to being based on physical characteristics, are also socially constructed. Some racial and ethnic groups share experiences of oppression; their attitudes and behaviors may reflect their struggles. Thus, race influences attitudes toward controversial issues such as affirmative action, welfare reform, and interracial marriage and adoption.
- **Religious identity** is at the root of countless contemporary conflicts occurring in the Middle East, Northern Ireland, India and Pakistan, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and it sometimes influences receiver and speaker responses to issues and world events. In the United States, for example, evangelical Christians may have a different view of the relationship between church and state than do members of other Christian groups.
- **Socioeconomic identity** frames our responses to issues, influencing our attitudes and experiences as well as the way we communicate. The widening gap between the ultra-wealthy and the middle and lower classes in this country contributes to different attitudes on a host of issues, including tax cuts.
- **National identity** refers to our legal status or citizenship. People whose ancestors immigrated to the United States generations ago may still be perceived as foreigners by some Americans.

A speaker should be aware that the culture, economic and social class, and gender of receivers might influence the way audience members will process the examples the speaker employs. For example, based on their personal experience, audiences of mostly women, mostly men, or mixed gender likely would react differently to the examples used in this excerpt from a speech on “Why Girls Matter” by Anna Maria Chavez, CEO of Girl Scouts of the United States of America:

Our alumnae have made huge impacts on all sectors of our communities. In the world of entertainment, for example, Taylor Swift is a Girl Scout. In the world of athletics, so is tennis star Venus Williams. Media great Robin Roberts is a Girl Scout alumna. Virtually every female astronaut who has flown into space was a Girl Scout. And one successful businesswoman who was a Girl Scout is Ginny Rometty, CEO of IBM. . . . All the former female U.S. secretaries of state were Girl Scouts: Madeline Albright, Condoleezza Rice, and Hillary Clinton. Fifteen of the 20 women in the U.S. Senate are Girl Scout alumnae. So are more than half of the 88 women in the House of Representatives. And of the five women who currently serve as governors across our nation, four were Girl Scouts.

Embracing the values of tolerance and civility is not a hindrance to success, it is clear, but an asset because it instills the values of character, confidence and courage. That is more than a matter of opinion. According to a recent survey, nearly two-thirds of Girl Scouts view themselves as leaders, compared with 44 percent of other girls, and 52 percent of boys.⁸

Speakers also need to be aware of how different cultures process humor. When integrating humorous stories, keep in mind that humor does not always translate. For example, topics such as sex and dating could be unwelcome to Muslims, and “your mama” jokes could be unwelcome to Zambians, because Zambian parents are revered like gods.⁹

By considering ethnic and cultural identity, respecting diversity, and developing our understanding of people who are unlike us, we improve our ability to use public speaking to create community.

3.1e Consider Preferred Learning Styles

Speakers need to be sensitive to how receivers prefer to learn and process information. Some of us are aural learners, others are visual learners, and some of us need to be approached at an abstract level. If a speaker offers a variety of support that appeals to more than one learning style, that speaker will succeed in reaching the audience.

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We are unique. Take into account that diversity means audience members may learn differently.

accept their validity. By not isolating yourself within your own group or culture, you become a more effective speaker.

Make a Commitment to Develop Speechmaking and Listening Skills Appropriate to Life in the Age of Multiculturalism and Globalization

By talking openly about controversial topics, listening to different viewpoints, and understanding how policies may inequitably affect people belonging to different cultural groups, you take a giant step toward understanding why diversity matters.

Although culture is a tie that binds, the global world grows smaller and smaller each day through technological advancement and ease of travel. Respecting difference, speaking and listening responsibly, and ethics go hand in hand. With this in mind, make it a priority to

- Be a respectful and patient listener
- Engage and ask questions—rephrase if confusion persists
- Have empathy and imagine yourself in another's shoes

3.1f Understand Difference to Build Bridges and Confidence

Acknowledging that all cultures do not share the same communication rules benefits us both as citizens and as public speakers. The more we know about those from other cultures, the more confident we become speaking or listening to others. Use these two tips as guides:

Avoid Formulating Expectations Based Solely on Your Own Culture

When those you speak to have diverse communication preferences, acknowledge them and

Speak Ethically

Ethics express society's notions about the rightness or wrongness of an act, the distinctions between virtue and vice, and where to draw the line between what we should and should not do.¹⁰ For example, what ethical code do we expect college athletes to follow? We expect them to follow the rules and avoid performance-enhancing drugs. To play fair, not cheat. Is it any different in public speaking? The kinds of cheating that speakers and audience members engage in involve breaches in trust similar to those committed by athletes and other performers. Would you cheat to impress an audience? Or would you sacrifice your goals if they turned out not to contribute to the overall well-being of others?

Here are some more ethical quandaries to resolve:

- Is it an ethical breach to speak on a subject about which you personally don't care?
- Is it ethical to use a fabricated story to increase personal persuasiveness but not tell the audience the story is made up?
- Is it right to convince others to believe what you do not yourself believe?
- Is it ethical to refuse to listen to a speaker you find offensive?

When facing ethical dilemmas or potentially compromising situations, our personal code of conduct guides us in making ethical choices.¹¹ Ethical speakers treat receivers as they would want a speaker to treat them; they do not intentionally deceive listeners just to attain their objectives. You should reveal everything your listeners need to know to be able to assess both you and your message, and not cover up, lie, distort, or exaggerate to win their approval and support. A functioning society depends on our behaving ethically.

Ethical communication is honest and accurate, and reflective not only of your best interests, but also the best interests of others. **Ethical speechmaking** has its basis in trust in and respect for the speaker and receivers. It involves the responsible handling of information as well as an awareness of and concern for speechmaking's outcomes or consequences.



3.2a What Audiences Expect of Speakers

3.2b What Speakers Expect of Audiences



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Play fair. As in sports, being honest and ethical in public speaking is essential for success.

3.2a What Audiences Expect of Speakers

When receivers judge a speaker to be of good character, they are more likely to trust the speaker's motives, concluding that the speaker will neither take nor suggest they take any action that would bring them harm.

When receivers discover that speakers have been less than candid, they lose faith in the speaker's trustworthiness, integrity, credibility, and sincerity. Once receivers doubt a speaker, his or her words soon lose their impact, and trust, once lost, is extremely difficult to restore.

To be perceived as ethical in the eyes of audience members, adhere to the following tips:

Share Only What You Know to Be True

Receivers expect you to be honest. They have a right to believe that you will not

- Misrepresent your purpose for speaking
- Distort information to make it appear more useful
- Deceive them regarding the credentials of a source

Avoid committing an **overt lie** (deliberately saying something that you know to be false) or committing a **covert lie** (knowingly allowing others to believe something that isn't true). Whenever you hope to convey a false impression or convince another to believe something that you yourself do not believe, you are lying.¹² Such deceptive behavior is a violation of the unspoken bond between speaker and receivers.

Respect the Audience

Your audience doesn't want you to exploit their wants and needs, manipulate their emotions, or trick them into believing a fabrication to fuel your own desire for power or profit. Instead, they expect you to be honest and open—to engage them in dialogue and critical inquiry.

COACHING TIP

"If you say it enough, even if it ain't true, folks will get to believing it."

—Will Rogers

Repeating what you want others to believe doesn't make what you are saying any more true! Personal biases can affect the impact messages have. Step back and examine yours. Then add logic and reason to the mix.

Audience members have the right to be treated as your equals: Consider their opinions, try to understand their perspective on issues, respect their right to hold opinions that differ from yours, and acknowledge that you do not know it all.

Prepare Fully

Receivers expect you to be thoroughly informed and knowledgeable about your topic. They should be confident that you will present them with correct information, more than one side of an issue, and not knowingly mislead them by shaping, slicing, and selectively using data. You need to explore all sides of an issue (not just the one[s] you favor), and “tell it like it is” (not like you want your receivers to think it is).

Put the Audience First

Audience members have a right to expect that you will attempt to understand and empathize with them and the situations they face. A person who speaks on the importance of tax cuts for the rich without exploring the impact of such a policy on working families fails in his or her duty. Receivers also have a right to know that you will not ask them to commit an illegal act or do anything that is destructive of their welfare. For this reason, it would not be ethical to speak on a topic like the virtues of underage drinking or getting out of speeding tickets.

Be Easy to Understand

Audience members have a right to expect that you will talk at their level of understanding, rather than below or above it.

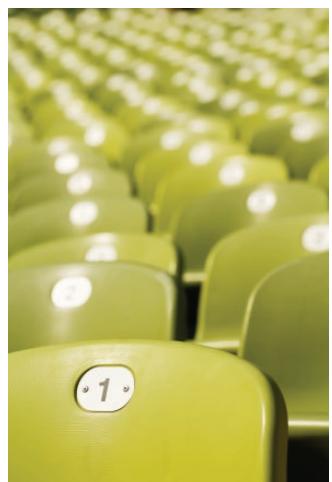
The audience should come away feeling they have sufficient grasp of your content to make an informed decision. If you use language unfamiliar to receivers, they will fail to grasp your message. And if you talk down to receivers, failing to recognize the knowledge base they have, they will feel insulted or belittled.

Don't Turn Words Into Weapons

Although your words may not literally wound others, they can do psychological damage. Willfully making false statements about another, engaging in name-calling or other personal attacks, or using inflammatory language to incite panic is unethical. Speak civilly.

Don't Spin

The audience has a right to expect that you will not manipulate their reactions by providing half-truths or failing to share information that proves you wrong. A speaker who knowingly suppresses information that contradicts his or her position destroys whatever bond of trust existed between speaker and audience.



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Number one. Putting the audience's needs first will help you deliver a speech that is ethical and has greater impact.

Respect Difference

Audience members may have different ideas about what constitutes an interesting topic, proper language, appropriate structure, or effective delivery. In order to meet their expectations, speakers need to look at the contents of a speech through the eyes of the members of different cultures rather than assume that all audience members see things the same way. By acknowledging the differences among receivers, speakers can accomplish their goals. For example, members of some cultural groups—Africans, for example—expect to participate overtly in a speech event, even to the point of helping to co-create it, while members of other cultural groups consider such participation to be disrespectful of the speaker.¹³ Similarly, Americans may judge a presentation that is blunt and opinionated acceptable and even preferable, while Asian audience members may judge it to be rude or insensitive.¹⁴ Whatever their cultural backgrounds, receivers have a right to their attitudes and beliefs. They have a right to expect that you will acknowledge and respect their right to disagree with you.

TABLE 3.2 FOCUS ON ETHICS

AN ETHICAL SPEAKER	AN UNETHICAL SPEAKER
Is intent on enhancing the well-being of receivers	Is intent on achieving his or her goal, whatever the cost
Treats audience members as she or he would like to be treated by a speaker	Treats audience members strictly in terms of her or his needs, ignoring their needs
Reveals everything receivers need to know to assess both speaker and message fairly	Conceals, lies, distorts, or exaggerates information to win the approval and support of receivers
Relies on valid evidence	Juices evidence, deliberately overwhelming receivers with appeals to emotion
Informs receivers whom, if anyone, she or he represents	Conceals from receivers the person or interest groups she or he represents
Documents all sources	Plagiarizes others' ideas, exhibiting a reckless disregard for the sources of ideas or information

Hold Yourself Accountable

Listeners expect you to be morally accountable for your speech's content and to distinguish your personal opinions from factual information. You are not merely a messenger; you bear responsibility for the message.

Receivers also have a right to believe that, when uncredited, the words are yours. If you present the ideas and words of others as if they were your own, then you are committing **plagiarism**. The word itself is derived from the Latin word *plagiarius*, meaning “kidnapper.” Thus, when you plagiarize, you kidnap or steal the ideas and words of another and claim them as your own.

Here are three simple steps to follow to avoid passing off someone else's ideas or words as your own:

1. Attribute the source of every piece of evidence you cite. Never borrow the words or thoughts of someone else without acknowledging that you have done so.
2. Indicate whether you are quoting or paraphrasing a statement.
3. Use and credit a variety of sources.

When students fail to adhere to these guidelines, they expose themselves to serious personal consequences, such as academic probation or expulsion.



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Credit where credit's due. Citing sources for all your research and anything you borrow is an essential task of ethical behavior.

3.2b What Speakers Expect of Audiences

Civility, the act of showing regard for others, should be the watchword of receivers. Even if receivers disagree with a speaker, they should not heckle or shout down the speaker. Instead of cutting off speech, receivers need to hear the speaker out, work to understand the speaker's ideas, and, in time, respond with speech of their own.

Give All Ideas a Fair Hearing

Do not prejudge speakers. Evaluate what they have to say, see it from their perspective, and honestly assess their speech's content based on what they share, and not on any preconceptions you may have.

To act ethically, listen to the whole speech and process the speaker's words before deciding whether to accept or reject the speaker's ideas. Do not jump to conclusions and blindly accept or reject the speaker's ideas on the basis of the speaker's reputation, appearance, opening statements, or manner of delivery. Be a patient receiver.

Be Courteous, Attentive, and React Honestly

Speakers have a right to expect that you will listen and respond honestly and critically, not merely politely or blindly, to a presentation. To do this, you need to focus fully on the ideas being presented. Although you need not agree with everything a speaker says, you do need to provide speakers with accurate and thoughtful feedback that indicates what you have understood and how you feel about the message.

When questions are permitted after a speech, effective questioners first paraphrase the speaker's remarks to be sure they accurately understand the speaker's intentions, and then go on to ask a question or offer an opinion.

Speakers have a right to expect that you will listen to them regardless of any differences in age, culture, religion, nationality, class, sex, or educational background. An ethical listener recognizes that not all speakers share their perspective. But above all else, the behavior of ethical listeners does nothing to undermine a speaker's right to be heard.

COACHING TIP

"Of all feats of skill, the most difficult is that of being honest."

—Comtesse Diane-Marie de Beausacq

"Tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." If others don't view you as trustworthy, your words won't matter. Truth telling is not necessarily easy. In fact, telling others the truth is often more difficult than lying. But audiences deserve the truth. Telling them lies undermines their best interests. Make truth telling part of your personal code.

Think Critically

Critical thinking—the ability to explore an issue or situation, integrate all the available information about it, arrive at a conclusion, and validate a position—plays a key role in public speaking.¹⁵ Both speakers and their audiences need to be critical thinkers, arriving at a judgment only after an honest evaluation of alternatives based on available evidence and arguments. Critical thinkers are honest inquirers who do not accept information without weighing its value.¹⁶

It is up to you as both public speaker and listener to take an active role in the speechmaking and speech evaluation process so that you practice critical thinking rather than subvert its use. When a speaker makes an emotional appeal for your support, be diligent in determining whether information exists that justifies responding as the speaker suggests. Examine the evidence on which conclusions are based to ensure they are valid and sound, to spot weaknesses in arguments, and to judge the credibility of statements.

It is important, however, to think creatively. Play with existing ideas so they yield new and fresh insights. Work to see the interconnectedness among ideas. It is also up to you to avoid presenting or accepting stale or faulty arguments. Look for differences or inconsistencies in various parts of a message. Ask questions about unsupported content. Decide whether conclusions are convincing or unconvincing and whether an argument makes sense. Base your opinion about the message on the evidence.

Critically thinking speakers expand receiver knowledge, introducing them to new ideas and challenging them to reexamine their beliefs, values, and behaviors. Similarly, the listener who is a critical thinker does not judge a speaker or the speaker's remarks prematurely, is willing to challenge him- or herself to reexamine ideas and beliefs, and refuses to use shoddy thinking habits to substantiate invalid conclusions. Speakers and listeners must hold each other accountable for both truth and accuracy. To accomplish this, follow the guidelines outlined on the next page.

3.3a Set Goals

3.3b Analyze Consequences

3.3c Assess Outcomes and Their Effects



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The thinker. As a speaker, try to see ideas from fresh perspectives, and as an audience member, don't take all pieces of information at face value.

TABLE 3.3 FOCUS ON CRITICAL THINKING

A SPEAKER WHO THINKS CRITICALLY	A SPEAKER WHO THINKS UNCRITICALLY
Recognizes the limitations of his or her knowledge	Thinks he or she knows everything
Is open-minded, taking time to reflect	Is closed-minded and impulsive, jumping to unwarranted conclusions
Pays attention to those with whom he or she agrees and disagrees	Pays attention only to those he or she agrees with
Looks for good reasons to accept or reject others' opinions	Disregards opinions others offer, even if valid
Insists on getting the best information	Picks and chooses information to suit his or her purpose
Explores what is stated and unstated, investigating all assumptions	Focuses only on what is stated, ignoring unstated assumptions
Reflects on how well conclusions fit premises and vice versa	Disregards a lack of connection between evidence and conclusions

3.3a Set Goals

Prior to attending a speech, consider the speaker's and/or the listener's motivations for being there. Think about the degree to which the speaker is speaking to serve his own interests or the interests of others. Reflect on the degree to which your mind is open to receive the speaker's ideas.

3.3b Analyze Consequences

After a speech, speaker and receivers evaluate one another's behavior, their own behavior, and the likely consequences of their behavior.

For every speech event, seek to determine

- If honesty prevailed
- If language was used ethically
- If convictions were clearly expressed
- If logical evidence was used
- If emotional appeals added interest, but did not conceal the truth, and
- If selfish interests were disclosed

3.3c Assess Outcomes and Their Effects

Was the speech a success or a failure and why do you think so? Think in terms of how effective the speechmaker was rather than whether he or she was *entirely* effective or ineffective.

For example, seek to

1. Identify what the speaker did to demonstrate respect for difference.
2. Explain what the speaker did to earn your trust.
3. Assess the effectiveness of both the words and support the speaker used. What sources did the speaker use? Were they credible?
4. Recognize the kinds of information the speaker used to support claims. Were they unbiased? Were perspectives other than those held by the speaker addressed?
5. Identify which of the speaker's ideas you accept, which you question, and which you disagree with.
6. Determine the extent to which the speech changed you.
7. Evaluate the extent to which the speech enhanced consideration of an important topic.
8. Identify any questions you would like to ask the speaker, and any information you need the speaker to clarify.



Personal record? Which goals did you achieve, fall short of, or easily surpass?



GAME PLAN

Sensitivity, Ethics, and Critical Thinking

- I have reviewed my speech for derogatory words or statements that might alienate members of the audience.
- The main ideas of my speech are supported by truthful evidence.
- All evidence, ideas, quotes, and statistics from other sources are properly cited with full credits.
- In writing my speech, I accounted for differences of opinion.
- I have reviewed my speech for instances of “spin.”
- I stand behind the words and ideas in my speech—I am accountable for my presentation.



Exercises

CULTURAL DIVERSITY, CRITICAL THINKING, AND ETHICS

Participating in the following exercises will broaden your understanding of what it means to value cultural diversity, think critically, and live up to high ethical standards.

1. The Danger of Overgeneralizing

Sometimes, when faced with people and situations we don't know, we resort to stereotyping—a thinking shortcut that organizes our perceptions into oversimplified categories. Stereotypes exist for short people, blondes, Asians, Black people, Millennials, and older adults, just to name a few. Though many of us have been the target of others seeking to stereotype us, we likely have done the same. List assumptions you have made about others, what you did to pigeonhole and classify them, and why you now believe the assumptions you made are true or flawed.

Facing up to your assumptions about others should help prepare you to speak before them. Whenever you speak, it is important to treat the members of your audience respectfully and as individuals rather than as members of a category. Doing so demonstrates not only cultural awareness, but also sound critical thinking and ethical judgment skills.

2. How We Learn Matters

If you were delivering a speech to college students on “The Effects of Grade Inflation,” what kinds of materials would you use to ensure your speech appealed to each style of learner? To facilitate this task, imagine yourself as each type of learner as you consider possible materials.

Similarly, ask yourself how persons from cultures other than your own would respond to the kinds of material you selected. To what extent, if any, do you imagine their responses would differ from your own?

By stepping outside of who you are and considering your speech from the perspective of others who differ from you, you gain fresh insights.

3. Analyze This Speech: Thinking Critically About Diversity

Holger Kluge was president of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. He delivered the following remarks during a speech made to the Diversity Network Calgary, Alberta, Canada. As you read his words, consider these questions:

- What assumptions did the branch manager make?
- What did Holger Kluge learn about diversity? What have you learned?
- What ethical issues are exposed in this excerpt?
- How might critical thinking skills have avoided the problem altogether?

I'd like to begin my remarks with a story. A number of years ago we hired an employee as a teller in one of our branches. A few weeks after this individual began work, he was called into the branch manager's office for a discussion.

The manager was a good boss and a good mentor, and he wanted to tell the employee the facts of life about working for the bank.

He told him not to expect to rise too far in the organization.

When the young man asked why, the manager replied:

"You've got an accent. You weren't born in Canada. And you're not Anglo Saxon. Basically, you've got the wrong name and the wrong background for advancement."

He went on to say that the best the employee could hope for was to someday become a branch manager.

I was that employee.

The irony is, that at the time I was considered an example of the bank's progressive hiring practices.

Somehow, the significance of this honor eluded me. In the space of a few moments, I had been banished to a wilderness of diminished expectations all because of my name, the way I spoke, and my country of origin.

That's one experience that shaped my views on diversity, knowing what it's like to be on the outside, having to overcome obstacles which others don't, simply because you're different.¹⁷

SN 1 Kluge uses a story to involve the audience.

SN 2 Kluge uses the manager's words verbatim before paraphrasing the remainder of the manager's comments.

SN 3 Identifies himself as the subject, surprising the audience.

SN 4 Explains why he is sensitive to diversity, providing receivers with an important lesson.

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Speakers need to educate receivers, not merely tell them what they want to hear or serve their personal self-interests, but politicians, public relations practitioners, advertisers, talk show hosts, and other public figures often seem to violate this advice. Indeed, the use of deception by those in the public arena is not new. Keeping this in mind, choose one of the following three- to four-minute speaking assignments or one of your instructor's choosing.

- A.** Identify a public figure who you believe deliberately deceived the public. Describe the alleged deception for the audience, and offer your opinion of the public figure's behavior, specifying how you believe she or he ought to have behaved.
- B.** Describe an ethical choice that you had to make, how you decided what to do, and why you believe your decision was right.
- C.** Prepare an ethical analysis of a recent speech, commercial, tabloid news report, or infomercial.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Explain how cultural understanding affects speakers and audiences.** It is likely you will speak before audiences whose cultural backgrounds and values differ from your own. By respecting and adapting to difference, speakers and audiences bridge their diversity.
- 2. Define and discuss the importance of ethics, identifying where you draw the line when faced with specific ethical dilemmas.** Ethics reflect a society's feelings about right and wrong. Questions of ethics arise whenever speakers and audiences interact. Receivers expect speakers to share only what they know to be true, to be fully prepared to present a speech, to consider what is in the best interests of receivers, to make it easy for others to understand them, to refrain from using words inappropriately, to refrain from putting either a positive or a negative spin on information just to win a point, to respect cultural diversity, and to be accountable for the message. Speakers expect receivers to give them a fair hearing, and to be courteous, attentive, and honest about their responses.
- 3. Define plagiarism, explaining why it is an ethical issue.** Plagiarism includes both misrepresentation and lying. A plagiarist steals the ideas and words of another and claims them as his or her own.
- 4. Define critical thinking, explaining its significance for speakers and audiences.** Critical thinking is the ability to explore an issue or situation by integrating all available information, arriving at a conclusion, and being able to validate the position taken. Both speakers and receivers need to arrive at judgments only after honestly evaluating alternatives rather than on the basis of faulty assumptions.
- 5. Describe the relationship among ethics, critical thinking, and multiculturalism/cultural understanding.** Critical thinking and respect for multiculturalism are integral in ethical speechmaking. By broadening the lens through which we process people and experience, and working to ensure that emotion does not overcome rationality, we demonstrate our ethical commitment to and respect for the speechmaking process.

KEY TERMS

Co-culture 40	Culture 40	Low-context communication 41
Covert lie 46	Ethical communication 45	Marginalized group 40
Critical thinking 51	Ethical speechmaking 45	Overt lie 46
Cultural diversity 38	Ethics 37	Plagiarism 49
Cultural identity 42	High-context communication 41	



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Look and Listen

Chapter 4: Listening Critically

Chapter 5: Analyzing and Adapting to the Audience





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4

Listening Critically

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Define listening
2. Explain listening's role in a free society
3. Identify benefits of effective listening
4. Explain four types of listening
5. Describe cultural diversity's impact on listening
6. Be an effective audience member, demonstrating critical thinking and listening skills

Contents

In order to assess the quality, appropriateness, and value of spoken words, we need to possess two key skills: (1) the ability to listen and (2) the ability to think critically. Both skills have their basis in making valid judgments about the speaker's claims and conclusions and evaluating the speaker's information and arguments. In fact, research reveals that listening and the ability to influence others are positively related.¹ We tend to accept the words of those who listen to us.

When we put critical listening and thinking to work, we distinguish facts from inferences, valid from invalid evidence, and logical from flawed reasoning. We resist taking the easy way out, by questioning flimsy or unsupported claims and arguments. We refuse to accept a speaker's words at face value. Rather, we work actively to get the most out of a speech by setting listening goals to support our listening efforts.²

What do we listen for? We listen for facts, examples, testimony, and statistics that support the speaker's position. We assess whether or not the evidence the speaker offers is accurate or faulty, provided by a credible or biased source, and if it strengthens or weakens the speaker's position. We make a concerted effort to resist false assumptions, overgeneralizations, and other reasoning errors.

COACHING TIP

"Tell me to what you pay attention and I will tell you who you are."

—José Ortega y Gasset

If you are like most people, you pay attention to what interests you. It is equally important, however, to pay attention to what might not interest you but could be beneficial to you.

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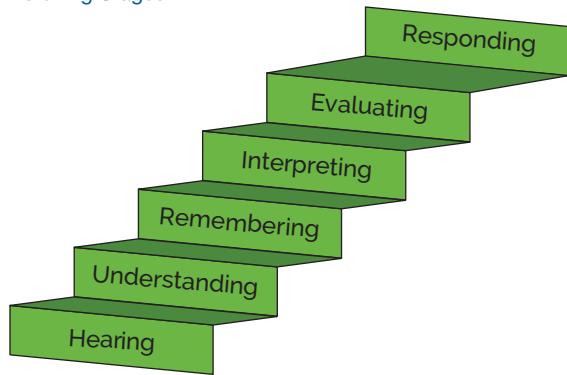
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**4.1a Stage 1: Hearing****4.1b Stage 2: Understanding****4.1c Stage 3: Remembering****4.1d Stage 4: Interpreting****4.1e Stage 5: Evaluating****4.1f Stage 6: Responding****FIGURE 4.1**

Listening Stages



The Six Stages of Listening

Hearing and listening are very different processes. **Hearing** is an involuntary physiological process, while **listening** is a voluntary mental process. In other words, just as we do not need to think to breathe, so we do not need to think to hear. But listening is a system of interrelated components, inclusive of both mental processes and observable behaviors, and occurring in six stages: hearing, understanding, remembering, interpreting, evaluating, and responding (see Figure 4.1).³

4.1a Stage 1: Hearing

During the hearing stage we receive aural stimuli—or sounds. We may choose to ignore some stimuli, like advertisements, while we choose to focus on others, such as instructions for an assignment in class.

We all attend to some sounds but block out others. **Attending** involves our willingness to focus on and organize particular stimuli. Unless our attention is held, however, we soon refocus on something else. Speakers quickly learn that it is not enough to capture the attention of listeners; they also have to work to retain it. To do this, speakers may

- Focus on subjects of particular interest to receivers
- Use words and images that evoke pictures in the minds of receivers
- Incorporate activity and movement into presentations, or
- Tell stories that create suspense, describe conflict, or evoke humor

4.1b Stage 2: Understanding

During the **understanding** stage, we focus on meaning, using our own reservoir of information to decode a message. Refrain from judging the message until you are certain you comprehend it and can summarize the key ideas and evidence.

4.1c Stage 3: Remembering

During **remembering**, we mentally save what we've gained from the speaker's message for further use. Here again, we make choices as we decide what is worth remembering and what we can discard. A good speaker builds redundancy into his or her message to increase the audience's chances of remembering it. Sometimes we may also take notes, or, if permitted, record the speaker's remarks. If you anticipate a speech will be particularly important, ask the instructor or speaker if you can make an audio or video recording of the presentation to be sure you are able to retrieve it for future reference.

4.1d Stage 4: Interpreting

During the **interpreting** stage, we seek to understand the message from the speaker's perspective. Doing this keeps us from imposing our meaning onto the speaker's ideas. To interpret a speaker's message accurately we may

- Relate what the speaker says to what we already know
- Compile questions to ask to clarify things, or
- Paraphrase the speaker's thoughts in our own words

By adopting these behaviors, we ensure our listening is focused as well as purposeful.

4.1e Stage 5: Evaluating

In the **evaluating** stage, we use critical thinking skills to weigh the worth of the speaker's message, evaluating what we have heard and understood. We decide whether we accept the speaker's point of view, whether the message has relevance for us, and whether we find it to be valid and well-intentioned, based on what we know. Whether we find the speaker's position valid or well-intentioned should depend on the kind of evidence and reasoning a speaker offers and our understanding of the issues involved.

4.1f Stage 6: Responding

During the **responding** stage, we react and provide feedback. We communicate our thoughts and feelings about the message we've received. Both during and after a speech, we let the speaker know whether we thought the message was successful or flawed.

The last time you applauded a speaker or failed to laugh at a joke or told your friend how much you appreciated the toast he made at your party, you were responding and providing feedback.



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Instant replay. You can get feedback during the speech based on audience response and afterward by talking with others.

Listening and Cultural Differences

Each of the six stages of listening is influenced by affectors—emotional and intellectual biases—that can prevent us from processing a speaker’s message in an impartial way. For each of us, culture, lifestyle, attitudes, and values influence and help determine

- What we attend to
- What we comprehend
- How we evaluate communication, and ultimately,
- What we retain

Culture affects willingness to listen. For example, **ethnocentrism**, the tendency to assess the values, beliefs, and behaviors of our own culture as superior to those of other cultures, can impede our ability to be receptive to the words of a speaker from a culture other than our own. Effective listeners need to recognize and adapt to potential biases brought on by ethnocentrism. They also need to pay attention to the other ways culture may intervene.

Because culture affects speaking style, it also can impede listeners from fairly processing a speaker’s words. For instance, whereas some cultures advocate for succinctness and directness, others practice elaboration and exaggeration. The Arab proverb “A man’s tongue is his sword” gives us insight into the Arab perception that words can be a punishing weapon. The speech of members of Arab cultures, for example, often contains forceful assertions and significant repetition, causing many who do not understand their culture well enough to conclude that they are being aggressive or threatening.⁴

We all wear glasses. Culture, lifestyle, and other biases shape the lenses through which you view the world, so be aware of how they impact your perception.

Attuning ourselves to differences between cultures can help diminish the impact of the prejudices, biases, and misconceptions we have developed over the years.⁵

The Benefits of Critical Listening

Effective audience members listen to gain knowledge, think critically about the message's meaning, and evaluate a message's validity and worth. They distinguish between main and minor points, differentiate facts from opinions, assess evidence, and identify errors or weaknesses in reasoning. They do much more than simply "hear" the speech and their efforts are rewarded with a host of benefits.

4.3a Reduced Stress

As information is communicated, complex data are simplified, objectives are clarified, and the stress levels of listeners drop. The stress level of speakers also goes down as they are provided a forum to speak their minds, fulfilling their communicative needs.

4.3b More Learning

Listeners learn more about the speaker and the subject. Speakers learn more about what audience members respond to, and how they react to the speaker's ideas. As a college student, you spend approximately 60 percent of each class day listening.⁶ Becoming a better receiver will increase both your personal confidence and your grades. Because you understand what has been said, you gain confidence in your ability to participate and express your opinions.

4.3c Improved Speaker–Audience Relationship

We all need someone to respond to us. We appreciate those who listen to us much more than those who ignore us. We also tend to tune in to those people who listen to us. Listening can create bonds between people from diverse backgrounds.

4.3d Improved Decision Making

Exposure to a wide range of information, attitudes, and beliefs provides you with a bigger picture and the kind of input you need to develop better judgment.

4.3e Improved Speaking

When speakers perceive themselves to have the rapt attention of their listeners and when they perceive their listeners to be open, alert, and active, then they are more comfortable in the speaking role and able to do an even better job of communicating their ideas.

4.3f A Better Society

People who listen critically to the messages of others and do not just accept what is presented to them can spot faulty reasoning, invalid arguments, and gross appeals to prejudice.



4.3a Reduced Stress

4.3b More Learning

4.3c Improved Speaker–Audience Relationship

4.3d Improved Decision Making

4.3e Improved Speaking

4.3f A Better Society



4.4a Type 1: Appreciative: Listening for Pleasure

4.4b Type 2: Empathic: Listening to Provide Emotional Support

4.4c Type 3: Comprehensive: Listening to Get Information

4.4d Type 4: Critical/Deliberative: Listening to Make an Evaluation

The Four Types of Listening

Listening theorists identify four different types of listening.

4.4a Type 1: Appreciative: Listening for Pleasure

You recently may have attended a live concert, taken in a movie or play, or spent an evening at the local comedy club. Why? You probably wanted to have a good time. Often we listen simply because doing so enables us to unwind, relax, or escape. The appreciative listener's purpose is to enjoy the power and impact of words that are well chosen.

4.4b Type 2: Empathic: Listening to Provide Emotional Support

Empathic listening serves a therapeutic function. It helps speakers come to terms with problems and develop clearer perspectives on the situations they face, and aids them in restoring emotional balance to their lives. Used most in interpersonal relationships, empathic listening also occurs during public presentations, such as when a speaker who lived through genocide describes his or her experiences for us.

4.4c Type 3: Comprehensive: Listening to Get Information

When you are lost and ask another person for directions, when you attend a presentation and seek to comprehend the speaker's message, when you sit in class and listen to a lecture, you are listening with the objective of gaining knowledge. Similarly, when we listen to news reports or to a physician delivering a diagnosis, we are listening comprehensively. Being able to listen comprehensively requires us to be able to recall facts, distinguish main and supporting points, and summarize what we have learned.

4.4d Type 4: Critical/Deliberative: Listening to Make an Evaluation

Frequently, in addition to working to understand the content of a message, we must also make judgments about its worth and validity, and ultimately whether we accept or reject it. Critical or deliberative listening goes a step beyond comprehensive listening, requiring us to separate fact and opinion, point out weaknesses in reasoning, and assess whether evidence is sound.

Improving Listening Behaviors

section 4.5

Consider the very best listeners you know. What words would you use to describe their behavior? Most people choose words like *concerned*, *open-minded*, *intelligent*, *attentive*, *interested*, and *respectful*. Now do the same for the worst listeners you know. Probably among the words you've chosen to describe them are *inattentive*, *closed minded*, *bored*, *impatient*, *nonresponsive*, and *rude*. Which list of words would you prefer to have others apply to you? Which would you prefer to use when describing the members of your listening audience?

Far too often, problem behaviors interfere with listening. To become more effective at both speaking and listening, you need to recognize those internal and external factors that contribute to deficient listening—or nonlistening—and then act to eliminate them. The kinds of listening problems that violate the mutual trust that should exist between speakers and listeners are identified in Table 4.1. Which, if any, of them have you been guilty of?

TABLE 4.1 PROBLEM LISTENING BEHAVIORS

BEHAVIOR	CONSEQUENCES
Tuning out	Loss of focus decreases understanding
Faking attention	Pseudolistening is deceptive
Prejudging	Prematurely evaluating can contribute to missing most of a message
Becoming overly emotional	The message's meaning can be distorted
Being lazy	Avoiding difficult material and taking the easy way out decrease comprehension
Being egocentric	Placing the focus on the self, not the speaker, makes it more difficult to understand others, positions and points of view
Being easily distracted	Oversensitivity to setting or context, personal appearance or delivery, decreases understanding, as does multitasking
Wasting time	Failure to use the thought-speech differential to advantage increases daydreaming

4.5a Stay Tuned In

4.5b React Honestly

4.5c Give a Fair Hearing

4.5d Control Emotional Reactions

4.5e Challenge Yourself

4.5f Focus on the Value in the Speech

4.5g Control the Physical Environment

4.5h Use Time Wisely

4.5a Stay Tuned In

Poor listeners do not pay the speaker sufficient respect or attention. It seems as if their ears and minds are “out to lunch.” Words bounce off them. Nothing penetrates. We have all committed an unlistening act, preferring to pursue our private thoughts, reminisce, worry about a personal problem, or make silent plans for an event rather than concentrate on a speaker. To guard against tuning out, expend energy from the outset of a speech to its conclusion. Adopt an attentive posture, keep your eyes focused on the speaker, and work to remain alert. By looking at the speaker, you help your mind follow the lead set by your body.

4.5b React Honestly

Nonlisteners pretend they are listening. They look at the speaker, smile or frown appropriately, nod their heads approvingly or disapprovingly, and even utter remarks like “ah” or “uh-huh.” All the external cues tell the speaker they are listening. But nonlisteners only pretend to listen.

Stop faking attention during a speech; instead, take notes. Note taking prevents you from becoming distracted and helps you listen for main ideas, transitions, and supporting materials. It also increases the probability that you will retain the speech’s content.

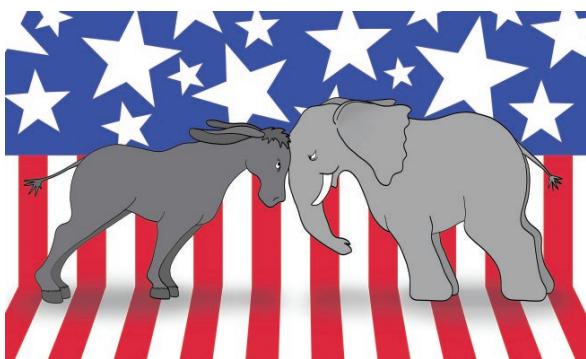
4.5c Give a Fair Hearing

Before even giving the speaker a fair hearing, nonlisteners decide that the speaker looks uninteresting, sounds boring, or does not merit their attention because she or he does not represent their views. Such prejudgments contribute to their missing the real value in the speaker’s remarks.

For example, a staunch Democrat more than likely registered full support for the 2016 documentary film *Where Do We Invade Next?* A staunch

Republican would have been more likely to argue that the film’s creator, Michael Moore, was a biased, inaccurate storyteller, and that his examples were flawed. Were those who supported and opposed the film reacting to the same stimulus? Yes, but pre-judgments by both may have limited their ability to critically listen to the film’s message.

To avoid prejudging speakers on the basis of their reputation, appearance, or manner, allow them to complete their presentations before you even begin to evaluate their effectiveness. Keep an open mind and hear the speaker out.



Bye bipartisanship. The major political divide in the United States means that it's less likely that party members will give fair hearings to those outside the party.

4.5d Control Emotional Reactions

Sometimes nonlisteners let their disagreement with the speaker's position get in the way of listening. They avoid anything with which they do not agree, that they believe has little relevance to their lives, or that they feel will be too difficult for them to comprehend. Personally threatened by a speaker's position, they do not really listen to it.

Nonlisteners also allow particular words spoken by a speaker to interfere with their ability to listen. These words, referred to by listening pioneer Ralph Nichols as "red-flag words," trigger an emotional deafness among nonlisteners, causing listening efficiency to drop to zero. Among them are words like *taxes*, *Nazi*, *Ebola*, *Zika*, and *welfare*. Are you aware of any specific words or phrases that cause you to erupt emotionally, thereby disrupting your ability to process a speaker's remarks accurately?⁷

To avoid reacting too emotionally and jumping to conclusions, don't mentally argue with a speaker during a presentation. If you listen first to what the speaker has to say, rather than assuming you know what's coming next, and if you refrain from focusing on something the speaker does or says that sets you off, then you will be better able to fairly evaluate the speaker's presentation.

4.5e Challenge Yourself

Nonlisteners often avoid material that is challenging. Believing they won't comprehend it anyway, they pass up the chance to exercise their minds.

Would you willingly attend a speech on thermonuclear engineering, molecular biology, or the privatization of industry, or would you tune out because you would have to work too hard? Oliver Wendell Holmes once noted, "The mind, once expanded to the dimension of larger ideas, never returns to its original size." Nonlisteners, however, refuse to stretch their minds; they won't work at listening.

Because listening is not easy, you need to commit to making the effort to do it. In other words, prepare yourself to listen by mentally clearing your mind of extraneous thoughts, reading up on the speaker's subject prior to the presentation, or researching the speaker.

COACHING TIP

"Nothing new can enter the mind through an open mouth."

—Unisys Corporation

We learn by listening. Audience members learn from listening to speeches, and speakers learn from listening to audience members. How you listen facilitates or debilitates the speaker's performance and/or the audience's response to and evaluation of your speech. What kinds of questions should listeners ask themselves when preparing to listen to a speaker? What kinds of questions should speakers ask themselves about how to encourage a receptive audience?

4.5f Focus on the Value in the Speech

Nonlisteners tend to be egocentric; they view themselves as the center of the universe, and they dismiss speeches that might be relevant to society but not to them personally. Seeking only self-satisfaction, nonlisteners are so wrapped up in themselves that they fail to realize the interconnectedness of all human beings.

Instead of focusing on yourself, focus on the value to be found in every speech.

4.5g Control the Physical Environment

Think of the story of Goldilocks and the three bears, in which the porridge was too cold or too hot and the beds too soft or too hard. If we let them, physical factors can function as distractions. Nonlisteners let themselves be distracted by the temperature, the arrangement of seats, or the acoustics of the rooms. They find themselves obsessed with a speaker's accent, mannerisms, or appearance. Once they succumb to such distractions, they are unlikely to listen to what the speaker is saying because they have neglected to focus on the message.

Even if the environment for the presentation is less than optimal, it is up to you to do whatever you can to maintain your focus. It is also up to you to resist multitasking while listening, which similarly distracts your focus.⁸ Put away other books and papers and turn off your phone.



Daydreamer. While not always easy, focusing on the value in every speech is an excellent skill to develop.

4.5h Use Time Wisely

The average person speaks at a rate of 150 to 175 words per minute. The average listener, however, comprehends at about 400 to 500 words per minute. The difference between the two is referred to as the **speech-thought differential**. Nonlisteners waste this extra time by daydreaming instead of focusing on, summarizing, and asking themselves questions about the substance of a speaker's remarks.

Make good use of your “spare” mental lag time. Interact with the speech’s content by producing your own examples, or relating what the speaker is saying to your own experiences.



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No free time. How can you use the speech-thought differential to your advantage in a speech?



GAME PLAN

Preparing to Listen

- I have turned off my phone and put away other books and papers.
- I have a sheet of paper to take notes.
- I am ready to listen with an open mind.
- I am prepared to learn something new.
- I am prepared to critically evaluate the speaker’s message.



Exercises

LISTENING CRITICALLY

Active listening is hard work. When you listen actively, your body temperature rises, your palms become moist, and your adrenalin flow increases. Your body prepares itself to focus. Let's look at what you can do to improve your skills as listener and thinker.

1. Analyze Your Listening Skills

Assess the current state of your listening behavior by responding “Yes” or “No” to each of the following questions:

	YES	NO
1. Do you ever find yourself thinking that you know better than a speaker and tuning out?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you ever daydream when you should be listening to a speaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you ever jump ahead of a speaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you ever fake paying attention to a speaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you ever try to avoid listening to difficult material?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Do you ever stop listening to a speech because the topic doesn't interest you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do you ever try to process every word a speaker says?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do you ever let the speaker's delivery or mannerisms interfere with your reception of his or her remarks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you ever let the environment or personal factors distract you from paying attention to the speaker?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Are there some topics you refuse to listen to?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Every “Yes” is a listening behavior that merits additional work on your part.

As you focus on how well you listen, keep the following seven points in mind:

Point 1. Listening is a conscious process. It requires your full attention. You can't half-listen; the half you miss could be critical.

Point 2. Evaluation should follow, not precede, reception. Effective listeners withhold evaluation until they are certain they have understood the entire message. Never allow what the speaker says or how he or she says it to close your mind.

- Point 3.** Every speech presents you with the opportunity to learn something new. Use—don’t abuse—that opportunity. At times, you might need to overlook a speaker’s monotone or lack of eye contact. Instead try to concentrate on the message.
- Point 4.** Both negative and positive prejudices toward a speaker or a topic can cause you to judge quickly. Either you will be too busy arguing against the speaker or too quickly impressed by what he or she is saying to listen accurately to the message.
- Point 5.** Effective listeners focus their listening efforts; rather than working to absorb every isolated fact, they concentrate on identifying the main points and the evidence used to support them.
- Point 6.** Your job is to look for relationships among a speaker’s ideas, not to jot down or retain every word the speaker says.⁹ Learning to take notes effectively will help you listen effectively, and vice versa.
- Point 7.** If you seek opportunities to practice skillful listening, you will become a more skillful listener. Work to increase your attention span, and you’ll find quite a lot worthy of attending to. By challenging yourself to listen to difficult material, you will also prepare yourself to meet the speaker’s challenge.

2. Take Notes

Active listening requires you to take an active role in setting listening goals and listening for main ideas and supporting information. The following suggestions will help you improve both your notetaking, whether initially live or electronic, and your listening abilities.

- A.** Divide a piece of paper in half. At the top of the left column write “Facts and Evidence.” At the top of the right column write “My Questions and Reactions.”
- B.** Jot down key words, but not a verbatim transcript of the speaker’s ideas. You are attempting to summarize and then evaluate the speaker’s message, not reproduce it.
- C.** Use your extra thinking time to analyze whether the speaker answers the questions you noted in the right column, and determine whether your responses to the message are favorable, unfavorable, or mixed.
- D.** Finally, decide on the extent to which you agree with the ideas and point of view expressed by the speaker, and evaluate the speaker’s presentation.

3. Respond With Constructive Criticism

By using “I messages” you directly attribute what you found right and wrong to yourself and not someone else. After noting a negative in the speech or weak behavior in the speaker, be sure to suggest how it might be improved. Try “I couldn’t determine the support for your second main point. It would have been helpful to me if you had offered examples and statistics to reinforce your position,” instead of, “You failed to provide evidence for the second main point of the speech.”

Following this advice, respond with constructive criticism to the following speaker weaknesses:

1. The introduction failed to arouse your interest.
2. A lack of transitions made the speech hard for you to follow.
3. You couldn’t tell the speech was ending.

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Find a partner and pick a topic in the following list or another of your choosing. Each of you will represent an opposing side of the argument. Discuss the following as you craft your speeches:

- What core messages do both of you want to convey?
- What buzzwords might turn others off from listening about the topic?
- How might you craft a message to ensure listeners give you a fair hearing?
- Do certain facets of the argument elicit particularly emotional responses?

	AGREE	DISAGREE
1. Flag burning should be banned in the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Capital punishment should be abolished.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Condoms should be distributed in all public schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Americans should buy only American products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Handguns and assault weapons should be banned in the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. All Americans should pay the same income tax rate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. College should be free for all Americans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Colleges should consider race when making admissions decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Online gambling should be legal in the United States.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Prayer should be permitted in public schools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Define listening.** Listening is a voluntary psychological process composed of the following stages: sensing, attending, understanding and interpreting, evaluating, responding, and remembering.
2. **Explain listening's role in a free society.** Critical listening and critical thinking skills are necessary to distinguish facts from inferences, valid from invalid evidence, and logical from flawed reasoning. Both skills enable people to make informed choices and help preserve democracy.
3. **Identify benefits of effective listening.** Effective listeners experience less stress, learn more, develop better relationships, make better decisions, and are able to contribute more to society.
4. **Explain four types of listening.** There are four different types of listening. They are (1) appreciative: listening for pleasure; (2) empathetic: listening to provide emotional support; (3) comprehensive: listening to derive information; and (4) critical: listening to make an evaluation.
5. **Describe cultural diversity's impact on listening.** Both our culture and our values affect our listening ability. In order to become better listeners, we need to work to eliminate the prejudices, biases, and misconceptions we have erected. Members of different cultures exhibit different listening styles. Those who do not understand a culture may misinterpret the communication of the culture's members.
6. **Be an effective listener, demonstrating critical thinking and listening skills.** The average person listens at only 25 percent efficiency, losing 75 percent of what he or she hears. By taking the time to understand the listening process and practicing effective listening habits, this deficiency can be alleviated.

KEY TERMS

Attending 60

Interpreting 61

Speech-thought differential 69

Ethnocentrism 62

Listening 60

Understanding 60

Evaluating 61

Remembering 61

Hearing 60

Responding 61



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5

Analyzing and Adapting to the Audience

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Analyze your audience using formal and informal tools
2. Use the makeup of the audience as a guide
3. Plan your speech to reflect audience demographics
4. Plan your speech to reflect audience psychographics
5. Plan your speech to reflect the nature of the situation

Contents

Speeches are meant to be delivered to and for an audience. Successful speakers do not speak to inform, convince, motivate, or entertain themselves. Rather, the audience is central and serves as the speaker's compass.

Your success depends on reaching the audience—building your relationship and sharing your message. That's why you need to learn about **audience analysis**, the process of gathering and interpreting information about receivers, so you can adapt your message to meet and reflect their needs and interests.

COACHING TIP

"When I get ready to talk to people, I spend two thirds of the time thinking about what they want to hear and one third thinking about what I want to say."

—Abraham Lincoln

Actors are a lot like speakers. Actors who are in tune with audience members reach them on a level that those who perform only to hear themselves speak cannot hope to attain. If you consider only your words without considering the needs and wants of audience members, you risk having the words that are so important to you fall on deaf ears. To accomplish your goals, take time to customize your speeches for the people you are trying to reach—whether your purpose is to inform, persuade, or entertain them.

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5.1a Consider the Audience's Makeup

5.1b Be Audience Centered

Reach Out to Your Audience

Imagine your potential audiences in the near future. You might speak to a student group; the members of a temple, church, or mosque; a teachers' organization; coworkers; a sales force; a community group; or a fraternity, sorority, or alumni group. Would you know each of these audiences equally well? Probably not. Your knowledge of each audience would influence your approach.

To decide how best to reach, influence, motivate, or entertain an audience, you need to figure out its members. This is not a new notion. More than two millennia ago, in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle noted, “Of the three elements in speechmaking—speaker, subject, and person addressed—it is the last one, the listener, that determines the speech’s end and object.”¹

5.1a Consider the Audience's Makeup

Adapt your speech to reflect your audience’s makeup. Not only do audiences differ, individual members also differ. Not all African Americans, 20-year-old women, or college students, for example, think alike. You will be well served to discover just how much you and the receivers have in common.²

5.1b Be Audience Centered

If you center attention on audience members, they will make you the center of their attention. When your words resonate, audiences are more likely to respond as you hope. Although you can’t, of course, expect to interact individually with each audience member, the more you find out, the more adept you become at adapting your presentation.

Effective speakers select topics based on both their expertise and their knowledge of what audience members need or want to listen to. The audience-centered speaker is not self-centered, but is motivated by an understanding of receivers.

Journalist and political consultant Peggy Noonan served as a speechwriter for presidents Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush. In her book *What I Saw at the Revolution*, Noonan advises speechmakers to find inspiration from unlikely public venues—one place being a shopping mall—that are filled with people from all walks of life, like the audiences whom speakers seek to reach. She counsels, “Show [your audience] respect and be honest and logical in your approach and they will understand every word you say and hear—and know—that you thought of them.”³

Answer Preliminary Questions

Audience members pay closest attention to messages they perceive to be meaningful, filtering out the information they deem less important. To penetrate the invisible shield individuals use to protect themselves from information irrelevance, relate your ideas to their values, beliefs, needs, and wants.

Answering the following questions can guide you in designing a speech that your audience will tune in to:

- To whom am I speaking?
- How do they feel about my topic?
- What would they like me to share with them?
- What kind of presentation do they expect me to deliver?
- What do I hope to accomplish?
- How important is my presentation to them?
- What do they know, want to know, and need to know about my subject?
- How do they feel about me?
- What problems or goals do the members of the audience have?
- What should I do to gain and maintain their interest and attention?

Drawing on her knowledge of what new college graduates expect to hear from her, in an address to the graduating class of Tulane University, comedian Ellen DeGeneres told them, “Follow your passion. Stay true to yourself. Never follow someone else’s path unless you’re in the woods and you’re lost and you see a path. Then by all means, you follow that.”⁴ Because she knew her audience well, she drew a big laugh.



AP Photo/Bill Haber

Finding Ellen. Commencement speakers often try to relate their life experiences and values with those of the graduating class.

5.3



5.3a Consider Age

5.3b Consider Gender

5.3c Respect Sexual Orientation

5.3d Gauge Knowledge Level

5.3e Understand Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Cultural Ties

5.3f Identify Affiliations

5.3g Consider Socioeconomic Background

Compose a Demographic Snapshot

Developing an understanding of an audience starts with drawing its demographic profile. A **demographic profile** is a composite of characteristics including age; gender; educational level; racial, ethnic, or cultural ties; group affiliations; and socioeconomic background.

For example, imagine that you are asked to speak to two different audiences on the value of taking socioeconomic diversity into consideration in college admissions. Your first audience is composed primarily of middle-aged, well-educated, wealthy people employed in professional or executive jobs. Your second audience is composed primarily of middle-aged, high school-educated Americans who live in the inner city, work in service or trade jobs, and occupy the lower or lower-middle rungs on the socioeconomic ladder. Which group do you believe would be more sympathetic to your position? Why? Would a successful speaker give the same speech to both groups? Without sacrificing your own stand on the issue, how could you adapt your message to these and other groups?

A **homogeneous audience**—one whose members are similar in age, have similar characteristics, attitudes, values, and knowledge—is rare. More often than not, you will speak before a **heterogeneous audience**—one composed of persons of diverse ages with different characteristics, attitudes, values, and knowledge. When this is the situation, be sure you include all groups, paying attention to the kinds of demographic data you can use to help enhance communication with them.

5.3a Consider Age

How old are the members of your audience? One of your key goals is to diminish the age difference between you and those you hope to reach. To accomplish this, you need to be sensitive to the references you employ and the language you use. Ask yourself questions like the following:

- Will they give the same meanings to the words I use?
- Will they be able to identify with my examples and illustrations?
- Are they old or young enough to be familiar with persons and events I refer to?

Speakers would be wise to understand how generational differences influence receivers. According to Lynne Lancaster and David Stillman's *When Generations Collide*, age is a key determiner of audience attitudes.⁵ They note, for example, that those born before 1945 are more apt to lean toward the conservative end of the spectrum, respecting both authority and symbols such as "the flag," and are less likely to be easily persuaded. Their guide word is *loyal*. Baby Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, tend to be belongers, competitive, more cynical, and less likely to bow to authority. Their guide word is *optimism*. Generation X members, born between the mid-1960s and 1980, are more apt to have grown up in blended or single-parent households and tend to be more independent and media savvy. Their watchword is *skeptical*. Finally, Millennials, born between 1981 and 2000, have grown up with technology, and are both friendship and safety focused.⁶ Their watchword is *reality*. Speakers can use the events and trends that serve as generational markers to guide them in appealing to different audience segments.

Of course, age is more relevant to the development of some topics than others. For example, the age of listeners is crucial if you are speaking about life after retirement, but it would be less important if your topic were taking care of planet Earth.

5.3b Consider Gender

Another key variable to consider when analyzing your audience is the ratio of males to females. According to sociolinguist Deborah Tannen, whereas "women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy . . . men speak and hear a language of status and independence."⁷ Whether you are a male or a female speaker addressing a predominantly male, female, or mixed-sex audience, this finding should affect the amount of time you spend building rapport with your listeners and could alter the approach you select to deliver your information and ideas to them. For example, if you were speaking about national security to an audience of mostly men you might focus on the importance of strengthening defenses and the necessity for surveillance. On the other hand, were you speaking on the same topic to an audience composed of mostly mothers of school-aged children, you might focus instead on what needs to be done to ensure that children learn in environments that are safe and secure.



Cultural diversity. How can you make yourself more cognizant of the diverse experiences your audiences bring to your speeches?

5.3c Respect Sexual Orientation

Although sexual orientation is often an invisible variable, it is important to recognize that not everyone in your audience will be the same orientation as you. Just as using racially insensitive remarks or demeaning the race or ethnicity of receivers is inappropriate, so is speaking disparagingly of, or displaying a bias against, someone's sexual orientation. By making the effort to include supporting materials that feature the LGBTQ community and heterosexuals, you ensure that you include all types of receivers. For example, if you were to speak about adoption, you may include in your speech information about local and state resources for both heterosexual couples and same-sex or transgender couples who seek to adopt.

5.3d Gauge Knowledge Level

Knowing the average level of education of receivers will help you make choices regarding vocabulary, language style, and supporting materials. Your goal is to adapt your words to your listeners' knowledge. If you miss your mark and speak above their knowledge level, they will not understand you; if you speak below their knowledge level, you will insult and bore them.

When speaking before a more knowledgeable audience, you will want to deliver a **two-sided presentation**, that is, a presentation that considers alternative

perspectives, rather than the more simplistic **one-sided presentation**.⁸ For example, if you were speaking on the trade policies of the United States to a well-informed audience, you would want to show receivers how familiar you were with the variety of viewpoints on this issue and explain why, after reviewing existing trade stances, you chose the position you now want them to adopt. Because individuals who are knowledgeable are used to processing complex communication and distinguishing among a variety of options, they will be more accepting of your ideas if you present them with strong evidence to back them up and include arguments that are logically sound.⁹

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What's their expertise? Speaking on a new type of medicine would lead to two very different speeches for an audience of doctors and an audience of non-doctors.

5.3e Understand Racial, Ethnic, Religious, and Cultural Ties

As you prepare your speech, keep in the front of your mind any potential misunderstandings that racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural differences could foster. For example, a predominantly Catholic or Orthodox Jewish audience is likely to support the abolition of abortion. If you have an audience of diverse listeners, it is helpful to acknowledge that some of your listeners may disagree with your stance or point. However, it is also up to you to find ways to encourage them to consider different ideas.

5.3f Identify Affiliations

Memberships in occupational, political, civic, and social groups also provide speakers with a pretty accurate prediction of the way audience members will react to a topic. Group affiliations serve as a bond. Workers who belong to the same union, citizens who support a political candidate, or parents who are active in the PTA (Parent Teacher Association) probably share a number of key interests, attitudes, and values with others in the group.

Whenever you function as a speaker, you need to consider how the various affiliations of audience members could influence both your topic and your approach. Remember, your goal is to identify clues regarding how listeners will respond to your presentation.

5.3g Consider Socioeconomic Background

People from different socioeconomic backgrounds naturally look at situations, events, and issues from very different perspectives. A wealthy audience might not appreciate what it means to grow up in poverty. It is up to you to increase audience understanding of, and identification with, your subject.

Writing about this issue some years ago, journalist Anthony Lewis noted, “Upper-income Americans generally, whether in public or private employment, live not just a better life but one quite removed from that of ordinary families. They hardly experience the problems that weigh so heavily today on American society.” How can you as a speaker close the perceptual gap created by this disparity?

First, you need to develop insight into how income affects life experiences. For example, a more privileged audience member listening to a speech against the Affordable Care Act might think \$400 a month for health insurance for a family of four is quite reasonable, without considering the family’s other expenses—rent, food, utilities, transportation—on an overall income of only \$4,000 a month. Second, you need to locate examples and appeals that relate your topic to the varied experiences of your audience and make direct references to them during your speech.

Although each member of your audience is a unique individual, he or she is also a composite of a set of demographic factors. Rather than functioning as a means for stereotyping receivers, demographic variables should guide you in knowing your audience.



5.4a Understand Values, Beliefs, and Attitudes

5.4b Understand How the Audience Perceives Your Topic

5.4c Understand How the Audience Perceives You

Compose a Psychographic Snapshot

Learning about your audience members' **psychographics**—how they see themselves; their attitudes toward various issues; their motives for being there; and how they feel about your topic, you, and the occasion or event—provides additional clues to their likely reactions. To draw this kind of audience picture, you need to understand the beliefs and values that underlie audience members' attitudes.

5.4a Understand Values, Beliefs, and Attitudes

Values are the principles important to us; they guide what we judge to be good or bad, ethical or unethical, worthwhile or worthless. They represent our conception of morality and are the standards against which we measure right and wrong. Knowing that respect for elders is among the core values shared by Chinese people; machismo and saving face are important to Mexicans; devoutness and hospitality are valued by Iraqis; and family, responsibility to future generations, and a healthy environment are valued by many in the United States, how might you adapt a speech on the National Security Agency's wire-tapping program to appeal to members of each group?¹⁰

Beliefs are what we hold to be true and false. They are also the building blocks that help to explain our attitudes. For example, those who believe that individuals will make better decisions with their money than the government often favor lower taxes. Because our belief systems are composites of everything we hold to be true and untrue, they influence the way we process messages. Some beliefs are more important to us than others. The more important our beliefs, the harder we work to keep them alive and the less willing we are to alter them.

Our values and beliefs feed into our **attitudes**, the favorable or unfavorable predispositions that we carry with us everywhere we go. The attitudes we hold help direct our responses to everything, including a speech. Attitudes are evaluative in nature and are measured on a continuum that ranges from favorable to unfavorable. For example, some hold favorable attitudes toward school voucher programs; others do not. Our attitudes reflect our likes and dislikes and are shaped by myriad influences, including family, education, culture, and the media.

5.4b Understand How the Audience Perceives Your Topic

Before class starts or right after it finishes are good times to make small talk with your peers in an effort to discover what they think about certain topics. Even just listening to what's on their minds as they chat with others can provide you with clues to their mind-set. Knowing your audience's attitudes toward your topic can help you determine how to handle your material. If you can gauge your audience's predisposition to respond favorably or unfavorably, you can adapt your approach so that you address their beliefs and reflect their values and more readily identify the kind of information you need to add, or the misconceptions you need to correct. And if you can demonstrate for them how your message supports the values they already hold dear, you are much more likely to succeed.

5.4c Understand How the Audience Perceives You

No matter how audience members feel about your topic, if they believe you to be a credible source, they are much more apt to listen to what you have to say.

What if you know audience members don't look favorably on you? Ask yourself whether they lack information, have received misinformation, or have a legitimate reason for holding the judgment. Then identify what you can do to influence them to view you more favorably. For example, if they don't believe you are an authority on your subject, you can work into your presentation experiences you've had that qualify you to speak on the topic. One student who asked his audience to accept that the U.S. government should significantly increase social services to the homeless made his message stronger by relating his own experiences as a homeless person some years earlier.

What your audience thinks of you could change the way they respond to your message. Your credentials and your reputation accompany you to the podium.



Know your audience. What's your audience's perception of you, and how will that impact your credibility and their listening?



5.5a Analyze the Occasion

5.5b Consider the Location

5.5c Consider the Time

5.5d Gauge Audience Size

Consider the Speaking Situation

An important component of your audience analysis is considering the reason for their attendance, as well as the occasion, location, and time at which your speech will take place.

5.5a Analyze the Occasion

Is your audience attending the speech voluntarily or are they required to attend? If you know in advance why people are present for your speech, you can adjust your remarks accordingly.

When thinking about the occasion, you also need to consider the kind of speech audience members are expecting you to deliver. If you are speaking to commemorate someone who has passed away, they expect you to deliver a eulogy. If you are speaking at a rally to encourage fund-raisers, listeners might well anticipate a motivational speech.

Whenever possible, it is wise for you to fulfill audience expectations. Be sure you can answer these questions:

- What is the nature of the group you are to address?
- What is your reason for speaking?
- What is the length of time allotted for your presentation?

Environmental variables like place, time, and audience size similarly affect the audience, influencing their reaction to you and your presentation. Consider how these factors could affect your style, language, and manner of delivery, and take steps to ensure that “little things” like the room being too small or the presentation running overtime don’t stand in the way of communication.

5.5b Consider the Location

Consider some of the ways that the physical setting could affect the receptivity of listeners by answering these questions:

- Why do we find it difficult to concentrate when we’re too hot or too cold?
- Why do we find it tough to focus on or pay attention to a speaker when a room is poorly lit or noisy?
- Why might an environment that is unattractive, or too attractive, adversely affect audience response?

Adapt your presentation to reduce listener discomfort and promote understanding and acceptance. That could mean talking louder or more softly, turning a thermostat down or up, bringing extra lights, or working extra hard to attract and maintain audience interest.

5.5c Consider the Time

If you are giving a speech early in the morning, right after lunch, later in the evening, or late in the week, you probably will have to wake up members of your audience by doing something unusual or by including some intriguing or startling example or illustration that compels their attention. You might, for example, ask a question or relate an experience that reveals your understanding of the situation.

Also consider the length of time you are given to speak. If you go over the time allotted, don't expect audience members to necessarily listen. If you speak for much less time than expected, don't expect that audience members will necessarily be pleased. Instead, find out the amount of time you are given, and work to fill that time with as stimulating and as informative a presentation as you possibly can.

Another consideration is the number of speakers sharing the program with you. Will you speak first, last, or somewhere in-between? Will you be flexible enough to tie your remarks to the remarks of those who precede you? Will you be sensitive to the lethargy that could affect your audience after a long evening of virtually uninterrupted listening? Former CEO of Fox News and communications consultant Roger Ailes observes that speakers need to be aware that during their speech the minds of audience members might wander off to thoughts of baby-sitters or other personal concerns. It is up to the speaker to draw them back in, even shortening the speech to maintain their interest. As he put it, "If the time is short, don't talk *faster*. Talk *less*. Edit your text."¹¹

Speakers need to empathize with what the audience is feeling and decide how best to communicate that empathy. Accurate perception can prevent audience rejection.

5.5d Gauge Audience Size

How many people will be in your audience: ten, fifty, a hundred, a thousand, tens of thousands, or millions?

Audience size and formality are directly related. As audience size increases, speaker formality increases. Audience size also directly influences the amount of interaction you are able to have with members of your audience, the kinds of visual aids you use, and whether you will use an amplification system and a podium. Adept speakers are ready to vary their manner and means of presentation to meet the requirements of different audience sizes. In fact, audience size is one of those variables that help make every speech situation different. When you are sensitive to it, you increase your chances for success.



5.6a Ask Your Contacts

5.6b Use Personal Knowledge and Observations

5.6c Research Audience Attitudes

Get Information About Your Audience

By now you should understand the kinds of information it would benefit you to have about your audience. How can you collect it? What do you ask, where do you go, and what kinds of tools can you use to gain insight into the audience?

5.6a Ask Your Contacts

A sensible starting point is the person who invites you to speak. Ask that individual about the group he or she represents. Questions such as the following will yield valuable information:

- Why does the group exist?
- What goals does the group hope to fulfill?
- What is the nature of the occasion at which I will speak?
- How many people do you anticipate will be in attendance?
- Can you share any insights about the composition of the audience?
- What expectations do you believe audience members will bring with them to the presentation?
- Are you aware of any attitudes held by audience members on the whole that could positively or negatively affect how they receive my presentation?
- How much time will be allotted for the presentation?
- Will any other speakers be sharing the program with me?
- At what point in the program will I speak?
- What will the physical setting be like?
- Will I be introduced?

Of course, your sponsor is not the only person you might query. If you know anyone who has spoken to the group before, or if you know members of the group, you might also ask them similar questions.



Observe and report. Make observations of your audience members beforehand to make educated guesses about their characteristics.

5.6b Use Personal Knowledge and Observations

If you'll be speaking before a group that you belong to, such as a class, club, or civic organization, you can make decisions regarding your presentation based, at least in part, on prior conversations you have had with audience members, your perceptions of their opinions of you, and insights you have gained from hearing many of them voice personal opinions. Don't be afraid to watch people in action prior to the speech and to make educated guesses regarding ages, education and income levels, and cultural backgrounds.

5.6c Research Audience Attitudes

The library and the Internet hold clues to the attitudes of audience members. By researching what local, regional, and national opinion polls reveal about the attitudes of various groups on a variety of social and political issues, you might be able to make a number of assumptions regarding the attitudes of those before whom you will speak.

To increase specificity and add to the knowledge you are gathering about the group you will address, you can also use a questionnaire.

The Questionnaire

Your instructor may allow you to distribute questionnaires in class. A well-thought-out questionnaire helps you estimate the amount of knowledge your listeners already possess about your subject and their attitudes toward it. Questionnaires generally contain three different kinds of questions: closed-ended questions, scaled questions, and open-ended questions.

Closed-ended questions are highly structured, requiring only that the respondent indicate which of the provided responses most accurately reflects his or her opinion and so generate clear, unambiguous answers. The following are examples of closed-ended questions:

Do you think drones should be banned in the United States?

Yes No Undecided

Should condoms be distributed in public schools?

Yes No Undecided

In contrast, **scaled questions** make it possible for a respondent to indicate his or her view along a continuum or scale that ranges by degree from polar extremes such as *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*, *extremely important* to *extremely unimportant*, and *extremely committed* to *extremely uncommitted*, thereby allowing the respondent to indicate the strength of his or her feeling.

The following are scaled questions:

How important is it for Congress to raise the minimum wage?

Extremely Important Important Neutral Unimportant Extremely Unimportant

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

"Colleges should consider race when making admissions decisions."

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Open-ended questions invite participants to answer in their own words and so produce more detailed and personal responses; however, they are

- How do you feel about schools that require students to wear uniforms?
- Respond to this statement: “A politician’s private life is not the public’s business.”

Because each kind of question can aid you in drawing a profile of your audience, use a mix in any

also harder to interpret and may not provide the desired information. For example,

FIGURE 5.1

Sample Questionnaire on Abortion

1. Age:				
2. Sex:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male		<input type="checkbox"/> Female	
3. Race:	<input type="checkbox"/> White		<input type="checkbox"/> African American	<input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic
	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian		<input type="checkbox"/> Native American	<input type="checkbox"/> Other
4. Religion:	<input type="checkbox"/> Catholic		<input type="checkbox"/> Protestant	<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish
	<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist		<input type="checkbox"/> Atheist	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim
			<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
5. Highest Educational Level Attained:	<input type="checkbox"/> High School		<input type="checkbox"/> College	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate School
6. Occupation:				
7. Organizational Memberships:				
8. Income:	<input type="checkbox"/> Under \$25,000		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25,000–\$49,999	
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000–\$74,999		<input type="checkbox"/> \$75,000–\$99,999	
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000–\$149,999		<input type="checkbox"/> More than \$150,000	
9. Marital Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Married		<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced		<input type="checkbox"/> Separated	
10. Political Affiliation:	<input type="checkbox"/> Democrat		<input type="checkbox"/> Republican	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent
11. Have you or your significant other ever had an abortion?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
12. Do you know anyone who has had an abortion?			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
13. How many persons would you estimate have abortions in the United States every week?				
	<input type="checkbox"/> 100	<input type="checkbox"/> 500	<input type="checkbox"/> 1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,000
	<input type="checkbox"/> More than 10,000			
14. Which answer best reflects your opinion of the following statement: “Abortion should be prohibited”?				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree	<input type="checkbox"/> Neutral	<input type="checkbox"/> Disagree
	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Disagree			
15. Explain your response to question 14:				

Developing a comprehensive understanding of your audience will have profound effects on your speechmaking. Your challenge as a speaker is to find ways to make your message inclusive of the different ages, religions, educational levels, sexual preferences, races, cultures, group memberships, and psychographic profiles represented among the receivers. As you prepare and plan your speech, keep in mind everything you have learned about your audience, as well as the specifics of the speaking situation. You need to

- Phrase your topic in such a way that audience members will not be turned off by it or tune it out.
- Resist the urge to concentrate exclusively on what you want to say; spend more time understanding what the audience wants to hear.
- Convince audience members early in your presentation that what you are communicating will solve a problem they have, help them reach their goals, or otherwise enrich their lives.
- Use your creative powers to encourage your listeners to care about your subject.
- Build on whatever common ground exists between you and your audience; make a personal connection with them.
- Always refer first to areas of agreement before speaking about areas of disagreement.
- Demonstrate that you respect your listeners; if they sense that you think you're superior to them, chances are they won't listen to you. If you communicate to them in words they don't comprehend, your speech won't matter even if they listen to it.
- Hear and see yourself and the speaking environment through the ears and eyes of the members of your audience. Put yourself in their place and they will more readily give you their attention.



GAME PLAN

Analyze Your Audience

- I have considered the demographic factors of my audience and strategized the best approach for my speech.
- I have a good understanding of my audience's values, beliefs, and attitudes toward my topic.
- I understand the purpose of my speech, and I know what my audience expects of me.
- I have queried my contact about the physical setting and order of speeches, and I've adjusted my speech to suit the occasion.



Exercises

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Participating in the following activities will enhance your audience adaptation abilities.

1. What Do You Know?

Use what you know about demographics and psychographics to analyze the members of this class and another class. Explain how you will apply the information in your next speech or presentation in each class.

2. Adapt This

Imagine that you were asked to deliver a speech on the contributions of the women's movement twice—once to an audience composed of primarily feminist receivers, and then to an audience composed of predominately antifeminist receivers. Describe how you might prepare your address to appeal to members of these diametrically opposed audiences without sacrificing your personal principles.

3. Analyze the Audience: Do Audience Members Want to Be Present?

Some audiences attend speeches voluntarily, while others have to be present, which affects how you go about presenting your message. Explain what you will do to try and win over audience members who don't want to be there. What will you do to make your speech relevant and interesting to them?

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Develop a survey to analyze an audience on an issue of your choice; your survey should contain closed-ended, scaled, and open-ended questions. Once you are sure your survey's questions are clear and unambiguous, have class members complete it. Then explain how you would take that information and your personal knowledge about your audience into account when planning a presentation.

Specifically, in a two- to three-page paper explain how conducting such an analysis helps in addressing both the needs and interests of receivers, and describe how you could use the insights you gained from surveying receivers to guide you in

- Formulating your objective
- Creating an introduction and a conclusion
- Organizing your main points
- Wording a speech

Once this is done, develop a presentation that puts your plan into action.

Finally, after delivering your presentation, ask your classmates to rate your speech on a five-point scale indicating

- How relevant it was to them, and
- How interesting it was to them

If the outcome is not what you anticipated, discuss steps you might have taken to increase receptivity and interest.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Analyze your audience using formal and informal tools.

In addition to drawing three key audience analysis profiles—a demographic profile, a psychographic profile, and an environmental situational profile—speakers need to query contacts, use their personal knowledge and observations, and when possible also research the attitudes of their audience using a questionnaire.

2. Use the makeup of the audience as a guide.

Speakers need to adapt their speeches to account for the makeup of the audiences they address. In addition to acknowledging differences, speakers also need to discover how much they and their audience members have in common.

3. Plan your speech to reflect audience demographics.

By developing an understanding of audience characteristics including the age, gender, educational level, racial, ethnic, or cultural ties,

group affiliations, and socioeconomic status of audience members, public speakers are better able to customize and adapt their messages to reflect the specific needs and interests of receivers.

4. Plan your speech to reflect audience psychographics.

By learning about audience member psychographics—what's going on in the minds of receivers, and their attitudes, beliefs, and values—speakers are better able to fine-tune their speeches and develop presentations that speak to the lifestyle choices and preferences of receivers.

5. Plan your speech to reflect the nature of the situation.

By conducting environmental or situational profiles, speakers develop a fuller understanding of how the “where and when” of presentations affects speech content, delivery, and audience reaction.

KEY TERMS

Attitude 82

Audience analysis 75

Belief 82

Closed-ended questions 87

Demographic profile 78

Heterogeneous audience 78

Homogeneous audience 78

One-sided presentation 80

Open-ended questions 88

Psychographics 82

Scaled questions 87

Two-sided presentation 80

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Topic and Research

Chapter 6: Select a Topic and Purpose

Chapter 7: Finding and Evaluating Research

Chapter 8: Integrating Support





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6

Select a Topic and Purpose

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Choose a topic appropriate for you, your audience, and the occasion
2. Develop an effective general purpose statement
3. Develop an effective specific purpose statement
4. Formulate a behavioral objective for audience members
5. Create an effective thesis
6. Evaluate the effectiveness of your general and specific purpose statements as well as your thesis

Contents

So you're going to give a speech. You must therefore confront a dilemma all speakers face: what to speak about. Choose the right topic—one that is appropriate for you, your audience, and the occasion—and you enhance your chances of delivering a “total quality speech.” Choose the wrong topic—one that you and your audience do not care about, or that is inappropriate to the speaking situation—and you'll probably find yourself unable to maintain your own interest, let alone the audience's.

There are infinite topics to choose from.¹ Let's explore the plays involved in selecting one that will fulfill your general and specific purposes for speaking. Mastering these pages of the *Playbook* requires you to approach your speech both systematically and creatively—that is, it asks that you work within a format but think creatively every step of the way. Once you combine a reliable system with a spirit of innovation, no speaking hurdle will be insurmountable. Becoming an elite speaker is closer than you imagine.

Section 6.1 Formulate a Topic

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6.1a Learn Brainstorming Techniques

6.1b Use Other Topic Selection Techniques

Formulate a Topic

In professional and civic situations, topic choice is likely to be predetermined or significantly limited. However, this typically is not the case in public or professional speaking classes where the choice of topic is often left up to you. If you know what to talk about with your friends, you already hold the key to discovering a good topic for a class speech. Choose a topic that you are familiar with or would like to know more about, one that reflects your personal concerns or convictions, and one you believe will interest listeners and allow them to gain knowledge and insight. To reach this point, you will first need to undertake some self-analysis.

6.1a Learn Brainstorming Techniques

The first step in topic selection is to compile a list of possible subjects that interest you and appeal to your audience. **Brainstorming** is a process of free association in which your goal is to generate as many ideas as possible without fear of critique. Give each of the following idea-generation techniques a try:

- **Brainstorm.** Get every possible idea down on paper.² Don't rule out any topic until you have had a chance to evaluate it.
- **Piggyback ideas.** Mix and match ideas you've generated to form interesting combinations. You might combine interests in the environment and in transportation for a speech on why people should drive environmentally friendly cars.
- **Don't censor.** Go idea-wild. You'll have ample opportunity to tame an idea once you evaluate it for usefulness and appropriateness to the speaking situation. During a brainstorming session, one student suggested a wild idea—implanting human stem cells in animal brains to produce animals that think like humans—only to discover that such research was actually being considered in scientific circles.



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Brainstorm. It's best to write down anything that comes to mind and refine and discard topics that don't work later.

Technique 1: Brainstorm to Develop a Personal Inventory of Interesting Subjects

Think about subjects you either have some knowledge of or would like to learn more about. They may relate to something you have experienced personally, like a hobby, or something you would like to explore, like tornadoes.

Another possibility is to take an “on looking” walk with your phone or other recording device as your companion. As you walk, notice potential topics hidden in plain sight. Record examples that come to mind from architecture, street signs, passersby, dog walkers, and anything else you see.³

A variation of the same exercise is to focus on *the here and now* for a source of potential topics. On the left side of a sheet of paper list everything you are able to see, hear, taste, smell, or touch from your present location. Once you have identified 10 to 15 items, note on the right side of your paper topics that might naturally evolve from each observation or experience (see Table 6.1). Do not censor your ideas; write down everything that comes to mind. A general subject area may surface that you can then develop into a more specific speech topic.

TABLE 6.1 TOPIC INVENTORY

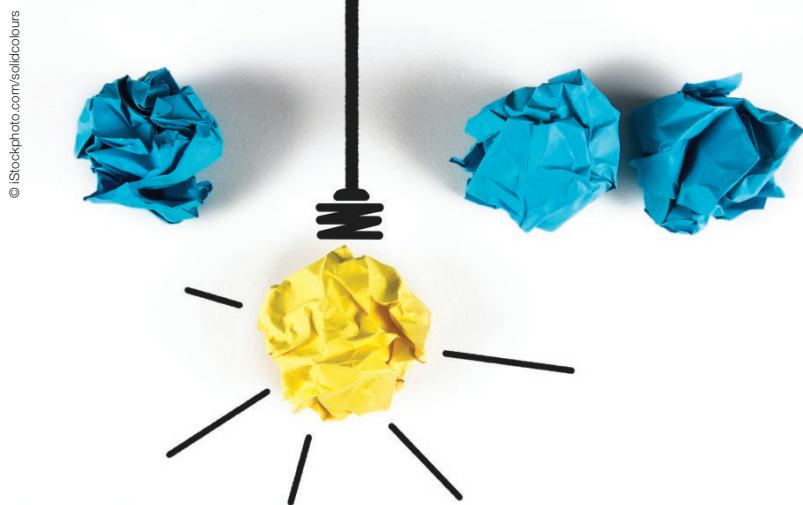
THE HERE AND NOW	POSSIBLE TOPICS
A passing airplane	Mass Transportation, Flight Safety, The History of Flight, How Airplanes Fly, The Future of Air Transport
The hum of the air conditioner	How Coolants Affect the Environment, The Invention of the Air Conditioner, How People Kept Cool Before Air Conditioning, The Energy Impact of Air Conditioning, Alternative Energy Sources
A television	Media Censorship, The History of the Sitcom, How Televisions Work, The Impact of <i>The Today Show</i> , The Changing TV Industry
A stuffed bear	Toy Manufacturing, Consumer Safety Regulations, The History of the Teddy Bear, Child Development
A dog	The Life of a Seeing Eye Dog, Dogs as Caregivers, The Importance of Supporting the ASPCA, The Domestication of Dogs
A lamp	The Development of the Light Bulb, Light Pollution, Life in America Before Electrification, How Light Bulbs Work

Technique 2: Brainstorm Using Categories as a Stimulus

Divide a sheet of paper into six columns. At the top of each column list one of the following words: *people, processes, phenomena, possessions, products, and programs*.⁴ Then devote the next 30 minutes (5 minutes per category) to writing down every word you associate with each category, in turn (see Table 6.2). Review your lists of responses and see which, if any, of the general subject areas you might develop into a specific topic.

TABLE 6.2 BRAINSTORMING USING CATEGORIES

PEOPLE	PROCESSES	PHENOMENA	POSSESSIONS	PRODUCTS	PROGRAMS
the mayor	recycling	meteor shower	sunglasses	chocolate	literacy
Michelle Obama	digestion	earthquake	gold necklace	smart watch	orientation
Mom	rusting	sinkhole	treasury note	lawnmower	Peace Corps
novelist	baking a cake	tornado	jade statue	handbag	Medicaid
Albert Einstein	making origami	lightning	car	stereo	Boy/Girl Scouts



Get Creative. You never know which ideas will spark your interest!

Technique 3: Brainstorm Using the A-B-C Approach

The A-B-C approach uses the alphabet to help find a potential topic. This technique is particularly useful in helping prevent “idea paralysis.” We provide you with one potential topic idea for each alphabet letter; generate at least one more on your own.

	Topic 1	Topic 2
A	Autoimmune diseases	_____
B	Black holes	_____
C	Coffee	_____
D	Date rape	_____
E	Echolocation	_____
F	Fly fishing	_____
G	Gun control	_____
H	Hair loss	_____
I	Influenza	_____
J	Justice system	_____
K	Kentucky Derby	_____
L	Liberia	_____
M	Missionaries	_____
N	Nobel prizes	_____
O	Organ donation	_____
P	Paper	_____
Q	Quantum physics	_____
R	Radiation	_____
S	Social networking	_____
T	Ticklishness	_____
U	UFOs	_____
V	Volcanoes	_____
W	Wilderness	_____
X	Xenophobia	_____
Y	Yeti	_____
Z	Zoos	_____

6.1b Use Other Topic Selection Techniques

These idea-generation exercises will help you develop areas of interest into a topic for presentation.

Technique 4: Scan the Media

Newspapers, magazines, books, advertisements, films, broadcast news, sitcoms, or the Internet might just provide the spark that lights our fire on a particular subject. Browsing through sources like these, as well as listening to or watching specialized programs, could result in a list of possible topics like the following:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Copyright Protection and
Music Downloaded From the
Internet | Immigration |
| Right to Privacy | Virtual Reality |
| The Death Penalty | Women as Global Leaders |
| Fertility Clinics | Robotic Surgery |
| The Electoral College | Sustainable Fishing |
| Manned Mission to Mars | Sexual Harassment |
| Diversity and the Corporation | Cuba–U.S. Relations |
| Depression and Holidays | Prison Privatization |
| Volunteerism | Airline Safety |
| Trans Rights | Job Hunting |

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24/7 news. The Internet and the world are at your fingertips, so just browsing your phone can spark an idea.

Technique 5: What's Taboo to Whom?

Consult resources such as David Livermore's *Leading With Cultural Intelligence*, or conduct an online search of "cultural mistakes" or "cultural taboos" around the world to identify speech topics that specific groups of people might find offensive or inappropriate for public discussion.⁵ For example, in many Arab, Asian, and African cultures, talking about sex to audiences made up of both men and women is likely to be judged offensive.⁶ Of course, some U.S. audiences might find it offensive as well. That said, not every potentially sensitive topic is taboo or off-limits. We need to remain open and process ideas we find disagreeable fairly.

On a smaller scale, be careful not to assume that because you are interested in a topic, others in your class will automatically be interested in that topic as well.

Technique 6: Draw a Mind Map

A mind map is a visual means of showing relationships among brainstormed ideas (see Figure 6.1). To create a mind map, begin by writing a word or phrase smack in the middle of a blank piece of paper. Then, as ideas about the center word come to mind, surround it with related words and images using arrows to indicate linkages between ideas, and colors to make your different ideas stand out.⁷ As your ideas get clearer, feel free to redraw the map.

FIGURE 6.1

Mind Mapping

It's key in visualizing possibilities and idea relationships.



After completing these exercises and compiling an extensive list of possible topics, you are ready to assess each topic's viability. As you review the possibilities, remember that you should be passionate about the topic you ultimately select. Your topic should be adaptable to the diverse interests and concerns of receivers, have significance for you and them, and allow you to add to or acquire information.



6.2a Formulate the General Purpose

6.2b Formulate the Specific Purpose

6.2c Consider the Audience's Perspective

Formulate General and Specific Purposes

Once you have picked a general topic, select a general purpose that reflects your assignment, facilitates the attainment of your primary objective, or both. Answer the question: “What purpose do I want to fulfill by speaking on this topic?”

6.2a Formulate the General Purpose

The **general purpose** is the overall effect you hope to have on your audience. Virtually all speeches fulfill one of three general rhetorical purposes: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain.

Speaking to Inform

An informative speech is designed to teach. Thus an informative speaker resembles a teacher whose primary goal is to communicate and share knowledge with an audience—to give listeners new information. Speakers deliver informative speeches when they want to explain a process, procedure, organization, or function; when they describe a person, place, or thing; or when they define a word or concept. Most informative speeches are not controversial. They occur in virtually all classes you take and are equally common in work and community settings. The following are examples of informative speech topics:

- The Effects of Caffeine on the Body
- How Photosynthesis Works
- How to Save Money
- How to Dress for a Job Interview
- The Effects of Lead Poisoning
- How to Count Cards

Speaking to Persuade

The speech to persuade is designed primarily to change the thoughts and/or the behaviors of receivers. The persuasive speaker hopes to alter not only what the audience members know, but also how they feel and/or act.

Persuasive speech topics are more controversial than informative speech topics because others may oppose what the speaker advocates. Thus, while a speaker may deliver a speech supporting abortion rights, a number of audience members may hold very different opinions about the subject. The following are examples of persuasive topics:

- Televised Ads for Electronic Cigarettes
- The Right to Health Care
- The Tax Burden on the Middle Class
- The Dangers of Factory Farming
- Alcohol Consumption During Pregnancy
- The U.S. Space Program
- Opt-Out Organ Donation

Speaking to Entertain

The speech to entertain is designed to amuse an audience. If, as a result of the speaker's efforts, audience members smile, laugh, and generally feel good or have a good time, the speech is a success.

You might be called on to deliver a speech to entertain when serving as an after-breakfast, luncheon, or dinner speaker, or when delivering a comic monologue at a comedy club, for example. Humor is usually an essential ingredient in the speech to entertain; skill in using it is necessary. The following are examples of topics of speeches to entertain:

- How to Fail a Course
- Least Effective College Essays
- The Part of the City I Wouldn't Show a Tourist
- How to Lie
- Text Messaging Mistakes

- Handshakes I Have Experienced
- The Best Ways to Waste Time

After you have chosen a general purpose, the next step is to fill in the details.

6.2b Formulate the Specific Purpose

The **specific purpose** of a speech is your statement of the speech's main objective. It identifies what you want your speech to accomplish or what you hope to do with your speech.

The specific purpose statement of an informative speech often contains such words as *show*, *explain*, *report*, *instruct*, *describe*, and (not surprisingly) *inform*. The following are examples of specific purpose statements for various kinds of informative speeches:

- To *describe* for audience members how decreases in state funding to colleges will affect them
- To *inform* my audience about the effects of sickle cell anemia
- To *explain* to my audience the signs of a stroke
- To *report* on efforts to raise college graduation rates
- To *instruct* class members on how to interview for a job

Words like *persuade*, *motivate*, *convince*, and *act* are characteristic of specific purposes for persuasive speeches, as in the following examples:

- To *motivate* listeners to buy organic food
- To *persuade* listeners to register as organ donors
- To *convince* audience members to maintain a financial "rainy day" fund

COACHING TIP

"Communication is 'purpose driven.'"

The purpose of a speech is the driver of the speech. Make that purpose crystal clear. There should be no doubt in the audience's mind regarding what you hope to accomplish.

—Larry A. Samovar and Edwin R. McDaniel

What do you notice about each of the preceding specific purposes? Though formulated for very different topics, they share at least five characteristics.

1. The specific purpose is stated as an infinitive phrase, that is, *to explain* or *to convince*.
2. The specific purpose is for your personal use and is written from your perspective; it identifies your concrete goal and can guide your research and the direction of your speech.
3. The specific purpose focuses on a single, distinct idea.
4. The specific purpose relates your topic to your audience by specifying what you want the audience to know, think, or do as a result of your speech.
5. The specific purpose is clear and concise, not muddled or unfocused.

While a good specific purpose is ambitious rather than trivial, it does not overreach. If you're unable to develop a speech that reflects your specific purpose in the time available, then you need to narrow your specific purpose even more.

The sharper your specific purpose, the easier you will find it to develop your speech. So while formulating your specific purpose, complete this checklist:



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- Does my specific purpose reflect the assignment or speech situation?
- Will I be able to obtain my specific goal in the speaking time allotted me?
- Will I be able to prepare a speech that fulfills my specific purpose in a manner my listeners will be able to understand and respond to?
- Will my audience assess my goal to be relevant to their needs and reflective of their interests?
- Will my audience judge my purpose to be significant and worthy of their attention?

Be sure you answer each of these questions with a “yes” and with a reason before you proceed.

Activate your audience. What do you want people to *do* after hearing your speech?

6.2c Consider the Audience's Perspective

In addition to formulating a specific purpose written from your own perspective, it is also helpful to assess the speech from the audience's perspective. You might find it useful to compose a desired **behavioral objective**. Complete the sentence "After experiencing my speech, audience members will . . ." to describe the response you expect from audience members.

Sample Behavioral Objectives for Informative Speeches

After experiencing my speech, audience members will be able to

- List three symptoms of West Nile virus
- Name four effects of global warming
- Explain how U.S. trade policy will affect them



GAME PLAN

Choosing a Topic

- Am I genuinely interested in my topic?
- Am I willing to research the topic to enhance my knowledge of it?
- Will an exploration of this topic benefit my listeners?
- Is my topic suitable for this particular situation?
- Will my listeners find a discussion of my topic worthwhile, important, and interesting?
- Have I narrowed my topic sufficiently to fit the speaking time allotted me?
- Have I identified a general speech purpose appropriate to the assignment or speaking situation?
- Have I formulated a clear specific purpose?
- Have I composed a behavioral objective that identifies the specific response I desire from audience members?
- Have I phrased my thesis/central idea so that it helps me control the development of my speech?
- By making careful choices, you focus your content and communicate more clearly, concisely, and confidently. Narrowing your focus will better enable you to get your message across.

Sample Behavioral Objectives for Persuasive Speeches

After experiencing my speech, audience members will

- Contribute money to support art museums
- Register to vote
- Sign a petition advocating that the U.S. government regulate carbon emissions

Writing a behavioral objective will help you focus the content of your speech on those aspects that audience members will find most interesting or appropriate. By identifying what audience members should know, think, or do after listening to your speech, you position the audience and its behavior in the forefront of your mind.

The next task facing you is to formulate a central idea or thesis.



6.3a Thesis Statements for Informative Speeches

6.3b Thesis Statements for Persuasive Speeches

6.3c Evaluating the Thesis Statement

Formulate the Thesis Statement

Speakers are often encouraged to develop theses for their speeches, just as writers do for papers. A **thesis** is a declarative sentence that divides a topic into its major components and summarizes the main points of your speech.

6.3a Thesis Statements for Informative Speeches

When your speech is an informative one and not intended to be primarily persuasive, the thesis statement (which some practitioners prefer to call the **central idea**) is phrased in a relatively objective and neutral manner. Its focus is on what you want audience members to understand or learn—for example, “Nuclear power plants have three major parts: the reactor core, vessel, and control rods.”

6.3b Thesis Statements for Persuasive Speeches

When your speech is persuasive, the thesis is sometimes called a **claim**. It expresses an arguable opinion or point of view; for example, a thesis for a persuasive speech against the use of nuclear energy plants might be “Nuclear power plants should be decommissioned.”

Whether the speech is informative or persuasive, the thesis statement is your speech “in a nutshell.” It is a statement of the key concept of your speech that all the facts, quotations, and ideas in the speech are designed to support.

COACHING TIP

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
—Nelson Mandela

A speaker is an educator. Formulating an effective thesis provides receivers with an understanding of the speech’s major components, paving the road to learning.

6.3c Evaluating the Thesis Statement

An effective thesis statement fulfills five criteria. Use this checklist of criteria to evaluate yours:

- It is a single sentence that conveys the essence of the speech.
- It focuses the attention of audience members on what they should know, do, or feel after experiencing the speech.
- It forecasts the development or organization of the speech.
- It is phrased diplomatically, avoiding figurative language that is apt to inflame.
- It supports the specific purpose.

When listeners are asked what your speech was about, they should be able to respond by offering your thesis. Even if they remember nothing else, it is the thesis you hope they retain. To show how this works, let us examine one of the examples we used earlier and develop it into a usable thesis.

Specific purpose: To explain to my audience the signs of a stroke

Thesis: Face drooping, arm weakness, and difficulty speaking are signs of a stroke and require immediate medical attention.

From this thesis, we can say that the speaker will explore three main points in his or her speech, each point corresponding to one of the three symptoms of a stroke.

Unlike the specific purpose, the thesis is usually delivered directly to the audience. Thus, a well-phrased thesis not only helps you divide your presentation into its major components, it helps your listeners follow the speech's progression. The following are examples of effectively phrased theses:

Thesis: Universal health care would improve the lives of Americans and bolster the economy.

Thesis: Practicing yoga will enhance your personal and professional life in four key ways.

Phrasing your thesis brings you a step closer to developing the structure of the speech itself.



Exercises

TOPIC AND PURPOSE

Participating in the following activities will let you apply what you know, putting your skills into action.

1. Top Ten Topics

Create a list of ten topics you believe worthy of both your and an audience's time. For each topic on your list, develop a thesis, and explain what makes the topic meaningful and worthwhile.

2. Purposeful Purposes

Using the ten topics in Exercise 1, demonstrate how each topic can be adapted to reflect the general purpose of an informative speech as well as the general purpose of a persuasive speech.

3. Analyze This: Is It Clear?

Read the following speech on disenfranchisement given by Dan Shuey, a student at Muskingum College.⁸ Focus on how well the speaker clarified the following for receivers: (1) the general purpose, (2) the specific purpose, (3) behavioral objectives, and (4) the thesis of the speech. Phrase each of the preceding speech components in your own words. Then, using the criteria discussed in the text for each component, assess the extent to which each component fulfills its function.

SN 1 The speaker begins by supplying receivers with historical context. By ending this section with a startling thought, the speaker draws receivers into the speech.

In writing the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson openly plagiarized his hero John Locke when he categorized life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as inalienable rights. Eighty years later, the nation followed through on Jefferson's words by passing the 13th through 15th Amendments. These additions to the Constitution guaranteed full civil rights to all citizens, or at least male ones, regardless of ethnicity or condition of former servitude. Not surprisingly, several parts of the U.S. weren't keen on these laws, and for over one hundred years, communities faced opposition to the 15th Amendment—the right to vote—in the form of poll taxes, literacy tests, and other Jim Crow laws designed to keep blacks from the ballot box. Luckily, Congress has taken action and today has ensured all adult Americans are unconditionally guaranteed the right to vote. Or so we thought . . .

According to the *San Francisco Chronicle* . . . 4.65 million Americans are stripped of their “inalienable” right because of laws depriving current and former prisoners of the vote. These 4.65 million tax-paying, full American citizens—1.4 million of whom are African American, are disenfranchised as a result of laws, which, you’ll soon learn, have an explicitly racist past. Today, we’ll examine the problems that arise from laws that restrict a full 13 percent of all African American males from voting, how these laws came to be and why they’re still in effect in many states, and what you and I can do to ensure that our elections are open to all adults—regardless of past convictions.

If you need a more direct reason to consider my proposition, consider this: in Florida alone, 750,000 citizens are deprived of the right to vote. That’s over one thousand times the state’s declared margin for President George W. Bush in the 2000 election.

Forty-eight states don’t permit incarcerated felons to vote, 33 restrict voting for a time period after release, and seven permanently disenfranchise those convicted of a felony. The problems that arise from these laws affect us first, because the laws simply aren’t just on a moral basis, and second, because they have a significant influence on our elections. According to the *New York Times*, the bulk of states that disenfranchise black voters are former members of the Confederacy, including Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia. It’s estimated that in Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, 25 percent or more of all black men are permanently barred from voting because of past felony convictions. Nationwide, one of every eight black men is forbidden from voting by law. . . .

 **SN 2** The speaker uses statistics to demonstrate the magnitude of the disenfranchisement problem.

 **SN 3** The speaker previews the main points of his speech.

 **SN 4** The speaker introduces the first main point and uses a variety of support to build credibility for his position on disenfranchisement.

continued

SN 5 The speaker once again uses statistical support to reinforce the problematic nature of the situation.

SN 6 The next main point of the speech finds the speaker using an array of supporting materials, including testimony and statistics to review the history of disenfranchisement.

continued

According to the . . . *San Francisco Chronicle*, in Florida alone, one of every three black men is disenfranchised. The article goes on to explain that if even a small number of these disenfranchised voters voted, and then voted 60 percent to 40 percent in favor of Al Gore . . . we should have a different President of the United States. And the . . . *New Orleans Times-Picayune* states that minorities as a whole actually turn out to vote at a higher percentage than whites. Furthermore, it's been calculated that four Senate seats won by Republicans . . . would have been won by Democrats if former convicts had not been disenfranchised. These four seats would have given the Democrats a majority in the Senate . . . possibly changing the face of U.S. policy entirely. . . .

The history of felon disenfranchisement laws is a frightening one to confront. Our nation does not have a strong history of civil rights and clearly there's a long way to go. Most felon disenfranchisement laws were enacted in the post-Civil War period with the unveiled motive of discriminating against the newly freed slaves. According to . . . the *San Diego Tribune* and verified in the 1977 Richard Kluger book, *Simple Justice*, a delegate to the Virginia convention in 1906, which helped establish disenfranchisement laws, said, and this is a direct quote, "This plan will eliminate the darkey as a political factor in this state in less than five years." Meanwhile, in Alabama, lawmakers inserted a provision into the state constitution banning those convicted of "moral turpitude" from ever voting. In the South, that was defined as a black man who directly spoke to white women. The Alabama legislature declared that its goal was to establish and preserve white supremacy. Sadly, the plan to push blacks out of the polling place worked. *The Union-Tribune* found that by 1903, disenfranchisement laws in Alabama had excluded nearly 10 times as many blacks as whites from voting.

So why haven't these clearly racist laws been repealed? Blame politicians wary of being considered soft on crime. According to the . . . *New York Times*, in Alabama, the state legislature passed a law which would have ended the disenfranchisement of ex-felons in their state because it was a racially discriminating law. However, Governor Bob Riley vetoed the bill, calling it "unnecessary." The previously cited *San Francisco Chronicle* article explains that Republicans have little to gain from giving felons the vote and Democrats are fearful of being associated with them. . . .

The solutions to the problems caused by felon disenfranchisement lie not in changing American attitudes. . . . Already 80 percent of American citizens support restoring voting rights to convicts after they've carried out their sentence. So it's time for those of us who do support it to make our voices heard in Washington. A policy is already on the table—we just need to tell Congress we want it passed. . . . However, this bill was not even let out of subcommittee. It was reintroduced . . . and once again was struck down in subcommittee before being heard before the entire House.

The full House needs to hear this bill. Most U.S. states have a House member on the committee for the Judiciary. Assignments can be viewed at www.house.gov. As the Reverend Jesse Jackson said . . . "It is time for people of conscience to come together to remove this modern version of Jim Crow discrimination." Furthermore, we can get involved in a national campaign to change these laws in our own states and make some money by joining the Sentencing Project. This registered nonprofit organization offers monetary stipends to students willing to research felon disenfranchisement laws. . . .

Today, we looked at the inherent problems in a democratic system that disenfranchises felons. We analyzed the reasons these racially unequal laws exist, and we realized ways that each of us can act in order to allow all American citizens that right to vote. We are guaranteed life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It's time we extend this guarantee to every American.

 **SN 7** The speaker asks and answers a rhetorical question.

 **SN 8** The speaker introduces his solution to the problem raised in the speech using specific examples to underscore why action is necessary.

 **SN 9** The speaker explains what receivers can do to become involved in solving the problem.

 **SN 10** The speaker summarizes the speech. By referring to the introduction in the concluding lines, the speaker achieves closure.

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Understanding and sharing the steps you take when moving from a general topic to a specific purpose to behavioral objectives and finally to a thesis can help others. In a presentation not to exceed two minutes, provide an example for your peers that illustrates your progression of thought as you move from a broad subject to a much more specific and focused thesis or central idea.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Choose a topic appropriate for you, your audience, and the occasion.** A good topic is one that is appropriate for the speaker, the audience, and the occasion. Speakers use a variety of idea-generation exercises to help examine their personal behaviors and interests, they scan the media, and they survey reference books and indexes.
2. **Develop an effective general purpose statement.** The general purpose statement describes the overall effect a speaker hopes to have on an audience.
3. **Develop an effective specific purpose statement.** The specific purpose statement is the speaker's personal statement of the speech's main objective. It describes what the speaker wants the audience to know, think, or do as a result of the speech.
4. **Formulate a behavioral objective for audience members.** A behavioral objective is a specific outcome, an observable, measurable audience response that begins with seven words—"After experiencing my speech, audience members will"—and then describes the response the speaker expects from audience members.
5. **Create an effective thesis.** A thesis divides a speech into its major components and makes a clear point about the topic. A declarative sentence, it summarizes the speech's main points.
6. **Evaluate the effectiveness of your general and specific purpose statements as well as your thesis.** Speakers must answer "yes" to ten key questions to determine whether they can move forward with the speech; otherwise, they have more thinking and refining ahead of them.

KEY TERMS

Behavioral objective 105

Claim 106

Thesis 106

Brainstorming 96

General purpose 102

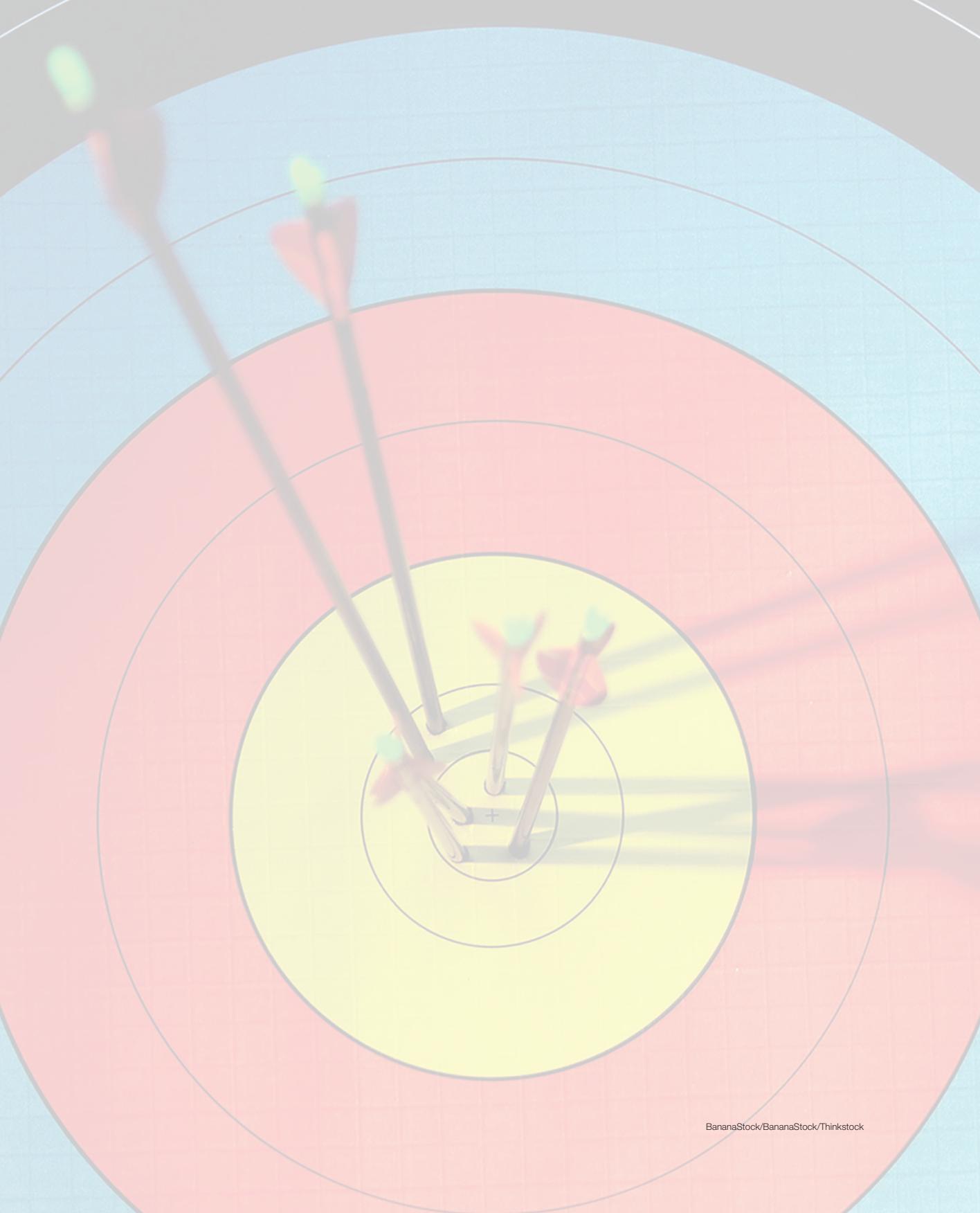
Central idea 106

Specific purpose 103



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7

Finding and Evaluating Research

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Draw research from your personal knowledge and experience
2. Plan and conduct an interview with a person who possesses special knowledge related to your topic
3. Do library-based research
4. Demonstrate the value of researching online
5. Take good research notes
6. Evaluate potential sources of information critically

Contents

What distinguishes an effective from an ineffective speech? An effective speech integrates an array of relevant research in support of the speechmaker's thesis. Good speakers discover, evaluate, and cite research to document their speech's content and build credibility. Research adds substance, believability, and impact.

Consider the self-talk you engage in when listening to a speech. If you are a conscientious receiver, you listen critically and look for concrete support for the speech's thesis.

Now, how do you gather research? If you want to try a new restaurant, you might ask your friends for recommendations, peruse a restaurant guide such as *Zagat* or *Yelp*, or review various restaurant home pages on the Internet.

What does this have to do with public speaking? The research we do when preparing to speak in public is very much like the personal research we conduct daily. However, because a speech is shared with others in a more formal setting, we use more formal approaches when gathering materials for it. Researching a speech is a kind of investigation, and it is your job to take nothing for granted in investigating your topic.

COACHING TIP

"Every fact depends for its value on how much we already know."

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Your speech is only as strong as the research and personal experiences upon which it is based. If you want audience members to accept what you say, then you have to impress them with how much you know.

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7.1a Use Personal Knowledge and Experience

7.1b Interview Others Who Have Specialized Knowledge

Use Primary Research

Public speaking students frequently overlook **primary research**. Primary research is original research involving the collecting of firsthand data, including using your knowledge and experiences, conducting surveys, and interviewing credible sources.

7.1a Use Personal Knowledge and Experience

By the time you enroll in this class, you probably have some job experience to your credit, and you have certainly been in school studying a wide variety of subjects for many years. In your lifetime, you have probably read a vast number of newspaper and magazine articles, watched countless hours of television, written papers, and talked with an array of individuals—many who are more knowledgeable than you. Just going about the business of living provides you with many experiences from which to draw raw material for a speech. Yet many college students often discount the value of their own lives when they begin to research a topic.

Once we write down our experiences, they serve as a form of personal research and enhance our credibility. This is not to suggest that you can't speak about a topic unless you have lived it. By researching the subject, you can talk about poverty without actually having been impoverished. However, if you have experience with a topic that is important to you, that experience—when supplemented with additional outside research—will greatly increase your credibility with your audience. Thus, you can capitalize on your own experience to provide effective explanations, examples, or definitions.

For instance, one student, a survivor of Hodgkin disease, explained to his class how he coped with the impact of the illness. He described first discovering that he had Hodgkin's, its symptoms, his treatment, and survival rates. He buttressed his message by revealing his personal fears in depth. The speaker's simple words conveyed his message more meaningfully and eloquently than if he had quoted another source. Even if your experiences are not as dramatic or as emotionally powerful as surviving cancer, you can still use them to your advantage. Think over your life and consider how you could integrate one or more experiences into a speech to add a sense of freshness and authenticity to your message.

7.1b Interview Others Who Have Specialized Knowledge

Although personal experience is often a starting point for speech research, rarely will it be sufficient, if only because few—if any—student speakers have enough material from their own lives on which to base an entire speech. Thus, you must consult other sources, too.

Interviewing those with special knowledge is a key means of acquiring both information about and insight into a topic. One possibility is to talk to individuals who others will find credible because they possess special knowledge or are experts on the subject. For example, if your goal is to speak about the dangers of nuclear power plants, a call or email to a nuclear physicist at the Nuclear Regulatory Agency in Washington, D.C., could bring you up to date on the issues you plan to discuss in your speech.¹

Conducting interviews with specialists will not eliminate your need to conduct other research, such as examining newspaper and magazine articles or reading relevant books on the subject. But questioning experts can help you structure your research and provide you with ideas and information to bring your speech alive. However, you must begin by doing some preliminary research that will enable you to formulate the particular questions for which you need an expert's answers.

Prepare for the Interview

The first task is to determine why you are interviewing someone. What qualifies the individual as an expert? For example, one student decided to talk about controversial road construction near his campus that would likely disrupt access to the college and its nearby business district. He began his research by reading news reports on the topic and discovered one particular shopkeeper had surfaced as the voice of opposition to the project and was often quoted in local articles. A phone call produced specific insights about the building project that the student was able to use in his speech. Because he wanted to be sure to inform his audience about multiple perspectives, the student also interviewed a government official as well as an engineer familiar with the project, and incorporated the results of those interviews into his speech.

To set up an interview, all you need to do is pick up the phone and ask permission. You might use the following template:

Hello, (Mr., Ms., Dr., Professor) _____. My name is _____, from _____ College/University. I am researching a presentation for my public speaking class on the subject of _____. I understand that you are well versed in this field and I wondered whether it would be possible for us to talk about it now or in the near future.

If you fail to reach the person you want to interview by phone and time allows, you could send a letter or email to the desired source. You might begin such a letter like this:

Dear (Mr., Ms., Dr., Professor) _____:

I am a student at _____ and am currently working on a speech on the topic of _____.

It is my understanding that you are an expert in this field, and I was wondering whether it would be possible for us to get together either in person or over the phone to discuss it.

I would only need a few minutes of your time to answer some basic questions about _____. My peers would really enjoy hearing your views.

Please contact me at _____, so we can work out the details of such a meeting. Thank you for your help. I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Before you make a phone call or conduct an interview, be certain that you have a series of questions to ask your interviewee that display a sense of purpose, direction, and familiarity with the subject. Here are sample questions you might use if you were interviewing a source from the American Polygraph Association about the use of lie detectors.

Preliminary Questions for the American Polygraph Association Representative

1. What is the scientific basis of the polygraph?
2. How do people train to administer lie detector tests?
3. How and when was the test developed?
4. How many tests are administered each year?
5. What are polygraph tests used for?
6. Is it possible to cheat on a polygraph test? How?
7. How does an administrator prepare to give a polygraph test?
8. How should a person prepare to take a polygraph test?
9. What ethical guidelines do polygraph administrators follow?
10. Why did you decide to become a polygraph administrator?

Whenever you conduct an interview, preserve its results. Take detailed notes or, if the interviewee grants you permission, record your conversation. You might use the following template for documenting that you have the interviewee's permission to record the interview:

This is _____, and today's date is _____. I am with _____, who has consented to this interview being recorded. Is that correct _____ [insert interviewee's name]?

If the interviewee answers “Yes,” then you can proceed with the interview, safe in the knowledge that not only your interview, but also the permission to record will be captured on tape.

Let’s say you plan to speak on an issue that especially concerns you—perhaps terrorism. Though some people are unlikely to consent to an interview, for the purposes of this exercise, assume that you can reach any public figure. Identify the desired interviewee and his or her position, and explain why you consider him or her an expert on your chosen issue. Then compile a list of at least ten specific questions you would like to ask the expert either in person, via email, or by phone.

Conduct the Interview

You now have an interviewee lined up and have prepared your questions. How do you proceed?

First, arrive on time. It is better to find yourself waiting for the interviewee and using the extra time to strategize than it is to make the interviewee wait for you.

Second, explain your reasons for the interview right away. *You* know why it was important to interview the subject, but your interviewee may not be sure why you’re there. If you need to set up a recorder, you can use that time to establish some common ground with the interviewee and give him or her a few extra seconds to focus on your topic.

Once you begin, the person you are interviewing may take your discussion into other areas. If the tangents are adding material to the interview that is relevant to your objectives, by all means let the interviewee pursue the area. If the detour is irrelevant, gently guide the interviewee back by returning to your prepared list of questions.

During the interview, ask questions designed to elicit needed information. Don’t waste time asking questions you can get answered elsewhere. Ask open questions that require more than one-word answers. Follow up with **probing questions** that seek more information, such as “Why did you make that decision?”



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Investigative journalism. Interviewing someone knowledgeable on your topic is a great way to conduct research.

Also remember to give the interviewee feedback. For example, you may want to say, “So, what you are saying is . . .” or “What I hear you telling me is . . .” Asking mirroring questions—such as “You said attitude is more important than aptitude?”—encourages discussion while also verifying the interviewee’s meaning. An even more effective approach is to combine a mirroring response with a probing question: “So you are suggesting that emotional intelligence is as important as IQ. Are you implying that schools should be teaching this as well?”

Techniques like these help ensure that you have accurately processed and understood the information that the interviewee is giving you, and also show the interviewee that you really care about what he or she is sharing.

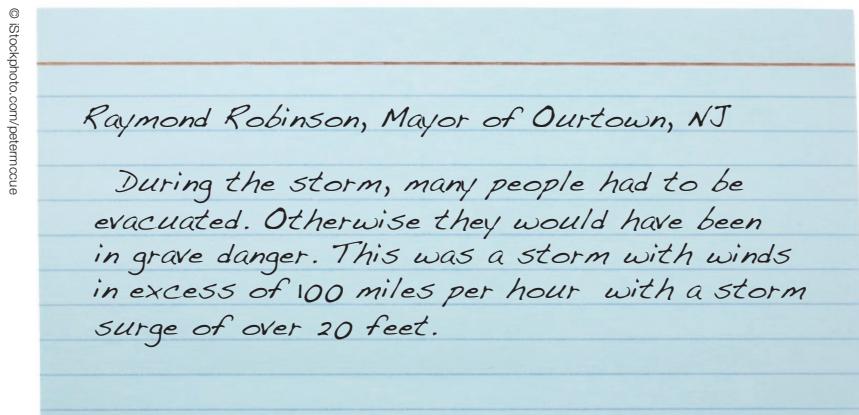
Conduct a Post-Interview Review

You should review your notes or recording immediately after the interview to clarify what you’ve written and so that you do not misquote your expert. Concentrate on isolating the main points from the conversation. Be alert for specific examples and information that you can incorporate into your presentation.

Compile a list of key ideas covered during the interview. Having such a list will make it easier to determine which pieces of information are relevant to your speech and which can be discarded. Transcribe or rewrite your notes, focusing on the most relevant material. You may want to write each piece of information on an individual index card so it will be easier to organize your presentation. For example, you might record information resulting from an interview about damage caused by a recent hurricane as shown in Figure 7.1.

FIGURE 7.1

Note Card Derived From an Interview



Gather Secondary Research

section
7.2

Secondary research includes published statistics, texts and articles by experts, and media and personal documents. As a repository for a wide variety of such research materials, the library is your ally. If you are familiar with your college's library this section will simply be a quick review. If your library is still a mystery (perhaps because you do your research online), this is your opportunity to get to know it better. Even with the ease of researching online, the library has resources such as librarians, reference works, and the catalog that you may want to consult.

7.2a Library Resources

The library is a prime source for research materials. You can visit it in person (which we advise) and access it from afar. You'll want to consult its research librarians, catalog, reference works, and databases.

The Catalog

Using the library's online catalog, you can find resources even if you do not know a specific author or title. All you need to do is enter two or three key words into the computer, and it will search the library's collection for you to find relevant material. A librarian can guide you in searching your school's catalog most effectively.

COACHING TIP

"We live for self-expression and the opportunity to share what we believe is important."

—Garr Reynolds

You have a speech in you. You think it's important and want receivers to think so too. For this to happen, you need to give the audience good information. Choose wisely! If your audience remembers only one piece of research, what do you want that to be?

7.2a Library Resources

7.2b Online Sources

7.2c Websites

7.2d Blogs

7.2e Wikis

Reference Collections and Other Resources

The catalog is only one stop along your investigatory road. Visit the reference section of the library, where you will find encyclopedias, yearbooks, dictionaries, biographical aids, atlases, and an array of indexes.

- The *Statistical Abstract of the United States* is a U.S. Census Bureau-produced reference that includes an incredible array of facts about U.S. birth rates, death rates, family income, employment data, and hundreds of other topics.
- *The World Almanac and Book of Facts* lists award recipients, sports record holders, natural resources in various countries, and much more.
- *Facts on File* collects news articles on major topics like science, sports, medicine, crime, economics, and the arts in weekly issues bound in a yearbook every 12 months.
- Monthly magazine *Current Biography* provides complete articles about newsworthy people from around the world.
- *Who's Who* references, including *Who's Who in America* and a number of volumes for specific fields, including business, science, math, and engineering, are valuable biographical resources.
- The *Biography Index* collects biographical information from magazines and newspapers.
- Subject-specific dictionaries—*Black's Law Dictionary*, for example—can help you define technical terms or jargon.
- The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides detailed history of a specific word.
- *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* contains more than 20,000 quotations.
- *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary* is a gazetteer that gives facts about nearly 50,000 locations around the world.
- *The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* is a general index of periodicals (also available online at <http://www.ebscohost.com/academic/readers-guide-to-periodical-literature>). Articles that appeared in more than 450 major magazines are cited by author, title, and subject. Each listing gives you all the information you need to locate a particular issue.
- Major U.S. newspapers are indexed, with back issues available on microfilm and online. (Most local newspapers in the United States are not indexed. If you see an article in a local paper that would be appropriate for your speech, clip it out and save it.)

AP Photo/Phil Sears



Ask an expert. Focus your interview questions on gaining new insights into your speech topic.

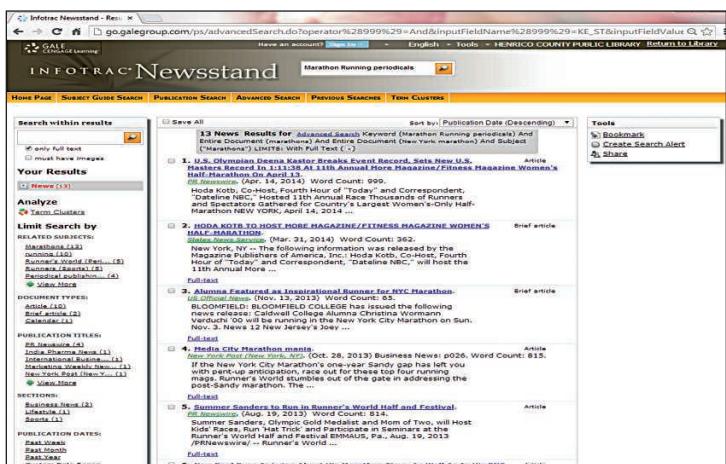
7.2b Online Sources

We have already seen that a variety of sources are available for you to research online. For example, most college libraries pay to subscribe to the *Encyclopedia of Associations* through GALENet, LexisNexis, or another online directory resource. All the major associations listed within it—the National Rifle Association, the American Civil Liberties Union, the Children's Defense Fund, and many more—have their own websites that are full of helpful information.

Other online resources include

- The *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications* searches current and historical federal publications (<http://catalog.gpo.gov/>).
- The *Consumer Information Catalog* lists free and low-cost publications available from various federal agencies on a wide range of topics (<http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov/>).
- The site <http://fedstats.sites.usa.gov> pulls together statistical information from 14 federal agencies.
- *The World Factbook*, published by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), contains maps and detailed information on every country, dependency, and geographic entity in the world (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>).
- *Infotrac* covers general publications and government documents (see Figure 7.2).
- Business Index ASAP provides bibliographic references, abstracts, and full articles from more than 800 business, management, and trade organizations.
- Various search engines, such as Google, also function as online databases (see Figure 7.3).

FIGURE 7.2
Infotrac



A variety of sophisticated databases containing journal articles written by scholars on virtually any subject are available for you to consult via computer.

- ERIC (<http://www.eric.ed.gov/>)
- ASI (https://library.truman.edu/microforms/american_statistics_index.asp)
- Academic Search Premier (www.ebscohost.com)
- LexisNexis (www.lexisnexis.com/)
- Infotrac (www.infotrac.net)
- JSTOR (www.jstor.org)
- GoogleScholar (scholar.google.com)

When consulting some academic databases, you may want to seek help from a research librarian. Because some of these resources require the payment of a fee, if your library does not subscribe, be certain of the specific information you need before using them.

In many ways the Internet now functions as a well-equipped international library of information resources. Among the most effective search engines are Google (www.google.com), Bing (www.bing.com), and Yahoo! (www.yahoo.com). Video search engines also are becoming commonplace. Search online for relevant videos on YouTube, Google, Blinkx, and Bing Videos.

7.2c Websites

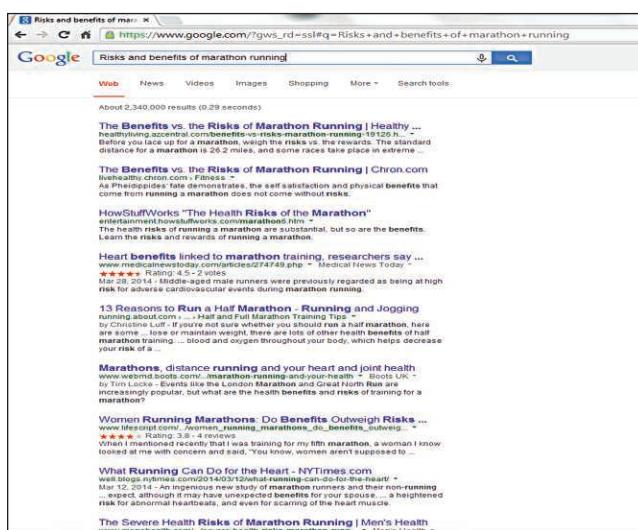
Websites can provide relevant information for a speech. Again, be sure to evaluate each site's objectivity together with the credentials of its author(s) and its sponsor(s). Websites maintained by faculty, think tank members, or nonprofit and governmental organizations tend to be more valid sources of information than many commercial websites designed for promotional purposes. Some websites present one-sided perspectives, rather than multisided consideration of issues, so you'll need to balance the information provided.

7.2d Blogs

When blogs engage qualified academics or other professionals in conversation, they can be enlightening. There is a difference, however, between such postings and those offered by random members of the public, who may not be as well informed about the subject. Therefore, unless you can determine the expertise of the blogger and responders, it is better to view them skeptically. Another reason to be wary is that blogs often represent the point of view of the blogger

and may be biased. So pay careful attention to the evidence put forth and make an effort to assess its accuracy.

FIGURE 7.3
Google Search Results



7.2e Wikis

A **wiki** is a website whose content is composed and edited by members of the public. Useful in introducing a subject and potential sources, wikis' use should be limited because anyone can post and edit material, the expertise of the person posting is not necessarily considered, and thus the information provided is sometimes inaccurate or outdated.

Thus, other than as a starting point, do not rely on wikis such as Wikipedia for information. In fact, citing Wikipedia as a source may damage your credibility. It is important to take the time to locate more reliable source material.

Think Critically About Research

When assessing the credibility of information, determine whether the sources you consulted are qualified and unbiased. Specifying the names, positions, and affiliations of your sources enhances credibility. Referring to a source generally, such as “Researchers have found . . .,” tends to detract from credibility.² Verifying and thinking critically about the quality of the information, whether you find it in traditional print research sources or online, is a serious responsibility.

7.3a Assess Traditional Research Sources

Sources that have an economic self-interest in the subject are less credible than sources that have nothing to gain. For example, a little over a decade ago, a study in the American Heart Association journal *Circulation* precipitated a call for the lowering of cholesterol limits. The government panel issuing the new recommendations failed to disclose its members’ links to pharmaceutical companies, many of which manufactured cholesterol-lowering drugs. This omission called the impartiality of the research and the validity of the conclusion into question.³

7.3b Evaluate Online Sources

Although the information contained in traditional research sources, including books, magazines, and journal articles, is typically reviewed and checked by several people before being published, virtually anyone can post information on a website or through social media. As you decide what to include in your speech from your Web search, ask yourself the following questions about information you find on websites and on social media:

- Who is the site’s sponsor? Was it found through a search engine or a library database? (Generally, library databases direct you to more reliable and higher-quality information.)
- To what sites, if any, is the site linked?
- What is the connection between the site and the links? Are the links from reputable sites?
- What clues does the Internet address of the site provide? Is it, for example, an advocacy organization (.org), a business (.com), the government (.gov), a network or Internet service provider (.net), an educational institution (.edu), or someone’s personal site? The origination of the site offers clues to its mission or function.
- Who wrote the material that appears on the site?
- Is the author a qualified and reliable source?
- How recent is the webpage?
- How often is information on it updated?
- Why is the site on the Web?
- Is its primary purpose to provide information or to sell a product or idea?



Assess reliability. Even sources you find traditionally, such as in a library, should be checked for their objectiveness and credibility.

By attempting to determine whether the source or site sponsor has any apparent or hidden bias, whether claims made are justifiable, and whether postings are specific or general and up-to-date, you demonstrate your commitment not to trust information simply because it is published on the Internet. Always seek confirming sources for what you discover.



GAME PLAN

Reviewing Your Research

- I have explored and included information from a variety of sources, including my own personal experience, library resources, as well as online resources such as websites.
- I have kept a clear record of research notes with roughly enough sources to fit the “rule of one to three.”
- I have reviewed my sources with a critical eye to make sure they are independent and reliable.
- I have incorporated my sources into my speech to acknowledge the words and work of others.
- I have compiled a list of works cited as well as a list of works consulted to show that I did not misuse or plagiarize the work of others.

Keep a Research Record

section
7.4

As you work your way through your research materials, you'll find yourself adjusting and editing the information that you actually plan to present to your audience. Keep your mind open: New and exciting roads for inquiry will surface only if you are willing to explore them. If your explorations are to be meaningful, you will need to record the information you hope to use.

7.4a Take Good Notes

Many researchers use a notebook to keep track of information, allocating a new page for every source they use; this makes it easier for you to organize and document your work when it is time to construct your speech. Others use 4-by-6-inch index cards, which allow you literally to shuffle the cards into the order in which you will use the information in your presentation. Try this approach:

- Use a unique card for each article you reference.
- Record the title, author, and subject on the top of each card.
- Record one piece of information per card.

For examples of what note cards look like, see Figure 7.4. Notice how each card contains either a direct quotation from the material or paraphrased information. Using a computer to take notes allows you to move information around wherever you need it or want to use it in the speech itself. You will want to treat each page of your document as you would a note card.



Write it down. Take careful notes as you conduct your research.

FIGURE 7.4

Sample Bibliography Cards

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Joe Peta, Trading Bases: A Story About Wall Street, Gambling and Baseball. New York: Dutton, 2013.

Direct Quotation:

From Peta, Trading Bases: A Story About Wall Street, Gambling and Baseball, p. 203.

"Baseball researchers get ridiculed by traditionalists for the alphabet soup of newfangled statistics they create. WAR, VORP are harder to grasp than basic counting statistics like RBIs and wins but that's because they measure skills and evaluate talent more accurately."

Paraphrase Card:

From Peta, Trading Bases: A Story About Wall Street, Gambling and Baseball, p. 203.

Author Joe Peta points out that baseball researchers are ridiculed for the statistics they create. Runs batted in and wins are easier to count, but modern researchers who use Wins Above Replacement or WAR for short to determine how many wins would change if a particular player was changed, together with a calculation that demonstrates how much a hitter contributes offensively to the team also known as VORP or the player's Value Over a Replacement Player, are able to measure a player's skills more accurately.

7.4b Cite Source Materials Carefully

As you take notes, be sure to give each source correct attribution to avoid plagiarism. Giving sources the credit due them not only protects you but also increases your credibility. Let your research show. Do not ever cover it up or try to claim someone else's ideas as your own.

Audiences do not expect you to have developed all the ideas contained in your speech. During the presentation, you will need to provide oral citations that reveal the sources of your information to the audience. Such citations are not difficult to include as long as you have done your research and recorded your information carefully. What do you say in an oral citation? Here are some samples.

If you are citing a speech or article, you might say,

"Back in a January 2016 speech on the future of the United States, president Barack Obama, told a joint session of Congress . . . "

If you are using a direct quotation, state the name of the author and the source:

"In his 2006 paper, 'The Importance of Accurate, Reliable and Timely Data,' Australian economist Saul Eslake writes . . . "

If you are paraphrasing a book or article, you might tell your audience,

"Howard Gardner, author of the best-seller Changing Minds, feels that most of us change our minds gradually. The notion that mind change happens suddenly is wrong."

Use a specificity progression in your oral citation of a source. The first time you cite a particular source, you want to be fairly specific. For example, in a speech on veteran suicides, one speaker told his audience, "As Melanie Haiken notes in her article for the February 2013 issue of *Forbes* magazine, 22 veterans are committing suicide every day." The student's second reference to the Haiken article was briefer, with him saying, "In her article for *Forbes*, Haiken also reveals that the number of veterans committing suicide has actually dropped from 1999 statistics." The speaker's third reference to Haiken's article contains even less source specificity, with the speaker stating, "Haiken points out that the VA Call Center has effected some 25,000 rescues since the inception of the veteran suicide intervention program."

As you build your speech, you bring experts onto your team in order to gain credibility and give your message the maximum impact. A Works Cited page lists the sources you mentioned during your speech. A list of all the sources you referenced when conducting your research is known as a Works Consulted page. Your instructor will probably ask you to turn in your Works Consulted when you submit the formal outline of your speech. When preparing either one, be sure to use a consistent referencing style. The MLA (Modern Language Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) formats are the most popular.⁴ (See Figures 7.5 through 7.8 for information on using these formats.) When using either format, arrange the list alphabetically—either by the last name of the author, by the title if no author is mentioned, or by the last name of the person interviewed. For examples, see the Works Consulted sections of the sample

speech outlines included in the chapters on informative (Chapter 18) and persuasive speaking (Chapter 19).

FIGURE 7.5
What to Include When Citing a Work

- Name of author(s) or editor(s)
- Title of the source
- Title of specific article
- Publisher or website sponsor
- Date of publication
- Date of retrieval of electronic source(s)
- Web address (URL)
- The issue or volume of the journal
- The name of the database used
- Page numbers

FIGURE 7.6
Quick Guide to Citations

QUICK GUIDE	APA	MLA
Book	Last name, A. A., & Last name, B. B. (date). <i>Title of book</i> . City: Publisher.	Last name, First name and First name Last name. <i>Title of Book</i> . City: Publisher, date.
Journal	Last name, A. A. (date). "Title of article." <i>Journal Name</i> , volume, page numbers.	Last name, First name. "Title of Article." <i>Journal Name</i> , volume (date): page numbers.
Magazine	Last name, A. A. (date). "Title of Article." <i>Magazine name</i> , volume, page numbers.	Last name, First name. "Title of Article." <i>Magazine name</i> , date: page numbers.
Newspaper	Last name, A. A. (date). "Title of Article." <i>Newspaper name</i> , page numbers.	Last name, First name. "Title of Article." <i>Newspaper name</i> , date: page numbers.
Internet	Organization. (date). Title. Retrieved from <address>. Date.	Document Title Site. Date. Organization Publishing site. Retrieval date. <address>
Email	Email is not included in APA.	Last name, First name. Personal email. Date.
Interview	Interviews are not included in APA.	Last name, First name. Personal telephone interview. Date.

Aim for Source Variety

How many sources do you really need? Of course, the topic and the available material will be a major part of that answer. However, if you are looking for a guideline, keep the *rule of one to three* in mind. This says that you should aim for three sources (“the rule of three”) for every minute of the presentation. So if

you need to prepare a 5-minute speech, you would start with a goal of 15 sources. As you work, however, you will quickly find that many of these sources are not appropriate to the presentation, and you can then refine the materials to the “rule of one.” That is, you should aim to refer to at least one source for every minute of your presentation.

FIGURE 7.7

Guide for APA Style Citations

Book—One Author

Family name, Initial. Initial. (date). *Title of book*. City: Publisher.

King, S. E. (2013). *Doctor sleep*. New York: Scribner.

Book—Two Authors

Family name, Initial. Initial., & Family name, Initial Initial. (date). Title. City: Publisher.

Jason, F., & Hanson, D. H. (2013). *Remote: Office not required*. New York: Crown Publishers.

Journal Article

Family name, Initial. Initial. (date). Title. *Journal Title*, volume number, page numbers.

Alibali, M. W., Phillips, K. O., & Fischer, A. D. (2009). Learning new problem-solving strategies leads to changes in problem representation. *Cognitive Development*, 24, 89–101.

Magazine

Family name, Initial. Initial. (year, month, week or day). Title of article. *Magazine Name*, page numbers.

Seabrook, J. (2013, October 14). The doctor is in: A technique for producing number one songs. *The New Yorker*, 44–56.

Newspaper

Family name, Initial. Initial. (year, month, day). Title of article. *Newspaper Name*, page numbers.

Berkman, S. (2013, October 19). Bronx renaissance. *The New York Times*, p. D1.

Internet

Organization publishing website. (date). Document title. Retrieved date, from address.

National Football League. (2013). *Football 101: Offense*. Retrieved October 1, 2013, from <http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap>.

Email

Email messages are categorized as personal information in the APA and are not included in a reference list. You can refer to them in your speech.

Interview

The interview is categorized as personal information in the APA system and is not included in a reference list. You can refer to interviews during your speech.

Don't become too hung up on these rules. They are merely guidelines. If you've selected 80 sources for your 5-minute presentation, you probably have far more information than you could use. If, however, you could find only one source of information for your speech, the rule of one to three tells you that you have far too little material, and that you

may need to consider broadening your topic. For example, if you want to talk about homelessness in your hometown and you find only one newspaper article, you need to widen the scope of your work, perhaps to include the surrounding country or even your state.

FIGURE 7.8

Guide for MLA Style Citations

Book—One Author

Family name, First name. *Title of the Book*. City: Publisher, date.

Hosseini, Khaled. *The Kite Runner*. New York: Penguin Books, 2004.

Book—Two Authors

Family name, First name and First name, Last name. *Title of the Book*. City: Publisher, date.

Mahzarin, R. Banaji and Anthony G. Greenwald. *Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People*. New York: Random House, 2013.

Journal

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Journal Name*, date: page numbers.

Olson, Kathryn. "An Epidctic Dimension of Symbolic Violence in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, November, 2013: 448–480.

Magazine

Last name, First name. "Title of Article." *Magazine Name*. Date: page numbers.

Wallace-Wells, Benjamin. "The Truly Paranoid Style in American Politics." *New York Magazine*. 25 November 2013: 31–43. Print.

Newspaper

Family name, First name. "Title of Article." *Newspaper Name*, date: page number. Print.

Eisenberg, Ann. "When Algorithms Grow Accustomed to your Face." *The New York Times*. 1 December 2013: B3. Print.

Internet

Organization website. (date). *Article Title*. Retrieved date, from Web address.

International Association of Skateboard Companies. (2013). *Just One Board*. Retrieved December 1, 2013 from <http://thelasc.org>.

Email

Family name, First name. "Subject Line." Email to Family name. Date.

Robinson, James. "My Attempts at Rope Climbing." Email to Johnson, Judy. 3 August 2013.

Interview

Family name, First name. Personal telephone interview. Date.

Guiliano, Edward. Telephone interview. 10 April 2012.

Exercises



RESEARCH

Becoming an adept researcher is a serious responsibility. Let's look at other research-based activities to get you in quality researcher shape.

1. Use a Checklist

Select a topic of interest to you. Go to the library and online and locate as much information as possible on your topic. Classify the material you find using categories such as scholarly, professional, or popular. Also decide whom you might interview on the subject and the extent to which you personally can contribute.

Use the following checklist to guide your search:

- The library's catalog
- Periodical indexes
- Newspaper indexes
- Research room
 - General encyclopedias
 - Specialized encyclopedias
 - Yearbooks
 - Biographical references
 - Dictionaries
- Quotation books
- Atlases and gazetteers
- Computerized sources and databases
 - Email and Listservs
 - Websites
 - Blogs
- Potential interviewees identified
- Any other research

2. Analyze Research Cited

In the following speech on dry cleaning, student Suzi Kim draws on personal experience, interviews, webpages, and published articles on the use of the chemical *perc* in dry cleaning. After reading the accompanying excerpt from her speech, and considering the sidenotes that accompany it, answer these questions:

1. Do you think the speaker interviewed the best people? Why or why not?
2. How many different sources and forms of support did the speaker use? Were they equally effective? Explain.
3. How do you feel about the speaker's use of webpages as sources? How else might she have used the Internet?
4. What additional kinds of research materials, if any, might the speaker have benefited from using?
5. Did any speechmaking errors impede the speaker's effectiveness? If yes, identify and explain them.
6. Based on this excerpted speech, to what degree do you believe the speaker realized her speaking goal?

DRY CLEANING

SN 1 The speaker uses the introduction to introduce the topic, exposing misconceptions about its nature. The speaker's interjection of the word "well" could become a distraction if continued throughout the speech.

In the early 1700s a mistake molded into what many believed to have been magic. After turpentine was accidentally spilled on a dirty tablecloth, well, the cloth was then perfectly clean. Soon after, this amazing discovery was seen as a scientific means of removing dirt from fabrics. Well, today we call this process dry cleaning. Actually, the term "dry cleaning" is a misnomer. The process merely does not use water. The clothes themselves are soaked in a toxic solvent called perchloroethylene, otherwise known as perc, which substitutes for turpentine. Perc has revolutionized the dry cleaning industry affecting our health in the process.

SN 2 The speaker clearly defines the subject of her speech, perc, using a local newspaper as a source.

According to the Galveston/Houston Association for Smog Prevention home page, last updated on January 28th, perc is a chemical that is listed under the Clean Air Act as a hazardous waste. Yet today more than 80 percent of U.S. dry cleaners rely on this toxic solvent. In the past, clothes made of such fine fabrics were worn until they became so filthy they needed to be thrown away. Well, clothes continue to be a luxury, and in a world that demands such fine fabrics to fulfill so many needs, we can no longer afford to throw away our lives or our health with perc.

SN 3 The speaker previews the speech's content.

Therefore, to best combat the threat of perc we must first understand the negative ramifications of dry cleaning that affect our health, then reveal some of the ineffective measures of governmental and industrial control of this toxic process, and finally learn some of the realistic measures we can adopt to keep our clothes clean and maintain our health.

SN 4 The speaker uses statistical evidence, identifying their source, as she builds a case against perc's use.

Dry cleaning has turned itself into an art and a science. We incorporate the cleaning into high, fast style. However, the history of dry cleaning . . . well, it's really quite humble. The process has gone from petroleum solvents that burst into flame into what many have believed to be a safe solvent—perc. So finally the *World and I* on November 5th reveals that up to 40 to 50 percent of the five hundred million pounds of perc produced annually is by dry cleaners.

SN 5 The speaker cites a series of sources including a website, research studies, and a personal example to underscore perc's dangers.

The main route for human exposure is via inhalation, but this chemical is also passed through skin and mouth contact. It is extremely soluble in blood. According to the Information Ventures home page, last updated on March 3rd . . . this chemical is also spread through blood, water, and other toxic solvents. In a study done at the University of California of individuals who frequented dry cleaning establishments at least three times a month, there were found decreased fertility and misshapen sperm

in men, and pregnant women experienced nearly five times the rate of spontaneous abortions. In other studies, individuals were found to have a high incidence of pelvic cancer. And children who were exposed to perc solvent through water had an unusually high incidence of leukemia. New York City apartment owner Sue Kassier is living proof of these studies.

After experiencing a toxic odor coming from her bedroom vent, Kassier was later diagnosed with upper respiratory problems and retinal nerve destruction. These enhanced perc levels are due largely to the emissions from the clothing of dry cleaning workers. And according to the November issue of the *Archives of Environmental Health*, the exhalations from the lungs of dry cleaning workers are actually toxic. Perc is not particular in choosing its victims attacking individuals who live in neighborhoods near dry cleaning establishments.

3. Do You Know What They Know?

As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Every fact depends for its value on how much we already know.” Conduct research to figure out what your audience already knows about the health dangers of a sedentary lifestyle or another topic of your choosing.

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Your instructor has asked for examples of the primary and secondary research you plan to incorporate into your next speech. In preparation for this, develop a list of sources you intend to consult. Then, prepare note cards showing proper citation for the following: a direct quotation and a paraphrase of a quotation from one primary and two secondary research sources, one of which is a Web source.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Draw research from your personal knowledge and experience.** By using personal experience, a speaker enhances his or her credibility and adds believability to his or her presentation.
- 2. Plan and conduct an interview with a person who possesses special knowledge related to your topic.** By conducting interviews with authorities on a subject, the speaker comes into direct contact with recognized experts and invests the presentation with even greater validity and relevance.
- 3. Do library-based research.** Library and computer-assisted research enable the speaker to discover and integrate the latest in credible, authoritative information into the speech.
- 4. Demonstrate the value of researching online.** The Internet has a wealth of resources you can consult to find material for your speech including databases of scholarly journals, professional websites, news and magazine indices, and image and video repositories. As with all research, evaluating the trustworthiness of sources is essential.
- 5. Take good research notes.** Note cards featuring facts, quotes, and complete source information facilitate the organization and documentation of materials you integrate into your speech.
- 6. Evaluate potential sources of information critically.** Evaluating the credibility, authoritativeness, currency, and relevance of the sources and information you intend to use is integral to an effective presentation.

KEY TERMS

Primary research 116

Secondary research 121

Probing question 119

Wiki 124



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8

Integrating Support

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Use and assess the effectiveness of examples
2. Use and assess the effectiveness of explanations and descriptions
3. Use and assess the effectiveness of facts and definitions
4. Use and assess the effectiveness of analogies
5. Use and assess the effectiveness of statistics
6. Use and assess the effectiveness of testimony
7. Properly cite support in a speech

Contents

Like a presidential candidate who studies a range of subjects before being interviewed by a reporter such as Charlie Rose or George Stephanopoulos, a speechmaker loads up on support before speaking. Consider how the interview with the candidate is covered. A team of researchers supports the interviewer. Information about the candidate's past wins and losses, strengths and weaknesses, and personal dramas are available for the interviewer to consult and refer to during the interview. Video profiles detailing the struggles and successes of the candidate have been recorded and are cued up. Were it not for such support, the interview itself might be dry and viewers might tune out. The same holds true for your speech and its audience.

A speech should be infused with support that amplifies, clarifies, and vivifies its ideas. To avoid having your speech fall flat, it is essential that you search diligently for supporting materials to elaborate on, prove, or enliven your points. And you must use the right type of support for the situation (see Table 8.1).

TABLE 8.1 SUPPORT

TYPE OF SUPPORT	PRIMARY USE(S)
Examples	To support specific points; to engage the audience
Explanations and descriptions	To clarify; to evoke a sensory response
Definitions	To explain words and concepts
Analogies	To promote understanding via comparisons and contrasts
Statistics	To strengthen claims and reinforce facts
Testimony	To increase believability and credibility

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Section 8.7 Citing Sources in Your Speech



8.1a Short Examples

8.1b Narrative Examples

8.1c Hypothetical Examples

8.1d Assess the Power of Your Examples

Use Examples

The right kind of examples can breathe life into a dull or uninteresting speech. Listeners are more likely to believe speakers who include and cite factual information, and they are more likely to engage in a story. As Nancy Duarte, the author of *Resonate*, notes, “Personal stories are the emotional glue that connects your audience to your message.”¹

8.1a Short Examples

You can use short examples to support a specific point. Although most of these examples are typically no longer than a sentence or two, when used in a series they gain power. In a speech on the pay gap between men and women, one student used the following series of brief examples to document disparities in pay by sex:

Typically women earn less than men throughout their lives. According to a 2016 analysis compiled by *Time* magazine, on average, women earn 15% less than men do between ages 22 to 25. They earn 38% less than men between ages 51 and 64. The fact is that men out-earn women in hundreds of occupations from medicine to law, from athletic coaching to umpiring, from administrative assistants to bartenders.

Each example the student used demonstrated that there were virtually no careers in which women earned more than their male colleagues.

COACHING TIP

“Personal example carries more weight than preaching.”

—Chinese proverb

Don’t go it alone when speaking in public. You have a support team to take to the podium with you. Use examples, definitions, analogies, statistics, and testimony appropriately and creatively, and you will increase the likelihood that your audience engages with and responds favorably to your ideas.

8.1b Narrative Examples

Extended examples are also known as illustrations, **narratives**, or anecdotes. More detailed and vivid than brief examples, extended examples are built very much like a story: They open, reveal a complication, contain a climax, and describe a resolution. Though narrative examples are longer, and thus consume more time, when well planned and placed they are also more emotionally compelling and add a real sense of drama to the speech.

In a speech at the 2004 Democratic National Convention, then–U.S. Senate candidate Barack Obama used a personal illustration to demonstrate that his life story was typical of the American dream:

My father was a foreign student, born and raised in a small village in Kenya. He grew up herding goats, went to school in a tin-roof shack. His father—my grandfather—was a cook, a domestic servant to the British. But my grandfather had larger dreams for his son. Through hard work and perseverance my father got a scholarship to study in a magical place, America, that stood as a beacon of freedom and opportunity to so many who had come before. . . .

My parents shared not only an improbable love; they shared an abiding faith in the possibilities of this nation. They would give me an African name, Barack, or “blessed,” believing that in a tolerant America your name is no barrier to success.

They imagined me going to the best schools in the land, even though they weren’t rich because in a generous America you don’t have to be rich to achieve your potential. . . .

I stand here knowing that my story is part of the larger American story, that I owe a debt to all of those who came before me, and that, in no other country on Earth, is my story even possible.²

By touching audience members in a way a generalization never could, an illustration helps the speaker pull listeners into the speech and focuses their attention on the issue at hand.

8.1c Hypothetical Examples

The examples cited in the preceding sections were factual. Sometimes, however, you will find it useful to refer to examples that describe imaginary situations. When you integrate brief or extended examples that have not actually occurred into your speeches, you are using **hypothetical examples**. Speakers are ethically bound to let audiences know whenever they use one.

In order for hypothetical examples to fulfill their purpose, audiences must accept that the fictional scenarios you create could really happen. The function of hypothetical examples is not to trick your listeners into believing something that is not true. Rather, you use hypothetical examples when you are unable to find a factual example that suits your purpose, you want to exaggerate your point, or you want to encourage your audience members to imagine facing a particular scenario. Sometimes, rather than being totally contrived, the hypothetical situations you cite will be a synthesis of actual situations, people, or events. But be careful. If you use a hypothetical example that is too far-fetched, audience members won't judge it credible.

Ron Reagan, the son of the former president of the United States Ronald Reagan, used the following hypothetical example in an effort to convince receivers to support stem cell research:

Let's say that 10 or so years from now you are diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. There is currently no cure, and drug therapy, with its attendant side effects, can only temporarily relieve the symptoms.

Now, imagine going to a doctor who, instead of prescribing drugs, takes a few skin cells from your arm. The nucleus of one of your cells is placed into a donor egg whose own nucleus has been removed. A hit of chemical or electrical stimulation will encourage your cell's nucleus to begin dividing, creating new cells which will then be placed into a tissue culture. Those cells will generate embryonic stem cells containing only your DNA, thereby eliminating the risk of tissue rejection. These stem cells are then driven to become the very neural cells that are defective in Parkinson's patients. And finally, those cells—with your DNA—are injected into your brain where they will replace the faulty cells whose failure to produce adequate dopamine led to the Parkinson's disease in the first place.

In other words, you're cured.³

Hypothetical examples are especially useful when someone's privacy is at stake. Persons whose work involves confidentiality—physicians, lawyers, ministers, and therapists—often choose to use hypothetical, rather than real, examples when discussing cases. Still, when faced with the option of whether to use a real or hypothetical example, consider whether your receivers will be influenced more by something that did take place or by something that might take place.

8.1d Assess the Power of Your Examples

Whether you use real or hypothetical, brief or extended examples, what matters most is that they reinforce, clarify, and personalize your ideas, as well as relate directly to your listeners. If you think of yourself as a storyteller, and each example as a key part of your story, then you'll be better able to use your words, your voice, and your body to paint mental pictures that engage, touch, and bring your listeners into the center of your story's plot. To do this successfully, you need to search for and/or create examples that your listeners can get excited about and identify with. Use the following checklist to gauge the power of each example.

- Is the example universal?
- Does the example involve people?
- Does the example make an abstract idea more concrete?
- Does the example clarify your message?
- Is the example directly relevant to your message?
- Is the example vivid—that is, is it filled with detail?
- Can you relate the example to your audience without relying excessively on your notes?
- Can you use speaking rate and volume to increase the impact of the example?
- Will your listeners readily identify with the example?
- Will your listeners accept the example as credible?

As the checklist suggests, it is important that any examples you use are suitable for your audience, topic, and occasion.

COACHING TIP

"The human species thinks in metaphors and learns through stories."

—Mary Catherine Bateson

Get the audience involved. Don't leave them confused or standing on the sidelines. Share analogies and stories. Dig deep. Personal narratives add drama, infusing your speech with emotion. Keep it real. Make your audience feel.



8.2a Explanations

8.2b Descriptions

8.2c Assess the Power of Your Explanations and Descriptions

Use Explanations and Descriptions

Explanations and descriptions are important tools in public speech. We use explanations to clarify what we have said, and we use descriptions to help our audience imagine they can see, hear, smell, touch, taste, or feel what we do. Both types of support help to engage our listeners in our topic.

8.2a Explanations

One speaker who anticipated a lack of subject familiarity on the part of her audience used an **explanation** to clarify the nature of Tourette syndrome.

Put your hands in your lap. Now keep them there and don't scratch that itch on your head. Don't scratch it. It itches so badly, but keep your hands in your lap. That's what it feels like to have Tourette syndrome and to try to control it. Tourette's is a medical condition characterized by involuntary movements or sounds known as tics. People like me who have Tourette's are unable to control our actions.⁴

Because the speaker believed that most people lacked knowledge on her subject, her explanation was designed not to overexplain, but to facilitate their understanding.

8.2b Descriptions

While speakers use explanations to clarify the unfamiliar for their receivers, they use **descriptions** to produce fresh and striking word pictures designed to provoke sensory reactions. Novelist, essayist, and screenwriter Joan Didion relied heavily on description in a speech entitled “Why I Write.”

I was in this [Panamanian] airport only once, on a plane to Bogota that stopped for an hour to refuel, but the way it looked that morning remained superimposed on everything I saw until the day I finished *A Book of Common Prayer*. I lived in that airport for several years. I can still feel the hot air when I step off the plane, can see the heat already rising off the tarmac at 6 A.M. I can feel my skirt damp and wrinkled on my legs. I can feel the asphalt stick to my sandals. I remember the big tail of a Pan American plane floating motionless down at the end of the tarmac.⁵

Notice how the speaker’s descriptions transport you to the airport, helping you feel and see what she experienced.

8.2c Assess the Power of Your Explanations and Descriptions

Consider how your audience will respond to each explanation or description. Use the following checklist to gauge the power of each explanation and/or description you use.

- Am I using the explanation to deliver information the audience clearly does not know?
- Have I avoided overexplaining or underexplaining?
- Is the description rich in specific detail?
- As a result of the description, will the subject of my description come more alive for listeners?
- Have I been appropriately selective in choosing what I explain and/or describe?



Ryan McVay/Digital Vision/Thinkstock

Move your audience. Vivid descriptions should elicit reactions from your audience.



8.3a Which Words Should You Define?

8.3b How Do You Define a Word?

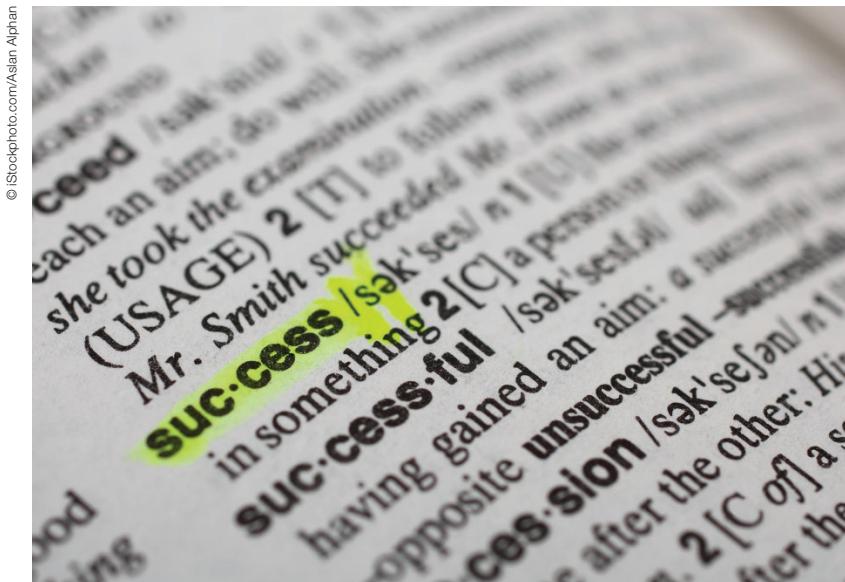
8.3c Assess the Power of Your Definitions

Use Definitions

Definitions help bridge cultural divides, enhance audience understanding, and facilitate audience acceptance of a speaker's ideas. Definitions are especially useful when your audience members are unfamiliar with the way you are using key terms, or when they might have associations for words or concepts that differ from your own.

8.3a Which Words Should You Define?

When speaking, you need to define words that are technical in nature, that have specialized meanings, that are rarely used, that you are using in unique or unusual ways, or that have two or more meanings. If the context fails to make the meaning of the word immediately apparent to your listeners, then it is up to you to define it. For example, in a speech on the importance of teaching the sciences, William Durden, the president of Dickinson College, defined *interdisciplinarity* as an appreciation for collaboration and the breaking down of disciplinary silos in order to encourage problem posing and solving from multiple vantage points.⁶



Get defined. If a definition cannot be grasped from the speech's context, you should define it.

8.3b How Do You Define a Word?

When you take your definition from a dictionary, you invest the meaning you cite with a degree of authority and credibility. At the same time, using an original definition could help audience members share your personal meaning for a word and could help make the speaker–audience connection more intense. Of course, using definitions supplied by experts also could help precipitate audience understanding and acceptance.

In a speech debunking the idea that the purpose of college was to train students for a job, one speaker used a definition from dictionary.com to explain why this is impossible:

To train is to develop or form the habits, thoughts, or behavior by discipline and instruction, such as—to train an unruly boy; to make proficient by instruction and practice, as in some art, profession, or work: to train soldiers; to make fit by proper exercise, diet, practice, as for an athletic performance; to discipline and instruct (an animal), as in the performance of tasks or tricks; to treat or manipulate so as to bring into some desired form, position, direction: to train one's hair to stay down.

We can't be in the business of "training" you for specific jobs because those jobs won't even exist in the future.⁷

In this way, the speaker made it clear that change is a constant and as a result the educating that colleges accomplish cannot be job specific.

8.3c Assess the Power of Your Definitions

Definitions are intended to increase listener understanding or acceptance of your ideas. By helping you explain the nature of a term or situation to your audience members, a definition may help you inform and persuade them. You can use the following checklist to gauge the power of each definition you employ.

- Does my definition contribute to the overall goal and purpose of my speech?
- Is my definition easily understood?
- Am I consistent in the way I define or explain a term or problem?
- Will audience members readily accept my definition?



8.4a Literal Analogies

8.4b Figurative Analogies

8.4c Assess the Power of Your Analogies

Use Analogies

Sometimes the most effective kind of support available to a speaker is an analogy. Like the definition, the analogy functions to increase understanding, but unlike the definition, it does so through comparison and contrast. There are two main types of analogies: *literal* and *figurative*.

8.4a Literal Analogies

A **literal analogy** compares two things from similar classes, for example, two viruses, two novels, or two crises. When delivering a speech on why we love horror movies, a student used a literal analogy, noting “If you loved the film *Saw*, you’ll also love *The Grudge*. Both films are cut from the same cloth.” Another student used a literal analogy to compare the Dodge Intrepid to a NASCAR vehicle, noting that when accelerating in her Intrepid she felt like she was beginning a NASCAR race. She then went on to describe the engine characteristics of NASCAR race cars that share much in common with the engine in the Intrepid.

As long as the things being compared are close enough to one another, the speaker will benefit from using a literal analogy. Because literal analogies tend to come off as more logical than emotional, the audience is likely to accept them as true.

8.4b Figurative Analogies

A **figurative analogy** compares two things that at first appear to have little in common with each other—a war and a dragon, or mad cow disease and an alien. A student giving a speech on horror movies made use of a figurative analogy in his speech, noting “A horror move is like a fairy tale on steroids.”

Former secretary of state Hillary Clinton used a figurative analogy in her farewell speech to the State Department. Referring to the modern architect known for his multifaceted building designs, she said,

We need a new architecture for a new world—more Frank Gehry than formal Greek. Now some of his work at first might appear haphazard, but in fact, it’s highly intentional and sophisticated. Where once a few strong columns could hold up the weight of the world, today we need a dynamic mix of materials and structures.⁸

Speakers use figurative analogies to awaken the collective imagination of the audience—to prod them into accepting that two things that appear to have little, if anything, in common, actually share one or more vital similarities.

Your primary purpose in using an analogy is to explain the unfamiliar by relating it to something the audience is more familiar with. The essential similarities inherent in your analogies should be readily apparent. If you strain to create them, audience members may conclude that your analogies are far-fetched, inappropriate, unbelievable, or unpersuasive.

Now, try this. Create a literal and figurative analogy for each of the following: a course in public speaking, your job, and your love life.

8.4c Assess the Power of Your Analogies

Analogy enhances audience understanding and acceptance of a message by making the unfamiliar familiar or prompting audience members to use their imagination to consider the point being made. You can use the following checklist to gauge the power of the analogies you use:

- Does the analogy have a clear purpose within the context of the speech?
- Is the analogy easily understood?
- Is the analogy easily visualized?
- Is the analogy original?
- Is the analogy apt and colorful?



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Drive audience understanding. Use analogies to compare and contrast.

section 8.5



8.5a Understand What Statistics Mean

8.5b Put Statistics to Use

8.5c Use Statistics Ethically

8.5d Present Statistics Visually

8.5e Assess Your Use of Statistics

Use Statistics

There is something comforting in the fact that we can express what we know with numbers. We use **statistics** to clarify and strengthen our ideas and claims, and to express the seriousness of a situation and/or the magnitude of a problem.⁹

8.5a Understand What Statistics Mean

You need to be able to distinguish among common statistical measures. Figure 8.1 explains the concepts of range, mean, median, mode, and percentage. Understanding these statistical measures strengthens your ability to highlight their importance and significance for receivers.

8.5b Put Statistics to Use

Speaking on the prevalence of guns, a speaker reported that being murdered with a gun was the number one cause of death for African American men ages 15 to 34. Then to drive home the seriousness of the situation, she added that since 1979, 44,038 black children were killed by guns—13 times more than all the black people killed by lynching from 1882 to 1968.¹⁰

Notice how the second set of statistics cited help to establish the problem's magnitude by adding context.

FIGURE 8.1

Making Sense of Numbers

Given the monthly salaries listed on the left, we can determine the following:

\$12,000 This salary is **21.09%** of all salaries combined: $12,000 / 56,900 = .2108963$.

\$10,000

\$8,400

\$7,000

\$5,000 This is the **median salary**: 50% of salaries fall above and below it.

\$4,000

\$4,000 This is **the mode**: the number that occurs most frequently in the number group.

\$4,000

\$2,500

The mean salary is the total of all salaries divided by the number of salaries:

$\$56,900 / 9 \text{ salaries} = \$6,322.22$.

The range is 9,500; the difference between 12,000 and 2,500.

8.5c Use Statistics Ethically

It's easy for unethical speakers to use numbers to fool the public. Factual information offered by biased sources may contain distortions or omissions.¹¹

- Examine the following two groups of numbers.

GROUP 1	GROUP 2
12,000	16,000
10,000	15,000
8,400	9,500
7,000	8,400
5,000	5,000
4,000	4,200
4,000	4,000
4,000	3,000
2,500	3,000

- Determine the range, mean, median, and mode for each group and a percentage measure for the first number in each group. Check your answers by comparing them with these:
 - The range is 9,500 for Group 1 and 13,000 for Group 2.
 - The mean for Group 1 is 6,322. The mean for Group 2 is 7,567.
 - The median is the same for both groups; it is 5,000.
 - The mode is 4,000 for Group 1, and 3,000 for Group 2.
 - The number in the top row is 21 percent of the Group 1 total and 23 percent of Group 2.

Imagine that these figures were the monthly commissions earned by sales executives with the Triple X Corporation (Group 1) and the Triple Y Corporation (Group 2). Now imagine a sales professional has been offered a job by both companies. How might the recruiters at Triple X and Triple Y use these figures to convince the applicant to take the job?

How would you feel if the recruiter for Triple X cited the median salary (\$5,000) to show that the “average” earnings of sales representatives in both corporations were identical while the recruiter for Triple Y cited the mean salary of her sales representatives (\$7,567) and the mean salary at Triple X (\$6,322) to demonstrate that Triple Y employees earned on the “average” \$1,200 more a month?

Although both recruiters would technically be telling the truth, unless the sales representative considering the job offer understood how each recruiter was selecting statistics, he or she could be misled.

Because the results obtained depend on the measure used, it is important that you fully explain your statistics to your audience. It is equally important that you not engage in numerical exaggeration.

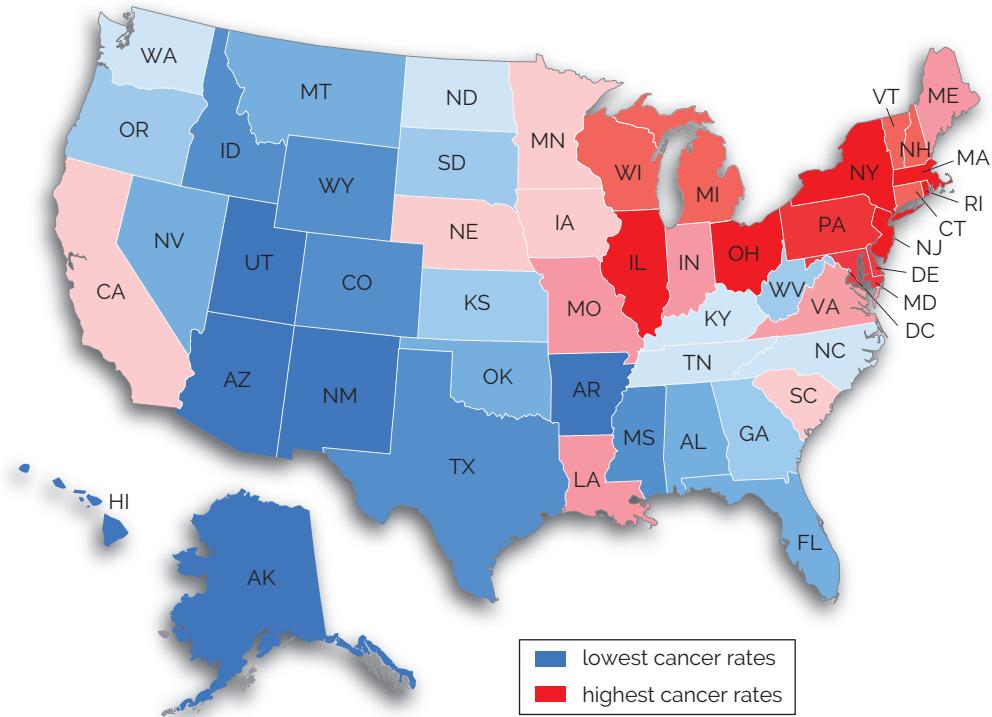
8.5d Present Statistics Visually

A visual aid can save time and make it easier for the audience to understand the significance of the statistical evidence you cite. Suppose, for example, you chose to speak on the relationship between vitamin D and breast cancer. In the course of your presentation you might well include a number of these findings: the breast cancer death rate was lowest in the sunny South and West and highest in the Northeast; breast cancer rates were more than 1.5 times as high in New York and Boston as in Phoenix or Honolulu; and breast cancer is more prevalent in communities with the most light-blocking air pollution and less prevalent where more solar radiation is received by residents.¹² These are interesting findings, but they probably would be even more effective if shown on a simple graphic, like Figure 8.2.

It is your responsibility to ensure that the statistics you use represent what you claim to be measuring, that you obtain them from a reliable source, that you use them correctly, and that you interpret them accurately. If you follow these precepts, then your statistical support will help you make your speech both more understandable and more memorable.

FIGURE 8.2

Age-Adjusted Breast Cancer Mortality Rates, by County Area, and Contours of Annual Mean Daily Solar Irradiance in Langleys (calories/cm²), United States, 1970–1994



Sources: Developed through use of National Cancer Institute and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration data (available at www.cancer.gov and <http://www.noaa.gov>).

8.5e Assess Your Use of Statistics

The impact of examples is strengthened when they are followed by statistics that demonstrate their representativeness. But before you integrate any statistics into your speech, you need to use your critical thinking skills to evaluate their usefulness. Use the following checklist to gauge the effectiveness of your statistics.

- Are the statistics representative of what I claim they measure?
- Am I being totally honest in my use of these statistics?
- Have I obtained my statistics from a reliable source that has no vested interest in the figures?
- Have I interpreted the statistics correctly?
- Have I used statistics sparingly?
- Have I explained my statistics creatively?
- Have I rounded off my statistics to facilitate understanding?
- Have I used a visual aid to increase the memorability of my statistics?
- Have I provided context for the statistics?
- Have I used statistics to clarify and enlighten rather than confound and confuse?
- Are the statistics I used complete and current?



GAME PLAN

Choosing Speech Support

- I have chosen support that will help me communicate my ideas more clearly and creatively.
- I have found examples that are useful and representative of my topic.
- I have used statistics that are relevant, reliable, and solid.
- I have incorporated testimonials from qualified and unbiased sources.
- My audience will find each piece of support relevant and appropriate.
- Each piece of support I have used increases the memorability of my speech.
- I am offering receivers a sufficient variety of supporting materials.



8.6a Expert Testimony

8.6b Peer or Lay Testimony

8.6c Assess the Power of Your Testimony

Use Testimony

When speakers use the opinions of others to reinforce claims they are making, they are using **testimony**. Though, of course, your own opinions do count, you will find that audiences, in general, are more influenced when you supplement your personal opinions with an expert opinion.

8.6a Expert Testimony

Expert testimony is provided by sources recognized as authorities on your topic; when you cite an expert and establish his or her reputation, you enhance your credibility and that of your speech as well. One student used expert testimony to try to convince her receivers that campus fraternities should be abolished:

John Foubert is the founder of *One in Four*, a private nonprofit rape prevention center with 15 chapters on college campuses. He is also the author of *The Men's and Women's Programs: Ending Rape Through Peer Education*, as well as a researcher on the subject. In a 2013 report about “rape-bait,” for CNN, Foubert reported the following: “Guys who joined a fraternity committed three times as many sexual assaults as those who didn’t join. It is reasonable to believe that fraternities turn men into guys more likely to rape.” Foubert believes that what should worry us is the culture of male peer support in fraternities that permits bad attitudes to escalate, inciting violence against women.¹³

Because the student’s topic was controversial, and the audience may have been hesitant to accept her stance, relying on an expert on the subject makes sense. Speakers integrate expert testimony into their speeches by using a source’s direct quotations or by paraphrasing the source’s words. Notice how in the preceding example the student used both when speaking of Foubert’s findings.

Supporting materials are evaluated twice: initially by the speaker, and subsequently by receivers. Speakers and receivers who are well trained to think critically are able to spot the strengths and the weaknesses in the messages they deliver to others and that others deliver to them. Critical thinkers assess the credibility of the speaker’s statements and the validity of the evidence supplied by the speaker.

8.6b Peer or Lay Testimony

In contrast to expert testimony, **peer or lay testimony** comes from people who are not necessarily recognized authorities, but “ordinary people” who have firsthand experience with the subject. Peer or lay testimony provides audience members with greater personal insight; such a speaker shares the feelings, the reactions, and the knowledge of individuals who have “been there.”

In a speech called “Homeless Children: A National Crisis,” the speaker used the testimony of Sherry, a homeless girl who had written a poem about her experiences. By asking the audience to listen to Sherry’s own words, the speaker was able to convey the girl’s innermost feelings to the audience.

I Want to Live in a House

I saw them at their house today.

They had new coats and mittens.

I don’t have a house like that,

I don’t have a coat or mittens.

Things will change; Mommy said they will

As she buttoned my cotton blouse.

I sure hope it’s true, you know,

*Cause I really want to live in a house!*¹⁴

What determines whether you paraphrase an opinion or quote it directly? You should paraphrase testimony—that is, restate it in your own words—if doing so would increase audience members’ understanding of or response to it. If the quotation is not too long or too difficult for audience members to comprehend and if you believe it has sufficient force and clarity the way it is, a direct quotation is generally preferred.

8.6c Assess the Power of Your Testimony

Testimony works because it lets you borrow someone else’s credibility. In effect, testimony enables you to associate your ideas with the knowledge, experience, qualifications, and reputation of another. It will do you no good to associate yourself with someone who is not an authority on your topic, is not highly regarded by others, or does not have firsthand experience with your subject. Use the following checklist to gauge the effectiveness of the testimony you cite.

- Have I clearly identified the source of the testimony?
- Is the source I cite recognizable, objective, and credible?
- Is the testimony I am using absolutely relevant to my presentation?
- Have I quoted or paraphrased the source accurately and used his or her words in proper context?
- Have I used verbatim quotations whenever possible?
- Have I used lay or peer testimony to enhance the audience’s ability to identify with my topic?
- Did I use the most up-to-date testimony available?
- Have I stressed the source’s qualifications so audience members will not have to strain to find his or her statement credible?

Citing Sources in Your Speech

It's one thing to find support, another to integrate it into your speech, and a third to cite it correctly when giving your speech and in your bibliography. Keep in mind that your audience members will have access only to the sources you identify orally; typically listeners do not see the bibliography you may have to submit to your instructor. Thus, to enhance your credibility, you need to tell audience members where you got your information and what makes its credible. This requires citing your sources, that is, sharing with receivers the name and author of a book, article, newspaper, or Web document; explaining what makes the author a qualified source; and revealing the date the material was published or posted. The goal is to seamlessly integrate such citations into your speech (see Table 8.2).

The following excerpt from a speech fulfills requirements for oral citation:

Oral Citation: The website of the United Network for Organ Sharing, unos.org, reports as of this morning, 120,925 Americans are waiting for healthy organs, but only about 15 percent of these people can expect to receive the organs they need.

Bibliographic Citation: "Transplant Trends." United Network for Organ Sharing. <http://www.unos.org/> (accessed December 8, 2013).

The speaker gave the name of the organization and its Web address, adding the needed credibility to the statistics she was offering. Notice how in her remarks she also established the information's timeliness.

In another speech given before the National Association of Broadcasters, its president, Gordon Smith, included a reference to a source, saying,

Oral Citation: A recent Wall Street Journal article had the headline: "Don't Look Now: A Car That Tweets."¹⁵

Bibliographic Citation: Ramsey, Mike. "Don't Look Now: A Car That Tweets." *New York Times*, February 10, 2012. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052970203824904577213041944082370>.

Although his audience might have been better served if he had given the date of the article and its author when citing it, it isn't always necessary for you to include the exact date in your presentation, but it should appear in your bibliography as a complete citation. Written citations contain more detail.

Use the following checklist for citing oral sources:

- Did I share the name of the author or origin of the source?
- Did I include the title or description of the source?
- Did I set the source in context by providing a date?
- Did I establish any relevant credentials or affiliations of the source?
- Did I establish the source's credibility?
- Did I cite the source without interrupting the flow of my presentation?
- Could an audience member locate the source I cited if they wanted to?

TABLE 8.2 ORAL CITATIONS

SOURCE CITED	INFORMATION TO SHARE
Book	The book's title, author, some information on the author's qualifications, and the publication date
Journal or magazine article	The name of the journal or magazine, the article title, the author's qualifications, the publication date
Newspaper	The name of the newspaper, the article title, the author of the article and his or her qualifications, the date the article appeared
Government document	Agency name or branch of government that produced the document, publication name, and date
Brochure/pamphlet	Title, publisher, date of publication
Weblog	Blog site, name of blogger, qualifications, date of posting
Interview conducted by you	Cite yourself as the interviewer, identify the person interviewed, and the date and place of the interview



Exercises

SUPPORT

You can apply what you have learned by participating in the following activities:

1. Finding Facts, Statistics, and Examples

Locate an interesting fact, statistic, and example to use in a speech on one of the following subjects. Explain the value of each and properly identify its source:

- Recycling
- Benefits and Risks of Vaccinations
- Introverts

2. Reliable Sources

Identify a reliable source whose testimony you could cite in a speech on each of the topics listed in the preceding exercise.

3. Assess the Speech: Identifying Support

Read or view a speech given by the current president of the United States. The president's inaugural or State of the Union addresses should be readily available online. Identify the kinds of support the president used to support the goals of the speech.

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Using the right support and citing sources appropriately takes practice:

1. Select a topic that concerns or interests you.
2. Formulate a statement related to the topic that you are prepared to support. Your statement should begin "I think that . . ." or "I believe that . . ."
3. Locate two types of support from two different research sources that you can use to make your point.
4. Develop a 60-second presentation.

Once you select your issue, ask yourself these questions:

- Have I selected an issue that I can support?
- What types of support should I use?
- Does each potential piece of support back up my claim?
- How can I use other forms of support to further enhance the impact of my remarks?

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Use and assess the effectiveness of examples.

When examples are useful and representative they help you develop ideas. Although short examples support specific points, lengthier narrative examples deeply influence receivers. Hypothetical examples encourage audience members to imagine what it would be like to face the situation described.

2. Use and assess the effectiveness of explanations and descriptions.

Explanations help clarify content. Descriptions rely on sensory appeals to engage receivers.

3. Use and assess the effectiveness of facts and definitions.

Facts are the verifiable information in your speech. Definitions are needed when audience members are unfamiliar with terms used or might have different associations for them.

4. Use and assess the effectiveness of analogies.

Analogies rely on comparison to enhance understanding. When used appropriately, they help make the unfamiliar more familiar.

5. Use and assess the effectiveness of statistics.

If fully explained, statistics clarify and strengthen ideas and claims.

6. Use and assess the effectiveness of testimony.

Use both expert and lay opinion to borrow credibility and supplement your use of personal opinion.

7. Properly cite support in a speech.

Orally identify sources in your speech and provide complete information in your bibliography. Doing this correctly enhances both your and the source's credibility.

KEY TERMS

Definitions 146

Figurative analogy 148

Narrative 141

Descriptions 144

Hypothetical examples 141

Peer testimony 154

Expert testimony 154

Lay testimony 154

Statistics 150

Explanations 144

Literal analogy 148

Testimony 154



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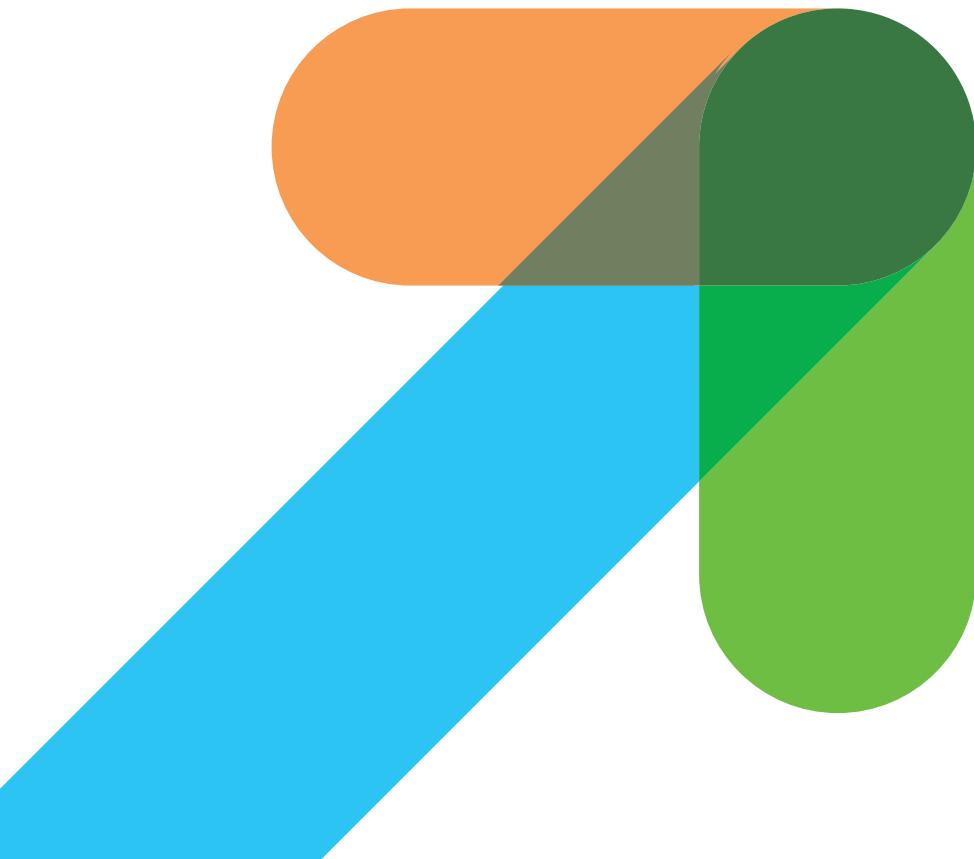
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Organize and Outline

Chapter 9: Organizing Your Speech

Chapter 10: Outlining Your Speech



9

Organizing Your Speech

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain why organization matters
2. Explain the principle of redundancy and why it is useful in a speech
3. Identify linear organization and list some examples of this format
4. Identify configural organization and list examples of this format
5. Discuss how culture influences organizational preference

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Organization empowers a speech. In fact, organization and content are equal partners in speech development. If a speech is poorly organized, even if the information you present is first rate, audience comprehension suffers.¹

Can you, for example, imagine trying to follow a ballet troupe, a theatrical ensemble, or a sports team if the performers or players involved had no idea where they were supposed to be positioned or what they were supposed to do? The dancers would bump into one another. The actors would stumble about the stage. The athletes would be in disarray. What is more, there would be no pattern for those watching to follow, so they wouldn't know where to look to make sense of the performance or game they were attending. The ability to organize a game's plays is critical for most sporting events. The same principle holds true for public speakers and audiences. The ability to organize ideas into one or more effective patterns is critical for effective speechmaking.²

Unless audience members are able to follow and understand your speech, they might as well not listen to it. Research supports what we know intuitively—we learn more from a speech that is well organized.³ For this reason alone, it is important to learn to craft a speech that doesn't ramble, but instead is coherent and balanced.

In addition, developing an understanding of organizational patterns has advantages, making it easier for you—both as a speaker and a listener—to give and follow lectures, process information, weigh persuasive appeals, and function as a critical, effective communicator.

COACHING TIP

"Organize, don't agonize."

—Nancy Pelosi

Never let your ideas wander about aimlessly. Give them order. Strategize when selecting an organizational pattern. Choose the organizational strategy that will work best for your speech's purpose, content, and audience. Select wisely, and your main and supporting points will flow, virtually effortlessly, from the strategy.

Section 9.1 Understand Speech Organization

Section 9.2 Use Linear Organizational Formats

- 9.2a Time Order:
It's Chronological, 166
- 9.2b Spatial Order:
It's Directional, 167
- 9.2c Cause-and-Effect Order: It's Relational, 168
- 9.2d Problem–Solution Order: It's Workable, 169
- 9.2e Topical Order: It's Part of the Whole, 170

Section 9.3 Use Configural Formats

Understand Speech Organization

Creating a speech has been compared to writing an essay. Yet, in some ways creating a speech and an essay are very different experiences (see Table 9.1). Whereas audience members usually listen to a speaker deliver a speech only once, readers are able to revisit written passages in their search for meaning. In order to facilitate comprehension of a spoken message, speakers normally use shorter sentences than do writers, and they also repeat the main ideas of their work more frequently than writers. Writers may use clearly visible headings and subheadings. When presenting, however, we must find ways to let the organization of our speech reveal itself naturally to the members of our audience.

Just like an essay, a speech benefits from having a clear beginning, middle, and end. In writing a speech, think of the often-repeated adage: “Tell them what you are going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them.” We begin by introducing the topic, offering a preview of what’s to come. This done, we go on to discuss the topic, developing it fully. Then we wrap up with a concluding statement that summarizes the main points and ties the presentation together. This formula acknowledges the principle of *redundancy*—the use of repetition to reduce the uncertainty of receivers—and is especially important because not every audience member is adept at listening skillfully. By building a certain amount of repetition into a speech, a speaker improves receiver comprehension.

TABLE 9.1 THE SPEECH VERSUS THE ESSAY

SPEECH	ESSAY
Is heard once	May be read many times
Contains short sentences	Contains complex sentences
Contains repetition	Contains less repetition
Organization revealed naturally	Organization revealed by heads and subheads

Use Linear Organizational Formats

Traditional organizational formats use a linear logic that is representative of the way many North American speakers organize their thoughts. A speech has a **linear format** if its main points develop and relate directly to the thesis or topic sentence that comes early in the presentation. When exhibiting linear logic, a speaker develops ideas step-by-step, relying on facts and data to support each main point. Then the speaker links each main point to other main ideas via a series of bridges or transitions.

Members of low-context cultures, such as the United States, often use a linear format. They characteristically relay information explicitly. Why? Because they expect receivers will have difficulty understanding what is not said overtly. Rather than rely primarily on emotional appeals and stories to make their points, they offer relevant supporting facts—that is, hard evidence and proof in defense of positions taken.

We will look at five traditional or linear approaches to ordering material: (1) chronological order; (2) spatial order; (3) cause-and-effect order; (4) problem-solution order; and (5) topical order (see Table 9.2).

TABLE 9.2 LINEAR FORMATS

FORMAT	PURPOSE	ESPECIALLY USEFUL IN
Chronological	To explain to audience members the order in which events happened; to describe a series of sequential developments	Informative speaking
Spatial	To describe the physical arrangement of objects in space	Informative speaking
Cause and Effect	To categorize a topic and relevant materials into those related to the causes and consequences of a problem	Informative and persuasive speaking
Problem–Solution	To identify a significant problem that needs a resolution and then a solution to alleviate the problem; to demonstrate a problem’s nature and significance, then solution(s)	Persuasive speaking
Topical	To highlight the natural divisions of a topic; to identify the natural clusters or subtopics of a speech	Informative, persuasive, and special-occasion speaking



9.2a Time Order: It's Chronological

9.2b Spatial Order: It's Directional

9.2c Cause-and-Effect Order: It's Relational

9.2d Problem–Solution Order: It's Workable

9.2e Topical Order: It's Part of the Whole

9.2a Time Order: It's Chronological

When you use time or **chronological order** to organize the body of your speech, you explain to your audience members the order in which events happened. For example, you may deal with your topic by taking an historical approach.

Purpose: To inform the audience about the evolution of marijuana laws

Thesis: Laws about marijuana have changed dramatically since the early 1900s.

Chronological organization can move from the past forward to the present.



- I. Marijuana was a common ingredient in 19th-century medicines.
- II. The government began to regulate marijuana starting around 1910.
- III. In 1996, California legalized medical marijuana.
- IV. In 2012, Colorado became the first state to legalize recreational marijuana use.

A time pattern can also be used in a subsection of a speech where the overarching organization is of another style. For example, a speaker delivering a speech on the problem of institutionalizing the mentally ill might first chronologically explain how mental institutions developed in this country. Such an organizational tactic would offer receivers a context against which to process those points the speaker will explore during the remainder of the presentation.



Time warp. A time pattern can be either earliest to latest or vice versa in order to convey a point.

Especially useful in informative speaking, a chronological structure helps when you organize your main points from earliest to latest or vice versa in order to illustrate a particular progression of thought, as in the following examples.

Purpose: To inform the audience about the development of the Internet

Thesis: The Internet has changed dramatically since its invention.

- I. More than 3 billion people have access to the Internet today.
- II. The World Wide Web was invented in 1989 and made the Internet accessible to nonexperts.
- III. The first computer networks were developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s.



Some chronological organizations move from the present backward to the past.

Purpose: To inform the audience about the three stages of labor and childbirth

Thesis: There are three stages of labor.

- I. The first stage of labor has two phases.
 - A. Early labor is the first phase, which begins with very mild contractions.
 - B. Active labor is the second phase, when contractions become more intense.
- II. Stage two is birth.
- III. Stage three is the delivery of the placenta.



Chronological organization can be used to describe the sequence of any event.

9.2b Spatial Order: It's Directional

If you can observe your subject in space, it may be a candidate for **spatial order**. For example, we can discuss the planets in order of their proximity to the sun or describe the street plan of Washington, D.C. In spatial order, main points proceed from top to bottom, left to right, front to back, north to south, and so forth—or vice versa. Here is an example of how a speaker used a spatial pattern in talking about the White House.

Purpose: To inform the audience about the layout of the White House

Central idea: The White House includes 67,000 square feet of offices, reception and meeting rooms, and living space in three distinct areas

In this example, main points move from east to west.



- I. The East Wing houses the offices of the First Lady and the social secretary.
- II. The Residence is the site of public events like state dinners and receptions and is the home of the first family.
- III. The West Wing contains the Oval Office and the offices of other key executive staff.

Like chronological order, spatial order is used most frequently in informative speeches.

9.2c Cause-and-Effect Order: It's Relational

Cause-and-effect order requires you to categorize your materials into those related to the causes of a problem and those related to its effects. You then decide which aspect to explore first.

Cause-and-effect order and effect-and-cause order are quite versatile. They are used in both informative and persuasive speeches. Here's an example from a speech about drunk driving:

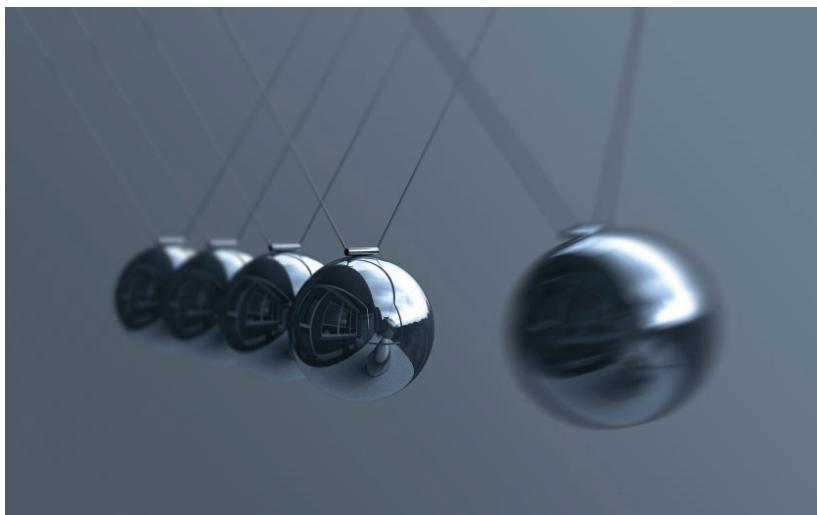
The first main point focuses on causes.



The second main point discusses the effects.

- I. In 2013, more than 28 million people admitted to having driven drunk.
- II. In 2014, nearly 10,000 people were killed by drunk drivers.

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Context. With a cause-and-effect argument, you can establish why something happens so you can talk about changing it.

9.2d Problem-Solution Order: It's Workable

Speakers seeking to influence often select a **problem-solution order** whereby the speaker first reveals a significant problem that needs a resolution and then offers a solution to alleviate the problem. Notice in the following example how the emphasis is on how the problem can best be resolved.

Purpose: To convince my audience that national health insurance can help solve our health care problems

Thesis: National health insurance will solve many of the problems caused by rising health care costs.

- I. Rising health care costs have resulted in an uninsured class of people.
- II. Implementing national health insurance will solve this problem.



The problem

The solution

When using a problem–solution format, a speaker may discuss the advantages of the solution as well. When this occurs, the speaker’s organization includes a third main point: the advantages of adopting the solution. The next example also presents a pragmatic solution to a problem.

Purpose: To convince my audience that we need to revise the reporting of poverty statistics

Thesis: We should act now to solve the problem caused by the way poverty statistics are currently reported.

- I. The poverty level is currently understated in order to keep people off welfare rolls.
 - A. The income level defined as poverty for families of four is absurdly low.
 - B. Poverty thresholds for single-parent families are even more outrageous.
- II. Minimally acceptable income levels must be raised.
 - A. Government levels of aid must be raised for families.
 - B. Additional help must be given for single parents.
- III. These increases will solve some of the problems of the poor.
 - A. They will make life easier for families.
 - B. Additional aid to single parents will help them help themselves and their children.



The problem



The solution



The advantages of adopting the solution

Problem–solution order is most frequently employed in persuasive presentations.

9.2e Topical Order: It's Part of the Whole

When your speech does not fit into any of the patterns just described, you may arrange your material into a series of appropriate topics. This is **topical order**. For example, you use a topical order to speak about the pros and cons of a particular issue.

Purpose: To inform audience members of the advantages and disadvantages of a vegetarian diet

Central idea: Eliminating meat from your diet presents both advantages and disadvantages.

A topical organization clusters ideas into a series of appropriate topics.



- I. There are two advantages of a vegetarian diet.
 - A. It does not support inhumane factory farming or require the death of any animal.
 - B. A vegetarian diet is linked to better overall health.
- II. There are two disadvantages to a vegetarian diet.
 - A. Some people are unable to get the nutrients they need without eating meat.
 - B. It can be difficult to eat out at restaurants or at friends' homes and maintain the diet.

Other examples of topical order also may include categorical arrangements that look at the social, political, and economic factors that contribute to a problem, the perceptions of upper-class, middle-class, and lower-class people on an issue, or any other divisional structure that breaks the material into units. When employing topical order, you may find that you can intermingle time, spatial, cause-and-effect, or problem–solution order within the topical order. In addition, although the subdivisions of a topical-ordered speech typically correspond to different aspects of the topic, subdivisions may also serve as a *mnemonic* (a device that is used to trigger memory). For example, in a speech on speechwriting, one speaker used the word *BRIEF* as follows to organize the body of the presentation:

- Brainstorm ideas
- Research ideas
- Interpret ideas
- Energize ideas
- Finalize ideas

Because it lends itself to almost any subject, topical organization is a very popular organizational format.

Use Configural Formats

According to most intercultural communication theorists, English is primarily a “speaker-responsible” language, but other languages, including Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic, are more “listener responsible.” Native users of speaker-responsible languages typically believe it is up to the speaker to be explicit about what he or she wants the listener to know. In contrast, native speakers of listener-responsible languages typically believe that speakers need indicate only indirectly what they are speaking about. They believe it is up to the listener, and not the speaker, to construct the speech’s meaning.⁴

Speech strategies organized by linear logic present support and evidence in a very direct, speaker-responsible way. In contrast, **configural formats** are less explicit in offering hard evidence in defense of a position.

Instead of previewing and discussing main points one at a time, configural thinkers approach their subject from a variety of perspectives, using examples and stories to carry the crux of their message. Because configural speakers believe the explicit stating of a message is unnecessary, those who use this style expect receivers to understand more of the subtleties in their presentation. Instead of directly stating the conclusion, the speakers lead receivers to their goal indirectly and by implication.



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Think it out. What types of speeches would work best with configural formats, and what types should follow more traditional formats?

Communication scholars identify three main systems of configural organization.

1. First is the **deferred-thesis pattern**, in which the main points of a speech gradually build up to the speaker's thesis, which the speaker does not reveal until the speech is nearly over.
2. Second is the **web pattern**, in which threads of thought refer back to the speaker's central purpose; although to Western ears the speaker may seem to be off topic at points, to receivers in other cultures the tangents the speaker explores are connected to the speaker's topic and make it more meaningful.
3. Third is the **narrative pattern**, in which the speaker tells a story or series of stories without stating a thesis or developing it with main points. When using this pattern, the speaker may only "discover" the main point via a series of illustrations and parables.⁵

Speakers who use configural patterns devise a series of "stepping stones" that circle their topic; they do not hit it head on.

The following speech outline is organized configurally. Because the speaker does not explicitly state the speech's main points, the audience will need to participate actively in interpreting what the speaker only implies.

Purpose: To persuade my audience that biological weapons research is a problem

In a configural organization, the speaker implies, rather than explicitly states, the main points.



- I. A hypothetical worker, Alan, who works in a lab funded by the defense department, inadvertently infects himself with the biological weapon he is studying.
- II. Alan suffers the kind of death that our enemies would suffer were biological weapons used during episodes of warfare.
- III. Alan's family suffers with him.
- IV. Today, members of Alan's family address Congress, asking, "How can America be involved in something like this?"

According to Richard Nisbett, there is a *geography of thought* when it comes to both the development of a worldview and the frameworks of thinking that support it.⁶ In the West, speakers summarize and offer a conclusion. In the East, speakers tend to cycle back into the same topic from different directions.⁷ The following example—offered by a professor—addresses the difference in approach:

I was surprised when one of my students who had been a teacher in China before coming here told me that she didn't understand the requirements of essay structure. I told her to write a thesis statement and then prove its three points in the following paragraphs. She told me if she wrote this way in China she would be considered stupid. "In China," she said, "essays were written in a more circular fashion moving associated ideas closer and closer to the center."⁸

While we need to be cautious about overgeneralizing—especially because people from one culture who spend time in another culture tend to adjust their thinking styles—when speaking to an audience composed of people from diverse cultures, speakers may consider adjusting their organizational preferences.

Keep this in mind when in the next chapter we turn our attention to outlining.



GAME PLAN

Organizing Your Speech

- I have reviewed all of my options for organization, and I understand their similarities and differences.
- I have chosen an organizational format that best suits my topic and goal.
- I have taken culture into account and used the organizational format that best conveys my message while adhering to speaker-responsible and/or listener-responsible strategies.
- I have considered my audience and plan to present my topic in a way that is accessible to them.



Exercises

ORGANIZATION

Use the following chapter exercises to think strategically about speech organization.

1. Organization Matters

Create a PowerPoint storyboard of a recent event or sports game at your college. Be sure to take photos of the performers or players warming up, key moments, the crowd reacting, and the performers walking off the stage or field at the end. Post the photos in random order. Ask a student who has not yet taken a course in public speaking to tell you a story about the event or game based on your PowerPoint presentation. Next, rearrange the photos in the correct sequence. Have the student describe how his or her understanding of how the event changed when the sequence of events was properly ordered.

2. Pick a Pattern

- A. Take a speech topic such as “the search for alien life.” How could you develop a speech on the subject using chronological, spatial, cause-and-effect, problem–solution, topical order, or any linear format of your choice?
- B. Using the same topic, how could you develop a speech on the subject using a configurational pattern?

3. Analyze the Speech: Contemplate Cultural Perspectives

According to cultural anthropologist Edward T. Hall, culture guides attention, helping us decide those stimuli to which we will pay attention and those we will ignore.

With this in mind, what steps should a speaker take to ensure that audience members who prefer an organizational pattern other than the one the speaker has chosen pay attention to the right things in the presentation? For example, let’s say a speaker from a low-context culture such as the United States were asked to give a speech on how globalization affects the U.S. middle class to an audience composed of economists from Saudi Arabia or Mexico. How might the speaker adapt the speech’s organizational format to appeal to members of a high-context culture? In your opinion, does changing the organizational structure also change the speech’s content, so that a speaker who makes such adaptations is no longer being true to his or her beliefs? Explain your position.

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Select a topic such as organ donation, global warming, U.S. refugee policies, the death penalty, or the European Union. Research your choice, identifying main points for the topic that would be appropriate if you were to use a chronological, spatial, cause-and-effect, problem–solution, topical, or alternative organizational pattern. Consider how each of these organizational formats affects the speech. Then, identify the organizational pattern you believe works best and why.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Explain why organization matters.** When ideas are unorganized, they are disorienting to receivers, making it difficult for them to make sense of your speech.
2. **Explain the principle of redundancy and why it is useful in a speech.** A speech is listened to—usually once. By summarizing main points we reduce the uncertainty of receivers and increase their comprehension.
3. **Identify linear organization and list some examples of this format.** Linear formats are more commonly used in the West to convey information in a direct and straightforward manner. Key linear formats include (1) chronological, (2) spatial,
- (3) cause and effect, (4) problem–solution, and (5) topical.
4. **Identify configural organization and list examples of this format.** Configural formats are nonlinear and built using subtleties, intuitive thinking, and informal logic that cycles back to the same topic from different directions. Key configural formats include (1) the deferred-thesis pattern, (2) the web pattern, and (3) the narrative pattern.
5. **Discuss how culture influences organizational preference.** Culture attunes us to different ways of thinking and processing information. We adhere to the “geography of thought” in both the development of a worldview and the frameworks of thinking that support it.

KEY TERMS

Cause-and-effect order 168

Chronological order 166

Configural formats 171

Deferred-thesis pattern 172

Linear formats 165

Narrative pattern 172

Problem–solution order 169

Spatial order 167

Topical order 170

Web pattern 172



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10

Outlining Your Speech

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Identify the parts of an outline
2. Develop a full sentence outline, adhering to appropriate form and structure
3. Prepare an extemporaneous outline or speaker's notes from a formal outline



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Once you select the organizational pattern that best supports the subject matter of your speech, you are ready to develop your outline. An outline helps organize and clarify your ideas. It guides you in deciding what material is important and what is not by forcing you to assess the relationships among ideas. When relationships are clear, the audience is better able to process and think critically about your points.

An outline also functions as a road map for your presentation. It helps you visualize how the parts of your speech fit together. An outline ensures that each part of your speech has unity and coherence, and that your main points and subpoints are well developed and supported. Use it to assess if your speech holds together before delivering it to an audience.¹ By using an outline you can

1. Confirm clarity of both the purpose statement and thesis
2. Critique construction of both main and subpoints
3. Identify placement of transitions or idea connectors

In other words, the outline helps to control the development of your material and the flow of your speech.

COACHING TIP

"The benefit of this kind of outlining is that you discover a story's flaws before you invest a lot of time writing the first draft. . . ."

—George Stephen

Outlining works. Begin the outline as soon as you start preparing your speech. Use it to double-check the underlying logic of your ideas. Fix any flaws you discover. The outline is your visual depiction of your speech. It will show you if the parts fit together well. If something doesn't belong, take it out. If something is missing, add it. Put the effort in up front and your audience will thank you by following your road map, and maintaining their focus and direction.

Section 10.1 Create an Outline That Works for You

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section 10.1



Create an Outline That Works for You

As soon as you start working on your presentation, you should begin putting your ideas into outline form. In many ways, the outline resembles a building constructed using a modular design. Instead of working with building blocks, however, you work with idea blocks and structure the outline in stages.

10.1a Establish Your Main Points

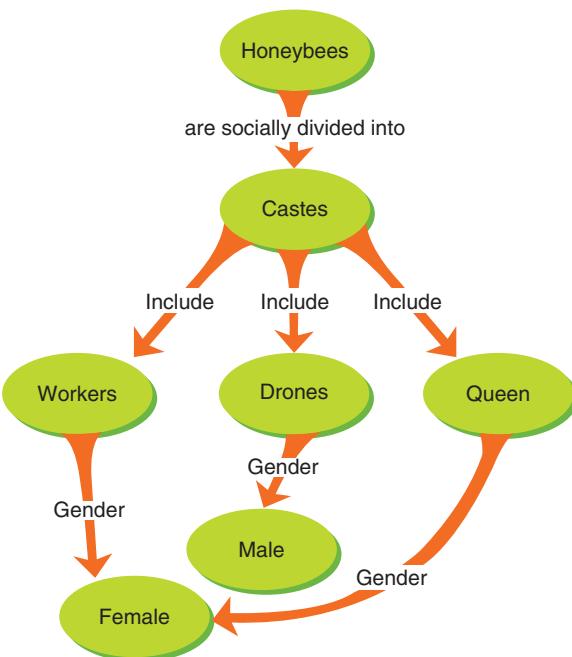
10.1b Support Main Points With Subordinate Points

10.1c Use Coordinate Points

10.1d Exhibit Parallelism

10.1e Label All Parts

FIGURE 10.1
Mind/Concept Map



- During the first stage, create a preliminary *working outline* composed of a few words to identify the key points of your speech. You can also create a mind or concept map to visualize the relationship between ideas (see Figure 10.1, from a speech about bees).
- The *full-sentence outline* is more detailed. Develop this version only after you have researched and fully fleshed out the ideas contained in the working outline.
- Finally, transform your full sentence outline into an extemporaneous outline, or speaker's notes. This becomes the outline you use to guide your delivery of the speech (see Table 10.1).

Let's imagine that you have devised the following preliminary working outline for a speech about affirmative action:

- I.** Definition
- II.** Purposes
- III.** Outcomes
- IV.** Why under attack

Your next task is to conduct your research and flesh out the full-sentence outline. The outline should fulfill the following criteria:

1. It identifies the specific purpose and thesis statement or central idea.
2. It exhibits coordination and consistency.
3. It presents a visualization of the speech, distinguishing between your main points, your speech's subtopics that directly support your thesis, and your subordinate points—those ideas that function as support or amplification for your main ideas or subtopics.
4. It reveals a division of the whole.
5. It exhibits parallelism.
6. It labels as well as indicates transitions between your introduction, the main points of the body, and the conclusion.
7. It identifies the works you consulted.

Though we later discuss and provide examples of these criteria in action, a few merit special attention.

TABLE 10.1 THREE STAGES OF OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT

STAGE	OUTLINE TYPE	DESCRIPTION
One	Preliminary working outline	Words or phrases identifying a speech's points
Two	Full sentence	Elaborates main and subpoints
Three	Extemporaneous	Speaker's notes, used when delivering a speech

10.1a Establish Your Main Points

The basic structure of an outline begins with its **main points**. Like a skeleton that gives our body shape and purpose, these ideas serve as the framework of the outline that makes a successful speech.

You want your receivers to retain the main ideas of your speech; otherwise, there would be little reason to have an audience listen to you. For example, if you were speaking on the Zika virus, you might structure your outline as one student did with two main ideas.

Purpose: To inform audience members about the fears and questions concerning the Zika virus

- I. Fears about Zika are prevalent in society today.
- II. Questions about efforts to protect against a Zika pandemic remain unanswered.

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Map it out. Not every speech has to follow one format, but no matter how you deliver it, you should always plan and outline it first.

The ordering of points should flow logically so receivers can follow the presentation easily. In the above example, the speaker chose first to confront existing fears about Zika and then to discuss the questions revolving around the disease's control and potential treatment should it develop into a pandemic. It would have made less sense for the speaker to start with how researchers plan to combat the disease and end with existing fears. However, sometimes the main points of a presentation can be attacked in any order. For example, suppose you were presenting a speech on popular hobbies. Your speech might focus on

- I. Hobbies conducted with a group
- II. Hobbies conducted alone

No particular reason exists to put main point I before II or vice versa. The order depends only on how you choose to approach the subject.

10.1b Support Main Points With Subordinate Points

Subordinate points, or subpoints, are the foundation on which larger ideas are constructed. Begin the organizational process by arranging your materials into clusters of main and subordinate ideas. As you proceed, identify which evidence supports which ideas, and keep in mind all the kinds of support identified in Chapter 8.

When you take the time to prepare an easy-to-follow structure for your speech, your main points alert receivers to listen for supporting information. Because they are not struggling to give order to a disordered array of information, they are able to focus instead on the thesis of your speech and the support you offer to build your presentation. Since your ideas are carefully laid out, you can focus on establishing a good relationship with audience members, instead of concentrating on what to say next.

The outline you develop will indicate the relative importance of each item included in it. The main points (indicated with Roman numerals I, II, III, and so on) are the most important items you want your audience to remember. Your subpoints (capital letters A, B, C, and so on) are supportive of but less important than the main points. Likewise, sub-subpoints (Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3, and so on) are supportive of but less important than subpoints. Remember to line up the entries in your outline correctly. Locate the main ideas closest to the left margin. The subpoints should begin directly underneath the first letter of each main point. Generally, at least two subpoints must support every main point.

Items that support the subpoints begin directly underneath the first letter of each subpoint. If needed, indicate the supporting materials for the sub-subpoints with lowercase letters (a, b, c, and so on). In this way, the full sentence outline functions as a visual representation of the supportive underpinnings for ideas. In general, there should be at least a 3-to-1 ratio between the total words in your speech and the number of words in your outline.

A full sentence outline using symbols and indentations for a speech on the avian flu might look like the following:



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Rock solid. Even with strong main points, a speech will fall apart without meaningful subpoints and sub-subpoints to support it.

Full Sentence Outline

SN 1 Make your main points the most prominent part of the outline by using Roman numerals and aligning them with the left margin of your page.



SN 2 Use capital letters for subpoints and indent them evenly below the first word of each main idea they support.



SN 3 Use Arabic numerals for sub-subpoints and indent them evenly below the subpoints they support.



SN 4 All main points should be of equal importance.



SN 5 Include at least two subpoints for each main point.



Specific purpose: To inform audience members about the fears and questions concerning the H5N1 avian flu (bird flu)

Central idea: Acknowledging the fears concerning avian flu and understanding the questions regarding protection can help us meet the challenges the disease presents.

- I. There is widespread fear concerning the H5N1 avian flu.
 - A. Many people fear that H5N1 avian flu is the next pandemic.
 1. There is concern that cases of human infection of H5N1 avian flu have been reported in a number of countries, including China, Cambodia, Turkey, and Iraq, among people who handled infected birds.
 2. There is concern that the H5N1 avian flu virus will mutate spontaneously, giving it greater ability to jump from human to human.
 3. There is concern that travel, especially by air, will accelerate transmission of the disease around the world.
 - B. Currently, chances of contracting H5N1 avian flu are small for people who do not have close contact with birds.
 1. Not a single bird in the United States has been found to suffer from avian influenza.
 2. Casual contact with birds will not spread flu because of the species barrier.
- II. Many questions remain regarding future efforts to protect against a pandemic strain of avian flu.
 - A. Developing a vaccine to attack a pandemic avian flu virus is problematic.
 1. Whether Tamiflu and Relenza will be effective against the pandemic version of the avian flu virus is unclear.
 2. Because scientists do not know what the pandemic flu virus will look like, a vaccine cannot yet be made.
 3. Scientists hope that the H5N1 vaccines now in trials will provide at least some protection in a pandemic.
 - B. Developing international cooperation is critical.
 1. We need to increase awareness of the threat.
 2. We need to improve surveillance and diagnosis of the disease in birds.
 - C. Developing a biosecurity system is key.
 1. The president signed an executive order adding pandemic influenza to the list of quarantinable diseases.
 2. The N95 mask provides aerosolization protection from the droplets that spread the virus.
 3. Discouraging personal stockpiling, the government is calling for the maintenance of national and regional supplies of vaccine.

10.1c Use Coordinate Points

The best outlines should consist of **coordinate points**. This simply means that all the main points you discuss should be of equal weight or substance. For example, if you were to speak about Mexican customs, you might organize them topically according to social, business, and religious customs as follows:

- I. Understanding the social customs of Mexico can improve Mexican–American relations.
- II. Understanding the business customs of Mexico can improve Mexican–American relations.
- III. Understanding the religious customs of Mexico can improve Mexican–American relations.

The outline reveals that the speaker plans to spend about the same amount of time discussing the three divisions of Mexican customs. What if the speaker were unable to find much material on religious customs? One solution would be to limit the speech to business and social customs. If there were some religious customs that were essentially social in nature, those elements might be subordinated under the social category.

- I. Here is where you put your first main point.
 - A. Your first subpoint includes evidence that supports the main point.
 1. The first sub-subpoint gives additional information about subpoint A.
 2. The second sub-subpoint gives additional information about subpoint A.
 - B. Your second subpoint includes evidence that supports the main point.
 1. The first sub-subpoint gives additional information about subpoint B.
 2. The second sub-subpoint gives additional information about subpoint B.

10.1d Exhibit Parallelism

A good outline must be devised in such a way that the concepts in it exhibit **parallelism**, that is, words, phrases, or sentences parallel each other or balance with one another, often mirroring each other. This approach also helps the audience to process and retain your speech's points.

Note that every entry is subdivided into two or more points. The entries all rely on the same grammatical pattern and are complete simple sentences. This technique also lets you think through your ideas without writing a complete manuscript.

10.1e Label All Parts

Effective outlines clearly label all parts, which eventually will include the body, which we have focused on in this chapter, together with the introduction, the conclusion, transitional tools (see the next section), and the works cited list. By handling each of the parts of your speech separately, and labeling them clearly, you take the steps necessary to ensure that you

1. Develop an adequate body of material to share
2. Prepare an effective introduction and conclusion
3. Anticipate how you will get from section to section and point to point
4. Highlight the sources (books, magazines, newspapers, government documents, television programs, interviews, and Internet sites) you consulted during the speech preparation process

You thereby improve the chances that you will realize your essential speechmaking objectives.

section 10.2



10.2a Use Transitions

10.2b Use Internal Previews

10.2c Use Internal Summaries

10.2d Use Signposts

Make Your Speech Seamless

Audience members who rely on linear logic will expect you to transmit your ideas with clarity and fluidity. They will count on you using transitional tools—transitions, internal previews, and internal summaries—as you move from one idea to the next to create a sense of coherence and unity.

10.2a Use Transitions

Moving from one main point to the next is very much like getting from one side of a river to the other. In the world, a bridge serves that purpose very nicely. In public speaking, **transitions** work as bridges from idea to idea. A transition also serves as the glue that binds your ideas into a completed presentation rather than an array of unrelated concepts.

As you work with transitions, remember that they fall into one of the four Cs:

- **Chronological transitions** help the listener understand the time relationship between the first main point and the one that follows. Words and phrases such as *before, after, later, at the same time, while, and finally* show what is happening in time order.
- **Contrasting transitions** include terms such as *but, on the one hand/on the other hand, in contrast, and in spite of*. These words show how the idea that follows differs from the ones that precede it.
- **Causal transitions** are words like *because, therefore, and consequently*; they help show the cause-and-effect relationships between the ideas.
- **Complementary transitions** help the speaker add one idea to the next. *Also, next, in addition to, and likewise* are examples.

See Table 10.2 for some examples of transitions in action.

You also may use more than words to bridge ideas. Visuals, for example, can help you transition, as can physical movement. Walking from one side of the podium to the other as you move to the next main point can serve to show your audience that you are literally changing direction from one idea to the next in your presentation.

TABLE 10.2 TRANSITIONS

TYPE	EXAMPLES
CHRONOLOGICAL	After we completed the first phase of the project . . . At the same time that we were exploring cultural values . . .
CONTRASTING	Although the money was available to build the senior center . . . On the contrary, we should also consider . . .
CAUSAL	As a result of the ways the members of different cultures define what is “real,” “good,” and “correct,” their interpretations of . . . Because the maintenance needed on the bridge was ignored . . .
COMPLEMENTARY	Likewise, our experiment was designed to demonstrate that . . . It is just as important to examine the ways in which animals . . .

10.2b Use Internal Previews

An **internal preview** also helps hold your speech together, but is generally longer than a simple transition. It prepares audience members for the information that will follow. Let's examine how previews can work for you.

In a presentation on genetic engineering, a speaker told her audience the following:

We will next consider a technique that allows biologists to transfer a gene from one species to another. It is called recombinant DNA technology.

More than just a transition, this speaker's statement gives the listener a specific indication of what to look for as the speech progresses.



Pass the baton. The audience should know when you're transitioning to a new point no matter how you accomplish it.

10.2c Use Internal Summaries

The internal preview precedes the information you are discussing; the **internal summary** follows it. Summaries help speakers clarify or emphasize what they have said. For example, here the speaker provides a mini-conclusion by noting what she just covered before introducing her next point:

It should now be clear why violent video games can desensitize young people and make them meaner. We next need to turn our attention to what we can do about it.

In this case, the internal summary is combined with an internal preview, creating a bridge to the next section of the speech.

10.2d Use Signposts

Speakers use **signposts** to make receivers aware that they are about to explain something, share an important idea, or let the audience know where they are in the progression of a speech. Signposts are indicated by an array of signaling cues such as

- Numbers (“first,” “second,” and “third”)
- Phrases designed to focus receiver attention (“You’ll especially want to keep this in mind” or “Above all else, remember this”)
- Phrases that indicate an explanation is forthcoming (“For example” or “To illustrate what I mean”)
- Rhetorical questions (“What steps can we take to make things better?” or “Why is this important?”)

In addition to facilitating the speaker’s movement from idea to idea, signposts serve as a guide for receivers, focusing the spotlight on what the speaker believes is most important. When giving a speech on the challenges posed by violence in schools, a speaker used the following signposts to mark or signal each of the main points in her speech:

- I.** The first challenge I’ll discuss is the one students face.
- II.** The second challenge I’ll discuss is the one teachers face.
- III.** The last challenge I’ll discuss is the one communities face.

Signposts also signal the end of a speech. When a speaker says something like “Finally,” or “To sum up,” the speaker is signaling the receiver that the speech is about to end. So in addition to moving a speech forward, signposts also draw it to a close.

Now it’s time to put all of the elements together. The following is an example of one student’s outline. As you read it, note the student’s use of attention-getting material at the outset, how the introduction provides a preview of the speech, which ideas the student chose to emphasize, the relationship of main points to the central idea, how subordinate ideas are used to support the main ideas, how transitional tools link ideas, and how the conclusion reinforces the speech’s purpose and make it memorable.



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Read the signs. Help your audience out by signaling important information and guiding them through the speech.

SAMPLE OUTLINE

Title: Abandonment of the Elderly

Specific purpose: To explain the growing abandonment problem that thousands of our elderly are left to experience

Central idea: Increased family stresses and a lack of government assistance are causing families in the United States and abroad to abandon their older relatives.

Introduction

- I. Nearly a half-century ago the late playwright Edward Albee wrote *The Sandbox*, a drama telling the story of a family who bring their grandmother to a playground and dump her in a sandbox.
- II. Back then Albee’s play was labeled as absurd.
- III. Now that this is happening in many countries, it is all too real.
- IV. Today, I would like to talk to you about the growing problem of granny-dumping that the elderly face.



SN 1 See Chapter 11 to learn how to introduce your speech.

continued

SN 2 Signposts signal the progress of the speech.



continued

(Transition: Let's begin by examining the story of one elderly person.)

- I. Thousands of families in the U.S. are abandoning aging parents.
 - A. John Kingery, 82, was abandoned outside a men's room in Post Falls, Idaho.
 1. His clothes were stripped of their labels.
 2. An Alzheimer's sufferer, Kingery was not able to remember his name.
 - B. Thousands of elderly Americans face similar abandonment situations, often being left in hospitals.
 1. The American College of Emergency Physicians estimates that 70,000 people are abandoned each year in hospital emergency rooms.
 2. Most of the families who abandon relatives do so because they cannot pay for the necessary care.

(Transition: This is not only an American problem. In South Korea, China, and India the elderly face a similarly uncertain future.)

- II. In South Korea, the breaching of the Confucian social contract has left many elderly people to fend for themselves.
 - A. Denied welfare, thousands of South Koreans age 65 and over commit suicide.
 1. One 78-year-old widow staged her death as a final act of public protest against a society she said had abandoned her by drinking pesticide in front of her city hall.
 2. South Koreans are denied welfare because their children are capable of supporting them.
 - B. Thousands of older Chinese face equally horrific fates.
 1. Chinese parents invest heavily in their children's education thinking the children will repay the debt to them later in life.
 2. The children do not live up to their responsibilities.
 3. Elderly parents find themselves with no financial reserves.
 - C. The elderly in India are also abandoned.
 1. Every year, thousands of grown Indian children abandon their parents.
 2. With society no longer parent-oriented, the elderly in India are left to fend for themselves.

(Transition: Why are family members and governments not living up to their responsibilities?)

- III. Responsibilities are overwhelming those here and abroad who in the past would have cared for elderly relatives.
 - A. The social fabric of societies is fraying.
 - B. Governments have not responded to the erosion of the family structure.
 - C. Caregivers suffer physical and mental stress.
 1. Exhausted caregivers become susceptible to high blood pressure and strokes.
 2. Caregivers suffer from depression.
 3. Caregivers experience guilt.

SN 3 Transitions bridge one idea to the next.



(Transition: So much for the reality of granny-dumping; what about the future?)

- IV. There are a number of ways to ensure granny-dumping ends.
 - A. Families can do more.
 - 1. They can avoid placing all of the responsibilities on one person.
 - 2. Relatives can help out with the never-ending stack of paperwork required by government agencies.
 - B. Governments can do more.
 - 1. Programs need to be added so that elderly parents can be cared for outside the home at least part of the time.
 - a. This would provide variety for the elderly parents.
 - b. Such programs would also give a much-needed rest to the family so they could avoid burnout.
 - 2. Suicide prevention centers need to be established.
 - a. The government needs to protect its people.
 - b. The elderly need to feel there is hope.
 - 3. A holistic approach to elder care needs to be adopted.

Conclusion

- I. Though Albee's *The Sandbox* was labeled as an example of absurdism some fifty years ago, granny-dumping has become an all too real and all too tragic way of life for tens of thousands of people around the world.
- II. It is time to treat our aging and elderly relatives with the respect and dignity they deserve.

 **SN 3** See Chapter 12 for guidance on concluding your speech.

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section 10.3



10.3a Prepare an Extemporaneous Outline

Practice Speaking With Your Outline

Once you have researched your topic, identified your supporting materials, and outlined your presentation, it's time to become your own audience and explore the sound and feel of your speech. Three essential ingredients in your first tryout are (1) your speech notes, (2) a clock or wristwatch, and (3) an audio or video recorder so that you can review the exact words you used to express your ideas. Before starting, check the time and turn on the recorder. Then begin speaking. In effect, what you are doing is preparing an oral rough draft of your presentation.

Look for the following elements:

1. Does your presentation consume too much or too little time?
2. Are any ideas not expressed as clearly as you would like?
3. Have you expressed the same thoughts again and again?
4. Is the structure confusing because of missing or inappropriate transitions?
5. Did you remember to include an effective attention getter?
6. Is the information in the body of your presentation too detailed or technical for receivers?
7. Does your conclusion satisfy the psychological requirements you established for it?

If you find that your main attention getter is not as effective as it could be, improve it. If the supporting material under, say, the second main point is confusing, rewrite it. Refine your speech until it is as close as possible to what you want to present. Once you reach that point, you are ready to prepare to give your speech extemporaneously.



GAME PLAN

Creating a Successful Outline

- I have a good idea of both my purpose for speaking and my topic.
- To help me brainstorm and organize my ideas, I drew a concept map and/or converted my thoughts into a written working outline.
- I developed my working outline into a full sentence outline and added subordinate points to support the main ideas.
- I have included at least two main ideas that I have supported with at least two subordinate points.

- I have added transitions so my speech flows seamlessly from one idea to the next.
- I added an introduction and conclusion that preview and review my speech's main ideas.
- I have revised my outline into speaker's notes that I used to practice my speech out loud.

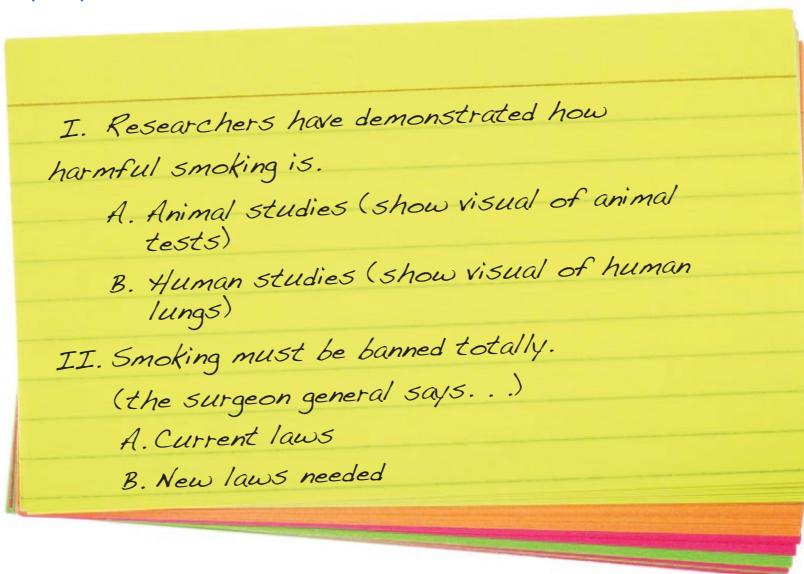
10.3a Prepare an Extemporaneous Outline

When you deliver an extemporaneous speech, instead of speaking from a script, you typically refer to a set of brief notes, called an **extemporaneous outline** or speaker's notes. This outline reminds you of the key parts of your speech and the support you will use to develop each point. The time to prepare your extemporaneous outline is after you have practiced delivering the speech a few times using a more detailed outline. Only when you are comfortable and familiar with your speech are you ready to rely exclusively on the extemporaneous outline.

Your primary goal when preparing speaker's notes is to keep them as brief as possible so you won't be tempted to read them aloud instead of maintaining eye contact with the members of your audience. It is okay, however, to include a number of delivery cues in the margins of note cards, such as "emphasize" or "hold up the visual aid," much as an actor marks up a script, to help facilitate speaking smoothness.

When creating your speaker's notes, print or type in large block letters and use just a key word or two in place of the complete sentences in your outline to remind you of your main points and subpoints.

FIGURE 10.2
Sample Speaker's Notes





Exercises

OUTLINING

Use the following activities to help you refine your outlining skills.

1. Develop an Outline of a Speech

In addition to helping you prepare your own presentation, a speech outline also helps you prepare to analyze others' presentations. If, as you listen to a speaker's ideas, you can also picture the structure of his or her ideas, you will be better able both to recall the main points of the speech and to determine whether the support the speaker supplies is adequate. After you develop a clear image of the visual framework of a speech, you are also better equipped to critique the speech and ask the speaker relevant questions.

For practice, read a speech of your choice or one assigned by your instructor. Working alone or in a group, develop a sentence outline of the main points of the speech's body. Once your outline is complete, answer these questions:

- Is the body of the speech well organized?
- Does the speech exhibit structural integrity?
- How does making an outline of the speech help you answer the two preceding questions?

2. Take the Transitional Challenge

In your next class, keep track of the transitions, internal previews, and summaries and signposts that your professor uses in class. Describe how their use promotes understanding and learning.

3. Assess the Speech: YouTube and TED

View two speeches: the first, a student's speech on YouTube; and the second, a professional speaker's "TED Talk." Develop an outline of each speaker's introduction, body, and conclusion, comparing and contrasting their use of transitional tools. Based on your examination of the outlines, which speech do you believe exhibited more structural integrity and why?

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Based on the information in this chapter as well as research you conduct independently, prepare a podcast or YouTube video on the tenets of outlining, being certain to discuss each of the outline's parts along with your guidelines for creating one that is effective.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Identify the parts of an outline.** An outline is a speech road map. It contains the following parts: the specific purpose, the thesis, the main ideas, the introduction, the body (composed of key main and supporting points), transitions, and the conclusion.
- 2. Develop a full-sentence outline, adhering to appropriate form and structure.** Developing an outline helps the speaker organize his or her thoughts into a meaningful framework. An effective outline exhibits (1) coordination and consistency, (2) subordination, (3) a division of the whole, and (4) parallel structure.
- 3. Prepare an extemporaneous outline or speaker's notes from a formal outline.** Once an outline is completed, the speaker then develops a shortened version of the outline containing key words to use during the presentation.

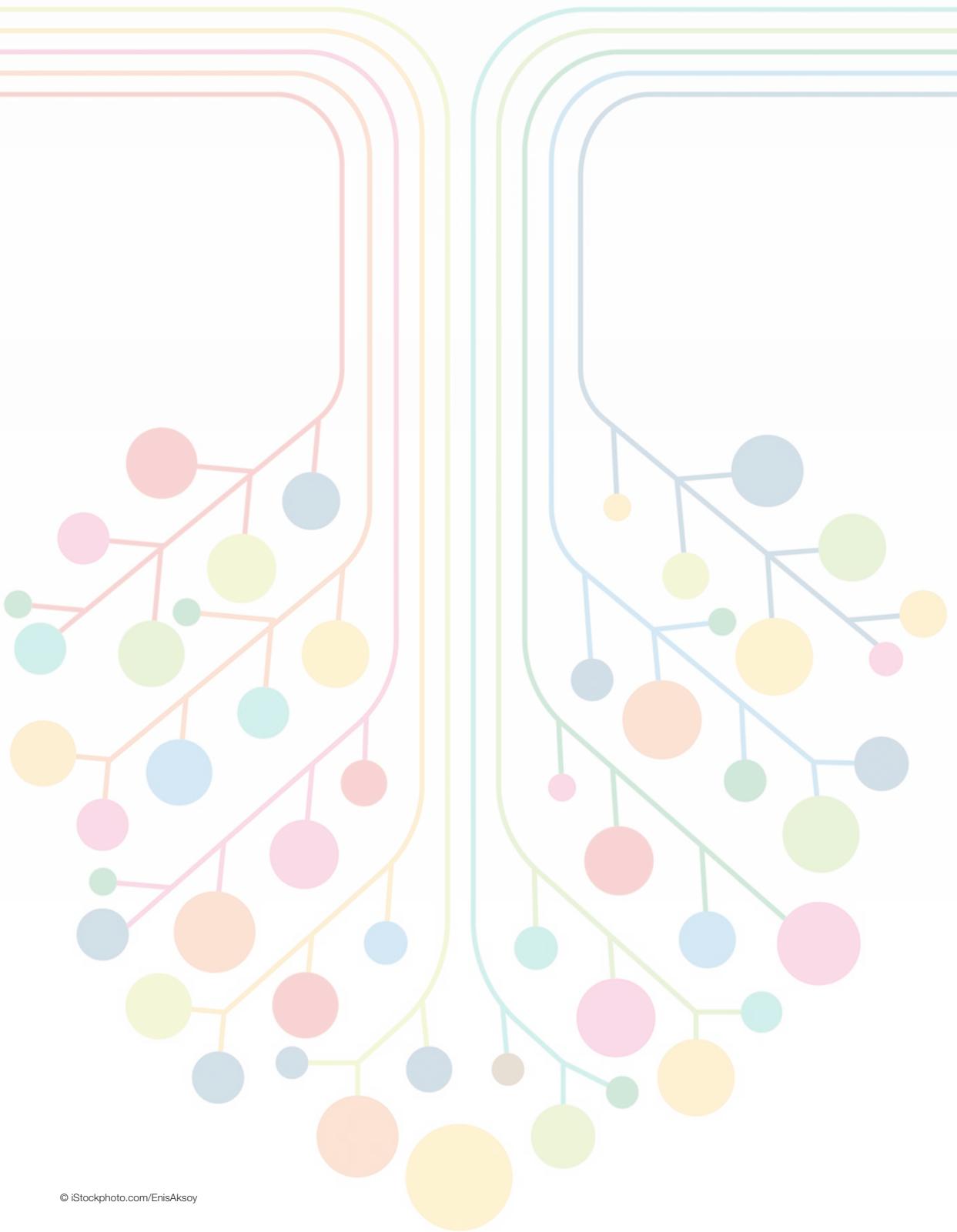
KEY TERMS

Causal transitions 184	Extemporaneous outline 191	Signposts 186
Chronological transitions 184	Internal preview 185	Subordinate points 181
Complementary transitions 184	Internal summary 186	Transitions 184
Contrasting transitions 184	Main points 180	
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Present Your Speech

Chapter 11: Introducing Your Speech

Chapter 12: Concluding Your Speech

Chapter 13: Wording the Speech

Chapter 14: Styles of Delivery

Chapter 15: The Speaker's Voice

Chapter 16: Physical Aspects of Delivery

Chapter 17: Using Presentation Aids





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11

Introducing Your Speech

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain how an introduction affects a speech
2. Describe the purposes served by introductions
3. Identify at least five ways to introduce a speech
4. Use the introduction to capture attention, build credibility, and preview the speech's main ideas
5. Avoid introduction pitfalls

Contents

Think about the opening song at a rock concert and its effect on fans. The introduction of your speech works the same way. During the first few moments of a presentation, audience members form their initial impression of both the speaker and the speech. How you begin affects the motivation to listen.

There is wide agreement that opening strong is vital to speechmaking success. According to speech coach Stephen C. Rafe, author of *How to Be Prepared to Speak on Your Feet*, “You have to develop the best possible opening—one that will catch your audience’s attention from the first words you speak.”¹

If you succeed in convincing the audience that what you have to share merits their attention, their faces will register appreciation and concentration, their bodies will display interest and concern, and they will sit still and listen to you.

Though it is often the last part of a speech to be written, and usually takes only about 10 percent of total speaking time, an effective introduction captures attention and interest, builds your credibility and goodwill, and orients receivers to the organizational pattern your speech will follow. The better you are at accomplishing these objectives, the more likely it is that your audience will listen.

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Section 11.4 Avoid These Common Introductory Bloopers



Get Your Audience's Attention

Audience members quickly form impressions of you. Unless your speech attracts attention and builds interest from the outset, you may fail to communicate your point simply because the audience isn't listening. Let's look at several effective attention-getting techniques:

11.1a Startle or Shock the Audience

11.1b Involve the Audience

11.1c Arouse Curiosity and Build Suspense

11.1d Quote a Relevant Source

11.1e Use Humor

11.1f Arouse Emotion

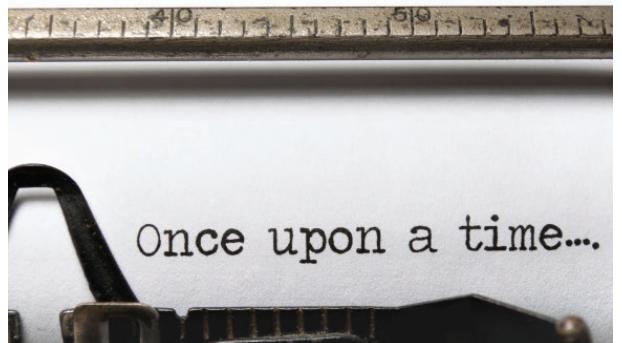
- Startle or shock the audience
- Directly involve the audience
- Arouse curiosity and build suspense
- Use an interesting quote from a relevant source
- Use humor
- Use a story to arouse emotion

11.1a Startle or Shock the Audience

The goal of an introduction is to compel attention. The speaker's initial words make such an impact that it becomes virtually impossible for the thoughts of audience members to stray. Consider the opening of this speech, titled "The Story of the Lost Corpse":

I've spent my career as a hospital administrator talking about the need for values, but it's not always easy to walk the walk, especially when a crisis erupts and the most expedient response is often the unethical one—I learned that the day we lost a corpse. We had two bodies in the morgue of a hospital I previously led; one was going to be taken to a mortuary for a traditional funeral and the other was going to a university as a donation to science. As it turned out, the wrong body went to the university. . . . My risk manager gave me the news. I asked him what he thought we should do, and he promptly responded, "No harm, no foul. No one knows, so let's leave it that way." . . .

That didn't seem the appropriate response, and it was contrary to the values of the hospital. I told him, "If it was your loved one, you wouldn't have wanted the body to be taking a ride across the state to the university." . . . I decided to inform the family.²



Storytime. Opening with a story, whether it's a personal anecdote, about someone's life, or a fictional plot, can grab your audience's attention.

Startling or shocking statements are effective and easy to use. However, you need to weigh carefully how much shock effect is consistent with an honest treatment of the topic. With that in mind, evaluate your attention getter:

- Will audience members perceive it as relevant to the topic?
- Will they follow it without difficulty?
- Will it ignite their interest?

Using an introduction only because of its shock value but failing to connect it to your remarks can lead audience members to become confused or irritated rather than interested. Startling statements must be both true and supportable.

11.1b Involve the Audience

When audience members believe your topic directly affects them, or is something for which they share personal responsibility, they will pay closer attention.³ Notice how in the very first sentence of a speech on the Prozac family of drugs, the speaker immediately draws you in:

Congratulations! You have all been invited to play “Choose Your Own Personality,” and take a spin at the Prozac wheel. What do you win? A legitimate cure to chronic depression? A chance at one of a dozen annoying and dangerous side effects? Or a whole new personality!⁴

11.1c Arouse Curiosity and Build Suspense

Rhetorical questions—questions requiring no overt answer or response—are curiosity arousers and suspense builders. As your listeners mull over how to respond to your question(s), their participation is ensured.

In a speech on the five stages of sleep, one student asked the audience:

Have you ever bragged that you don’t need sleep? Well according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine people who sleep less than seven hours nightly have a 26 percent greater death rate than those who sleep seven to eight hours a night.⁵

Imagine being in that audience. How would you respond if asked that same question? You’d probably start thinking about how much you sleep, and thus one objective of the introduction would be realized. You would then begin to wonder “How?” and “Why?” The speaker can pave a path for you to travel with him or her with a single question.



Heidiimages/Getty Images

Keep them guessing. Building suspense and relying on the natural curiosity of audience members are effective attention getters.

11.1d Quote a Relevant Source

Sometimes a quotation is the most effective technique you can use both to impress your audience and to capture their attention. The words of a well-known figure, a passage from a work of literature, or a familiar phrase may help you communicate information in a more persuasive or comprehensible manner than your words alone could otherwise accomplish.

Delivering a speech at the Israeli Embassy in Washington D.C., president Barack Obama enhanced his credibility by quoting from the Talmud:

The Talmud teaches that if a person destroys one life, it is as if they've destroyed an entire world, and if a person saves one life, it is as if they've saved an entire world.⁶

The words of ordinary people can also be used when appropriate to arouse greater interest. So can nearly any other quotable source. Speaking about past racial and economic injustices, one student began her speech with these words:

Have you ever wondered how your world differs from the world your grandparents grew up in? When I was in high school, I asked my great-grandma what it was like growing up when she was young. Her words stung: "When I was your age, the high school was all white. No blacks were allowed to attend it. I played sports on an all white team because no blacks were allowed to play on our teams. I rode in the front of the bus. They could not. They also couldn't drink out of the fountain I drank from. And they couldn't sit next to me in the luncheonette. I never even met a black person until I left our town and went off to college." My grandmother's world lacked diversity. It was colorless rather than color-full.

11.1e Use Humor

When used wisely, appropriately, and with discretion, humor encourages audience attention and portrays the speaker as a likeable, friendly person.⁷ In many ways humor acts as a bridge to goodwill.

Humor works best when it is directly related to the content of a speech and not merely "stuck on" for effect or as an afterthought. Addressing Dartmouth's graduating class, Conan O'Brien began with these words:

Before I begin, I must point out that behind me sits a highly admired president of the United States and decorated war hero while I, a cable television talk show host, have been chosen to stand here and impart wisdom. I pray I never witness a more damning example of what is wrong with America today.⁸

If you think audience members might find the humor you are considering using offensive, don't use it. While humor that pokes fun at the speaker him- or herself or the human condition usually is effective, at no time are racist, sexist, ethnic, and off-color jokes or stories appropriate.

11.1f Arouse Emotion

When integrated effectively into introductions, stories also capture listener attention and hold listener interest. We all enjoy a good story, and if that story is filled with the drama of human interest and is amusing or suspenseful, we enjoy it even more. Of course, the story you use should not only involve the audience, it should also be clearly relevant to the issues you discuss in your speech.

A student used the following story in the introduction of her speech on fraternities to depict a problem in a way her audience would understand.

Chuck was a sophomore at Alfred University in New York. He was a typical student with goals and dreams, just like yours and mine. He was a student who wanted to be accepted by his peers so badly that he'd do almost anything for his newly found "brothers," including allowing himself to be locked in a car trunk in the middle of winter, and consuming a bottle of wine, a quart of Jack Daniels, and a six pack. This pledge's dreams went the way of alcohol poisoning and overexposure.⁹

In addition, if the story involves you or someone you know personally it can also help establish your experience with the topic. Michael Eisner, former CEO and chairman of the Walt Disney Company, used this story to introduce his speech on what it takes to manage a creative organization:

Humbling is something at Disney we encourage. It reminds me of an experience one of our young American Disney executives had when he was opening a new office for us in London and wanted to impress his new British secretary. As she entered his office, he was speaking on the telephone and said, "Why, of course, your majesty, think nothing of it. You can call me any time. See you soon. Regards to Prince Philip."

Then he hung up and said, "Oh, hello, Miss Brown. Did you want to see me?"

"I just wanted to tell you, sir," says the secretary, "that the men are here to hook up your telephone."¹⁰

In addition to capturing the attention of receivers, stories add color to a speech and also help the speaker make the ideas in the speech less abstract and more concrete.

section 11.2



11.2a See Yourself Through Their Eyes

11.2b Demonstrate Your Credibility

11.2c Establish Topic Credibility and Relevance

11.2d Connect Credibility and Culture

Build Your Credibility

Aside from capturing your audience's attention and engaging them in your ideas, your introduction also should build your credibility. Part of your job is to convince receivers that you are a knowledgeable and believable source.

11.2a See Yourself Through Their Eyes

Credibility is based on a receiver's judgment of a source's expertise on a particular topic. Once a speaker convinces you that he or she is qualified, sincere, and someone with whom you can identify, you will likely perceive that person as trustworthy and believable. Whether the speaker actually possesses those qualities is not the issue; in your eyes, the speaker is someone whom you believe is competent to offer you advice, has your best interests at heart, and is a person of goodwill.

You may, of course, respect the speaker's competence when it comes to some subject areas but not others. You may, for example, be ready to listen to the advice the television personality Dr. Phil offers on psychological matters but discount his beliefs regarding financial issues. Thus, you need to help your receivers understand why you are qualified to speak on your chosen topic. You might show them that you know what you are talking about by sharing experiences, interests, and research findings related to your topic.

Your audience members' initial impressions of you will be based on how you look, what you say, and how you communicate during your opening remarks. Speakers who are well dressed, passionate about the importance of their topics, speak clearly, use inclusive language, make eye contact, and stand with an open body position are seen as more credible than speakers who lack these qualities. If at the end of your introduction audience members believe you are qualified to speak on your chosen topic, if they identify with you and respond to you because they like and trust you, then in their eyes you will be a credible source.



In the mirror. Be aware of how you will come across to others in the introduction of your speech.

11.2b Demonstrate Your Credibility

To hone your own level of credibility, answer these five questions as you draft your speech.

1. Why should audience members listen to me?
2. What have I done or experienced that qualifies me to speak on the topic?
3. How personally committed am I to the ideas I am about to share with my audience?
4. What steps can I take to communicate my concerns and enthusiasm to the audience?
5. How can I use my appearance, attitude, and delivery to help establish my goodwill and make my case?

If you are mindful of the ways listeners perceive you, then you will find that you can use attitude, demeanor, and content to build your credibility in their eyes.

Notice how student Ann Marie Ursini uses her abilities as well as research to build credibility with receivers in a speech on the need for Americans to speak a foreign language. As you read this excerpt, consider how effectively she communicates her thesis to receivers:

America is facing a crisis of ignorance. *Es muy probable que ustedes no estan entendiendo lo que yo digo ahora.* If you are like the majority of Americans, you have no idea what I just said. Which is essentially what I said, only I said it in Spanish and therein lies the problem. Since you are all “speechies” of one sort or another, I certainly do not need to impress upon you the importance of communication. However, most Americans are currently depriving themselves of a tremendous tool that could open up whole new worlds—the ability to communicate in a foreign language.¹¹

Your ability to show your audience members your concern for them will encourage them to listen to you. Both the sincerity of your voice and the commitment portrayed by your facial expressions, eye contact, and gestures can enhance your audience's opinion of you and do much to cement the feeling of goodwill that is so integral to their assessments of your credibility. When your listeners understand how you personally relate to the subject, they are better able to relate to it and to you.



Believable. How can you effectively use your tone, demeanor, eye contact, and stance to convey passion and genuineness in your speech?

11.2c Establish Topic Credibility and Relevance

The audience needs to understand how your topic affects them. They need to be provided with a credible reason to listen—an answer to the question: What's in it for me?

Would these words from a student speech about the cost of a college degree have relevance for you? Do you find them credible?

Here we are at college. Many of us have taken loans to finance our educations. The average debt of a student in a liberal arts college is over \$20,000, which works out to a loan payment of about \$248 a month. That's a lot when you consider that graduates of liberal arts colleges will only earn about \$40,000 a year according to PayScale.com. How much will you owe when you complete your education?

Since many students take out loans that will take years to repay, the speaker enhanced her credibility by establishing a problem she and her audience shared in common.

11.2d Connect Credibility and Culture

In some cultures, speakers are emotional and passionate, while in others they are restrained and unexpressive. If you are of the same sex, ethnic background, and age as the majority of your audience members, you have an obvious advantage. But most

speakers cannot count on having such a uniform audience. Again, it is up to you to think critically and plan your opening not only to excite and motivate listeners but also to establish common ground with them.

Former president Bill Clinton accomplished this in a speech given to African American leaders on the site in Memphis where the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. delivered what turned out to be the last speech of his life. The president began his remarks with phrases that reflected the words King had used nearly three decades earlier. Clinton adopted King's tone, words, and style in an effort to establish his own credibility and win over his audience.¹²

Clinton began his address:

I am glad to be here. You have touched my heart. You have brought tears to my eyes and joy to my spirit.¹³

He then continued by referring to the Bible:

The proverb says, "A happy heart doeth good like medicine, but a broken spirit dryeth the bone."¹⁴

By emulating King, Clinton sounded a lot like a preacher. He also established himself as a concerned member of the community, one who shared the same interests as his receivers, and whom they now viewed as more credible. By identifying and sharing the concerns of your receivers, you can enhance your cultural credibility as well.

Preview the Big Ideas

In addition to attracting attention and building your credibility, a good introduction sets the scene for your presentation, preparing audience members for what is to come. If you focus on your goal, your listeners' eyes, ears, and hearts will follow. A preview

1. Lets the audience know your speech's subject and purpose
2. Identifies the main ideas that will constitute the body of your speech

From the very beginning, your audience should have a pretty clear understanding of your intended topic (unless you are using a configural format; see Chapter 9). If your introduction fails to introduce the subject of your speech, the audience's attention will remain unfocused. Your introduction should clarify, and not confuse receivers.

Notice how one student used this brief, but effective, introduction to prepare the audience for the body of the speech:

Gossip has a bad reputation. It hasn't always had, and it doesn't always deserve it. Allow me to give you the real scoop. . . . First, I will give you a brief overview of the history of gossip. Then, I'll explain how it fulfills psychological needs, how it functions anthropologically, and finally, how gossip is real news.¹⁵



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Coming attractions. Your introduction should set the scene of your argument to pique the interest of your audience.

Avoid These Common Introductory Bloopers

To ensure all goes smoothly and avoid committing an introductory foul, follow these guidelines:

- **Don't forget to prepare.** Lack of preparation is not something audience members readily forgive. Lack of preparation demonstrates a lack of commitment on your part. Simply be prepared.
- **Don't pretend to be what you are not.** Audience members want to know you; they want to know what you think, what you feel, and why. If you pretend to know something when you don't, or pretend to feel something when you don't care, then in time—usually sooner rather than later—you will be exposed as a fraud.
- **Don't rely on gimmicks.** Treat the audience fairly. If you trick them into paying attention, in the end, they won't. If an introduction doesn't suit your topic, don't use it.



COACHING TIP

"You have only one chance to make a good first impression."

—Anonymous

Attention! The first words you speak to an audience should both command attention and establish a connection. Involve the audience. Build your esteem in their eyes. Add momentum to your speech. By crafting a winning attention getter, you give your speech a running start.

- **Don't be long-winded.** Under ordinary circumstances your introduction should use about 10 percent of your speech. If you persist in introducing your ideas, you'll find that by the time you get to the body of your speech, your audience will be short on patience and endurance.
- **Don't create the introduction first.** It's a lot easier to make a good decision about how to begin your speech after you have prepared the body of your presentation.

Remember, although a good introduction is no guarantee that your speech will be successful, if you don't invest time and effort in preparing it, you are almost certain to build an impenetrable wall between you and your listeners.



GAME PLAN

Creating a Captivating Introduction

- Based on my topic and personality, I am using curiosity and suspense/humor/emotion/a relevant quotation to capture the attention of my audience members.
- I've considered our shared experiences and built upon our common ground to develop an introduction that establishes a positive relationship with my audience.
- I've made sure that my introduction includes the necessary information to orient receivers to the thesis of my speech by previewing its main ideas.
- I have established my own credibility and relevance to the topic to satisfy audience members' skepticism.



Exercises

THE INTRODUCTION

Creating an effective introduction takes practice and skill. To hone your ability, use these training camp drills to get your introduction in shape.

1. Captivate Me

First prepare hypothetical startling statements you could use to introduce a speech on one of the following topics:

- Gun Safety
- Transgender Rights
- Preparing for Final Exams
- Hazards of Bicycle Riding

Then create an introduction that is designed to arouse the audience's curiosity or emotion about one of these topics:

- Affirmative Action
- Vaccinations
- Gluten
- Doctors Without Borders

2. Learn From TV

Spend time carefully watching television advertisements. Describe examples of ads that use startling or shocking openers, rhetorical examples, humor, or emotion to capture audience attention and encourage involvement. Then find examples of openers that are used by local or national news programs to do the same.

3. Analyze This Introduction

Select a recent speech from *Vital Speeches of the Day* or TED Talks. Evaluate the extent to which the speaker used the introduction to capture attention, build credibility, and preview the content of the speech.

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Develop three possible introductions for a speech on any one of the following subjects, or a subject of your choice:

Ageism	Depression	Free Speech
NSA Spying	Bullying	Eleanor Roosevelt
Comets	Political Correctness	Space Travel

Present your introductions to the class. Then ask your classmates to tell you whether they found them effective and which they found most effective.

In a one- to two-page paper explain the techniques you relied on in each introduction to attract audience attention, build your own credibility, and forecast what is to follow.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Explain how an introduction affects a speech.

The way a speaker introduces a presentation influences the interest level of receivers and affects receivers' initial perception of the speaker.

2. Describe the purposes served by introductions.

Effective introductions serve these key functions: (1) they capture attention, (2) they build credibility, and (3) they orient receivers to the organizational development and tone of the speech.

3. Identify at least five ways to introduce a speech.

To fulfill the functions of an introduction speakers rely on a number of techniques: they startle or shock receivers, directly involve receivers, arouse curiosity or build suspense, make their listeners smile or laugh with them, or move them with stories.

4. Use the introduction to capture attention, build credibility, and preview the speech's main ideas.

Speakers seize attention by surprising the audience, involving them, relating an interesting quote, using

humor, and appealing to emotion. In order to build credibility, the speaker first must understand how receivers perceive them and then help the audience view them as qualified. To accomplish this, they relate personal experiences, identify credentials, use reputable sources, establish topic relevance, and build common ground. Effective introductions also communicate the subject of a speech and its purpose, as well as preview what's to come.

5. Avoid introduction pitfalls.

During introductions speakers should not apologize for lack of preparation, pretend to be what they are not, rely on irrelevant gimmicks, or be long winded. The introduction should also not be created before the speech's body.

KEY TERMS

Rhetorical questions 199



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12

Concluding Your Speech

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UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Describe the purposes conclusions serve
2. Identify at least five ways to conclude a speech
3. Avoid conclusion pitfalls
4. Develop conclusions that achieve multiple goals

Contents

Picture this. You're at a soccer game. The game is almost over. The score is tied. All the fans are on edge. The star striker, taken down in the box just as she was about to shoot, is given a free kick. She lines up, fakes to the right, then drives the ball past the goalie into the net! A thrilling finish means everyone will remember the game's outcome. That's the kind of reaction you want to create in the audience as you deliver your speech's conclusion.

During a presentation's final few moments, the audience listens and observes as the speaker does his or her best to drive home the message of the speech while leaving the audience with a favorable impression. An appropriate ending can make or break the entire speech. It should compel the audience to continue thinking about your speech—even after you have stopped speaking.

COACHING TIP

"You've got to be very careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there."

— Yogi Berra

End your speech with flair. The conclusion is a significant moment in your speech's life. It is when you "get there." Take advantage of your last few moments speaking to remind the audience why your ideas are important and why they should care. You have one final chance to be sure you reach your goal and connect with the audience. Make it memorable!

Section 12.1 End Strong

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- 12.1b Forecast the Finish Line, 213
- 12.1c Restate the Central Idea or Thesis, 214
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Section 12.2 Avoid These Common Concluding Pitfalls

section 12.1



12.1a Keep It Short

12.1b Forecast the Finish Line

12.1c Restate the Central Idea or Thesis

12.1d Motivate the Audience (Again)

12.1e Achieve Closure

End Strong

Sharon Bower, speech consultant and author of *Painless Public Speaking*, explains, “Listeners forget long, colorless, and complicated endings. . . . A final statement should be short and sweet: short to listen to and sweet to remember.”¹ And speech coach Stephen C. Rafe, author of *How to Be Prepared to Speak on Your Feet*, advises that you “look over your material and ask yourself, ‘What is the most important or logical way to end this communication?’ Pick the kind of ending that works best for your audience, your situation, your topic, and your intentions.”²

A well-designed conclusion fulfills these functions:

1. It lets the audience know a presentation is drawing to a close.
2. It summarizes key ideas the speaker shared.
3. It “wows” receivers, reenergizing them and reminding them of the response the speaker seeks.
4. It provides the speech with a sense of closure.

The final minutes you and your audience are together constitute your last opportunity to position your ideas firmly in their minds. It takes great skill to end a game in a way that brings fans to their feet. The same is true for a speech. Although you might be tempted to take the easy way out and bring your speech to a close with a “That’s all folks” or “And so it goes,” doing so could destroy an otherwise fine presentation. Instead, put audience members in a mood conducive to achieving your goals by ending your speech in as memorable a way as you began it. If you do this, you’ll add additional “wow” power to your words and achieve closure, much like early colonial patriot Patrick Henry did when he delivered these closing lines to his speech: “I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death.” His ending is part of our national heritage and an example of how a great ending to a speech is constructed.³ Although the conclusions you create may not become part of our national heritage, you can design conclusions that rouse your audience.

12.1a Keep It Short

A conclusion should not be lengthy. The average conclusion makes up about 5 percent of a speech. However, just as with your introduction, the materials you use in your speech's conclusion must be relevant to your topic, appropriate to the audience and occasion, interesting, and involving. They also need to provide audience members with a sense of completion. The conclusion is your last chance to put the spotlight exactly where you want it to shine.

At the close of one student's speech on the importance of regular exercise, for example, in about 60 seconds he reminded the audience of the results of the physical activity survey he provided when he began the speech, reviewed the health risks that regular exercise reduces, and then ended with these words: "The bottom line is that while many people fail to appreciate that exercising, even a little, is the quick fix to improving our health and quality of life, we thankfully are no longer among them. We get it. And we'll do it."⁴

12.1b Forecast the Finish Line

A conclusion should not take the audience by surprise. Instead, cue the audience that you are about to stop speaking. You might pause, decrease or increase your speaking rate, build momentum, alter your voice tone, or cue them with a transitional phrase. For example, you might say, "In conclusion," "To review," or "Let me end by noting . . ." Such techniques help your audience adjust to the fact that you are approaching the speech's end.

Here is how Talbot D'Alemberte, one-time president of the American Bar Association, signaled the end of a speech on civil justice reform:

In closing, I want to pay special tribute to lawyers like you who have devoted so much time and energy to our profession. The bar binds us together as a profession uniquely responsible for ensuring justice in our society. Our involvement reminds us that the law is a calling and not simply an occupation or a business.⁵



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Finish strong. A well-crafted conclusion should be memorable and reinforce the goals of your speech.

12.1c Restate the Central Idea or Thesis

New ideas have no place in the conclusion to a speech. Instead, use the conclusion to reinforce the main points you want audience members to remember. Think of it this way: You are putting your presentation on “rewind” for a moment. In order to accomplish this, you can

- Recap your central idea or thesis and your main points one last time so your audience enjoys an instant replay of your position and your rationale.
- Use a quotation that summarizes or highlights your point of view.
- Make a dramatic statement that drives home why audience members should be motivated and committed to respond as you desire.
- Take the audience full circle by referring to your introduction.

John F. McDonnell, chairman and CEO of McDonnell Douglas, used the conclusion of a talk entitled “PaxPacifica” to reemphasize his speech’s thesis and main points:

In closing, I want to restate the point I made at the outset. There are good and compelling reasons why the U.S. should encourage the export of U.S.-made weapons to friendly nations around the globe. This would serve U.S. strategic interests and it would help shape up the U.S. defense industrial base at a time of declining defense spending. When it is allowed to compete, the U.S. defense industry is not only competitive, but is almost always the first choice of the most knowledgeable customers around the world.⁶

12.1d Motivate the Audience (Again)

Just as an effective introduction motivates audience members to listen to a speech, an effective conclusion motivates receivers to respond appropriately. Your conclusion is no place for you to let up on effort or energy. It certainly is no place for you to let down your audience. Instead, take the time you need to create a striking ending that supports and sustains your speech's theme.

Many of the same kinds of materials you used to develop your introduction can help you set a proper concluding mood. Reminding receivers of a startling fact, using a quotation, integrating humor, asking a rhetorical question, or using an effective story can pump up a conclusion.

For example, one speaker used a humorous quotation to set the mood for continued contemplation and action by audience members. In a speech entitled "Rediscovering a Lost Resource: Rethinking Retirement," the speaker closed with this anecdote:

Listen to Warren Buffet, who has built an investment empire. When asked a few years ago about leaving a woman in charge of one of his companies after celebrating her 94th birthday, he replied, "She is clearly gathering speed and may well reach her full potential in another five or ten years. Therefore, I've persuaded the board to scrap our mandatory-retirement-at-100 policy. My God, good managers are so scarce I can't afford the luxury of letting them go just because they've added a year to their age."¹⁷



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Don't let up. Maintain your energy at the conclusion of your speech to motivate and inspire your audience.

12.1e Achieve Closure

An effective means of giving a speech balance is to refer in the conclusion to ideas explored in the introduction, achieving **closure**. You might reuse a theme you introduced at the beginning of your speech, ask or answer the rhetorical question you used at its outset, refer to an opening story, or restate an initial quotation. Integrating any one of these strategies helps to provide audience members with a desired sense of logical and emotional closure. Because such strategies help your speech sound finished, audience members are not left wondering whether your speech is actually over. Leave your audience hanging and you leave your ideas hanging. If your conclusion convinces audience members that you have delivered what you promised in your introduction, they are more likely to accept your thesis and take the action you advocate.

After opening her speech celebrating the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. with references to a letter about racial injustice that King had written from a Birmingham jail back in 1963, the speaker ended her speech by coming full circle:

We have a chance to glimpse what Dr. King described in his closing words of the Letter from the Birmingham Jail . . . “the radiant stars of love and brotherhood will shine over our great nation with all of their scintillating beauty.”

And all God’s people said . . . Amen.⁸

By referring back to ideas explored earlier in their speeches, speakers help audience members acknowledge the wholeness and completeness of their presentations.

Avoid These Common Concluding Pitfalls

An effective conclusion leaves the audience fulfilled and in the mood to think about or do what you recommend. Your closing comments are your last chance to make a good impression and fulfill the purpose of your speech. Because it comes last, the conclusion is the part of the speech your audience will remember most clearly. Make sure to leave a positive final impression by avoiding these pitfalls:

- **Don't end abruptly.** A conclusion needs to be built carefully, or the ideas you've worked so hard to develop will topple like a house of cards. Let your audience know you are wrapping up so they aren't caught by surprise.
- **Don't be long-winded.** When you end a speech, you cross the finish line. Hang around that finish line too long without crossing it, and your audience could lose interest in you and your ideas at a very critical juncture. Build your conclusion, but keep it tight.
- **Don't introduce new ideas.** Though it's appropriate to restate in a fresh way the ideas you've covered in your speech, it's not appropriate to introduce new ideas in the conclusion. The conclusion is your last opportunity to drive home important points, not the time to start making new ones.
- **Don't end with a thud.** Devise a conclusion that will stick in the minds of your listeners, not one that may have little, if any, impact on what they retain. If you create an ending that has real emotional appeal, you will inspire rather than let down your audience. Your ending should be striking, not count as a strike against you.



GAME PLAN

Writing a Compelling Conclusion

- I know how much time is allotted for my speech, and I've made sure that the conclusion is no more than 5 percent of the total time.
- I have included transition words such as "in closing" to forecast the speech's end for my audience.
- After I transition into my conclusion, I don't introduce new ideas but rather focus on recapping my thesis and key ideas.
- I've used one of the techniques discussed in this chapter to elicit an appropriate reaction from audience members so my words will linger in their minds.



Exercises

THE CONCLUSION

Learning to create a memorable conclusion will help you keep your speeches from simply petering out.

1. Reinforce Common Ground

A speaker can use a conclusion as a communication bridge. By reaffirming the concerns and interests a speaker and audience share in common, the speaker reinforces their **common ground** and increases the likelihood that the audience will respond as the speaker desires. For example, Coca-Cola created a global marketing campaign that focused on the unifying themes of joy, laughter, sports, and music. By “selling” these universal themes, company executives contended they could “achieve more by doing one promotion globally.”⁹

A public speaker is able to accomplish much the same thing—that is, a speech can be written so that it is understood and responded to similarly by audiences in different parts of the world. You are asked to create a speech on Self-Driving Cars that would speak to audiences in New York City, Shanghai, Moscow, and Rome. What themes would you employ to make the speech appealing across borders?

2. Analyze This Conclusion

Lauren had outlined the body of a presentation on the dangers of drinking and driving. She chose the topic because her brother had been hit and killed by a drunk driver and she conducted extensive primary and secondary research in preparation for her speech. Now nearing the end of her preparation, Lauren began crafting her speech’s conclusion. She had agonized over the introduction, but ultimately chose to discuss the death of her brother in the introduction, telling the sad story as if it had happened to someone else. Lauren had an idea. “Maybe, what I should do,” she thought, “is reveal in the conclusion that the person killed was not a stranger, but my own brother.”

- Respond to Lauren’s idea. Does it fulfill the guidelines discussed in this chapter?
- What other options would you recommend she consider?
- Locate a speech on drinking and driving on YouTube. Analyze its conclusion according to the following criteria: Did the speaker signal that the speech was coming to an end? Summarize the speech’s key points? Restate the speech’s central idea or thesis? Achieve closure? Did the speaker’s conclusion invite the audience to respond? Did the conclusion add to the speech’s memorability?

3. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Review the introductions you created in Chapter 11’s Approach the Speaker’s Stand. Develop a conclusion to join each of the introductions you created, or develop three conclusions on different topics identified here or other topics you find interesting.

Ageism	Depression	Free Speech
NSA Spying	Bullying	Eleanor Roosevelt
Comets	Political Correctness	Space Travel

Present your conclusions to the class. Then ask your classmates to tell you whether they found them effective.

In a one- to two-page paper, explain the techniques you relied on to signal the conclusion, reemphasize your theme and main points, and motivate listeners to respond as you desire. Explain which introduction and conclusion you believe audience members would find most effective and why.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Describe the purposes conclusions serve.

Effective conclusions serve four key functions: (1) forecast the end of a speech, (2) reemphasize the central idea of a speech, (3) motivate receivers to respond as a speaker desires, and (4) provide a speech with a sense of closure.

2. Identify at least five ways to conclude a speech.

To achieve the functions of conclusions, speakers should keep their closing words short, use cues to help receivers adjust to the fact that a speech is ending, review key points covered, use a dramatic statement or quotation to reinforce a speech's

central idea(s), and take the audience full circle by referring to the speech's introduction, thereby creating a sense of closure.

3. Avoid conclusion pitfalls.

When concluding, speakers should not end too abruptly, be long-winded, introduce new ideas, or end with a thud.

4. Develop conclusions that achieve multiple goals.

Develop conclusions that forecast a speech's end, summarize a speech's main points, elicit a desired response from receivers, compel them to continue thinking about your message, and provide closure.

KEY TERMS

Closure 216

Common ground 218



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13

Wording the Speech

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UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain how words work
2. Use words that connect with receivers
3. Use words that demonstrate your consideration of the audience
4. Make strategic word choices
5. Adopt an oral style

Contents

In hockey, when a player commits a dangerous foul, the referee orders the player into the penalty box. As long as that player is off the ice, the team remains a player short. When this happens, the opposing team has the advantage—and with the advantage comes the opportunity to make a power play. In public speaking, the player who has a way with words has the advantage. Speakers whose words are ineffective put themselves in a figurative penalty box. Thus, using words well is key in scoring a speechmaking power play. In large part, the message you communicate to the audience and the meaning receivers extract depend on your word choices.

Your words can cause ideas to live in the minds of your receivers long after you finish speaking. But only if you select words that have audience appeal—words that succeed in moving others emotionally and intellectually—are you likely to establish the audience connection you seek. Choose the wrong words—words that lack vividness, are difficult to understand, or fail to capture the imagination—and you might well contribute to the audience's boredom or confusion. Communicating simply, accurately, and effectively increases your chances of delivering a memorable speech.

In this chapter we explore your role as a creator of word power plays. We'll look at how language works and how the word choices you make spell the difference between speechmaking success and failure.

COACHING TIP

"Words. . . . They're innocent, neutral, precise, standing for this, describing that, meaning the other, so if you look after them you can build bridges across incomprehension and chaos."

—Tom Stoppard

Words help you connect. Select the right ones and they convey your ideas with clarity and power. Remember to keep your words simple. Speech is for the ear, not the eye. Speak in short units. Eliminate jargon. Keep it personal.

Section 13.1 Understand How Words Work

Section 13.2 Use Words to Connect

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Section 13.5 Use Oral Style

section
13.1

Understand How Words Work

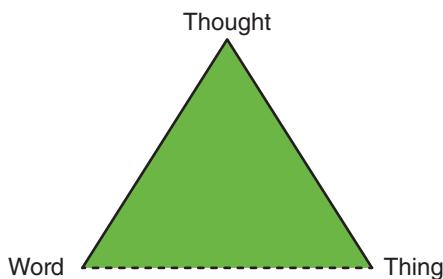
Language is a unified system of symbols that permits us to share meaning.¹ A *symbol* stands for, or represents, something else. Words, as symbols, represent things or ideas. For example, the word *homeless* is not the thing “homeless.” Because words can convey different meanings to different listeners, good speakers must understand the relationship that exists among words, thoughts, and human behavior.

The **Triangle of Meaning**, devised by communication theorists C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, provides a model of the tenuous relationships among words, thoughts, and things (see Figure 13.1). The dotted line connecting a word and a thing indicates that there is no direct connection between the two. The only connection between the word *coat*, for example, and a physical coat is in people’s thoughts. It is feasible that a number of us could look at the same object, think entirely different thoughts about it, and thus give it entirely different meanings based on our experiences. One person might hear the word and think of a winter jacket, another a suit coat, and a third a coat of paint.

It is dangerous to assume everyone understands what you mean. Once communication is the goal, we can no longer consider only one meaning for a word. We must also focus on what our words mean to those with whom we are communicating.

FIGURE 13.1

The Triangle of Meaning



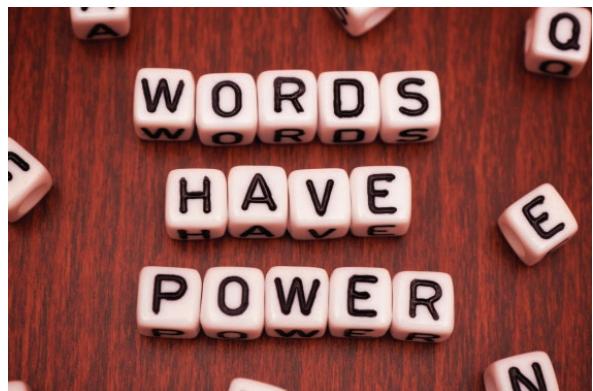
Use Words to Connect

For language to work, there must be a common understanding about what the words we are using mean to others. Only then can we share meaning and experience.

Different words that describe the same event can evoke very different responses. For example, how do you react to each of the following words or phrases? What kinds of thoughts does each generate? What image(s) do you visualize for each?

war defensive response massacre

Though the event being described could be the same, the words used to describe it express our perception. If we use the word “massacre,” we suggest disapproval, while a “defensive response” might be a justified reaction to an attack. And this influences how our audience responds as well. Our words can help listeners perceive our ideas as we want, influencing their attitudes, values, and actions. Used well, words can cause an audience to feel intensely, overcoming their apathy.



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Words matter. Words should not be easily thrown away, so be precise and considerate in your word choices.

COACHING TIP

“Words can wring tears from the hardest hearts.”

—Patrick Rothfuss

Your words can help you win the hearts of your audience. Reason reaches receivers on a logical level. Figurative language rich in sensory appeals reaches them on an emotional level. So choose your words with care. Make the audience feel and you make your message real!

section 13.3



13.3a Overcome Communication Obstacles

13.3b Consider Time and Place

13.3c Observe Reasoning and Thinking Preferences

13.3d Use Plain, Unbiased Language

Consider Your Audience

Meaning exists not in words, but in the minds of people using the words. Your goal in communicating with your audience is to create meaning overlap. Only if the audience gives similar meanings to your words will they be able to make sense of your message and respond as you desire. Accordingly, one of your prime objectives is to translate your ideas into language your listeners will understand and respond to. This requires you to be culturally sensitive.

13.3a Overcome Communication Obstacles

Words have both denotative and connotative meanings. The **denotative meaning** is the word's dictionary definition, precise and objective. Audience members are not dictionaries; when you use a word they should not have to consult a dictionary to find meaning number four for that word. What audience members do carry with them in their heads is the connotative meaning of words. **Connotative meaning** is variable and subjective. It includes all the feelings and personal associations that a word stimulates. For example, the feelings and personal associations people have for words and phrases such as *home*, *immigrant*, *gun control*, or *childhood* differ depending on whether the experiences they associate with each word are good or bad.

If you fail to consider the possible connotative meanings a word could evoke among audience members, you increase your chances of being misunderstood. Search for words that seem likely to elicit the meanings and responses you desire from as many audience members as possible. Focus on the audience instead of simply speaking the first words that pop into your mind. Take time to identify the best way and the best words to use to evoke a desired reaction.²

13.3b Consider Time and Place

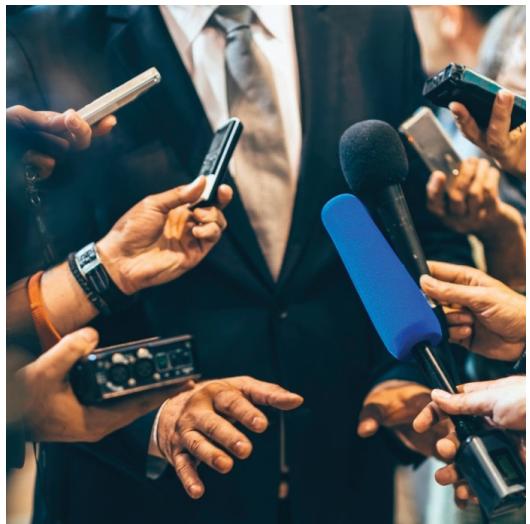
Every generation evolves new meanings for old words. It's as if we recycle language. This fact becomes important when you are speaking to audiences composed primarily of persons not your own age. Consider, for example, how an audience of your peers, an audience of people in their seventies, and an audience of elementary school-aged children might interpret any of the following words: *radical, net, surf, rap, bitcoin, red, straight, chill, hook-up, bad, sick, cell, awesome*. Because time can affect a word's meaning, speakers must be aware of the meaning any given audience member could attach to a word.

The meanings of words change not only through time. Words also change meaning from one section of the country to another. Pop, soda, and Coke are all the same drink, depending on where you live. Public speakers need to be sensitive to how regional differences affect word meanings or they could find themselves facing a widening communication gap.

13.3c Observe Reasoning and Thinking Preferences

Our words provide clues to our worldviews, interests and concerns, and what we believe to be important. They also reveal how we think.³

People in Western cultures tend to rely on both inductive and deductive reasoning to make points and to understand those made by others. Inductive reasoning relies on observation and specific instances or examples to build a case or argument. Deductive reasoning takes a known idea or general principle and applies it to a situation.



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Words are worlds. Be considerate of your audience, know what words have value to them, and be thoughtful in how you employ them.



Hero, hoagie, sub, or wedge? Consider whether the language of your presentation is attuned to regional differences.

People from non-Western cultures, however, may prefer to rely on other ways of presenting their messages in lieu of making objective observations. Rather than limiting themselves to inductive and deductive reasoning when speaking before others, for instance, people in the Arab world sometimes express their emotions and religious faith.⁴ Westerners who aren't attuned to Arabs' preferences may therefore have difficulty locating the main ideas in speeches given by Arabs, and vice versa.⁵ Arab speakers, for example, sometimes change course mid-speech. To Westerners, it may seem as if they have gone off on a tangent as they personalize and emote. As a result, Western audiences often find themselves working harder to identify an Arab speaker's purpose than they do when listening to a speaker of their own background. Arab speeches also may contain exaggerations and repetitions. Additionally, Western receivers often interpret the stress patterns of the Arabic language incorrectly, perceiving them as aggressive or disinterested when that likely was not the intent of the speaker.⁶

Asians also differ from Westerners in their language use and preferences. Whereas North Americans tend to exhibit a frank, direct speechmaking style

that is sometimes confrontational, Asians tend to place a high value on politeness and are more likely to use hints and euphemisms to convey their meaning.⁷ They typically neither preview nor identify their speech's purpose or main points for receivers. Instead, both are suggested through stories and personal testimonies.⁸

Clearly, there is more than one way to express ideas verbally. In our diverse world, it is counterproductive to consider the expression preferences favored by the members of one culture superior to another's. We run into problems when we allow feelings of ethnocentrism to interfere with our ability and willingness to process others' thoughts as accurately as possible and without bias. Our goal should be to shrink the language divide, not widen it.

13.3d Use Plain, Unbiased Language

It is important to respect all members of the audience, acknowledging their cultural beliefs, norms, or preferences, and taking their perspectives into account when selecting your words.

- Eliminate idioms and jargon that persons unfamiliar with your topic would find confusing or frustrating.
- Speak in short units that facilitate the processing of your words, while making certain that you do not “dumb down” your content or talk down to the members of your audience.
- Avoid using overly technical language as well as overblown language that overwhelms rather than interests listeners.

For example, generally the words *gay* and *lesbian* are preferred to refer to men and women, respectively, who have an affectional preference for persons of their same sex. The word *woman* is preferred to *girl* or *gal* when referring to a female adult. The phrase *physically challenged* is preferred to *disabled*. The word *Hispanic* is appropriate when referring to persons who identify themselves as belonging to a Spanish-speaking culture, while *Latina* or *Latino* is the preferred term when speaking of someone who is from a Latin American country. Most African Americans prefer the term *African American* to *black* or *Afro-American*.⁹ When referring to American Indians, *Native American* is the preferred term, not *Indian*, which is best reserved for referencing persons from India. The correct means of identifying persons from Asia is *Asian*, not *Oriental*, which is suggestive of a European bias.



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Be respectful. Word choice is always important in avoiding showing disrespect or prejudice toward any one culture, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and so on.

section 13.4



13.4a Keep It Simple

13.4b Keep It Concrete

13.4c Keep It Appropriate

13.4d Keep It Distinctive and Vivid

13.4e Keep It Personal

Be Strategic

Only if your audience shares your meaning will they truly perceive your message accurately. To achieve this, you need to make strategic word choices—choices that favor the simple over the complex, the concrete over the abstract, the appropriate over the inappropriate, and the vivid over the vague. Let us explore each of these language options in turn.

13.4a Keep It Simple

Whenever you have the choice, select the simplest, most familiar word available to you. Never use a technical word like *cephalalgia* when a simpler one like *headache* will do—the latter is usually clearer to your listeners (see Table 13.1).

Far too often, speakers who spout unfamiliar words and **jargon and technospeak** (specialized language) to uninitiated audiences succeed only in communicating their stuffiness and pretentiousness. No real sharing of meaning can occur between such a speaker and his or her audience because the audience has no idea what the speaker is talking about.

The following story illustrates how poorly chosen language can obscure meaning:

A plumber who had only a limited command of English knew that hydrochloric acid opened clogged drainpipes quickly and effectively. What he didn't know, however, was whether it was the right thing to use. So the plumber decided to check with the National Bureau of Standards in Washington, D.C. Seeking confirmation that hydrochloric acid was safe to use in pipes, he wrote the bureau a letter. After processing his letter, a scientist at the bureau wrote back this response: "The efficacy of hydrochloric acid is indisputable, but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic surfaces."

The plumber interpreted the scientist's response as a confirmation and wrote a second letter to the bureau thanking the scientist for the quick reply and for giving him the go-ahead to use hydrochloric acid.

The plumber's thank you really bothered the scientist who showed it to a superior. His superior decided to write the plumber a second letter. This letter read, "We cannot assume responsibility for the production of toxic and noxious residue which hydrochloric acid can produce; we suggest that you use an alternative procedure."

Though this response left the plumber a bit baffled, he hurriedly sent the bureau a third letter telling them that he was pleased they agreed with him. "The acid was working just fine."

When this letter arrived, the scientist's superior sent it to the head administrator at the bureau. The head administrator ended the confusion by writing a short, simple note to the plumber: "Don't use hydrochloric acid. It eats the hell out of pipes."

The more difficult your language, the more likely your audience—particularly if unspecialized—will have difficulty understanding it. For this reason, before using the jargon of a field always check whether audience members share the specialized vocabulary.

TABLE 13.1 USING SIMPLE LANGUAGE

INSTEAD OF	USE
endeavor	try
commence	begin
altercation	fight
vista	view
eschew	avoid
ediface	building
remunerate	pay
precipitation	rain

13.4b Keep It Concrete

Using concrete rather than abstract language helps your audience members picture what you want them to. It leaves no doubt about your meaning and it will help prevent possible misinterpretation of your message.

Remember, the more abstract the word, the more meanings people will have for it. To reduce ambiguity, be concrete (see Table 13.2).

TABLE 13.2 USING CONCRETE LANGUAGE

INSTEAD OF	USE
expensive car	Mercedes-Benz
help the manufacturer	help the U.S. car manufacturer
livestock	cattle
dog	Bichon Frisé
sound business principles	employee participation
a bundle	\$1,000,000
be fair	use the same standard for all
help the homeless	volunteer at a soup kitchen
physical activity	aerobics

Concrete words evoke more precise meanings. If you make a conscious effort to be more specific and less general, the speeches you deliver will become clearer, more interesting, and easier to remember.

Indirect expressions, called **euphemisms**, make it easier for speakers to handle unpleasant subjects, but often they also make it harder for audiences to develop a clear and accurate perception of what the speaker is saying. Notice how your reactions are changed by the words used in the trios in Table 13.3.

TABLE 13.3 WORD CHOICE AND AUDIENCE PERCEPTION

put to sleep	euthanized	killed
loved one	dead body	corpse
slumber chamber	coffin	casket
break wind	pass gas	fart
expecting	in the family way	pregnant
let go	laid off	fired
sanitation worker	garbage collector	garbage man

The words in the first column are the most polite. Receivers generally find them less harsh and more pleasing, but do they convey the clearest meaning? How do the pictures they create in your mind differ from the pictures created by the words listed in the second and third columns?

A speaker's word choices play a role in our reaction to his or her speech. For example, the words *janitor* and *sanitary engineer* both mean *custodian*. Yet, the terms have very different connotations. We frequently react to the words the speaker uses instead of what the words actually refer to. Receivers need to work hard to prevent a speaker's words from blinding them to what those words represent.



Pre-owned or used car? Choose your words carefully.

13.4c Keep It Appropriate

Phrase your speech using words that you understand and are comfortable saying, and that your audience will understand, accept, and respond to positively. Obscene, racist, ageist, or sexist remarks are usually judged offensive by audiences, reducing your credibility. Thus, common sense must prevail. Although we may use certain terms when conversing with our close friends, such expressions may be inappropriate in a speech. For example, back in 1984, one-time presidential hopeful billionaire Ross Perot made a mistake when he delivered an address before the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) convention in Nashville and referred to African Americans as "you people."

Confront the Issue of Political Correctness

For some, **political correctness** means using words that convey respect for and sensitivity to the needs and interests of different groups. Thus, when we find ourselves speaking about various issues to audiences composed of persons who are culturally different from us, we may also find ourselves adapting our language so that it demonstrates our sensitivity to their perspectives and interests. For others, however, political correctness means that we feel compelled by societal pressures *not* to use some words for fear that doing so would cause members of our audience to perceive us as either racist or sexist. For example, some years back, when David Howard, a Caucasian aide to then mayor of Washington, D.C., Anthony Williams, used the word *niggardly* in reference to the budget, a controversy erupted. Howard was compelled to resign even though the word he used was in reality unrelated to the “N” word. (Using the “N” word in place of the actual word is also a form of political correctness.) Some might opt to do whatever is necessary to avoid offending anyone. Still others view political correctness as a very real danger to free speech. Which of these viewpoints comes closest to representing your own?

Avoid Sexist, Racist, and Ageist Language

We can show our respect with words, but we can also use words to signal our lack of respect or contempt.

Sexist language suggests that the two sexes are unequal and that one gender has more status and value and is more capable than the other. For example, in past decades, masculine words were used to include both males and females. But the use of *he* for he or she or *mankind* for the human race in written and spoken discourse excluded women by ignoring them.

A sexist language practice called **spotlighting** was also used to reinforce the notion that men, and not women, set the standard. Though a person was rarely described as a *male physician*, *male lawyer*, or *male physicist*, terms such as *woman doctor* and *female mathematician* were widely used. Today, however, spotlighting is rarer and we are somewhat more apt to substitute gender-inclusive terms such as *chairperson* and *spokesperson*, and to use language that equalizes rather than highlights the treatment of gender.

Racist language expresses bigoted views about a person or persons from another group, based on a person’s ideas of that race. Racist language dehumanizes the members of the group being attacked. It is the deliberate, purposeful, and hurtful use of words intended to oppress someone of a different color.¹⁰

Ageist language discriminates on the basis of age. U.S. culture tends to disparage the elderly and exalt the youthful. Negative stereotypes such as “She’s an old hag,” “She’s set in her ways,” or “He’s losing his mind” abound. Ageism is often based on a distaste for and fear of growing older.¹¹ We need to decategorize individuals and change our expectations to improve our communication effectiveness with persons of all ages.¹²

13.4d Keep It Distinctive and Vivid

A distinctive speech grabs your attention and stays in your memory.

To be a vivid speaker, you need to be a vivid thinker. You need to see a vivid mental picture in your mind's eye before passing it on. You must hear the cadence of your words and sense the rhythm of your speech's movement before expecting others to do so. To achieve vividness,

- Give yourself the freedom to think imaginatively.
- Make a conscious effort to use figures of speech and selected sound patterns that add force to your thoughts.

Using **figurative language** helps your audience picture your meaning, while the sound and rhythm of certain words help them sense your intensity. For example, were you to deliver a speech on competitive racers Usain Bolt or Paula Radcliffe, saying that either ran like the wind would be more descriptive than saying he or she ran fast. Both figurative language and vivid speech will help you gain and sustain the attention of your audience.

Imagery is your partner in keeping your message vivid. Part of your task is to use words to create vivid mental pictures designed to influence how audience members see things, process your message, and share more fully in the speechmaking experience. Colorful and concrete words that appeal to the senses help awaken the imaginations of receivers, shortening the distance to your goal. Notice how Jesse Jackson used the image of a quilt to share his vision of America:

America's not a blanket woven from one thread, one color, one cloth. When I was a child growing up in Greenville, South Carolina, and grandmother could not afford a blanket, she didn't complain and we did not freeze. Instead, she took pieces of old cloth—patches, wool, silk, gabardine, croakersack on the patches—barely good enough to wipe off your shoes with. But they didn't stay that way very long. With sturdy hands and a strong cord, she sewed them together into a quilt, a thing of beauty and power and culture.¹³

Jackson then went on to describe for receivers why the people of this country—its farmers, laborers, women, and mothers—needed to work together and pool their resources (their patches) to piece together such a quilt, one that would provide the people of this nation with health care, housing, jobs, and hope.

Use Figures of Speech

Using figures of speech makes ideas vivid. Words that suggest striking mental images add freshness and vitality to a speech.

Among the most commonly used figures of speech are similes and metaphors.¹⁴ A **simile** is an indirect comparison of dissimilar things, usually with the words *like* or *as*.

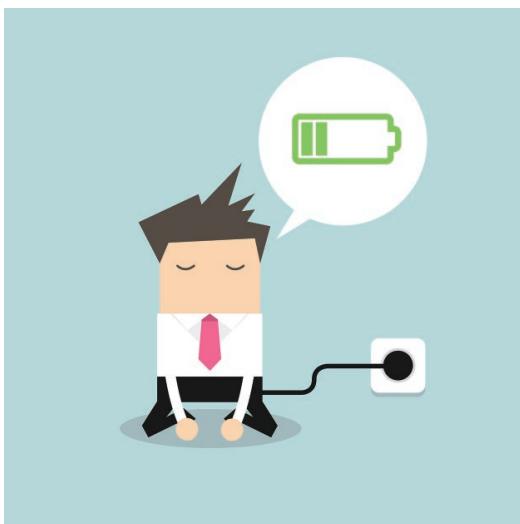
Chief Seattle, a Native American leader, used effective similes to make his point:

The white people are many. They are like the grass that covers vast prairies. My people are few. They resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain.¹⁵

In contrast to a simile that builds an indirect comparison, a **metaphor** builds a direct identification by omitting the words *like* or *as*. In a metaphor, two things not usually considered alike are compared directly, and their relationship is implied. Professional speaker and writer Wayne Dyer used a metaphor when he wrote,

Your body is nothing more than the garage where you temporarily park your soul.¹⁶

In this example, the metaphor used helped give concreteness to a more abstract concept. Metaphors enhance the audience's ability to visualize the speaker's message.



Recharge your batteries. A figure of speech can help an idea stick in your audience's heads.

Use Sound and Rhythm

Sound and rhythmic patterns can also help improve a speech. Consider using parallelism, alliteration, and antithesis.

Parallelism makes your speech vivid through the repetition of words, phrases, or sentences. In his “I Have a Dream” speech, Martin Luther King Jr. buttressed the forcefulness of his message by adding parallelism and figures of speech to it:

One hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives in a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land.¹⁷

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Read “The Raven.” Edgar Allan Poe’s famous poem includes alliteration abundantly.

Each time King used the phrase “one hundred years later” and evoked an image of the plight faced by African Americans a century after the abolishment of slavery, he was using parallelism.

Alliteration is the repetition of initial consonant sounds in nearby words. In a keynote speech he delivered some years ago, the one-time New York Knick and former U.S. senator Bill Bradley used alliteration when he told audience members: “For too long, American leadership has waffled and wiggled and wavered.”¹⁸

Antithesis, another means of adding vividness to a speech, achieves its objective by presenting opposites within the same or adjoining sentences. By juxtaposing contrasting ideas, the speaker can sharpen the message and clarify a point. Urban League spokesperson Whitney M. Young Jr. relied on antithesis to carry his message to his audience:

We seek not to weaken America but to strengthen it; not to decry America, but to purify it; not to separate America but to become part of it.¹⁹

By pointing out opposites, antithesis increases the dramatic impact of a speaker’s message.

Onomatopoeia, a word or words imitating natural sounds, also enhances vividness. For instance, in a speech on impending water shortages, one student asked her audience what they would do if the water from their shower was never a splash, but just a slow *drip, drip, drip*.

Hyperbole is the use of extreme exaggeration for effect. One speaker, for example, used hyperbole to indicate the effects of corporate outsourcing: “If we don’t stop it,” she noted, “everyone in this country will be unemployed.” Although hyperbole can help a speaker to make his or her point, some believe that because it requires the speaker to exaggerate the audience may perceive the speaker to be lying. However, when used for emphasis or to spur the imagination of receivers, hyperbole can be effective.

Understatement is hyperbole’s opposite, drawing attention to an idea by minimizing its importance. For example, in a speech on how God has been depicted in popular culture, a speaker referred to a scene in the film *Bruce Almighty* in which a room virtually explodes with light when God enters. The film’s main character, Bruce, however, describes the room as being only “kinda bright.” Bruce’s words, spoken upon his meeting God for the first time, are an example of understatement.

When used appropriately, each of these speechmaking devices can make your message more striking, your ideas more intense, and your presentation more vivid. So remember, choose your words carefully and arrange your phrases and sentences creatively, and you will bring your speech to life.

13.4e Keep It Personal

Use the personal pronouns *I, us, me, we*, and *you* in your speech. The audience wants to know what you think and what you feel. They want to know you are including them in your thoughts, relating your ideas to them. After all, your speech is for them. Melinda Gates, the wife and partner of Microsoft founder Bill Gates, personalized a speech she gave at Duke University this way:

Some people assume that Bill and I are too rich to make a connection with someone who’s poor, even if our intentions are good. But adjectives like rich and poor don’t define who any of us truly are as human beings. And they don’t make any one individual less human than the next. The universe is like computer code in that way. Binary. There is life, and there is everything else. Zeroes and ones. I’m a one. You’re a one. My friend in the Himalayas is a one.²⁰

Despite having great wealth, Melinda Gates succeeded in establishing a personal connection with her audience.

section 13.5

Use Oral Style

When you create a speech, you write it to be heard, not read. Therefore, you should use an oral rather than a written style. Written and oral styles differ from each other in a number of important ways. Consider the following oral style characteristics:

- Oral style is more personal than written style. When delivering a speech, you are able to talk directly to your audience and invite participation in ways a writer cannot.
- Oral style is more repetitive than a written style. Because listeners cannot rehear what you have said, as they can reread a page of text, you'll use more repetition and reinforcement. By repeating and restating your ideas, you let listeners know what is important and what they need to remember.
- Oral style is much *less formal* than written style. While written discourse often contains abstract ideas, complex phrases, and a sophisticated vocabulary, simpler sentences and shorter words and phrases characterize the oral style.
- Oral style is *more adaptive* than written style. You can get immediate feedback and respond in turn.

The language of public speaking is less like the language of an essayist and more like the language of a skilled conversationalist. Listeners better retain and more easily recall a speech when it is filled with everyday colloquial expressions, clear transitions, personal pronouns, and questions that invite participation, than when it is composed of abstract language, complex sentences, and impersonal references. If you want your audience to remember what you say, make them feel more comfortable by using an oral style. A speech is not mailed to an audience; it is delivered aloud.



GAME PLAN

Choosing Your Words

- I have researched my topic and reviewed my notes for any words that may cause confusion or misunderstanding among members of my audience.
- I have used plain, unbiased, and respectful language that makes my message clear for my audience to understand.
- I have chosen words that reflect my views of political correctness, but I have also taken into account the need to avoid being sexist, racist, or ageist.
- In choosing my words, I have used figurative language in ways that make my ideas clearer yet more evocative.
- While practicing my speech, I listened for the sound and rhythm of my words, adjusting the wording to use one or more of the following techniques: parallelism, alliteration, antithesis, onomatopoeia, hyperbole, and understatement.
- Finally, while practicing my speech, I paid attention to and developed my own oral style, translating my sentence outline into an extemporaneous one that utilizes repetition and a certain degree of informality.



Exercises

WORD MATTERS

Mastering the ability to use words to create speechmaking power plays is integral to your success as a speechmaker.

1. Weave a Word Tapestry

Just as war, defensive response, and massacre can be words that indicate the same event to different people, consider the ten words below. Create a figure of speech for each one that evokes fresh images in the minds of different audiences. Decide which choice of word would work best for you and might elicit the response you want from listeners.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. a distinctive speech | 6. marriage |
| 2. immigration | 7. racism |
| 3. a high-school education | 8. this text |
| 4. a dream job | 9. football |
| 5. birth | 10. your speechmaking ability |

2. Be Word Wise

You have been asked to give a speech on a newer technology—perhaps Instagram, Snapchat, Periscope, Twitter, or another of your choice. What words would you think appropriate to describe this medium in a speech to your class? How would your word choices change were you to deliver the speech to an audience of grandparents? What adaptations would be needed and why?

3. Analyze the Words Used

When giving a speech entitled “Campus Sexual Harassment Policies,” a student speaker used a number of hypothetical examples. Featured in the examples were two fictional characters the speaker called Dave Stud and Diane Sex Object. Though a number of students laughed when they heard the names, others were offended and objected vocally at the speech’s conclusion, noting that the speaker’s word choices were sexist.

- Consider your own response. Even if you understand that the speaker didn’t mean to offend, would you advise that he cut these words from his next delivery of the speech?
- Is there another way to achieve the same goals of the speech with different words? If so, which words would you choose?

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Choose a controversial current event as a subject. Develop two 2-minute speeches that express very different positions—the first containing words and figures of speech that are likely to bias listeners in favor of the subject, the second containing words and figures of speech that are likely to bias them against it.

Deliver both speeches in class. Ask class members which version they find more effective and why.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Explain how words work.** The Triangle of Meaning—a model of the relationships among words, thoughts, and things—depicts how words work. Its primary message is that words and things are only indirectly related to each other through the thoughts of people. Words are symbols.
- 2. Use words that connect with receivers.** Both the message a speaker communicates to an audience and the meaning receivers extract are a result of the words used by the speaker. When words are used effectively, they have the power to unite, evoke fresh images, and encourage a desired response.
- 3. Use words that demonstrate your consideration of the audience.** Denotative meaning is a word's dictionary meaning. Connotative meaning is subjective and includes the feelings and personal associations that a word stimulates. The meaning we give to words changes through time and based on geographical location. Speakers need to be sensitive to how people from different generations and different parts of the world use language.
- 4. Make strategic word choices.** This is accomplished by adhering to the following word choice guidelines: keep it simple, keep it concrete, keep it appropriate, and keep it vivid. In addition to facilitating an oral style, these guidelines also enable receivers to share the meanings a speaker has in mind.
- 5. Adopt an oral style.** An oral style usually contains short sentences, colloquial expressions, clear transitions, and simpler words than writing. It is also more informal, more inviting of participation, more personal, more concrete, and more repetitive.

KEY TERMS

Ageist language 231	Figurative language 232	Racist language 231
Alliteration 234	Hyperbole 235	Sexist language 231
Antithesis 234	Jargon and technospeak 228	Simile 233
Connotative meaning 224	Metaphor 233	Spotlighting 231
Denotative meaning 224	Onomatopoeia 234	Triangle of Meaning 222
Euphemism 230	Political correctness 231	Understatement 235



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14

Styles of Delivery

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UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain how a speaker's delivery style can enhance or detract from the speech
2. Distinguish among the following delivery modes: memorization, manuscript, extemporaneous, impromptu, and sound bite
3. Determine the best method of delivery for a speech

Contents

Poor delivery kills good ideas. Having something to say is only half the battle. The other half is conveying your message effectively and with sincerity.¹

Good delivery connects you and the audience. A well-delivered speech convinces your audience that you care about both your topic and them. It helps your audience interpret your message appropriately, and it closes whatever gap may exist between you. Because good delivery feels natural, and because it is conversational in tone, it also sounds as if you are talking *with* rather than *at* audience members. In other words, good delivery makes you sound spontaneous, as though you were speaking the words in your presentation for the very first time.²

To accomplish this, you need to master whatever mode of delivery you choose to use. You need to learn the options for delivery, set a goal, and monitor your progress—just as an elite athlete does when preparing for game day.

COACHING TIP

“Public speaking is a perfectly normal act . . . which calls . . . only for an extension and development of that most familiar act, conversation.”

—James Albert Winans

Be natural. Be positive. Be prepared. Be real. You should not sound phony or overrehearsed when giving your speech. Use a conversational tone, and you will be better able to connect with and relate directly to the members of your audience.

Section 14.1 Choose a Delivery Mode

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- 14.2h Refine, Practice, and Refine, 250
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Section 14.3 Avoid Common Delivery Bloopers



14.1a Speaking From Memory

14.1b Manuscript Reading

14.1c Impromptu Speaking

14.1d Extemporaneous Speaking

14.1e Sound Bite Speaking (Twitter Speak)

Choose a Delivery Mode

How do you choose an appropriate delivery style? Take the following three factors into account:

1. The nature of the speaking occasion
2. The purpose of the presentation
3. Your strengths and abilities

Decide whether it is best to deliver a speech from memory, read it from a manuscript, make a few impromptu remarks, speak extemporaneously, or present a sound bite for media consumption.

Whichever method you choose, the mode of delivery should not call attention to itself. Listeners need to be free to concentrate on your ideas, not your mode of delivery. Each of the styles is appropriate for different occasions, purposes, and speakers.

TABLE 14.1 DELIVERY MODES AND LIKELY USES

DELIVERY MODE	LIKELY USE
Memorization	When delivering a brief special occasion speech such as a toast or speech of introduction; when no lengthy quotations or statistical proof are required
Manuscript	When precise wording is crucial; when you need to avoid being misquoted
Extemporaneous	When you are given sufficient time to prepare, develop a working outline or speaker's notes, and practice
Impromptu	When you are asked to speak on a moment's notice
Sound bite/Twitter speak	When you need to provide a quotable, tweetable statement

14.1a Speaking From Memory

When you write your speech out in full, commit it to memory, and then recite it word for word for an audience without using a manuscript, outline, or speaker's notes, you are speaking from memory. **Speaking from memory**, also known as oratory, requires considerable skill and speaking expertise. For one thing, the pressures brought about by the actual presentation could cause you to draw a blank at any point during the speech. Should that occur, instead of listening to you speak, your audience faces a stunning silence as you grope for the words you lost. When you speak from memory, you attempt to deliver your speech word for word, and that makes it even more difficult for you to recover if you make a mistake.

The tension you feel when delivering a memorized speech could affect your delivery in other ways as well. Your delivery could come off as stiff, stilted, and unnatural rather than flexible, friendly, and relaxed. Because you are afraid to deviate from your memorized text for fear of forgetting something, your ability to respond easily to audience feedback might also be inhibited. The danger for some speakers is that they come off sounding mechanical, making this a technique they should not rely on unless absolutely necessary.

Memorizing a speech does, however, offer certain advantages. It is much easier to establish and sustain eye contact with the members of the audience when you don't have to continually look down at a manuscript or notes. Your hands also are freer to gesture and support the meaning of your message.

Although there certainly are a number of speaking occasions that lend themselves to speaking from memory, including toasts and testimonials, acceptance speeches, speeches of introduction, and eulogies, the bulk of your speechmaking experiences will be a composite of the remaining delivery methods. Of course, even when using these, you might find it useful to memorize some sections of your speech such as the introduction, conclusion, or a particularly effective quotation.

When delivering a speech, or even a section of a speech, from memory, keep these techniques in mind:

1. Rehearse sufficiently to sound natural.
2. Keep your energy high.
3. Use appropriate nonverbal cues to reinforce the spoken words.



14.1b Manuscript Reading

When running for president in 2008, John McCain was criticized for his inability to use the teleprompter. More comfortable in “give-and-take” impromptu settings and town meetings, Senator McCain found it difficult to meet the challenge of more formal speaking demands, often sounding like he was reading his lines, and creating the impression that he was overscripted.³ Yet, if McCain misread a line, he was accused of being unprepared—with his misstatements becoming fodder for YouTube. In contrast to McCain, president Barack Obama was very comfortable using the teleprompter, turning to it not only for his most important speeches but also for

routine announcements and the opening statements at news conferences. For President Obama, the teleprompter was a means of ensuring that he stuck to his intended message.⁴

Like speaking from memory, **manuscript reading** requires that you write a manuscript in full and deliver it word for word, but you need not commit the text to memory. At the same time, because reading aloud well requires every bit as much skill as mastering a script and delivering it expressively, manuscript reading is not as easy as it sounds. If you do not invest a lot of time practicing reading your manuscript aloud, you could end up *eye- and hand-tied* to your manuscript, and deprive your audience of meaningful eye contact and gesturing.

Bringing the printed page to life for listeners requires that you take your eyes off the manuscript and close the communicative gap between you and your audience. If you read in a monotone, you will bore receivers. The reading of your speech needs to sound like conversation to your listeners. It needs to sound as though you are speaking rather than reading it, or it will not have the impact you desire. This requires that vocal cues (delivering lines with ease) and physical cues (no poorly timed gestures or inappropriate smiles) also support delivery (see Chapters 15 and 16).

Because the manuscript directs the speaker, it also becomes virtually impossible to go off script and adapt it, changing a word or phrase as needed. Thus, a manuscript affords a speaker less flexibility. This can be a downside, but is beneficial when a speaker needs to be especially careful about the phrasing of a problem or policy. Presidential, foreign policy, and political addresses; official proclamations; and presentations at business, trade, and stockholder meetings—occasions where a slip of the tongue could be disastrous—are appropriate settings for a manuscript speech. In addition, when time is strictly limited, a manuscript speech may be the right choice.

When the demands of the occasion make manuscript delivery necessary, remember the following:

- Write the speech to be listened to; the audience will not be reading along with you.
- Be sure to use a font that is easy to read and large enough to see.
- Mark up the manuscript with delivery cues. Focus on communicating ideas, not words.
- Practice reading it aloud so your words sound fresh.
- Become so familiar with the manuscript that you are able to maintain eye contact and integrate appropriate gestures.

14.1c Impromptu Speaking

How did you feel the last time you were put on the spot and asked to say a few words? Perhaps someone asked you to describe yourself in an interview, answer a question in class, or explain your position during a meeting. Were you ready to respond without extensive time to plan, prepare, or practice? You are likely to give at least one, if not many, impromptu speeches daily, and a majority of the public speaking you will do during your business or professional life will probably be unplanned.⁵

Unlike memorization and manuscript reading, **impromptu speaking** requires that you be able to think on your feet. All you really have to rely on when delivering an impromptu talk is your knowledge and previous experience.

If you are adept at gathering your thoughts quickly and summarizing them succinctly, then you will always be prepared to deliver an impromptu speech. You can apply all the lessons you've learned about delivering planned speeches—the principles of effective structure, support, and delivery—to the impromptu situation. Though unplanned speaking may seem unnatural or awkward to you, it offers you both flexibility and the opportunity to demonstrate your speaking versatility. Perhaps more than any other speechmaking style, delivering an impromptu speech helps you reveal to others who you are, what you are like, and what genuinely concerns you.⁶

When called on to deliver an impromptu speech, remember the following guidelines:

- Compose yourself.
- Think about your purpose.
- Relate the subject to what you know and have experienced and receiver interests.
- Organize your talk—connect your ideas to each other, and be certain to use an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Don't ramble. Keep it brief, covering just two to three points.
- Stay on message.



Take note. Extemporaneous speeches are delivered conversationally with the support of speaker's notes.

14.1d Extemporaneous Speaking

When a speech is prepared and practiced in advance but is neither written out word for word nor memorized, it is most likely an example of **extemporaneous speaking**. The extemporaneous speaker delivers a speech using only speaker's notes as a reminder. Partly because the speaker selects the exact words virtually at the moment of their delivery, the language seems more natural and spontaneous. When the speech is not memorized, the speaker can exhibit a more conversational quality; when it is not read from a script, the speaker can maintain generous eye contact. This facilitates the monitoring of audience reactions and adjusting to the feedback received. As a result, the extemporaneous speaker establishes a more direct connection with audience members.

The emphasis in extemporaneous speaking is on communication, not recitation or memorization. It requires that the speaker be flexible enough to adapt to the audience and demands extensive planning, organization, and practice. Because it connects well with audiences and because it builds speaker confidence, extemporaneous speaking is the method preferred by most public speaking teachers and experienced speakers alike.

To prepare a good extemporaneous speech, remember to:

- Research the topic thoroughly.
- Create an outline and speaker's notes.
- Rehearse, familiarizing yourself with the organizational pattern, including the introduction and conclusion.
- Speak conversationally.
- Become so comfortable with the topic that you are able to adjust your speech, adapting to the audience as needed.

14.1e Sound Bite Speaking (Twitter Speak)

According to political media adviser, communications consultant, and former Fox chairman Roger Ailes, contemporary speakers should respond to our “headline society.”⁷ Ailes reasoned, “In today’s society, long-winded people will soon be as extinct as the dinosaur.”⁸ Although most instructors of speech want students to avoid **sound bite speaking** (or what we might refer to as **Twitter speak**) in the classroom, there are some speaking situations in which it is now seen as required.

During political conventions or events, after the delivery of speeches by public figures, or in the course of introducing new policies or programs, spokespersons, pundits, and politicians “spin their messages,” frequently using sound bites—short, memorable statements that can be tweeted after being delivered aurally. Because audiences today are impatient for information, speakers need to be able to distill their messages effectively. Notice in the table below how speakers can hold or lose the attention of receivers by the way they package a thought:⁹

Keep these techniques in mind when delivering a sound bite or Twitter speak:

- Develop a sentence that captures your subject’s essence.
- Make your comments memorable.
- Abbreviate the speech until it is tweet-size—140 characters. You might also create a 6-second video to accompany it, using Vine.

TABLE 14.2

DULL	MORE INTERESTING
The two leading ways to achieve success are improving upon existing technology and diminishing the larger obligation.	The two leading recipes for success are building a better mousetrap and finding a bigger loophole. —Edgar A. Schoaff
To construct an amalgam, you have to be willing to split open its component parts.	To make an omelet, you have to be willing to break a few eggs. —Robert Penn Warren
Capital will not produce great pleasure, but it will remunerate a large research staff to examine the questions proposed for a solution.	Money won’t buy happiness, but it will pay the salaries of a large research staff to study the problem. —Bill Vaughan



14.2a Schedule Multiple Early Practices

14.2b Verbalize Everything

14.2c Prepare and Practice With Your Visual, Audio, and Memory Aids

14.2d Check Your Time

14.2e Replicate Actual Speechmaking Conditions

14.2f Watch and Listen to Yourself Alone and With Others

14.2g Give Yourself a Preliminary Evaluation

14.2h Refine, Practice, and Refine

14.2i Work on Nonverbal Aspects of Delivery

14.2j Hold a Mock Q&A Session

Plan and Practice

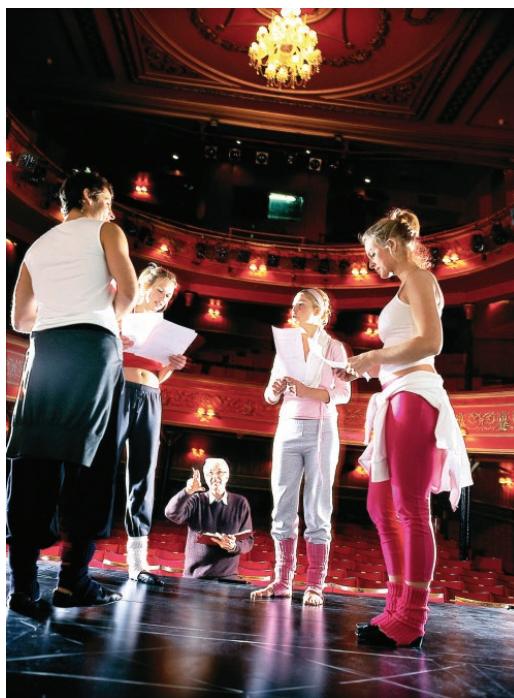
"If I'm supposed to sound spontaneous and natural, as if I'm giving my speech for the first time, why do I need to rehearse it?" asks the novice speechmaker. This question has several answers.

Just as an athlete practices a play until it is second nature, so a speechmaker needs to rehearse his or her part until it becomes "one" with him or her. For athletes, every move matters. Once they know a play cold—so they don't need to think about where they should be on the field—they are free to focus their attention on what the other team does. For speakers and athletes, it is thinking ahead and practicing that get them to that point.

Finally, the old adage "Practice makes perfect" has merit—if you practice correctly. Aspirants to political office know this well. Prior to the presidential debates, for example, candidates typically spend weeks preparing, including listening to audiotapes of their past performances and engaging in mock debates that are videotaped and reviewed.

How often and in what sequence should you practice? As much as it takes to succeed. Although rehearsal is a highly individual matter, we can provide you with some basic practice advice to ensure you practice right.

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Practice makes perfect. Like athletes and actors, speakers need to practice regularly to improve performance.

14.2a Schedule Multiple Early Practices

Don't make time your enemy. Begin practicing at least half a week before you will deliver the speech. Do not wait for the night before. Practicing well ahead of the delivery date lets you master the message.

In early practice sessions, repeatedly read through your notes, outline, or manuscript. If you will be delivering a manuscript speech or a speech from memory, rehearse using a triple-spaced manuscript with large and easy-to-read fonts that you mark up to indicate which words and phrases to stress, when to speed up and slow down, and when to pause.

If you will be delivering an extemporaneous speech, this is your opportunity to refine your outline into speaker's notes. Begin by reading it over a number of times before you speak it aloud. As you rehearse, develop a list of key words and phrases from that outline and place them on no more than a handful of note cards. Write on one side of the card only. From then on, use the cards to spark your memory. Be sure to print quotations and statistics in large letters on separate cards, but do not reproduce complete paragraphs or the entire speech on these cards. Also, be sure to number the cards to avoid fumbling through them when you are in front of the audience.

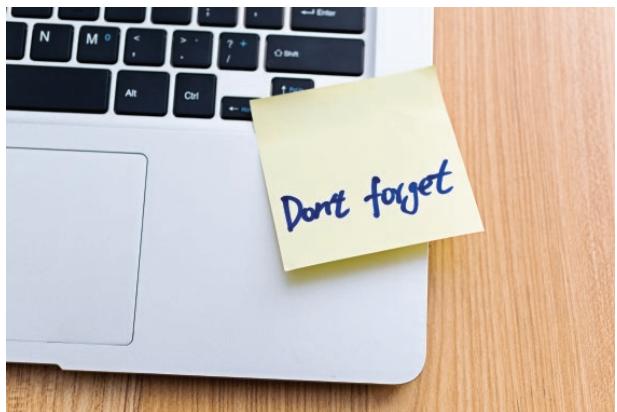
Keep in mind that, though many students use note cards, most professional speakers do not, preferring instead to use a single sheet of paper containing their key words and phrases, quotations, expert testimony, and key statistics. When used alone or together with any visual aids the speaker plans to use, this page usually suffices.

14.2b Verbalize Everything

Practice your delivery of every example and illustration, recite every quotation, and say aloud every statistic you plan to use. Familiarity begets clarity and comfort in public speaking. Without sufficient practice, you won't build the self-confidence you need to deliver an effective presentation.

14.2c Prepare and Practice With Your Visual, Audio, and Memory Aids

If you will be using visual, audio, or memory aids during the speech, work with them during your practice sessions. This will help you work out any kinks, electronic or otherwise, and will make your delivery of the speech smoother and more natural.



14.2d Check Your Time

Time your presentation. If it is too long, cut out nonessential information and redundant examples. Tighten your phrasing. You might even need to eliminate one of your key points. If your speech is too short, make it more substantial. You might add another main point, or include another illustration or example.

14.2e Replicate Actual Speechmaking Conditions

Do your best to mirror the actual conditions and setting you will experience when giving your speech. Although sitting down and running through the speech in your head is useful early on in your preparation to increase your familiarity with your speech's content, standing in front of an audience is different. Make sure you practice the speech standing up and hold a realistic dress rehearsal, ideally in a room as much as possible like the one in which you actually deliver the speech. And run through the entire speech rather than continually stopping.

14.2f Watch and Listen to Yourself Alone and With Others

It is important to monitor your progress. During your preparation, you should seek feedback before doing your final polishing and running a last dress rehearsal. Get feedback while you still have time to make and master changes.

Audio or video record your rehearsal and play it back for self-evaluation. Rehearse in front of friends and family and get feedback from them. Practicing in front of other people has been shown to improve the actual performance.¹⁰

14.2g Give Yourself a Preliminary Evaluation

Pay attention to what works and what needs work. As you review your performance, ask yourself whether you are expressing your ideas as clearly as you would like to. Do you have an attention-getter? Is your language understandable to audience members? Is the support you used adequate? Is the organization easy to follow? Does your conclusion contain both a summary and a psychological appeal? Keep in mind that an organized speech will be easier to remember because it will flow logically.

14.2h Refine, Practice, and Refine

In your last stage of practicing, the focus is on refining, not dramatically altering the speech. Practice. Practice. Practice. Make your final rehearsal as realistic as possible.

14.2i Work on Nonverbal Aspects of Delivery

Pay attention to your use of nonverbal cues during your practice sessions. Ask your rehearsal audiences whether you make enough eye contact, employ meaningful gestures, and use your voice and appearance to advantage (techniques we cover in more detail in Chapters 15 and 16).

14.2j Hold a Mock Q&A Session

While not all speeches are followed with a question and answer (Q&A) session, knowing how to handle one can be just as important as preparing yourself to deliver the speech. Though the Q&A has much in common with the impromptu speech, there are things you can do to prepare yourself. You can:

- Anticipate some of the questions audience members will ask, and prepare answers to them in advance.
- Think about questions you hope audience members won't ask, and prepare answers for them.
- Prepare a "Tip Sheet" with points to remember when answering particularly complex questions.
- Have someone rehearse you by asking you the potential questions you've brainstormed as well as others designed to unnerve you.
- Repeat a question aloud if it is phrased in a neutral manner, before answering it; if necessary, you can rephrase it to remove any venomous or loaded words.
- Practice saying, "I don't know," if you don't know. You still have time to find out the answers prior to the delivery day. And if you have to answer a question with an "I don't know" on delivery day, promise to find out the answer and get back to the person who posed the question.
- Remember, you don't need to answer more than is asked.

(We cover the Q&A session in more depth in Chapter 27.)

section
14.3

Avoid Common Delivery Bloopers

Your goal is to be fully ready to deliver a peak performance. To ensure you are, don't commit any of these training fouls:

- **Preparing mentally does not replace preparing aurally.** Though thinking through your speech is helpful, it should never replace live practice sessions in which you rehearse your speech aloud.
- **Don't wait to be given feedback.** It's important to seek feedback, not count on others to give it on their own. Ask your mock audience(s) what they think and feel about your speech.
- **Don't skip practice sessions.** Skipping practice is a sign of overconfidence. Telling yourself you have it down when the truth is you need to continue working does a disservice to yourself and your audience.



GAME PLAN

Refining My Speech Delivery

- After considering my speech topic, the occasion, and my own level of comfort, I have chosen a style of delivery that will enable me to really connect with the audience.
- Given the delivery style I've chosen to use, my speaking notes are clear, easy to follow, and marked with delivery cues such as "refer to slide," "slow down for impact," or "stress this word."
- I've practiced my speech several times; at this point, I know the organization and my notes so well that I can adjust to different audience reactions.
- The idea of a question-and-answer session makes me a little nervous so I held a mock Q&A in which I answered some of the questions I anticipate will be asked.
- To control any anxiety I may experience, I've reviewed some of the confidence-building techniques from Chapter 1.
- I've reviewed video of other accomplished speakers, and through my practice sessions, I have a sense of what will work for me and what won't in reaching my audience.



Exercises

DELIVERY

Prepare and practice so that when you present you're confident and professional.

1. Get More Comfortable in Front of Others

Prepare a manuscript or notes for a two-minute talk on one of the following topics: A Time My Beliefs Were Challenged; A Space or Environment Where I Felt Out of Place; To Tweet or Not to Tweet; The Best Advice I Ever Received; or My Favorite Things About My Hometown.¹¹ Deliver your talk in three ways: (1) read it word for word once, (2) speak from memory, (3) speak using notes. It's okay if it's not perfect; just get a feel for the difference in styles and practice. Remember to refer back to the guidelines for each speaking style.

2. Getting to Know You: Introducing the Q&A

Choose something to “show” that tells others about you—perhaps something personal that you use to distinguish yourself from others such as your phone’s ringtone(s), a favorite pair of shoes, an unusual necklace, a special photo from Facebook or Instagram. Your audience will ask you questions about why you chose the item you did, what your choice means, why you think it distinguishes you, and so on. Be prepared to give impromptu answers.

3. How Talk Show Talents Do It

Compare and contrast the opening monologues of two late-night talk show hosts; for example, you might compare Jimmy Fallon with Jimmy Kimmel. Explain what distinguishes one performer’s style from the other.

4. Analyze a Politician's Delivery

View a video of former president Bill Clinton's speech given at the 2016 Democratic Convention. Then do the following:

1. Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the style(s) of delivery Clinton used, providing specific examples of his ability to build rapport, make an argument, and forcefully make his case.
2. Compare and contrast Clinton's speech with the one given by Melania Trump at the 2016 Republican Convention.
 - Which of the two do you think more quickly established rapport with the audience?
 - Which of the two came across as more natural and personable?
 - Which of the two made you feel as if she or he was speaking directly to you?
 - Which of the two had better eye contact?
 - Which of the two used his or her voice more effectively?
 - How did both use gestures to underscore their messages?
3. Discuss the extent to which mode and manner of delivery influence the speaker's ability to personalize a speech and connect with the audience.

5. Approach the Speaker's Stand

First, deliver an impromptu speech on a favorite recreational activity. Once this is done, write out and deliver the speech using a manuscript. Then revise your notes and deliver the speech extemporaneously.

- How different were these experiences for you? For the audience?
- Which means of delivery do you think had more conversational appeal?
- Which delivery mode was easier for the audience to listen to?

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Explain how a speaker's delivery style can enhance or detract from the speech.** Speakers who deliver their speeches as if they mean them are better able to connect with the audience. A well-delivered speech helps the audience interpret the message appropriately, closing whatever gap may exist between them and the speaker.
- Distinguish among the following delivery modes: memorization, manuscript, extemporaneous, impromptu, and sound bite.** When you speak from memory, you attempt to deliver your speech word for word without using a manuscript or notes. Manuscript reading requires that you be able to bring the printed page to life, making your words sound like conversation rather than like reading. When you speak in an impromptu manner, you deliver a speech off the cuff. In contrast, an extemporaneous speech is prepared and delivered in a conversational manner from speaker's notes. Sound bites are brief packaged thoughts offering simple solutions that appeal to our "headline society" as well as the Twittersphere.
- Determine the best method of delivery for a speech.** The best method depends on the nature of the speaking occasion, the purpose of the presentation, and the speaker's strengths and abilities.

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Speaking from memory 243

Impromptu speaking 245

Sound bite speaking 247

Twitter speak 247



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15

The Speaker's Voice

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UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Describe how vocal cues can facilitate communication between the speaker and the audience
2. Explain how culture affects the use and interpretation of vocal cues
3. Effectively give voice to a speech

Contents

Think of award-winning performers such as Nicole Kidman or Alan Cumming. Like the rest of us, actors attempt to use their voices to reflect the state of being of the character they are portraying. For Kidman, who hails from Australia, and Cumming, who is from Scotland, this can mean concealing the sound of their normal speaking voice and adopting an American accent instead. They do this so naturally that unless we knew they were not born in the United States, we would not be able to tell. Their manner of speaking does not call attention to itself.

The voice of the accomplished speaker enhances the expression of ideas *without* calling undue attention to itself or distracting receivers. When audience members are attracted, not distracted, by the sound of your voice, they are better able to concentrate on what you have to say. When listening to an effective presentation, an audience senses a speaker's enthusiasm, feels the force inherent in the speaker's voicing of ideas, and senses the speaker's desire to communicate.

Researchers have discovered that the bulk of a message's personal and connotative meaning is communicated via its nonverbal delivery. According to one study, words carry only some 7 percent of the meaning, with 38 percent of meaning attributed to vocal cues, and the remaining 55 percent attributed to the speaker's body language.¹ Audiences tend to trust the nonverbal level of communication. Deliver your speech honestly and effectively, and your audience members are likely to find you credible and believe you.

Section 15.1 Control the Sound of Your Speech

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Section 15.6 Be Aware of Dialects and Regionalisms

section
15.1

Control the Sound of Your Speech

How would you describe your voice? When you hear it, does it sound pleasant to you? How do others respond to it? While we would all like to have a voice that others refer to as “golden,” many an effective speaker has a voice that is undistinguished. Consider, for example, that president Abraham Lincoln’s voice has been called high pitched and wavering and prime minister Margaret Thatcher’s as shrill and grating.² Each of these speakers, however, mastered the art of vocal control.

When used to advantage, your voice is a powerfully expressive tool³ that plays an important role in your audience’s response both to you and your speech.⁴ Audiences form impressions of speakers based on vocal cues alone, making inferences about the speaker’s age, status, ethnicity, and occupation, just to name a few. We stereotype others based on how they sound (see Table 15.1).

Keeping all this in mind, answer these questions honestly:

- Does my voice help me convey the meaning of my speech clearly?
- If I were in my audience, would I want to listen to me for an extended period of time?
- Does my voice enhance or detract from the impression I make?

In the next few sections, we look at the **paralinguistic**, or vocal cues—pitch, volume, rate, and articulation—that play a part in creating the impression you make on an audience.

TABLE 15.1 VOCAL CUES AND PERSONALITY STEREOTYPES

VOCAL CUES	SPEAKERS	STEREOTYPES
Breathiness	Males Females	Young, artistic Feminine, pretty, effervescent, high-strung, shallow
Thinness	Males Females	No effect on listener’s image of speaker Social, physical, emotional, and mental immaturity; sense of humor and sensitivity
Flatness	Males Females	Masculine, sluggish, cold, withdrawn Masculine, sluggish, cold, withdrawn
Nasality	Males Females	Wide array of socially undesirable characteristics Wide array of socially undesirable characteristics
Tensioness	Males Females	Old, unyielding cantankerous Young, emotional, feminine, high-strung, less intelligent
Throatiness	Males Females	Old, realistic, mature, sophisticated, well-adjusted Less intelligent, masculine, lazy, boorish, unemotional, ugly, sickly, careless, inartistic, humble, uninteresting, neurotic, apathetic
Orotundity (fullness/ richness)	Males Females	Energetic, healthy, artistic, sophisticated, proud, interesting, enthusiastic Lively, gregarious, aesthetically sensitive, proud
Increased rate	Males Females	Animated and extroverted Animated and extroverted
Increased pitch variety	Males Females	Dynamic, feminine, aesthetic Dynamic and extroverted

Sources: Based on Dudley Knight, *Speaking With Skill: A Skills Based Approach to Speech Training* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012); Kate DeVore, *The Voice Book: Caring for, Protecting, and Improving Your Voice* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2009); and Paul Heinberg, *Voice Training for Speaking and Reading Aloud* (New York: Ronald Press, 1964).

Pitch Your Voice Properly

section
15.2

Pitch is the highness or lowness of your voice on a tonal scale; it is your voice's upward or downward inflection. Like a pitcher varies location and speed when he or she throws a baseball, hoping to make it difficult for the batter to anticipate the coming pitch, we vary our voices to avoid talking in a monotone and to add expressiveness to our words. Audiences judge a speaker who varies his or her pitch to be livelier, animated, and interesting.

15.2a Vary Pitch

Our *habitual pitch*, the level at which we speak most often, may or may not be our *optimal pitch*, which is where our voice functions best and where we have extensive vocal variation up and down the scale. Varying your pitch increases the communicative value of your words. It also helps convey your message's meaning. For example, can you use pitch to change the meaning of these words?

I'm so happy to be here.

With rising and/or falling intonation, you can give that sentence very different meanings from genuinely expressing happiness, to sarcasm, to distain. Saying those words in a monotone, for instance, would mean you are not happy. Your pitch also reveals whether you are making a statement or asking a question. It conveys your emotion and can make you sound angry or annoyed, patient or tolerant. Speakers who are able to vary their pitch to reflect the mood they are expressing are more persuasive than those who use a repetitive pitch pattern.⁵

15.2b Consider the Effects of Stereotypes

Audiences tend to stereotype speakers on the basis of their voices. Lower-pitched voices are considered more mature, sexier, and stronger than higher-pitched voices, which are frequently associated with helplessness, nervousness, and tension. When we are nervous or scared, the pitch of our voice tends to rise because the muscles around our vocal cords constrict. To keep your pitch natural, remember to use the stress relaxation exercises discussed in Chapter 1.

15.2a Vary Pitch

15.2b Consider the Effects of Stereotypes



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Fine tuning. How can you use the sound of your voice and other vocal cues to impact the meaning of your speech?

section 15.3



Adjust Volume

Volume is the loudness or softness of the voice, its intensity. Aim to speak with enough force that everyone in attendance is able to hear you comfortably, but don't overwhelm your audience. Good breath control lets you vary your volume as needed. Breathe deeply from the diaphragm rather than take shallow, vocal cord-level breaths. Even when speaking your lowest, audience members in the very last row should still be able hear you.

15.3a Adapt to the Situation

15.3b Consider Cultural Adaptations

Regulate your volume to reflect the size and acoustics of the room, the size of the audience, and any competing background noises. Increasing your volume at particular points can help you emphasize specific words and ideas, add emotional intensity, and energize the room. In contrast, decreasing your volume can also help you gain or sustain audience attention, convey a contrasting emotion, or even add suspense.

15.3b Consider Cultural Adaptations

Generally, in the United States we consider a voice that is too loud to be intrusive and aggressive, and a voice that is too low to be meek, hesitant, and less credible.

The volume the members of one culture judge to be appropriate may be unacceptable to and misinterpreted by the members of another culture. In general, Latinos, Arabs, Israelis, and Italians tend to speak more loudly than Anglo Americans and East Asians.⁶ For Arabs, loudness connotes strength and sincerity, whereas speaking too softly implies that one lacks confidence or is timid.⁷ For Asians, a gentle, soothing voice is reflective of good manners.⁸

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Volume control. Listen to the room and adjust your volume accordingly.

Regulate Rate

Rate is the speed at which you speak. Most of us speak between 125 and 175 words per minute. Speaking too quickly communicates a desire to get the speech over with in record time and audience members may find it difficult to keep up. Speaking too slowly communicates tentativeness and lack of confidence and may bore the audience.

15.4a Reflect Mood

Your rate should vary to reflect any change in the speech's mood: slow when you want to express thoughtfulness, solemnity, concern, or are relaying serious and complex material; quicker when you want to convey excitement, a sense of urgency, eagerness, happiness, or when sharing lighter contents or heading toward a climax.

For example, Martin Luther King Jr. began his "I Have a Dream" speech uttering words at approximately 92 words per minute; he finished it at a rate of approximately 145 words per minute. King's rate of speech quickened as he headed toward his speech's emotional conclusion. Think of rate as the pulse of your speech; it should quicken to convey agitation, excitement, and happiness, and fall to convey seriousness of purpose, serenity, or sadness.

COACHING TIP

"Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with meaning."

—Maya Angelou

Your voice can help or hurt your speech. When it helps, it communicates to the audience how much you care about your topic. When it hurts, it hinders your ability to connect with the audience or sustain their attention. Play your voice like you would an instrument.

15.4a Reflect Mood

15.4b Use Silent Pauses

15.4c Avoid Verbal Fillers



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Like a rollercoaster. Build up the rate of your words or slow it down to match what you're trying to convey and take the audience on a ride.

15.4b Use Silent Pauses

To slow the rate of speech . . . *pause*. You can pause to emphasize your meaning, underscore the importance of an idea, lend dramatic impact to a statement, give your listeners time to reflect on what you have said, and signal the end of a thought. In fact, according to *60 Minutes* producer Don Hewitt, “The pauses tell the story. They are as important to us as commas and periods are to the *New York Times*.⁹” Pauses help the speaker maintain control. Use the following pause pointers to enhance your effectiveness:

Pause . . .

- Before starting. Some speakers begin speaking even before getting to the front of the room. This demonstrates a lack of control. Instead, once in position, pause, scan the audience, and then begin.
- After posing a rhetorical question. Give members of the audience time to contemplate the question.
- When you are about to make an important point. Silence signals the significance of what will come next.
- When transitioning from one part of the speech to another. This gives receivers time to adjust psychologically.
- After delivering your final words. Don’t leave your position while still speaking, demonstrating your desire to remove yourself from being the audience’s focus. Instead, pause, scan the audience as you did at the outset, and then walk back to your seat at a comfortable pace.



As with other cues, culture intervenes in our perception of the pause. Among European Americans, for example, too extended a pause can cause receivers discomfort, making them feel tense and anxious. In Japan and India, however, long pauses are natural and a sign that one is collecting one’s thoughts.

Red light. Pauses help signal important points to the audience, and they help slow down the rate of a speech.

15.4c Avoid Verbal Fillers

One thing you want to be certain *not* to do is fill a meaningful pause with meaningless sounds and phrases such as *er*, *uh*, *um*, *okay*, or *you know*. Such extraneous vocal fillers disrupt the natural flow of your presentation, diminishing your credibility. Here's an example of how verbal fillers impede effective delivery:

Um . . . I was, uh, hoping, you . . . um, would step up, ah . . . you know, and . . . um, sign this . . . petition, um, because, you know, it is a matter . . . uh, of life, and uh . . . death.

Not very persuasive, is it? Make a conscious effort to notice when you use vocal fillers (ask a friend or family member to point out each use), and focus on eliminating them from your repertoire of spoken sounds.



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Er, um. Aim to eliminate verbal fillers that detract from your message.

COACHING TIP

"We often refuse to accept an idea merely because the tone of voice in which it has been expressed is unsympathetic to us."

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Match your voice to your message's mood. Speaking too loudly or too softly may convey the wrong impression to receivers, especially if they are used to listening to speakers whose habitual volume intensity is different from yours.

section
15.5

Pay Attention to Articulation and Pronunciation

Articulation is the way you pronounce individual sounds. Ideally, you speak the sounds of speech sharply and distinctly. When you fail to utter a final sound (a final *t* or *d*, for example); fail to produce the sounds of words properly (substituting or adding a sound where it doesn't belong, like *idear*); or voice a sound in an unclear, imprecise, or incorrect way (*come wimme* instead of *come with me*), then you are guilty of faulty articulation. As a speaker, your responsibility is to say your words so your audience can understand them. If your listeners can't understand you, they can't respond appropriately, and they may simply conclude you either don't know what you are talking about or are an inept speaker.

While the focus of articulation is on the production of speech sounds, the focus of **pronunciation** is on whether the words themselves are said correctly. Have you ever stressed the wrong syllable in a word or pronounced sounds that should stay silent? Among common mispronunciation errors are adding unnecessary sounds, omitting necessary sounds, reversing sounds, or misplacing an accent (see Table 15.2).

To avoid problems with pronunciation, use a dictionary or check a reputable pronunciation guide online to learn how a word should be said. Because mispronouncing a word can cause a loss in credibility, it is something you want to avoid. Don't wait for an audience member to point out an error in pronunciation to you.

TABLE 15.2 FREQUENTLY MISPRONOUNCED WORDS

Some words in the English language are frequently mispronounced. We identify a number of commonly mispronounced words here with their correct pronunciations and most common mispronunciations.

	CORRECT	INCORRECT
athlete	(ATH-leet)	(ATH-a-leet)
Arctic	(ARC-tic)	(AR-tic)
comfortable	(COM-fort-a-ble)	(COMF-ter-ble)
espresso	(ess-PRESS-oh)	(ex-PRESS-oh)
figure	(FIG-yer)	(fig-er)
forte	(FORT)	(for-TAY)—correct only as a music term
lambaste	(lam-BASTE)	(lam-BAST)
menstruation	(men-stroo-A-shun)	(men-STRAY-shun)
nuclear	(NUKE-lee-ar)	(NUKE-yoo-lar)

	CORRECT	INCORRECT
nuptial	(NUP-shul)	(NUP-shoo-al)
often	(OFF-en)	(OFT-en)
probably	(PROB-ab-ly)	(PRAH-bal-ly, PROB-ly)
realtor	(RE-al-tor)	(REAL-a-tor)
supposedly	(sup-POSE-ed-ly)	(sup-POSE-ab-ly)
taut	(TAUT)	(TAUNT)
toward	(TOW-ward)	(TOR-ward)

Source: Used by permission of Samuel Stoddard, RinkWorks, www.rinkworks.com/words/mispronounced.shtml.

Be Aware of Dialects and Regionalisms

A **dialect** is a speech pattern characteristic of a group of people from a particular area or of a specific ethnicity. Although there is no one area or group whose dialect is right or wrong, people do have preferences regarding the appropriate use of language and may even stereotype others on the basis of their dialects. For example, people in the South may perceive those in the Northeast as brusque and abrasive, whereas Northeasterners may perceive Southerners as slow and surface-sweet. Midwestern speech patterns, in contrast, are frequently held up as a standard to emulate, and they characterize the dialects exhibited by many television news anchors. Most people have grown accustomed to Midwestern speech and prefer to listen either to it or to someone who sounds just like they themselves do.

If you don't have a neutral dialect, this doesn't mean your dialect is "bad" or inferior. Still, ask yourself whether your dialect could prevent understanding in your audience. If the answer is yes, then you will want to take some action to overcome the prejudices your listeners hold about your dialect. At the same time, each audience member should keep in mind that she or he should not prejudge a speech based on the speaker's dialect.

Despite this, it may be that audience members will perceive you as more credible if you adapt your dialect, making it more in line with the one they prefer to listen to, which in many cases will be Standard English. Adjusting your dialect (not abandoning it altogether) based on the situation is known as "code switching." Just as you might not use the same words when speaking to a supervisor, professor, or elder as you would when speaking with your friends, so you might use one dialect when interacting with others informally and another when delivering a speech in public.



GAME PLAN

Maximizing My Vocal Effectiveness

- I have identified my vocal strengths and will build on them to convey the meaning of my words clearly to the audience.
- I will use my optimal pitch rather than my habitual pitch to make listening to me easier and to ensure I have sufficient vocal range.
- I've practiced my speech to ensure everyone will be able to hear me.
- I've identified where in my speech to raise and lower my volume and where to pause to stress an important point.
- I've done my best to eliminate verbal fillers and articulation and pronunciation errors.
- I've reviewed video of how other accomplished speakers use their voices to connect with the audience.



Exercises

USING YOUR VOICE

Mastering the ability to use vocal cues to enhance delivery demonstrates speechmaking acumen. To increase your ability, participate in these activities.

1. Vocal Stretchers

Take time to conduct an examination of your voice in order to expand your vocal comfort zone. Start by “playing your voice” like an instrument, using different pitches to express your ideas, and varying your volume and rate dramatically. If you typically speak softly, now project your words with more force. If you usually speak loudly, lower your volume but still be understandable. Similarly, if you are a “fast talker,” deliberately slow the flow of your words, and if you are a “slow talker,” speed up without sacrificing clarity.

2. Can You Hear Me Now?

Using the sentence, “I am so happy to be here with you,” pair up and take turns speaking it in a large classroom or empty auditorium, with one of you speaking from the front of the room and the other sitting in the last row. How loud do you need to speak in order to be heard? Aside from being heard, what do you need to do with your voice to make the other person believe you, doubt your sincerity, laugh at the remark, or feel compassion for you?

3. Analyze This: The Sound of Speech

Search for “speeches that inspire” or “speeches by famous people” on YouTube and listen to two. Choose one delivered by a speaker from your own culture and another by a speaker from a different culture. Take notes on each speaker’s use of vocal cues, including pitch, volume, rate, articulation, and pronunciation, listening for differences as well as similarities, and discuss your impressions of their effectiveness.

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Make a video of yourself delivering a one-minute speech on the importance of vocal cues or another topic of your choice. Review the video and evaluate its vocal aspects, being sure to focus on those elements covered in this chapter.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Describe how vocal cues can facilitate communication between the speaker and the audience.** Receivers tend to evaluate speakers based on use of pitch (the highness or lowness of the voice on a tonal scale), volume (the loudness or softness of the voice), rate (the speed of speech), articulation (the production of individual speech sounds), and pronunciation (whether the words are correctly said). When these elements of vocal delivery are used effectively, the audience views the speaker more positively.
- Explain how culture affects the use and interpretation of vocal cues.** Effective speakers and audiences are aware of vocal preferences or proclivities influenced by culture, recognizing that the cultural norms of others may differ from their own. By becoming aware of how people from different cultures use their voices, audience members decrease chances for misinterpreting and misjudging a speaker's intentions.
- Effectively give voice to a speech.** Eliminating distracting vocal qualities improves speaking habits. By identifying and then correcting vocal problems, you enhance your ability to express yourself effectively.

KEY TERMS

Articulation 264

Pitch 259

Rate 261

Dialect 265

Pronunciation 264

Volume 260

Paralinguistics 258



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16

Physical Aspects of Delivery

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Describe how a speaker's physical cues can enhance or detract from his or her message
2. Use physical cues effectively
3. Show how kinesic and proxemic cues can help speakers communicate with receivers



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Contents

Picture the mythical boxer Rocky moving down the aisle of an arena on the way to the ring. He almost dances down the aisle with a menacing posture and appearance, arms bobbing and weaving—sending a message that the other fighter better watch out.

What does an audience see when they look at you when you’re about to give a speech? Your posture, facial expression, eye contact, and gestures, all of which add to or detract from the impact of your words.¹ You affect audience members not only by what you say but also by what you do and how you look when speaking. In this chapter, our focus is on what audience members see when you deliver a speech,² how you use **kinesics** (body language) and proxemics (space and distance) to promote the understanding and acceptance of your message.

Even when you are silent, your appearance, facial expression, eyes, posture, and movements continue talking to the audience, suggesting to them what you are thinking and feeling.³ Like your voice, your body should not call attention to itself. It should help receivers focus on and respond to your speech.

An adept public communicator knows how to use physical cues to enhance the impact of his or her words.⁴ Your goal is to project an image of vitality, so that you command attention. Do the physical cues you emit encourage the audience to respond positively?

Audience members also will communicate with you using body language. Your ability to adjust your presentation based on their reactions depends on your picking up a host of cues—smiles, frowns, eyes looking at you or away, heads nodding in agreement or disagreement, rigid or relaxed postures. When you respond to these cues appropriately, you help build a better relationship with the audience.

COACHING TIP

“People trust their ears less than their eyes.”

—Herodotus

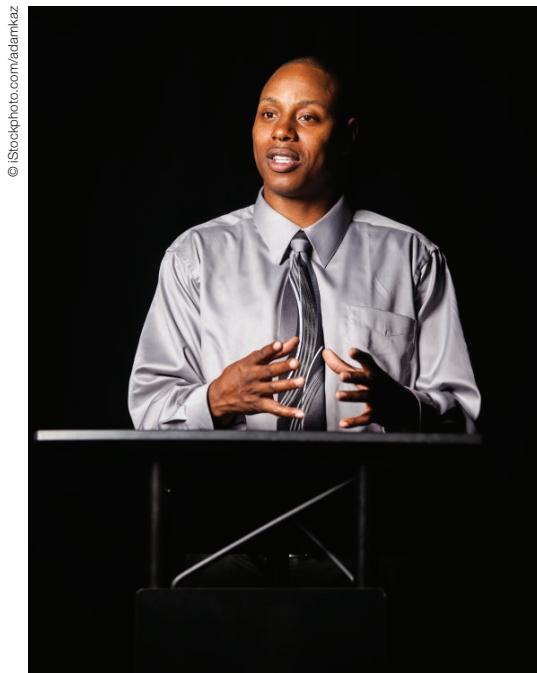
Talk to the audience not just with words but with your body. Your eyes, gestures, and physical demeanor provide audience members clues they can use to assess your sincerity and believability, likeability, and competence. They either underscore or undermine audience judgments of your authenticity and credibility. Make your appearance count, and the audience will count on you.

section
16.1

Approach the Audience With Confidence

A Chinese proverb says, “Let me see you walk, and I’ll tell you what you’re like.” Even as you approach the speaker’s stand, you are sending nonverbal messages to your audience. You have not yet spoken a word, yet by your manner of dress, rate of movement, the forcefulness in your step, the way you carry yourself and move your arms, the directness or indirectness of your gaze, your facial expression, and how and where you stand before them, listeners form opinions of you.

On the day you give your speech, be sure to walk deliberately to the front of the room, moving your arms naturally as you do so. Don’t make any silly faces or nervous sounds as you approach your speaking location. Once there, pause, and let your eyes address your receivers.



Poised for success. Manage your nonverbal communication to build a positive relationship with your audience.

Make the Most of the Speaker's Setting

Knowledge of **proxemics**—the use of space and distance in communication—can also benefit speakers.

16.2a Aim for Immediacy

The amount of space between presenter and receivers can create a sense of **immediacy** or suggest instead that a great distance exists between them. The goal is for you to use space in a way that enhances delivery. For example, compare the demeanor of an orchestra's conductor with an actor appearing in a one-person show. The actor is able to create greater intimacy with the audience simply by approaching the front of the stage—visibly symbolizing his connection to and identification with audience members. In contrast, until the last note sounds in a concert, the conductor looks directly at the orchestra, facing away from the audience—establishing a closer relationship with the orchestra than the audience.

Similarly, the speaker's position in relationship to an audience matters. Stand too close to audience members and they may feel that their personal space is being invaded, but stand too far away, and they could perceive you as uninterested or dispassionate.

16.2b Decide Where You Will Speak From

It is important to be aware of the space given you. Unless the occasion is a formal or serious one, don't feel stuck to the lectern, which if used ineffectively creates a barrier between you and the audience. Coming out from behind it helps to establish immediacy in much the same way a smile and eye contact do, making you seem more approachable.⁵ If comfortable doing so, you could even move among the audience. Whatever your choice, your movement should be purposeful.

16.2a Aim for Immediacy

16.2b Decide Where You Will Speak From



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Location matters. How can where you're standing and what's around you affect the speech's impact?

section 16.3



16.3a Know Your Gestures

16.3b Remember, Posture Matters

16.3c Use Facial Expressions and Eye Contact

16.3d Use Appearance to Support Performance

Coordinate Your Body Language With Your Words

If what you do with your body is inconsistent with what you say, your listeners will tend to believe your body language more than your words. And they are right to do so, because that is probably where the truth lies. Thus you must use physical cues to make it easier, not harder, for your listeners to believe and listen to you.

In addition, your body movements should be purposeful. Continually pacing like a caged lion, moving randomly or perpetually like a wind-up toy, or standing rigid and expressionless like a statue are attention distracters; by calling undue attention to your movement (or lack of), you subvert the message.

16.3a Know Your Gestures

A speaker who gestures meaningfully comes across as natural, relaxed, and in touch with his or her thoughts, whereas a speaker whose gestures are stiff and unnatural may be perceived as uptight, undynamic, and unsure. The following stances and motions convey these messages.

TABLE 16.1

IF YOU . . .	YOU MAY APPEAR TO BE . . .
Clutch one arm with the other or stand in a figleaf pose	Nervous and uptight
Hold your hands stiffly at your sides	Tense and uncomfortable
Cross your arms and legs	Distant and closed off
Place your hands on your hips	Combative and giving orders
Clasp your hands behind your back	Overly confident and too self-assured
Let your arms hang naturally and loosely at your sides	Relaxed and composed

In addition to these, some of us have annoying habits that audience members could find distracting. Gestures like playing with hair, jiggling bracelets or pocket change, cracking knuckles, or tapping a foot interfere with rather than clarify your message. Become aware of whether you have any distracting mannerisms, get feedback and help from others, and work to eliminate them.

Illustrators

Use gestures to reinforce, clarify, describe, and demonstrate the meaning of your words. You can, for example, signal when about to hit a main point with one, two, or three fingers. Such a gesture is called an **illustrator**—it illustrates your content. If you held a finger up vertically over your mouth, that would substitute for saying “Quiet please.” If you shook a finger at receivers while talking about the shame involved in not being an organ donor, that gesture would be emphasizing your message. You should avoid using contradicting gestures—ones that conflict with your words, negating your spoken message—unless you use it purposefully to make a point or a joke. It would not be effective to speak of the death of a hero with a smile on your face.

Emblems

Emblems are nonverbal symbols that have a direct verbal translation and are widely understood by the members of a culture. Be aware that a gesture’s meaning may differ across cultures. In Japan and Korea what Americans know as the “okay” sign symbolizes “money,” and among Arabs, when accompanied by a baring of teeth, it signifies extreme hostility.⁶



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OK? If you’re going to employ a certain emblem or sign during your speech, make sure it’s appropriate for the crowd.

Vary Gestures

Don’t limit yourself to a single, all-purpose gesture. Instead, your movements should flow naturally with your words.⁷ Under most conditions, gestures should coincide with, not precede or follow, verbal content.

Ask yourself these questions about your gestures:

- Are my gestures natural and spontaneous, rather than exaggerated, too patterned, or uncertain?
- Do they support my words?
- Are they varied appropriately?

16.3b Remember, Posture Matters

Posture is the position of your body in space. The posture you display conveys a lot about how you are feeling. Because you will likely stand when giving a speech, we focus on your standing posture. A public speaker who stands tall with shoulders squared sends a message of strength to audiences, whereas a speaker whose shoulders are either raised or stooped sends a message of stress or submissiveness, respectively. A speaker who leans toward an audience is usually perceived more positively than one who leans away or appears to withdraw from the audience.⁸ If using a lectern, don't drape yourself over it, slouch, or rock back and forth.

When you are ready to speak, ask yourself these posture-related questions:

- Does my posture convey my command of the speech experience?
- Does it express my interest in the audience?
- Does it demonstrate my comfort with speaking before others?



Good posture. Consider the message that your body position sends to the audience.

16.3c Use Facial Expressions and Eye Contact

Audience members rely on a speaker's facial cues to reveal what's behind the speaker's words.

Put on Your Game Face

Putting on a game face doesn't mean you are going to act tough or phony; it means you use your face to set the emotional tone for your speech, beginning when the audience sees you for the first time. Then, once you begin, guide your listeners by using facial expressions that match your verbal message. Use the following facial management techniques as needed to intensify, deintensify, neutralize, or mask what you are feeling:

- When you *intensify* an emotion you exaggerate your facial expressions to reflect the degree of expression you believe audience members expect you to exhibit. For example, you may communicate more excitement than you actually feel in an effort to generate excitement among listeners.
- When you *deintensify* an emotion, you diminish your facial expressions so that audience members will judge your behavior as more acceptable. Thus, you may downplay the rage you feel in an effort to temper audience member reactions.
- When you *neutralize* an emotion, you suppress your real feelings so as to suggest greater inner strength and resilience to listeners. Thus, you attempt to hide any fears, nerves, or sadness.
- And when you *mask* an emotion, you try to replace one emotion with another to which you believe audience members will respond more favorably. You might, for example, choose to conceal feelings of outrage, anger, jealousy, or anxiety if you believe audience members would find them unacceptable.

Inappropriate facial expressions can undermine your efforts. If you smile, for instance, when discussing a serious issue, that behavior contradicts your verbal message and will diminish whatever bond exists between you and your audience.

If your face is expressionless, it will also work against you by failing to communicate your interest in your audience and your involvement in your topic.

In preparation for speaking, ask yourself these questions relevant to your facial expressiveness:

- Are my facial expressions conveying the proper emotions?
- Do my facial expressions support my thoughts and feelings?

Maintain Eye Contact

Of all the facial cues you exhibit, none affects your relationship with your audience as much as the presence or absence of eye contact. Making effective eye contact early and often with an audience serves a number of important functions:

1. Eye contact signals that the lines of communication are open between speaker and listeners. It is easier for audience members to ignore a speaker who has not established eye contact with them.
2. Eye contact psychologically reduces the distance between speaker and listeners, helping to cement their bond.
3. It allows the speaker to obtain valuable feedback from audience members regarding how the speech is coming across, enabling the speaker to adjust his or her delivery as needed.
4. It communicates the speaker's confidence, conviction, concern, and interest.

Keep these guidelines in mind when speaking to an audience:

- Begin by looking audience members in the eye.
- Keep your gaze steady and personal as you distribute it evenly about the room or auditorium; in this way you visually demonstrate your interest in everyone present.
- Do not stare blankly. A blank stare can be mistaken for a hostile glower or a sign of a blank mind.
- Maintain eye contact with your listeners for at least three seconds after you conclude your speech. Let your final words sink in before you leave the lectern.



Look for attention. Audience members are more likely to listen to a speaker who has made eye contact.

16.3d Use Appearance to Support Performance

Your clothing and grooming are important in creating a good first impression with your audience members and in influencing their perceptions of your competence and trustworthiness.⁹ Because you want audience members to accept and retain your message, you need to present yourself as positively as possible. This means that your appearance, like your gestures, should be unobtrusive and should not isolate you from your receivers. Your words should not have to compete with your appearance for the attention of your listeners. The way you dress will help make both you and your message more appealing to listeners if you keep in mind that your physical appearance needs to reflect both the occasion and the nature of your speech. For instance, if you were giving a speech on surfing, it might be fitting for you to wear shorts or a T-shirt, but a suit would be appropriate when giving a business speech.

Use these questions to assess your appearance:

- Am I well groomed?
- Am I dressed appropriately?
- Does my appearance support both the content and mood of my speech?
- Am I wearing anything that might distract the audience's attention?



GAME PLAN

Improving Your Speech Stance

- I've practiced my speech in front of a full-length mirror more than once to get an idea of my own habits when it comes to stance—for example, I like to pace, and standing still in a natural pose takes some effort.
- I can envision where in the room I'll be standing in relation to my audience.
- I've tried a few relaxed poses, and I've chosen one that feels right to me; I know where to place my hands, and I have a variety of gestures that work to engage the audience.
- I know the content of my speech so well that I feel comfortable expressing the right emotions at the right times.
- I've practiced maintaining eye contact with audience members.
- I've picked out an outfit that is comfortable and works with my speech as well as the context in which I'll be presenting.



Exercises

USING YOUR BODY

Mastering the ability to use your body and physical cues to enhance delivery will help you build a secure and positive relationship with the audience.

1. Put Your Best Face Forward

When speaking in public, your face should match the emotion inherent in your words. Explain your plan for putting your best speech-face forward. For example, you might coach yourself to approach the front of the room confidently and meet the eyes of the members of your audience before beginning to speak.

2. Register Emotion

Select an emotion—surprise, happiness, or anger—and picture it increasing and decreasing in intensity, say moving from the most subtle indication of the emotion to the most intense and back. Experienced speakers use their bodies to demonstrate such changes. Try it. Explain why being able to express such emotional distinctions can benefit you as a speaker.

3. Analyze the Speaker's Physical Stance and Delivery

Physical delivery distinguishes one speaker from another. Using examples you discover online, compare the physical speaking styles of a pair of speakers: Steve Jobs and Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey and Ellen DeGeneres, or another pair of your own choosing. In your comparison, note the following:

- Which of the speakers engenders more trust and why
- What you specifically like or dislike about each of the speaker's styles
- Whether the speaker gestures too forcefully or not forcefully enough
- If the speaker's smile comes across as sincere or fake and why
- When the speaker leans toward and away from the audience
- When the speaker's eye contact is sustained or intermittent

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Prepare a two- to three-minute speech on a topic of your choice of which your instructor approves.

During your presentation, picture each member of your audience as an individual, and one at a time, have five seconds of sustained eye contact with each one while you speak. At the end of your presentation, ask audience members to assess how your eye contact made them feel. Also ask them to critique other aspects of your delivery including your use of voice, gestures, and movement.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Describe how a speaker's physical cues can enhance or detract from his or her message.

What a speaker does when delivering a speech affects the audience's perception of his or her credibility. By taking time to explore how to use physical cues more effectively, a speaker can work to enhance the understanding and acceptance of ideas by audience members.

2. Use physical cues effectively.

Physical behavior carries meaning. If a speaker displays effective

gestures, body movements, facial expressions, eye contact, and posture, then it is easier to create a good relationship with receivers.

3. Show how kinesic and proxemic cues can help speakers communicate with receivers.

The way that speakers use space and distance influences the audience–speaker relationship. An understanding of proxemics can bridge distance, create a connection, and enhance delivery.

KEY TERMS

Emblems 273

Immediacy 271

Proxemics 271

Illustrators 273

Kinesics 269



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17

Using Presentation Aids

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Discuss the functions served by presentation aids
2. Assess the strengths of the presentation aids discussed in this chapter
3. Choose an appropriate slide presentation software program
4. Select, prepare, and integrate the most appropriate presentation aids into a speech

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Contents

Whenever we view a sports event, election night results, coverage of a trial, or even the weather, we see the commentators use presentation aids to augment their reporting. In football, a yellow line indicates the first-down line. During a presidential election, maps are coded red and blue. Criminal trials feature crime scene visuals. Visuals help tell each story.

Many of us think of a public speech as filled with words. But words are not always enough. As in broadcast sports, you may discover that **presentation aids**—graphics, a photo or film segment, or maybe dramatic music—can supplement your words. Consider this observation by presidential adviser and communication and media relations specialist Merrie Spaeth:

When Moses came down from the mountain with clay tablets bearing the Ten Commandments, it was perhaps history's first example of a speaker using props to reinforce his message. It wouldn't have had the same impact if Moses had simply announced: "God just told me 10 things, and I'm going to relay them to you."¹

Today's audiences are more attuned to messages that have visual appeal than to ones appealing solely to their ears. Because of our immersion in a culture saturated with media and new technology, we expect speakers to stimulate our sight as well as our hearing. Thus, by effectively integrating visual and audio materials into your speech, you can make a significant difference in how your audience responds.

COACHING TIP

"I use many props. The props act as cue cards reminding me of what to say next."

—Tom Ogden

Presentation aids not only prop up your speech, they prop up your memory of what comes next, helping you segue from one important point to another. Because they enable you to speak with greater fluency and confidence, and help the audience remember your message, visual and audio evidence help to achieve the goals of your speech.

Section 17.1 Use Presentation Aids Strategically

Section 17.2 Know How to Work With Presentation Aids

Section 17.3 Select the Best Aids

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Use Presentation Aids Strategically

Presentation aids are often clearer than speech itself. When audiences see and hear your message, they understand and retain more of it. Keep in mind, however, that the purpose of using presentation aids is to reinforce, not replace, your spoken words. When used to advantage by a speaker, presentation aids fulfill the following functions:

- **Increase comprehension.** Humans process more than 80 percent of all information we receive through our sense of sight.²
- **Promote memory and recall.** We remember only 10 percent of what we read, 20 percent of what we hear, and 30 percent of what we see. But we remember more than 50 percent of what we see and hear simultaneously.³
- **Facilitate organization.** By displaying main ideas visually, you help your listeners follow your speech's structure and better understand your presentation.
- **Direct attention and control interest.** A dramatic photograph, object, or graph holds a listener's attention more compellingly than words alone.
- **Increase persuasiveness.** Speakers who make visuals an inherent part of their presentations are perceived as better communicators and are 43 percent more likely to persuade their audiences than were speakers who relied exclusively on spoken words.⁴
- **Communicate concisely.** Effective presentation aids help you share information that might otherwise be too complex or take up too much time. An effective chart, for example, can eloquently convey a message.



I can see clearly. There are numerous benefits for both you and your audience of using some type of visual aid.

- **Create an aura of professionalism.** When prepared with care, visual and audio aids demonstrate a professional approach, increasing credibility and your ability to communicate your message.
- **Reduce apprehension.** When using presentation aids you have something to focus on other than the fear of speaking.
- **Manage time.** Visual aids tied to specific moments in your speech can help you keep on pace and end on time.

Effective presentation aids make achieving your goal more likely. Media- and technology-savvy audiences are comfortable processing information from multiple sources simultaneously. Adept at reading pictures, they gravitate to the visual.

FIGURE 17.1

Visual Aids and Retention

	Retention After Three Hours	Retention After Three Days
Speech Alone	70%	10%
Visual Alone	72%	20%
Speech and Visual	85%	65%

When used in concert with speech, visual aids enhance message retention.

Source: Elena P. Zayas-Baya, "Instructional Media in the Total Language Picture," *International Journal of Instructional Media* 5 (1977–1978): 145–50.

section
17.2

Know How to Work With Presentation Aids

Imagine going to a presentation on why you should visit national parks and finding yourself seated in the middle of a pitch-black auditorium. The speaker holds up photos of the parks, but you cannot see them well. She then delivers a ten-minute slide show designed to present highlights of each park. The speaker, however, positions herself in front of the screen, leaving you with an obstructed view. As she talks about each slide, she uses a laser pointer, twirling it about randomly when she isn't using it. She spins it so wildly that you actually become dizzy. You fight the urge to leave.



© iStockphoto.com/alptranum

Visual interest. Compelling visuals and other presentation aids should enhance audience interest in the presentation topic.

A more successful speaker might begin by telling you a story about how she came to visit these national treasures and why you would enjoy visiting them, too. She would not obscure pertinent information with her body, but stand out of the way. She would use the laser pointer to guide you through each of the park's highlights, but turn it off when not actively using it. And she would ensure that the room had enough ambient light so that you could take notes. The speaker might end by asking you to visualize yourself standing in front of Old Faithful. The last visual you see depicts the geyser with the following words splashed across the slide: "It's time to experience the spray for yourself."

Select the Best Aids

Presentation aids come in all shapes, sizes, and sounds and include people, models, objects, photographs, graphs, charts, drawings, slides, DVDs, music, and computer-generated materials. When planning on integrating visual or audio aids into a speech, consider these key questions:

1. What can I do to make my presentation more visually and aurally alive for my listeners?
2. Which presentation aids are most appropriate given the situation or setting for my speech? What kinds of presentation aids will the location of the speech allow?
3. Which presentation aids best suit the purpose of my speech?

17.3a Real People

A **human visual aid** can be effective if her role is well planned and she is not allowed to distract audience members. A student speaking on self-defense could bring along two people trained in martial arts, but they should not show off their skills until the appropriate moment. When using a human visual aid, follow these coaching pointers:

1. **Be certain your “human visual” is willing and committed to helping you accomplish your objectives.**
2. **Be sure to rehearse with this person prior to the big day.** Lack of preparation can be risky and can inhibit the smooth integration of the aide into your presentation.
3. **Any human visual aid is subordinate to your speech.** Do not have the aide share the speaker’s area with you until his or her participation is required. Once the person’s role is complete, move him or her back into the audience or out of sight.

You, too, serve as a visual aid. You might demonstrate the proper stance for fencing or model the dress of your native country.

17.3a Real People

17.3b Props and Models

17.3c Photographs

17.3d Graphs

17.3e Charts, Drawings, and Maps

17.3f Audio and Video Clips

17.3b Props and Models

Props and models also can enliven a presentation. When effectively used, both add clarity, interest, and drama to your ideas.

Props

A *prop* is an object that has the power to compel listeners to focus their attention on your message and better understand your subject. To be effective, the object should be large enough for everyone to see, but small enough so you can carry it to your presentation and handle it with ease. For example, a tennis racquet, a native costume, a musical instrument, food, or a toy can show your listeners what you are talking about or demonstrate how to do something. Although they can enhance interest and increase retention, props can also distract the audience. Therefore, the visual aids should be kept out of sight until needed. Otherwise, instead of concentrating on you, your listeners may focus on the object, speculating about what it is and what you are going to do with it.

Consider in advance the kinds of problems a prop could create. Animate props must be stored and treated humanely prior to, during, and after the speech. During a speech about how to handle a snake, one student placed the snake on a display table at the front of the room; much to her surprise, as she was turning to make a point, the snake slithered out of her reach and was on its way into the audience when she finally recaptured it. Remember, the visual aid should add credibility and drama to your presentation, not create fear or chaos.



Models

If you conclude that your visual aid is too large to bring to your presentation, too small to be seen, or too dangerous, valuable, or fragile to carry around, then you might use a *model* in its place. Effective models can aid in comprehension and retention by increasing the amount of audience engagement and interest. For example, one student who delivered a speech on the human heart used a larger-than-life replica that opened to reveal its chambers. The model helped clarify the information while also keeping the audience's interest.

Tips to Remember

Keep these coaching pointers in mind when using both props and models:

1. Be sure the prop or model illustrates and reinforces an important point.
2. Be sure it's visible from anywhere in the audience.
3. Keep it hidden until ready to use it.
4. Put it away when finished using it.
5. Practice so you can use it without difficulty or calling undue attention to yourself.

17.3c Photographs

Photographs also make effective visual aids. Rather than delivering the all-too-common apology, “I know you can’t see this well, but . . .,” make sure audience members *can* see it well. Select your photos with care, and enlarge them sufficiently.

Try not to pass photographs around the room, because doing so diverts attention from you. The person waiting to look at the photograph, the person looking at it, and the person who has just looked at it are not with you because they are concentrating on something else.

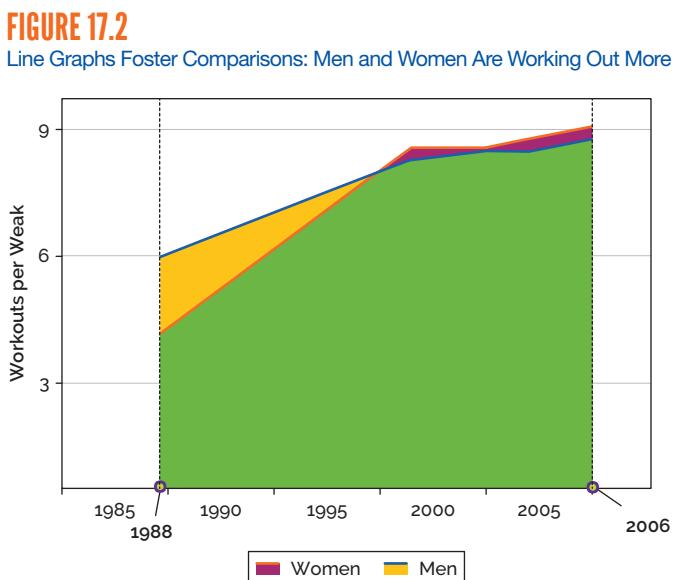
Whatever the nature of a photo, color pictures are usually more effective than black-and-white, but it is most important that the photo’s central features be clearly visible.⁵

17.3d Graphs

Well-designed **graphs** can help speakers communicate statistical information, illustrate trends, and demonstrate patterns. Among the most commonly used are line graphs, bar graphs, pie graphs, and pictographs and infographics.⁶

Line Graphs

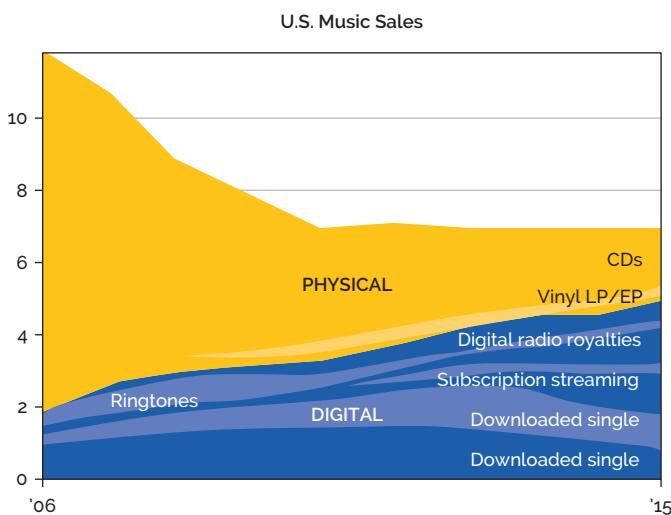
Line graphs show trends over time. Figure 17.2 is one such graph a student used in a speech on why diet is a better way to control obesity than exercise. Referring to the visual, the student said “As you can see from this graph derived from information in the April 2016 issue of *The Atlantic*, between the years 1988 and 2006 the amount women exercised doubled while men increased their workouts by approximately 50 percent.” The speaker then went on to tell her audience that despite the increase in exercise, during this time period the obesity epidemic among Americans actually worsened, increasing from 23 percent to 35 percent. The student’s visual helped document that increased exercise on its own did not reduce obesity. Not only does this line graph reveal a trend over time, it enables the speaker to make and show important comparisons. In addition, notice how the lines in the graph are color-coded for clarity. When designed well, the line graph is one of the easiest types of visuals for audiences to follow. When



Source: Olga Khazan, “Exercise in Futility,” *The Atlantic* (April 2016): 30.

FIGURE 17.3

Poorly Designed Line Graph



Source: Data from Recording Industry Association of America.

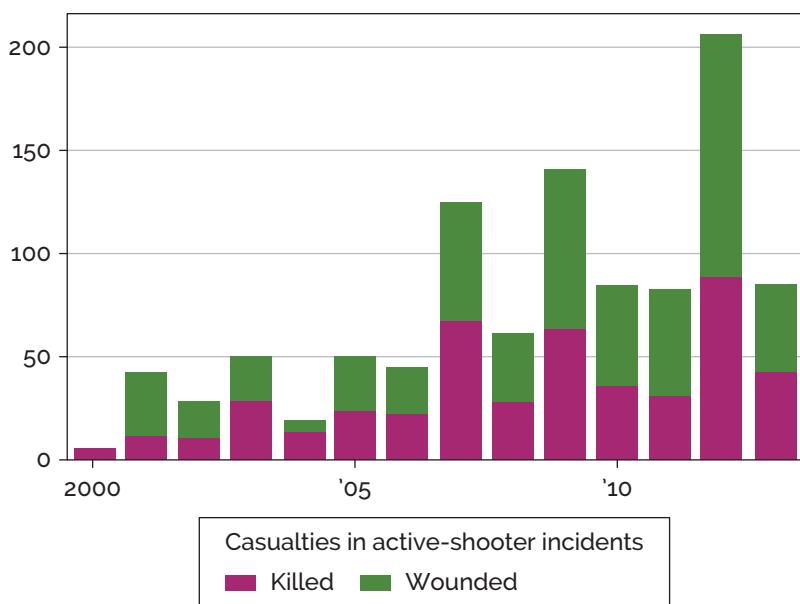
designed poorly, it can become confusing, as revealed by the line graph in Figure 17.3, which is complex, poorly color-coded, and difficult for an audience to read easily and quickly.

Bar Graphs

Like the line graph, the **bar graph** is useful for comparing or contrasting two or more items or groups. Bar graphs can be either horizontal or vertical. While they vary in length, the bars should be of equal widths. When prepared properly, the bar graph is usually easy for the uninitiated to read and interpret and makes the data more meaningful and dramatic for receivers. Figure 17.4 is a bar graph that shows an increase in mass shootings over a 14-year period.

FIGURE 17.4

Bar Graph Illustrates Mass Shootings on the Rise

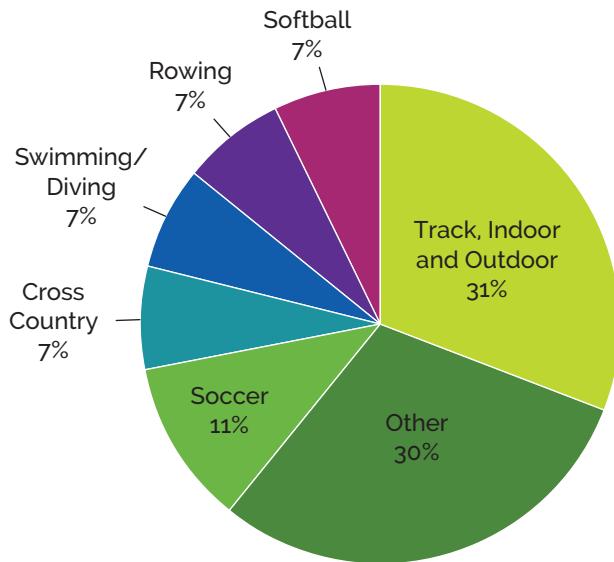
Source: Based on Federal Bureau of Investigation, "Mass Shootings on the Rise," *Wall Street Journal*, September 25, 2014, p. A1; permission conveyed through Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.

Pie Graphs

In contrast to line and bar graphs, **pie graphs** (or circle graphs) illustrate percentages of a whole or distribution patterns. Ideally, pie graphs should contain from two to five clearly labeled “slices” or divisions. Figure 17.5 shows a pie graph with slices representing the top six sports played by Division I female athletes and a seventh slice representing all other sports these athletes play. A separate tiny slice for each of the many other sports would make the graph too cluttered. Do you see any way the speaker might have reduced the slices in Figure 17.5 to 5?

FIGURE 17.5

Pie Chart Illustrates Women’s Participation in Division I Athletics, by Sport in 2012–2013



Source: NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), “Sport-by-Sport Participation and Sponsorship Women’s Sport 2012–2013 (Division 1),” <https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/Participation%20Rates%20Final.pdf>.

Infographics

Composites of information, illustration, and design, **infographics** help speakers relay information in more interesting ways. Infographics are particularly useful in helping audience members visualize data.⁷ A **pictograph**—a graphic representation of the subject—is a simplified version of an infographic. For example, the graph in Figure 17.6, describing the number of multiple-generation households in the United States, has visual appeal that makes it a little less formal than a bar graph. Figure 17.7 is an example of a more sophisticated infographic that one student used in a speech about online dating relationships.

FIGURE 17.6

Infographics Add Interest and Visual Appeal

Three or more generations in one household



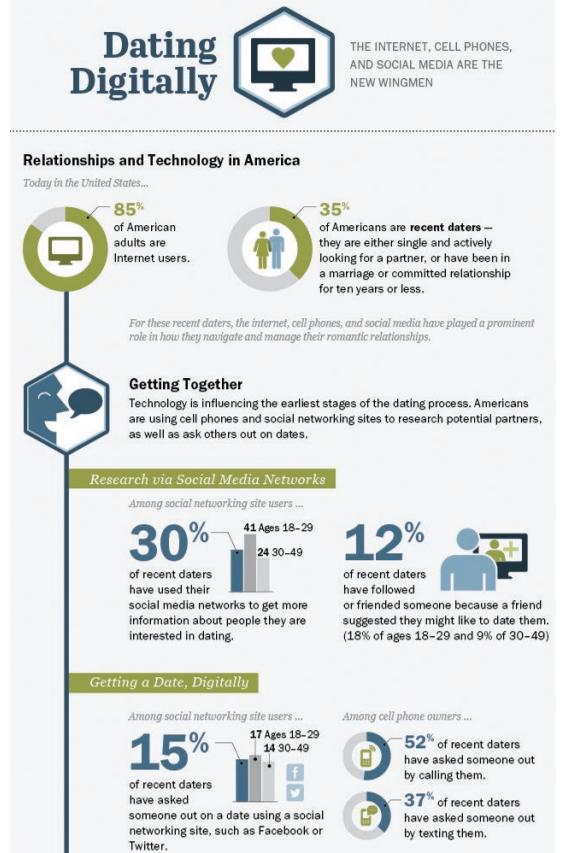
Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

See Table 17.1 to review the best uses of each type of graph.

Whatever types of graphs you use, keep in mind the following guidelines:

1. Clearly title the graph.
2. Keep the graph as simple as possible.
Too many graphs or too much information contributes to information overload.
3. Help receivers with the interpretation process.
Don't assume they will read the graph the way you expect them to.
4. Make sure the graph is large enough for the audience to see everything written on it and contains colors that are distinguishable. Clear graphs facilitate clear speech.

FIGURE 17.7
Dating Data Infographic



Source: Pew Research Center, "Online Dating & Relationships" [infographic], October 21, 2013, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2013/10/21/online-dating-relationships>.

TABLE 17.1 BEST GRAPH PRACTICES

TYPE OF GRAPH	FUNCTION
Line	To demonstrate trends or changes over time; to reveal how one thing affects another
Bar	To show comparisons and contrasts; to show differences in amount or frequency
Pie	To reveal relationships between parts and the whole; to indicate relative proportions, percentages, or distribution patterns
Infographic	To use pictorial representations to decrease the formality of a graph and enhance its appeal

17.3e Charts, Drawings, and Maps

Charts, drawings, and maps are resources speakers rely on to convey complex information simply and visually.

Charts

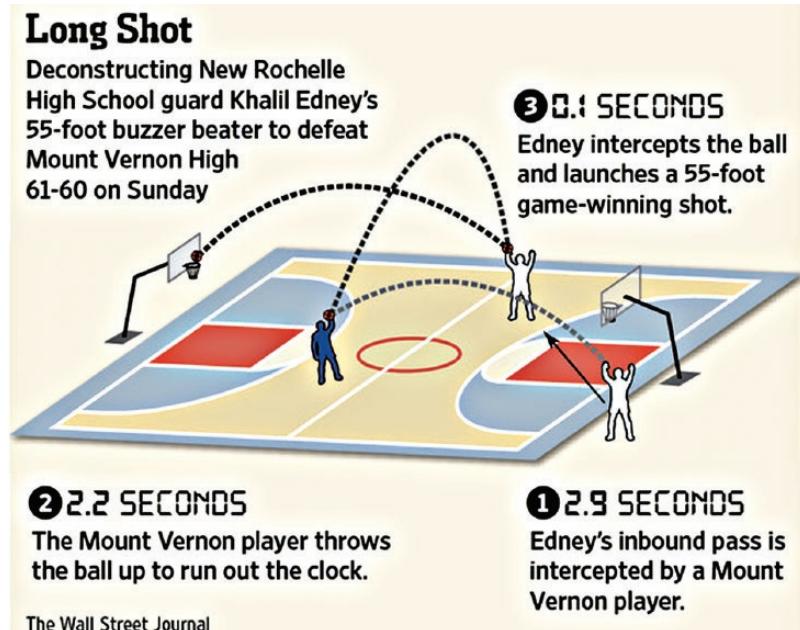
Speakers use **charts** to help compress or summarize large amounts of information. By enabling listeners to organize their own thoughts and follow your speech's progress, charts also simplify note taking and help audiences remember. The most commonly used chart is one that combines descriptions with graphics.

Figure 17.8 illustrates how, with a tenth of a second left to play in a basketball game, a team managed against long odds to inbound the ball and score to win the game. This chart helped a speaker to explain the play and make his point about the importance of not giving up until a game is over.

Charts are particularly useful for speakers who want to discuss a process, channel of communication, or chain of command, as Figure 17.9 demonstrates.

FIGURE 17.8

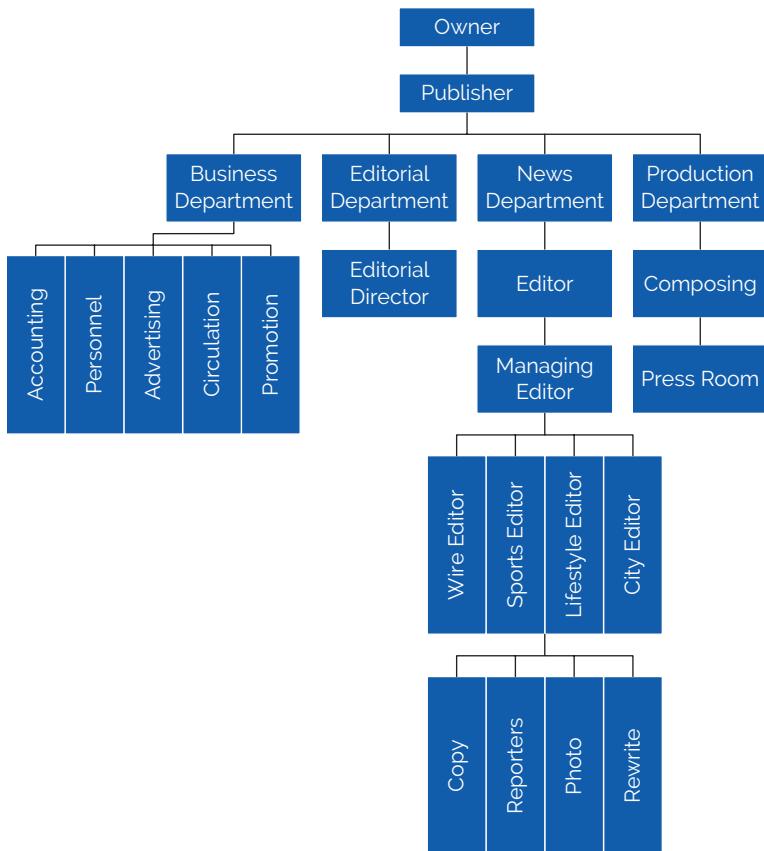
Charts Summarize Information



Source: Reprinted with permission of the *Wall Street Journal*, Copyright © 2013. Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide.

FIGURE 17.9

Organizational Charts Reveal Chains of Command



Drawings and Maps

Drawings and maps help illustrate key differences, movements, or geographic information. These visuals translate complex information into a format that receivers can grasp readily. A speaker compared different swim strokes using Figure 17.10. As she spoke, she revealed only the portion of the drawing to which she was referring; other sections were covered until she mentioned them.

FIGURE 17.10

Drawings Help Share Meaning

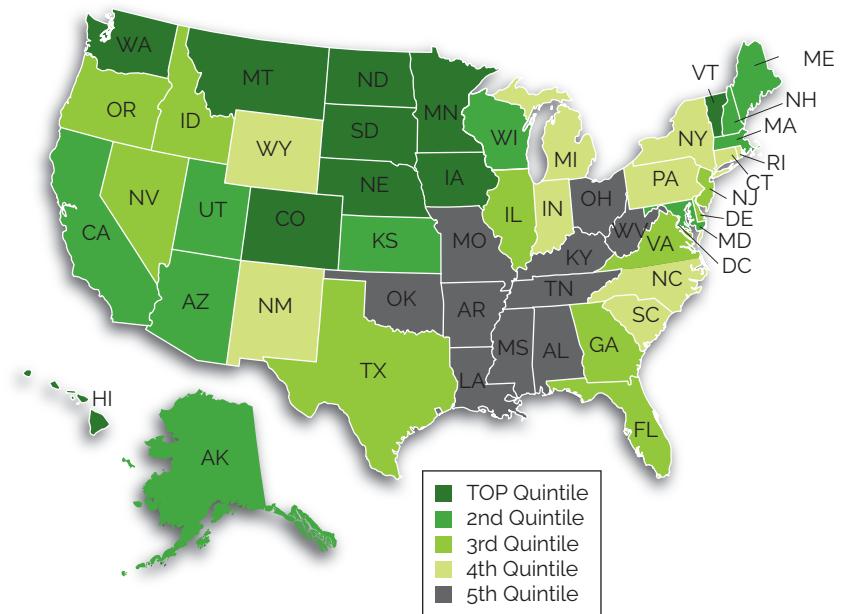


Source: Dorling Kindersley/Thinkstock.

Maps also make versatile visual aids. One speaker used the map in Figure 17.11 when delivering a speech on the nature of well-being. As you can see, communities in states scored higher or lower according to where they fell on the Well-Being Index, a measure of health, happiness, job satisfaction, and other factors determining quality of life.

Prepare drawings and maps in advance. Drawing them while your audience is watching consumes valuable speaking time, causes audience members to lose patience with you, and produces art that is less suitable for use.

FIGURE 17.11
Maps Illustrate Geographic Information



Source: Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, "State of American Well-Being, 2013 State Rankings and Analysis," in *State, Community, and Congressional District Analysis Report*, 7.

17.3f Audio and Video Clips

Audio and video clips can help make a speech more dynamic, involving, and exciting for receivers. Because they allow a speaker to custom design more sophisticated examples of presentation support, they can be extremely effective tools to use with today's mediawise audiences.

Though these visual aids require speakers to use more complicated equipment and may be more difficult to rehearse and set up, the vividness they provide is difficult to beat.

Video Clips

Using brief video clips in a speech can establish your credibility as well as increase audiences' interest, memory, and understanding. Imagine speaking about football and the risk of injury and then showing a video of a player being tackled during a game and suffering a concussion. Showing the segment during your speech provides an immediate dramatic impact.

You can find videos at YouTube, Vimeo, MetaCafe.com, and DailyMotion .com, among other sources. To be effective, the clip you use needs to be short—usually consuming no more than 30 seconds of a five-minute speech. You want your audience to remember your words, not just the video. It also needs to be cued up or downloaded prior to your presentation's start. If you will be using your own computer to show the clip, be sure you have compatible files and/or cables to connect to the classroom projector. And remember, double-check that the video will transfer well to a bigger screen. A video that is of low quality or too pixelated will not enhance your presentation. Think carefully about the audience and other constraints before selecting a clip. You don't want to isolate or offend the audience by using a clip that is too violent or generally in poor taste. Whatever you select, be sure to introduce the clip to the audience, preparing them for what they are about to see. Video clips work best when you are able to integrate them smoothly and without interruption into your speech.

Audio Clips

Though the majority of aids used by speakers are visual, audio also merits attention. A recording of music, sound, or speech can make your presentation more interesting and memorable. Were you speaking on the purpose of folk music, for example, playing snippets of songs or the recorded words of a musician could help you convey your message.

Audio is readily available and easy to use in your presentation, using either a computer or a CD player. Just be sure to cue the CD player to the precise point at which you want to begin before you begin your presentation. And, as with video, introduce the audio segment before using it to orient the audience to what they will be hearing.

Of note is the effectiveness of mixing visual and audio aids together—creating a fully integrated multimedia experience for the audience. Visual clips and computer images when paired with sound and text have the potential to make your speech one the audience will remember.



COACHING TIP

"The power of sound to put an audience in a certain psychological state is vastly undervalued."

—Mike Figgis

Appropriately integrated audio and video clips add drama to your speech. Use them to set, reflect, or amplify a mood. Because they strike a chord with the audience, they will make your words more interesting, involving, and memorable.

Be Familiar With Presentation Software

Because they are professional looking and easy to create, visual slides created using presentation software such as Prezi, Google Docs Presentation, Microsoft PowerPoint, GoAnimate, or SlideRocket can add contemporary flair, drama, professionalism, and credibility to a speech.⁸ Using one of these software options also enables you to give visual shape to your arguments. In the words of Harvard psychology professor Steven Pinker, “Language is a linear medium: one word after another. But ideas are multi-dimensional. . . . When properly employed, PowerPoint makes the logical structure of an argument more transparent. Two channels sending the same information are better than one.”

Presentation software also makes it easy to include a graph or chart, as most programs provide templates and tutorials explaining how to use them.⁹ Recent versions of presentation software also make it easy for you to create three-dimensional artwork and incorporate sound, music, or video clips into your presentation (see Table 17.2).

TABLE 17.2 A GUIDE TO PRESENTATION SOFTWARE

SOFTWARE	PROS	CONS
Microsoft PowerPoint	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ The most widely used presentation software^a+ The program is easy to use, particularly for Microsoft Word users.+ PowerPoint comes with multiple slide design options and additional templates can be downloaded directly from Microsoft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◊ To utilize this software, students must purchase a license.◊ Linear format is not as dynamic for presentations.
Apple Keynote	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Can be accessed from any Mac or iOS compatible device.+ Easy to share presentation files with others. Users can save Keynote documents as PowerPoint files.+ Apple Keynote comes with multiple slide design options and additional templates can be downloaded directly from Apple.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◊ To utilize this software, students must purchase a license.◊ Designed specifically for Mac and iOS devices, so some formatting may be lost when converting Keynote files to PowerPoint to present on a Windows computer.◊ Linear format is not as dynamic for presentations.

(Continued)

TABLE 17.2 (continued)

SOFTWARE	PROS	CONS
Prezi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Users can access the program online; there's no need to have access to a computer with the program installed.+ No fee for basic usage.+ More dynamic and interactive format; presentation is on a single canvas that allows the user to create his or her own organizational structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◊ User must pay an annual fee to edit presentations offline and make files private. Dynamic format not ideal for content-heavy presentations.◊ Not all information is spatially related; the canvas format can force a spatial relationship where none exists.
Google Slides	<ul style="list-style-type: none">+ Free, Web-based presentation program.+ Users can edit presentations when they're offline.+ Collaborative; user can create and edit slides with others in real time.+ Program automatically saves changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◊ Must have access to a Gmail account.◊ Not as many customization options as PowerPoint or Keynote.

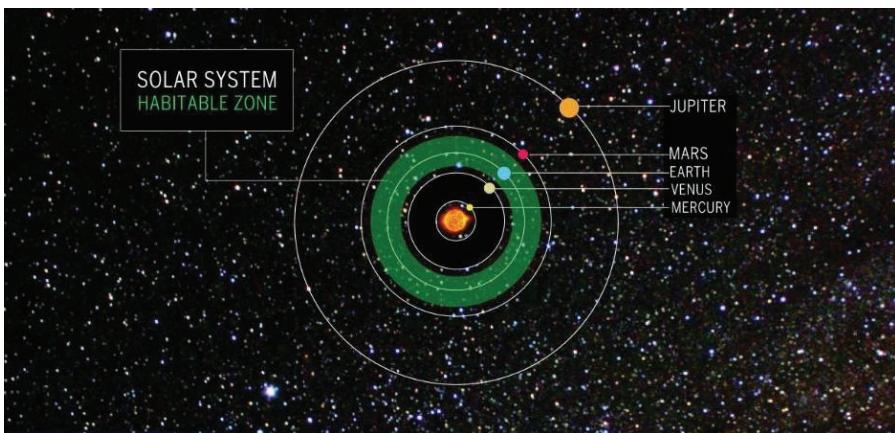
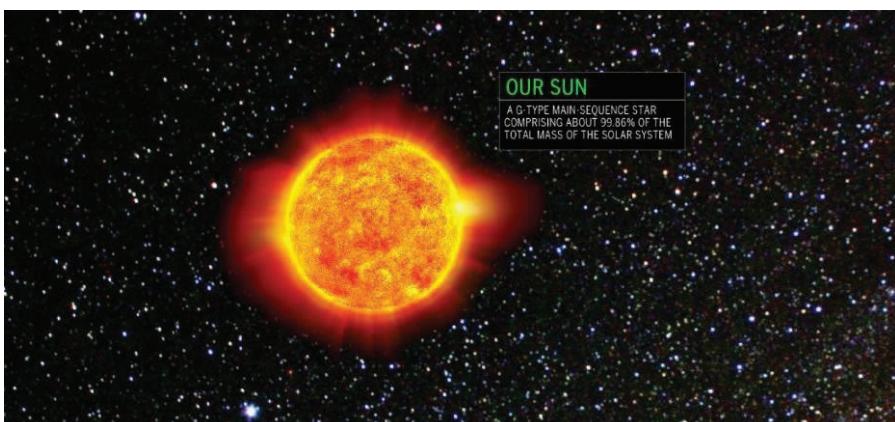
a. Bob Parks, "Death to Powerpoint," August 30, 2012, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2012-08-30/death-to-powerpoint>.

With the advent of **computer-generated graphics** (see Figure 17.12), technology is helping transform ordinary presentations into extraordinary speechmaking events, but you need to be selective when deciding whether or not to use presentation software. If your presentation is not prepared with care, the slides may upstage you, overpower your message, or drain your speech of its vitality.¹⁰ Or you may be tempted to use dazzling PowerPoint slides to cover up weak content.¹¹

Plan out how to use each of your aids, and practice integrating each one. Unless a presentation aid is going to enhance your presentation, don't use it. Just because you can use a glitzy visual doesn't mean you should.

FIGURE 17.12

Sample Slides From a Computer-Generated Graphic Presentation



Source: "A Real Search for Alien Life," Sara Seager's presentation for TEDxCambridge 2013, September 25, 2013, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnM4SaGc8R0>.

section 17.5



17.5a Devise the Content and Design the Look

17.5b Choose the Right Presentation Aids

17.5c Use Presentation Aids During Your Speech

Get the Most From Your Presentation Aids

Your visuals should be large enough, clear enough, and dramatic enough to enhance the informative and persuasive power of your presentations. Like any other skill, however, selecting, designing, integrating, and using visuals take patience, persistence, and practice.

17.5a Devise the Content and Design the Look

Follow these content and design pointers to help craft effective slides.

- **Keep it simple.** Each slide should be brief and focus on a single idea.
- **Keep it short.** The fewer words, the better!
- **Use bullets.** Bulleted lists increase readability and help you organize your ideas.
- **Avoid clutter.** Minimize purely decorative design elements that distract viewers from your message.
- **Be direct.** Use active wording and parallel sentence structure.
- **Be design wise.** Keep slides consistent, to avoid distracting the audience with jarring colors or fonts.
- **Use a readable font.** Common fonts are common for a reason: They are the easiest to read. Avoid decorative or handwriting fonts, and don't mix more than two font types on a single slide. Use the same fonts on all slides.
- **Use a suitable text size.** Use 36- to 44-point type for main headings, 24 to 36 for subheads, and 18 to 24 for text. Type projected on a screen should never be smaller than 18 point. Use upper and lower case to increase legibility.
- **Be color cautious.** Using the right color enhances readership, receptivity, and retention.¹² But using color requires care. You want the color(s) you use to set the right mood and render your message readable and attractive. Keep the background color consistent. Use no more than two text colors. Differentiate background from text.
- **Be creative.** Rely on images and sounds more than text. Insert tables, art, very brief video clips, and sound directly into your slides.
- **Be in control.** Direct your audience's attention before you start a video. If you're going to talk during the video clip, mute the sound. When not referring to a slide, use a blank slide or cover the lens to bring the focus of the audience back to you.

- **Remember you are a speaker first.** You're delivering a speech, not merely a multimedia presentation. You are not replaceable!
- **Maintain eye contact.** Keep your eyes on the audience, not on the slide. Talk to the audience, not to the screen.
- **Always rehearse.** To make the most of your visual and audio aids and incorporate them seamlessly, rehearse in advance and up to your presentation.
- **Be prepared.** Have a contingency plan in case the equipment fails.

17.5b Choose the Right Presentation Aids

How do you choose a presentation aid? Start by considering your topic, your audience, and your options. For example, topics related to health and human services typically include graphs and charts to simplify the communication of complex information. Consider these criteria when deciding whether to use a presentation aid:

1. Is it worth its cost?

Will the amount of time and effort you expend preparing the aid pay off in audience interest and response?

2. Does it “talk” to receivers?

Will the visual or audio aid facilitate your task by saving you words? Will your listeners be able to understand and relate to it? Might anyone in your audience find the visuals or sounds you are using inappropriate or distracting?

3. Am I skilled enough and equipped to use it effectively?

Is equipment on site? Will you have the opportunity to practice with the equipment? Unrealistic expectations regarding the time it will take you to master using a piece of equipment could leave you with too little time to rehearse your speech. Remember, using visual and audio aids well takes practice too.

Finally, when determining the presentation aids to use, keep the objectives of your speech uppermost in your mind, and limit each visual to one main point. Simplicity should lead the way. Every visual you use should be clear and concise, large and legible, and simple and straightforward. Don Keough of the Coca-Cola Company said it best: “Some pictures may be worth a thousand words, but a picture of a thousand words isn’t worth much.”

17.5c Use Presentation Aids During Your Speech

For maximum effectiveness, presentation aids need to be skillfully integrated into your speech and not create awkward moments for you. Here are some tips:

1. Be sure your visual and audio aids are in place before starting.
2. Present and explain each one.
3. Stand to one side of the visual and talk to the audience, making sure everyone can see the visual.
4. Keep physical possession and control of your visual.
5. Put the visual away when you are finished referring to it.



GAME PLAN

Integrating a Presentation Aid Into Your Speech

- I've spoken to my instructor about the equipment I'll need in the classroom for my speech.
- I've made sure that classroom equipment is compatible with my own.
- I've prepared a presentation aid that will be clear to eyes and ears in the front *and* back of the classroom.
- I've rehearsed how I will introduce my presentation aid and I'm comfortable making the transition.
- Setup of my equipment prior to my speech is easy.
- After my speech, I can close down and quickly remove my presentation aid to make room for the next presenter's needs.



Exercises

PRESENTATION AIDS

Mastering the ability to create and use visual and audio aids will enhance your ability to interest and involve audiences. Participating in these activities will build your skills.

1. Interpreting Visuals

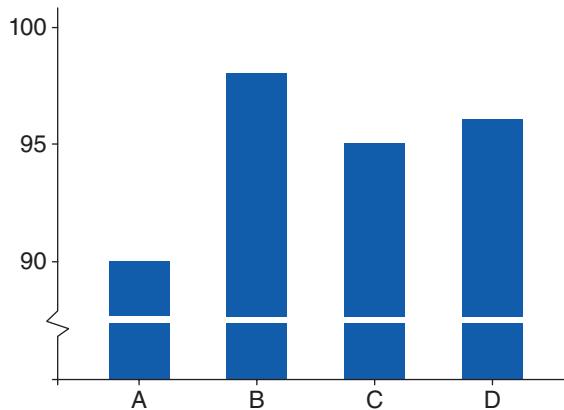
Consider this: Is there more to the graphs than meets the eye in Figures 17.13 and 17.14, displaying the average test scores of four English classes on achievement exams.¹³ Looking at both graphs, which one do you think displays better results and why?

Although the graph pictured in Figure 17.14 shows the same information as the graph in 17.13, why do we perceive the results differently? Why does showing the bars full length instead of cut short as in Figure 17.13 change our impression of the information?¹⁴

As a speaker, you should never present information in such a way that it seems to mean one thing but on closer inspection means something else.

FIGURE 17.13

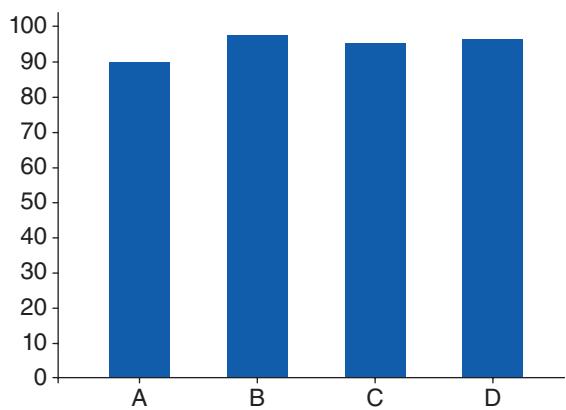
Evaluating What You See, I



Source: Robert Boostrom, *Developing Creative and Critical Thinking: An Integrated Approach* (Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Co, 1992), 231.

FIGURE 17.14

Evaluating What You See, II



Source: Robert Boostrom, *Developing Creative and Critical Thinking: An Integrated Approach* (Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Co, 1992), 231.

2. Props and Models

Identify a prop or model you could use when giving a speech on each of the following topics:

- Medical Training in the United States
- Altruism
- Snowboarding
- The Value of Discipline

3. Analyze This: A Speaker's Use of Visual and Audio Aids

One student, Jim Eae, added both credibility and drama to his speech entitled “Equality” by using four apples as visual aids in the introduction of his speech and its body, and then a stone during the conclusion. Selected excerpts of his speech appear below. Read them and then answer the questions that follow.

- In your opinion, to what extent was the speaker’s use of visual aids effective? Explain.
- Do you believe audience members would find the visual aids distracting or helpful? Why?
- If you were the speaker, would you have thrown a stone at your audience? Why or why not?
- What audio aids, if any, do you believe the speaker could have used to advantage?

[From the introduction] *[In turn, the speaker selects and holds up one of four apples for the audience to see]*

Four apples—similar by their outer appearance, almost identical by their insides, and yet their flavors are worlds apart. This one right here, it’s a sweet one, really sweet. This one right here, it’s kind of sour. This one is bitter, and the last is a combination of all. Four apples—two red and two green—similar, but very different.

I’m not just talking about the differences between apples. I’m also talking about the differences between people. Color you may say is only skin-deep, but it is much more than that. Some believe it determines where you come from, what you believe, where your social interests lie, and even whom you fall in love with. Your color helps determine your uniqueness and your individuality. It helps mold you into the person you are and the person you hope to become.

[From the body of the speech] George F. Snyder, author of *Black No More*, imagined a world where everyone was the same color. . . . Could you imagine this world if everyone was the same color? I could, and I would hate it.

The hope some have of a color-blind society brings up the question: If everyone conformed and became the same, which culture would we adapt to? Would the Japanese society of respect and hard work be dominant? Would everyone choose to have the strength and endurance of the African Americans? Would the conquering attitude of the Caucasian American reign supreme? . . .

[Once again picking up an apple] My favorite apple is this green one right here. It is colored but not too colored. It is sweet, yet still sour, but best of all, it is different from every other apple. If someone were to come up with the perfect medium for the taste and color of apples, I would object because I would not have the variety to choose from anymore. I would have to settle for a bland color and a bland taste. I pray this never happens.

A great man once said, “If any of you are without fault, then let him be the first to cast a stone.” It is time we stop casting stones and accept people for who they are, color and all. . . .

[From the conclusion] [The speaker holds up a stone] Let the man without any fault cast the first stone. During the civil rights era even police were casting stones at peaceful protesters. I, myself, have been hit with several stones of a color-blind society. For example, there were times when I wanted to speak up as a black man and not just a human, but I have to forfeit my thoughts, my ideas, and my feelings for you. Equality—that’s the solution.

Alexander Kremble, a black nationalist who spent twenty years as a missionary in Liberia and founded the first organization for African American intellectuals, said the race problem is a moral one, and like all other great battles of humanity, its solution will be fought with weapons of truth. Here it is, the first stone of equality, and I cast it to you. Not because I am without fault, but because I know it is the best solution for both you and me. The solution is equality, and now the solution is no longer in my hands, but yours. So I ask, “What are you going to do with it?”

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

1. You're giving a speech on one of the following topics:

- The Electoral College
- Hang Gliding
- CPR
- The American Foster Care System
- Copyright Law

Consider how you could include visual and audio aids in the speech.

2. Select a speech from YouTube, TED Talks, or *Vital Speeches of the Day* and brainstorm in class how one or more visual or audio aids either were or could be used to clarify or amplify the speaker's message.
3. Next, prepare a three- to five-minute presentation in which you use at least two visual aids and one audio aid.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Discuss the functions served by presentation aids.** The right presentation aids increase listener understanding, enhance memory and recall, facilitate message organization, and help the speaker control audience attention and interest. They add impact, reduce speech apprehension, enhance speaker credibility, and increase the persuasiveness of the speaker and message.
- 2. Assess the strengths of the presentation aids discussed in this chapter.** Human beings, objects, and models focus the audience's attention on the speaker's message. Photographs add realism, drama, and impact to a presentation. Graphs help receivers interpret statistical data and trends. Charts, drawings, and maps summarize large amounts of information. Graphics and sound add contemporary flair, professionalism, and credibility to a speech. Used effectively, all presentation aids add appeal and help illustrate the key points of a speech.
- 3. Choose an appropriate slide presentation software program.** Prezi, Google Docs Presentation, Microsoft PowerPoint, and SlideRocket are among the software programs available. Consider the goals of the speech, constraints, and the actual audience before selecting a program.
- 4. Select, prepare, and integrate the most appropriate presentation aids into a speech.** A visual or audio aid should strengthen points, connect to audience members, or enhance credibility. Content and design should be simple, straight to the point, and creative. Rehearse introducing the aids with words, and make sure all equipment and cables are in place before approaching the podium. Check the clarity and volume of the visual or audio clip so that all audience members can see and hear the content.

KEY TERMS

Bar graph 288	Graphs 287	Pictograph 290
Chart 292	Human visual aid 285	Pie graph 289
Computer-generated graphics 298	Infographic 290	Presentation aids 281
Drawings and maps 293	Line graph 287	



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Speak to Inform

Chapter 18: Speak to Inform





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18

Speak to Inform

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Define informative speaking and explain its purposes
2. Compare and contrast the following: a speech about objects and ideas; a speech about events and people; and a speech about processes and procedures
3. Deliver an informative speech that is organized and communicates as simply and directly as possible, creates information hunger in receivers by relating ideas directly to them, and is memorable

Contents

There are a nearly unlimited number of topics about which we can share information and develop understanding. Whether you are an employee, a parent, or a student, speaking informatively is part of daily life. You likely describe, demonstrate, or explain something to others every day. For organizational purposes, we divide **informative speech** into the following categories: speeches about (1) objects and ideas, (2) events and people, and (3) processes and procedures. Though these categories are far from exhaustive, they represent the most common ways public speakers package information (see Table 18.1).

COACHING TIP

The main purpose of an informative speech is to educate, not advocate.

Help audience members learn new information, and you help them grow. Knowledge that is applicable to life is power. Power up your audience with information they can understand and use, and you set them on a path unburdened by confusion.

Section 18.1 Speeches About Objects and Ideas

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- 18.1b Speaking About an Idea, 312

Section 18.2 Speeches About Events and People

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section
18.1



**18.1a Speaking
About an Object**

**18.1b Speaking
About an Idea**

Speeches About Objects and Ideas

When speaking of an object, animate or inanimate, we usually describe it and tell about its uses. When we speak of an **idea or concept**, we typically define and explain it.

TABLE 18.1 INFORMATIVE SPEECH TYPES AND TOPICS

SPEECH TYPE	SAMPLE TOPICS
Objects/Ideas	Self-Driving Cars Gene Therapy Instagram September 11 Memorial The Tomb of Tutankhamun Privacy Flight Sustainable Energy Yoga
Events/People	The Repair of the Hubble Space Telescope The Publication of <i>Go Set a Watchman</i> San Diego ComiCon The Cannes Film Festival Harvey Milk J. K. Rowling Kanye West
Processes/ Procedures	How to Change the Oil in Your Car How to Speed Read How to Prepare for a Job Interview How to Perform the Heimlich Maneuver

18.1a Speaking About an Object

An **object speech** can cover anything tangible—a machine, building, structure, place, or phenomenon (see Table 18.1 for examples). The selected object may be animate or inanimate, moving or still, visible to the naked eye or beyond its scope. Whatever your object, the goal remains the same: to paint an accurate and information-rich picture.

Once you select an object for your topic, the next step is to create a specific purpose that identifies the particular aspect on which you will focus. The following are sample purpose statements for informative speeches about objects:

- To inform my audience about Florida's Everglades
- To inform my audience about the anatomy of the human brain
- To inform my audience about the design of Roman aqueducts
- To inform my audience about prehistoric tools

Frameworks for Speaking About Objects

Speeches about objects lend themselves to topical, spatial, and chronological organizational formats. A topical format allows you to divide your subject into groups or major categories, as when speaking about volcanoes, for example, focusing first on extinct volcanoes, second on dormant volcanoes, and third on active ones. A spatial or physical framework enables you to discuss one major component of the object at a time, as you might do when discussing the entrance, antechamber, and burial chamber of an Egyptian pyramid. And finally, a chronological format is most appropriate if you are going to stress how a design or phenomenon evolved over time (for example, the formation of the Hawaiian Islands).

Whatever the organizational method you choose, be sure to adhere to the guidelines discussed in greater detail in Chapter 9.



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Object lesson. Like a tour guide, an informative speaker focuses the audience's attention on what is most important to know about a speech topic.

18.1b Speaking About an Idea

What does the word *existentialism* mean? What is *bullying*? How do we clarify the nature of *common law*, *double jeopardy*, or an *iatrogenic injury*? In a speech about an idea, also known as a concept speech, your goal is to explain it in such a way that audience members agree on two things:

1. The idea has relevance and importance for them, and
2. They want you to clarify or elaborate on it.

Ryan McVay/Photodisc/Thinkstock



Abstract ideas. What are some concepts you'd be interested in learning or talking about?

General or abstract ideas generally work best for concept speeches, as they allow for the most creative analysis and interpretation. For example, you might discuss free speech, Buddhism, or inequality (see Table 18.1 for more suggestions).

When we talk about ideas, audience members may have different interpretations of the concepts or words we use—primarily because personal experience influences meaning. This is particularly likely for nontangible topics such as injustice, religion, and responsible citizenship.

Let's look at a few of the general topics we've identified and create some specific purpose statements for each:

- To inform my audience about the meaning of injustice
- To inform my audience about different philosophies of religion
- To inform my audience about basic tenets of responsible citizenship

Frameworks for Speaking of Ideas

You can easily develop a speech about an idea using a topical order, enumerating and discussing, in turn, key aspects of the idea, for instance explaining the ways racial prejudice affects its victims economically, politically, and socially.

Speeches about ideas also lend themselves to chronological development. When speaking about sexual harassment you might explain how our understanding of the term has changed through the years. See Chapter 9 for more on organizational formats.

Speeches About Events and People

Many of us are interested in the remarkable people and events of our time and history. **Events and people** make solid informative speech topics.

18.2a Speaking of Events

A speech about an event focuses on something that happens regularly (a holiday, a birthday), or something that happened once (D-Day, the first moon landing), something that marked our lives (graduations, funerals), or something that left us with a lasting impression (the Sandy Hook shooting, the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan). The event you discuss might be one you personally witnessed (a political rally), or one you choose to research (the Constitutional Convention, Rosa Parks's arrest, or the passage of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the vote). Whatever your topic, your goal is to bring the event to life so your audience can visualize and experience it.

18.2b Speaking of People

If instead of an event you tell about the life of a person—someone famous or someone you know personally, someone living or dead, someone admired by or abhorrent to all—your goal is to make that person come alive for audience members, to enable them to appreciate the person's unique qualities, and to help them understand the impact the individual has had. In other words, you seek to answer this question: Why is the person worthy of our attention?

A speech on Jeffrey Dahmer would become interesting if the speaker used it to explore the mind of a mass murderer. A speech on Louis C.K. could develop an understanding of comedic originality, and a speech on Princeton's Ann-Marie Slaughter, the author of *Unfinished Business: Women Men Work Family*, could help audiences comprehend the challenges caregivers face balancing work and family life.

18.2c Frameworks for Speaking of Events and People

Speeches on events and people lend themselves to a variety of organizational approaches; chronological, topical, and causal patterns are especially useful. Look to the purpose of your speech to help you choose. For example, if your speech aims to explain the history of an event or person—say, Hurricane Katrina—you would probably choose a chronological sequence. In contrast, if you want to approach your subject from a different angle and discuss, for instance, the social, economic, and political effects of Hurricane Katrina, a topical organization would better suit your needs. And if you want to inform your audience why Hurricane Katrina proved so destructive to the city of New Orleans, you would choose a causal order.

18.2a Speaking of Events

18.2b Speaking of People

18.2c Frameworks for Speaking of Events and People

section 18.3



18.3a Frameworks for Speaking of Processes and Procedures

Jupiterimages/Goodshoot/Thinkstock



Chicken stew. How to cook a certain dish is one of numerous different processes and procedures speeches you could give.

Speeches About Processes and Procedures

How do you do that? Why does this work? Can I make one too? When we answer questions like these, we share our understanding about **processes and procedures**, the third category of informative speeches.

Here are examples of purpose statements about processes and procedures:

To inform my audience about how photosynthesis works

To inform my audience about the workings of the Electoral College

To inform my audience how to change a car's oil

If you are delivering a “how” speech, then your primary goal is to increase audience understanding of your subject:

How the Kidneys Work

How Colleges Select Students

How Tornadoes Develop

How the Jet Stream Works

If, however, you are delivering a “how-to” speech, then your primary goal is to communicate not only information but specific skills so audience members can learn how to do something:

How to Cut Your Own Hair

How to Housebreak a Dog

How to Avoid Email Scams

How to Lobby Your Legislators

There is virtually no end to the list of processes and procedures about which you can speak.

18.3a Frameworks for Speaking of Processes and Procedures

When delivering a speech that focuses on a process or procedure, you will probably find it most useful to arrange your ideas in either chronological or topical order. Chronological order works well because it naturally reflects the sequence, approach, or series of steps used from start to finish in making or doing something. For instance, in a speech on how scientists may save Earth from collision with a comet, you might detail four key steps in the process, from detecting the comet, determining when contact will occur, sending a spacecraft to intercept it, and lastly, blowing it up. But other times, you might find it more useful to discuss the major principles, techniques, or methods listeners need to understand to master the process or procedure. Then topical order is your best choice. For instance, you could focus your speech on how scientists prepare for a potential comet on a collision course with Earth, beginning with their researching the effects of past comet impacts and then describing what they are doing to improve comet-detection technology.

Keep your speech clear and comprehensible. One that contains too many main points, or step after step after step with no logical categorization, is usually too difficult for receivers to interpret and remember, making it unlikely they will be able to follow what you are sharing. By keeping your main points manageable, you facilitate better understanding of the process or procedure.



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Fork in the road. What are the benefits and disadvantages of topical order or chronological development for a speech?

section 18.4



Achieving Informative Speaking Goals

Sharing information involves transferring an idea or a skill to others, with the hope that you will accomplish at least one of the following two goals:

1. Expand your audience's knowledge, or
2. Clarify what your audience knows by reducing their confusion or uncertainty, or providing a fresh way of perceiving.

To accomplish either goal, you need to deliver a speech that

1. conveys information that is well organized, clear, and accurate;
2. delivers the right amount of content, avoiding **information overload** or **underload**;
3. creates information hunger; and
4. is memorable.

18.4a Be Organized, Clear, and Accurate

A speech is clear if audience members are able to identify its specific purpose and central idea or thesis as well as comprehend, follow, and accept its main points.

Make the Information Easy to Follow

A speaker's message is easier to follow if the presentation has a discernable structure, related facts are grouped together, and oral signposts are used to help receivers follow the progression of ideas. For example, a speaker discussing the nature of secondhand smoke would be more effective if he organized the speech's main ideas around a clear definition and then an examination of the key effects of secondhand smoke, than if he confused receivers by intermingling into the speech an analysis of the effects of smoking on health care costs.

Avoid Jargon

To facilitate audience understanding, keep your speech free of unnecessary jargon—special or technical terms used primarily by those who share a profession or trade. Define unfamiliar words and concepts, use everyday language, and compare new information you are trying to convey with information already familiar to them. For example, if you used the word *sabadilla* in a speech on insecticides, you would need to explain that *sabadella* is a Mexican plant that chemical companies use to make a variety of insecticides. If you select and explain your words carefully, then others will listen to and learn from you.

Use Concrete Language

When you are **concrete**, you enhance your message with sufficient specificity and detail for audience members to form clear mental pictures, grounding your ideas in specific references rather than vague **abstractions**. Avoid using general words like “thing” or “it.” Put your subject directly where it belongs—into receivers’ minds.

Be Accurate

Clarity and accuracy go hand in hand. If your message contains inaccurate figures, if your facts are based on rumor or hearsay, and if your ideas are not supported by either primary or secondary research, then your receivers have every right to question your honesty and integrity. For example, in the fall of 2013, New Jersey governor Chris Christie repeatedly denied that his administration had intentionally created a massive traffic jam in Fort Lee, New Jersey, as political payback for the Democratic mayor of Fort Lee’s refusal to endorse Christie’s candidacy for reelection. Then in January 2014, texts surfaced proving that members of Christie’s staff had been complicit in creating the Fort Lee traffic crisis. On January 9, 2014, Christie held a press conference to apologize to the mayor and citizens of Fort Lee and to report the firing of the members of his staff whose behavior he termed “completely unacceptable.” The embarrassment and humiliation Christie admitted to experiencing could have been avoided if the governor had conducted the necessary research himself instead of defending the manufactured traffic jams as part of a “traffic study.” Make it your business to do your own fact checking prior to delivering your message. Take the time you need to verify all the facts and figures you intend to share with receivers; base your message on a solid foundation of well-documented research.

18.4b Convey the Right Amount of Information

Ensure you give the audience neither too little nor too much information.

Pace, Don’t Race

When you’re delivering an informative speech, your job is to communicate your ideas so audience members understand them, not to race to see how much new information you can cram into their brains in five or ten minutes. Develop the main ideas of the speech carefully and clearly. Take enough time to let each point you are making stand out and register with the audience. Integrate supporting information that relates directly, not tangentially, to your main ideas. Reiterate what it is you want receivers to remember. Pace the information you deliver during the speech—being careful to make the information digestible. A challenge is to know not only what to include, but what *not* to include as well.

Don't Take Knowledge for Granted

Work to communicate even the most sophisticated ideas as simply and clearly as possible. The more you assume audience members know, the greater are your chances of being misunderstood. Instead, respect the intelligence of your receivers, but work hard to clarify the complex. Show your audience how you are building on to what they already know. When you relate new information to old and use creative analogies to help receivers make connections, you will make the unfamiliar more familiar. For example, one student compared the pending legalization of recreational marijuana to eating a box of candy, telling receivers that it may be tempting, but hidden dangers await them if they consume too much.

Repeat, but Don't Retreat

Help audience members process new content by using **repetition** (reusing the exact same words) and **restatement** (rephrasing an idea in different words to more fully explain it). But you must strike a delicate balance between these and newness, so as not to bore your audience.



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Pace yourself. Don't cram too much into your speech; strike a balance between new information and clear explanations.

18.4c Create Information Hunger

How do you motivate your audience to learn a new body of content? You create information hunger by convincing them that they have a personal need to know what you are about to convey. If your audience believes your speech's content is somehow vital to them, then they are much more likely to listen carefully and act on your recommendation. For example, to create information hunger for a speech on how to lobby a legislator to support school breakfasts for impoverished students, you might ask receivers to imagine how they would feel if they had had neither dinner the night before nor breakfast today

before coming to school. What would they be concentrating on—their empty stomachs or learning? Remind them that a relationship exists between filling a stomach and filling a mind.

Capture and Sustain Attention

You must first capture and then sustain the audience's interest so that they want to hear what you will say next throughout your speech. One faculty member created information hunger in a new cohort of first-year college students with these introductory words:

This event is a formal way of marking the start of the school year, and for you, the start of your college career. Each year, a faculty member shares some ideas with your class. This year, that person is me. And I have these ideas to share with you.

The first idea is pretty simple: you're screwed. Your generation is screwed.¹

Adapt to Your Audience

Most subjects become interesting if well adapted to the audience. From the outset, receivers need to believe that your speech will benefit them—that you are about to add to their knowledge, satisfy their curiosity, or show them how what you know can help them enjoy or improve their lives. For example, if you were talking to a group of career women about the management styles of women and men, your speech would probably interest them because of its potential to affect them directly.

Use the material covered in Chapters 5 and 8 to help you adapt to and customize your content for your particular audience.

18.4d Be Memorable

In order for your speech to remain with your audience after you have finished speaking, you must convey the enthusiasm you have for your subject to your listeners, and make it memorable. To do this, you can

- Let them know what you think is important for them to retain.
- Stress those points via verbal and nonverbal means, using repetition, pauses, vocal emphasis, and gestures.
- Build in audience participation.

By helping the audience use the information you give them during or immediately following your speech—building in audience participation or asking for a behavioral response—you increase the chances of their assimilating and using the information you provide them.

Remember, although your goal may be to share ideas, people are interested in other people. Nothing enhances the communication of information more than the integration of personal anecdotes, examples, and illustration. The drama of human interest makes a speaker's information memorable by helping it come alive.



GAME PLAN

Preparing an Informative Speech

- I have chosen an organizational framework that works for my topic.
- I have determined the specific purpose of my speech, and it is clearly stated.
- I've reviewed and revised my organization so that main points clearly support main ideas.
- I've established my topic's importance and relevance in a way that suits my audience.
- I've edited the amount of information I provide so that it is accurate and complete.
- Overall, I believe my speech educates receivers on the topic, but does not overwhelm them.



Exercises

INFORMATIVE SPEAKING

Building on your skills, the following activities help enhance your understanding of informative speaking while providing the extra information savvy needed for you to convey information in interesting and involving ways.

1. Topic Frameworks

Develop a framework that includes a specific purpose, a central idea, and main points for giving an informative speech on one of the following topics:

- Planned Parenthood
- Sikhism
- The Design of Washington, D.C.
- The Koch Brothers

2. Huh? (Unclear) Versus Aha! (Clear)

Following are a number of highly technical words or phrases that would probably need to be revised using jargon-free words or phrases that audiences readily understand.

Unclear	Clear
Cephalagia	Headache
Agrypnia	Insomnia
Precipitous	Steep
<i>Nil desperandum</i>	"It ain't over till it's over."

Based on your understanding of unclear and clear words, listen to one of the following speeches and locate five examples of words or phrases that you believe need to be simplified in order to enhance clarity or five examples of words or phrases that you believe are perfectly clear.

- Madeline Albright's speech commemorating International Women's Day 2010 on YouTube
- Bill Gates's speech on creative capitalism on YouTube, or read a transcript of the speech at <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/media-center/speeches/2008/01/bill-gates-2008-world-economic-forum>

3. Analyze the Speech: What It Means to Be Deaf

Because informative speaking is a prime means of sharing what you know with others, it is essential for the speaker to recognize diversity and adapt to difference.

In the speech that follows, student Andi Lane addresses a diversity issue when she shares her understanding of what it means to be hearing impaired. Notice how she uses her own experiences as a starting point.

Read the transcript below and answer these questions:

1. Think about the speech's introduction and its conclusion. To what extent did the introduction succeed in getting your attention? To what extent was the speaker successful in tying her introduction and conclusion together?
2. What means did the speaker use to establish and maintain her credibility? Which kinds of information were most useful? Most memorable?
3. Are you now able to understand what it means to be deaf? If so, what did the speaker do to help you internalize such an understanding? If not, what could the speaker have done to promote better understanding?
4. Were the supporting materials the speaker used effective? How many different kinds of supporting materials did the speaker use? In what ways did they facilitate your understanding? Your emotional involvement?
5. Focus on the speaker's use of transitions. How effectively did the speaker move from one point to the next? To what extent was it easy to identify the speaker's main points?
6. What did the speaker do to help widen receiver appreciation of diversity issues?
7. What might the speaker change to enhance her speech?
8. Based on this transcript, pretend you are the speaker and develop speaker's notes to use when delivering the speech.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE DEAF

At the beginning of this year I moved into an apartment.

When I arrived at my new place, my roommate was there to greet me, and she saw my stereo. She got really excited, and she said, "Great you have a stereo for us to listen to." I laughed and told her that was a pretty funny joke, as I turned and ran up the stairs. But Sarah never knew I said that. You see, Sarah is profoundly deaf and relies upon lip reading as her primary source of communication. Living with Sarah has taught me many things.

Prime among them is this: the deaf and hearing impaired face many problems on a daily basis. My interest in this subject led me to take a basic sign language and communication with the hearing impaired course. In the course I discovered that understanding the deaf culture, learning to communicate with them, and accepting them can alleviate many of the problems that deaf and hearing-impaired people face. Let's explore these points together.

 **SN 1** Beginning with this personal anecdote is a fine way to start. The speaker builds credibility and audience interest simultaneously.

 **SN 2** The speaker reveals her thesis and previews the speech's content.

continued

continued

SN 3 The speaker moves into the first main point of her speech. She defines deaf culture for the audience. Because she has only limited experience with the subject, the use of an authoritative source enhances her credibility.

SN 4 The speaker introduces her second main point and uses comparison and contrast to help clarify for receivers the differences in communication among members of the deaf and hearing cultures. Her use of specific examples adds interest and promotes understanding.

SN 5 The speaker explores the third main point of the speech by explaining the nature of sign language. Again, she is careful to identify the source of her information.

“What exactly is deaf culture?” you might ask. This is a legitimate question, since even those who are deaf and involved in the deaf culture have a difficult time explaining it. In his book, *Sign Language and the Deaf Community*, William Stokes says that there are several characteristics that can help us define the deaf culture. The deaf culture is closed and limited only to those who are deaf. Members have a common language that they share and common beliefs about others who are deaf and also those who are hearing. They also have shared goals; one of their primary goals is a goal of acceptance—acceptance in employment, politics, and every aspect of life.

It’s also interesting to compare the hearing world to the deaf culture. In deaf culture there’s less emphasis on personal space; people have to be close together in order to read each other’s signs. There’s also less importance placed on time. People are not always punctual; there’s a more relaxed feeling in the deaf culture.

Eye contact is lengthy, necessary, and polite in the deaf culture. Also when you do introductions—we usually greet each other; we meet each other; we exchange names. In the deaf culture, you exchange first names, last names, and where you attended school.

And my final point, the difference between the hearing world and the deaf culture, is that the hearing world is more reserved where the deaf culture is more tactile. An illustration of this is that in the hearing world we shake hands. In the deaf culture—usually they exchange hugs. These are just some of the important differences that Dr. Kenya Taylor, an audiologist, points out.

Daily life is, of course, very different for those who have a hearing problem. Communication is the main distinguishing factor. Sign language is usually taught to children at a very early age to provide them with a sense of vocabulary—a way to communicate their thoughts and ideas.

There are many different types of sign language, and these vary from area to area much as spoken language does, much like a dialect. The two most common types are signed English and the American Sign Language. Sign language, basic sign, is usually taught to beginners and follows the main sentence structure as spoken English does. ASL is used by those who are hearing impaired. It’s a shortened, more abbreviated form. While the same signs are used, it’s the format that differs according to Greenburg in his book, *Endless Sign*.

As mentioned before, children are usually taught sign language at a very early age. It is later that they acquire lip reading or speech skills, if they acquire them at all. Most deaf people can lip read to some extent. Now, of course, this presents special problems for the person. They must always be alert and aware of what's going on. And imagine being in a dimly lit room or trying to talk to a person who has a habit of looking away. Also, when you are talking to a deaf person they can't hear the sarcasm in your voice; you need to say what you mean.

Nonverbals are important; they pick up information any way they can get it. It's funny, because now I have a habit of flipping on the interior light when I get in my car at night. This is because I'm accustomed to riding with Sarah. Even when she's not in the car, the light's on, because it's impossible for us to communicate without the interior light on.

Right now, I'm going to paint a hypothetical situation for you, and I would like for you to put yourself in it. And it's a situation where you will be trying to communicate with a deaf person. Let's say you're at a restaurant; you're working there. It's a real busy place, the most popular place in town. One night a man comes in, alone, and is seated in the back corner, which is dimly lit. You're in a rush, and you go over to him, and you pour his water. And as you're pouring his water, you say: "May I take your order?" And you look up, and he doesn't say anything. First of all, he doesn't know you are addressing him, and second of all, he has no idea what you said. So you repeat yourself, "May I take your order?" And the man says, "I am deaf." But you don't know what he said because you don't know sign language. He speaks, and you can't understand him, and you're about to panic. In this situation, what you don't need to do is panic. You need to remember that the only difference between you and him is that you can hear and he can't. Communication is always possible, even if you have to point at the menu or write notes.

This leads me into my final point, the importance of accepting those with hearing problems. The more aware we are of the problems faced by the deaf and the greater our understanding, the less prejudiced we are going to be. The main difference, the only difference, in fact, between us—those who can hear—and people who can't hear is that we hear sounds with our ears, while they hear words and expressions with their eyes. And they feel with their hearts just like we do. We can't measure a person's intelligence by the degree of a hearing loss or the way that they speak. They are our equals.

SN 6 The speaker uses specific instances to clarify the problems the hearing impaired and hearing face as they attempt to communicate with each other.

SN 7 The speaker draws on her personal experiences to make a point. Notice how doing this adds credibility to her presentation.

SN 8 The speaker uses a hypothetical illustration or narrative to involve receivers directly, increase their interest, and facilitate their understanding.

SN 9 A transition at the start of this paragraph paves the way for the speaker to introduce her final main point.

continued

SN 10 Notice how the speaker cites an authoritative source prior to offering tips.

continued

I have a few tips from *The Hearing Instruments*, Volume 36, which will help us become more sensitive when we're talking to a deaf person. First of all, you talk in a normal fashion; don't shout at them because they can't hear you anyway. Try to keep your hands away from your mouth, because, of course, if they're trying to read your lips and your hands are over your mouth, they're not going to be able to understand you. Chewing, eating, and smoking are considered rude. You want to get the person's attention before you begin to talk to them, and it's perfectly acceptable to lightly touch their arm or wrist—somewhere along there. And finally, make sure that the hearing impaired person is not facing the light. That's something that we probably wouldn't think of. But if they're facing the light, they're not going to be able to concentrate on communication.

SN 11 The speaker summarizes her message. In addition, by again using personal experiences as well as reviewing what she's learned from them, she gives her speech a sense of closure.

Today I've shared with you some background information about the deaf culture, ways in which deaf people are able to communicate, and the importance of accepting deaf people for who they are. In the short time I've lived with Sarah, I've learned so much. I learned that you don't talk to her when your back is turned or when you're in another room. I've learned that I can scream as loud as I want to in the apartment, and it wouldn't make any difference at all. I can achieve the same end result by just telling her I'm upset. And I've learned that one of my most dear friends has a profound hearing loss, but I still love her.

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Prepare and deliver a five- to seven-minute informative speech on one of the following topics or another of your own selection: Insomnia, Celiac Disease, Lead Poisoning, the History of Organ Transplants, Diwali, the Witness Protection Program, Bullying, or Birthday Traditions.

In developing your speech, (1) clearly state its specific purpose, (2) identify the central idea of the speech, (3) develop each main point in the speech, integrating research and supporting materials, and (4) use both an organizational format and language that facilitate audience understanding.

Prepare an outline and speaker's notes, and include a bibliography of the sources you consulted.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Define informative speaking and explain its purposes.** Informative speaking involves the sharing or transfer of information from speaker to receivers. As a result of an informative speech, the speaker expands or clarifies what receivers know by adding to their knowledge and skills or reducing their confusion.
- Compare and contrast the following: a speech about objects and ideas, a speech about events and people, and a speech about processes and procedures.** Speeches about objects cover anything tangible, while speeches about ideas explain concepts or definitions. Speeches about events or people focus on the compelling events or people of our time or history. Process or procedure speeches explore how something is done, works, or is made, or why something happens.
- Deliver an informative speech that is organized and communicates as simply and directly as possible, creates information hunger in receivers by relating ideas directly to them, and is memorable.** Like any other good speech, clearly develop the main points of a speech by offering receivers concrete support and using language that is neither overly complex nor vague. A well-crafted, informative speech also avoids over- or underloading them with information. Finally, remember to link the ideas of your speech with the interests or goals of receivers, as audience members need to be drawn into and become involved with the speech's main ideas.

KEY TERMS

Abstraction 317

Concrete 317

Event/person speech 313

Idea/concept speech 310

Information overload 316

Information underload 316

Informative speech 309

Object speech 311

Process/procedure speech 314

Repetition 318

Restatement 318



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Speak to Persuade

Chapter 19: Prepare to Persuade

Chapter 20: Methods of Persuasion



19

Prepare to Persuade

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Define persuasion
2. Distinguish the differences among attitudes, beliefs, and values
3. Identify and define your persuasive goal, particularly the change you seek in receivers
4. Compare and contrast the following types of persuasive speeches: a question of fact, a question of value, and a question of policy
5. Explain and use Monroe's Motivated Sequence



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Contents

Can you imagine yourself speaking in favor of opening U.S. borders to increased numbers of immigrants, or do you see yourself advocating for closing our borders? Would you speak in support of a woman's right to choose, or are you a proponent of the right to life movement? Would you speak against the death penalty, or do you believe in capital punishment?

Choice and change characterize our lives.¹ The positions we take on the issues of the day and our efforts to convince others of our correctness can have a real and meaningful impact. In this chapter, we focus on persuasion and its purposes. In Chapter 20, we explore persuasive speaking techniques. Mastering the contents of these chapters will make you a more effective persuader and consumer of persuasion.

Section 19.1 We All Practice Persuasion

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Section 19.4 Understand Monroe's Motivated Sequence

section 19.1



19.1a Assess Attitudes

19.1b Build on Beliefs

19.1c Validate Values

19.1d Integrate Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values

We All Practice Persuasion

Persuasion is the deliberate attempt to change or reinforce attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors.² Persuasion permeates society, but when we engage in it we must do so ethically and successfully by avoiding coercion and manipulation.³ Let's look closely at attitudes, beliefs, and values and their relationship to persuasion to see how to use them to achieve persuasive goals.

19.1a Assess Attitudes

An attitude is a mental set or predisposition that leads us to respond to or evaluate people, places, things, or events positively or negatively. The attitudes we hold reflect our likes and dislikes. Attitudes are classified along a continuum ranging from positive to negative, with neutrality at the midpoint.

The more you know about audience members' attitudes and why they feel as they do, the better you can tailor your message to speak directly to them.⁴ If you and the audience share similar attitudes toward a topic, the task is simplified. Fortunately, audience attitudes tend to cluster at a particular point along the attitude continuum. If you can identify where that point is—that is, what the general audience attitude is—then you can build an approach that takes it into account.

For example, let's assume most people in your audience are neutral toward your topic, perhaps because they know very little about it. Your primary need, in such a case, is to supply them with reasons to care and evidence that substantiates your position. If, however, most audience members oppose your proposition, your task changes. In this case, you need to offer arguments that reduce hostility or negativity and provide information to redirect audience attitudes.

When giving a speech, you have the potential to instill, change, or intensify attitudes. Attitudes differ not only in *direction* (Are they positive or negative?) and *intensity* (How strong is the positive or negative attitude?), but also in *salience*—how important and relevant the attitude is to its holders. For example, though the audience may have a positive attitude toward affirmative action programs and feel strongly about the need to correct previous inequities, if they do not believe it affects them, it will not have salience.

Among the forces shaping attitudes are family, religion, schooling, social class, and culture. These also shape beliefs, which we look at next.⁵

19.1b Build on Beliefs

We measure attitudes along a favorable–unfavorable continuum, and beliefs along a probable–improbable one. Our beliefs determine whether we accept something as true or false. Upbringing, past experiences, and evidence work together to convince us of the truth or falsity of statements of belief.

Attitudes and beliefs work in concert. If you have a positive attitude toward someone or something, you are more likely to believe good things about it and vice versa. For example, if you hold a negative attitude toward television, you might well believe that television encourages laziness in children, precipitates reading problems in young learners, and contributes to childhood obesity. In contrast, if you started out with a positive attitude toward television, then you would be more apt to believe such views were either exaggerated or untrue.

19.1c Validate Values

Values, sometimes referred to as core beliefs, are enduring and deeply ingrained indicators of what we each feel is good or bad, right or wrong. If we value honesty over deception, for example, we would classify honesty as desirable. Values motivate behavior. They guide conduct by reminding us what we find most important. They also guide our decisions about what is worth trying to change or influence.

The top five values identified by Americans in one Gallup poll were good family, good self-image, being healthy, having a sense of accomplishment, and working for a better America.⁶ Speakers can use such findings to show how what they advocate supports the values important to audience members.

19.1d Integrate Attitudes, Beliefs, and Values

When delivering a persuasive speech, use your own values, beliefs, and attitudes to select your subject.

First, identify strong attitudes you hold about five controversial issues. For example, are you for or against granting citizenship to undocumented immigrants currently working in the United States? Next, identify the beliefs you hold that help explain your attitude on each issue, for example, “I believe undocumented immigrants are taking jobs that U.S. citizens would not take,” or “I believe that undocumented immigrants are taking jobs away from U.S. citizens.” Then, identify the values that support your beliefs, for example, “I value rewarding hard work,” or “I value the legal process.” Finally, review your list, and determine which of your strong attitudes, beliefs, or values you could successfully turn into a persuasive speech.



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Tough call. Persuading another person to change his or her view can be challenging without the right approach.

section 19.2



19.2a Identify a Goal

19.2b Specify the Change You Seek

Goals and Purposes of Persuasive Speech

Persuasive speakers seek change that usually results in one or more of the following goals:

- Reinforcement of a position
- Shift in a position
- Adoption of a behavior
- Elimination of a behavior

19.2a Identify a Goal

The persuasive speaker aims to influence the audience's response so that receivers feel, think, or act differently than they did before the speech. To succeed, the persuasive speaker must be able to identify his or her objectives succinctly and, more specifically, be able to answer the following two questions:

1. What exactly am I trying to reinforce or change in my receivers?
2. How must the members of my audience alter their attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors for them to respond as I desire?

To the extent that you change the ideas and behaviors of one or more of your receivers, obtaining a commitment or eliciting a desired action from them, you are being persuasive, and you are changing the world—presumably for the better.

19.2b Specify the Change You Seek

Once you establish your persuasive goal, you must next decide on the type and the direction of the change you seek and on how to motivate your audience to respond appropriately. For example, which of the following do you want audience members to do?

- *Adopt* a new way of thinking or behaving, such as . . .
 - Donate money to assist wounded veterans
 - March to protest racial injustice
 - Write their legislators to support strict gun control
- *Sustain* or *reinforce* a way of thinking or behaving, such as . . .
 - Reaffirm their belief in freedom of the press
 - Recommit to supporting public education
 - Strengthen their willingness to vote regularly
- *Discontinue* or *extinguish* a way of thinking or behaving, such as . . .
 - Stop sexting
 - Discontinue support for the death penalty
 - Limit fast food consumption
- *Avoid* a particular way of thinking or behaving, such as . . .
 - Not binge drink
 - Not think of academic cheating as harmless
 - Not exceed the speed limit

Those who seek to persuade also assume substantial ethical obligations. It is up to you to ensure that any changes you seek are sound and in the best interests of receivers. You need to stimulate your receivers to think or do as you desire without harming them or the public.

section 19.3



19.3a Speak on a Question of Fact

19.3b Speak on a Question of Value

19.3c Speak on a Question of Policy

Categorize and Organize the Persuasive Speech

Persuasive speaking is categorized according to whether it focuses on a *question of fact*, a *question of value*, or a *question of policy*. Whichever you choose, your claim represents your **proposition**, that is, the relationship you wish to establish between accepted facts and your desired conclusions. Each kind of proposition requires you to use particular types of evidence, motivational appeals, and methods of organization.

19.3a Speak on a Question of Fact

Propositions of fact are statements asserting that something does or does not exist or is or is not true. The following are typical propositions of fact:

- Self-driving cars make driving safer.
- The current U.S. immigration policy is a failure.
- Ghosts exist.
- A high-fiber diet promotes longevity.
- Sustained exposure to products used in nail salons poses substantial health risks.
- The harmfulness of high fructose corn syrup is exaggerated.
- The criminal justice system discriminates against racial and ethnic minorities.
- The federal deficit is a threat to our economic security.

Your goal is to persuade receivers of the truth of your proposition with an array of evidence and argument that convinces the audience that your interpretation of a situation is valid, and thus your assertion is true and accurate, and your conclusion undeniable.

Organize the Question of Fact Speech

When speaking on a proposition of fact, part of the challenge is to convince the audience that your conclusion is based on objective evidence. At the same time, you need to present the facts as persuasively as possible.

It is common to use a *topical organization* to organize speeches on questions of fact, with each main point offering listeners a reason they should agree with the speaker.

TOPICAL ORGANIZATION

Specific Purpose: To persuade my audience that the homeless lack the resources to regain a place in American society

Proposition: The homeless lack the resources to regain a place in American society.

Main Points:

- I. The homeless do not have permanent residences, so they are forced to drift from place to place.
- II. The homeless have no place in the economic system.
- III. The homeless suffer from conditions of hunger, and physical and mental illnesses.

However, if you believe that you can best achieve the goals of your persuasive presentation by describing an issue as worsening over time, or by describing a subject spatially—for example, how a specific issue under consideration has global implications—then instead of using a topical organizational format you might choose to use *chronological* or *spatial organization*.

19.3b Speak on a Question of Value

A **proposition of value** provides an answer to questions like these: What is bad? What is right? What is moral? A proposition of value represents your assertion of a statement's worth.

When you are speaking on a proposition of value, your task is to justify your belief or opinion so that your receivers accept it too. The following statements are propositions of value:

- Discrimination against transgender people is wrong.
- Eating animal meat is improper.
- Euthanasia is immoral.
- War is morally justifiable.
- Solitary confinement is cruel and unusual punishment.
- A fetus's right to life is more important than a woman's right to choose.



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Factual. A proposition of fact, such as one about U.S. immigration, requires you to strike a balance between objectiveness and persuasiveness.

- It is unethical to have more than two children.

How do you convince your listeners to arrive at the same conclusion as you? By offering information, evidence, and appeals, as well as by establishing standards or criteria that you hope will compel them to agree with your value judgment. In order to analyze a proposition of value, you must do two things:

- Define the object of evaluation and support that definition.
- Provide value criteria for determining what the evaluative term means, that is, how do you define what is “proper,” what is “wrong,” or what is “immoral”?

In the next example, the speaker explains why she believes it is immoral to fund research to clone human beings. By referring to the work of Father Richard A. McCormick, a professor of Christian ethics at the University of Notre Dame, she hopes to build support for her stance.

Cloning would tempt people to try to create humans with certain physical or intellectual characteristics. It would elevate mere aspects of human beings above what University of Notre Dame Reverend Richard A. McCormick says is the “beautiful whole that is the human person.” But who among us should decide what the desirable traits are, what the acceptable traits are? Might this practice lead to the enslavement of humans by humans?

Organizing the Question of Value Speech

Speeches on propositions of value often use a **reasons approach**, a type of topical organization, in which each reason in support of the position is presented as a main point. One student used this kind of format to explain why she believes that keeping the detention center at Guantanamo Bay open is contrary to the country’s values.

REASONS FORMAT

Specific Purpose: To convince my audience that keeping Guantanamo Bay open is morally wrong because keeping it fails to advance our national security, it runs counter to our values, and it hurts our standing in the world.

Proposition: It is morally wrong to keep the detention center at Guantanamo Bay open.

Main Points:

- I. Keeping Guantanamo Bay open fails to advance our national security.
- II. Keeping Guantanamo Bay open runs counter to our values.
- III. Keeping Guantanamo Bay open hurts our standing in the world.

Note that each reason provides a “because,” or justification for the speaker’s position.

After hearing that speech, another student was motivated to deliver one supporting an opposing set of values, which calls for a **refutation format**. When arguing against a previously espoused position, you first note the stance being refuted, state your position, support it, and demonstrate why your position undermines the one previously stated. In this case, the student defended the proposition, “It is morally right to keep the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay open.”

19.3c Speak on a Question of Policy

A **proposition of policy** asks receivers to support a change in policy and/or to take action to remedy an existing situation or solve a perceived problem. You can probably identify countless instances in which you have observed propositions of policy. When a legislator recommends the passage of a mandatory sentencing bill or when a social activist urges the elimination of discriminatory hiring practices, each is petitioning for a particular policy because he or she believes it is both needed and desirable (hence the traditional inclusion of the word *should* in the proposition).

When speaking on a question of policy, your job is to convince the audience that your stance is right. You accomplish this first with reasons, and second by proposing practical action or a solution. Propositions of policy usually build on both propositions of fact and propositions of value. In order for you to persuade your audience that action is merited, you first have to establish a proposition of fact and convince them to accept a proposition of value. Unless you can show a need for a policy, there is no point in arguing for it. Once you demonstrate that a need exists, it is then incumbent on you to suggest a solution and illustrate how that solution would help alleviate the problem.

The following are typical propositions for policy topics:

- To be culturally literate, all college students should study a foreign language.
- Childhood immunizations should be mandatory.
- College education should be free for all.
- Artificial sweeteners should be banned.
- Sex education should not be taught in schools.
- College athletes should be paid.
- Standardized testing should be ended.

Organize the Question of Policy Speech

Individuals may agree about the facts surrounding an issue and even share a similar value orientation. Despite agreeing, however, they may disagree regarding what to do. For example, an entire community may agree that homelessness among children is a serious problem, and they may share the value that holds that we are responsible for all children, not just our own flesh and blood. Yet some might argue that we should place homeless children in foster homes; others might propose spending more money to house the homeless; still others might contend that we should view homelessness as a natural disaster and mount a mammoth effort to rid society of homelessness altogether.

Whatever the nature of the policy disagreement, there are four aspects of any controversy that advocates usually address:

- Is there a problem with the status quo?
- Is it fixable?
- Will the proposed solution work?
- Will the costs of fixing the problem outweigh the benefits of fixing the problem—that is, will the proposed solution help, or will it create new and more serious problems?⁷



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Bare necessities. The burden of proof is on you to establish the need for the proposition of policy before you can argue the solution.

Among the most popular formats for speeches on questions of policy are problem-causes-solution, comparative advantages, and Monroe's Motivated Sequence, all of which are variants of topical organization.

Often, a proposition of policy speech divides naturally into a *problem-causes-solution* organizational framework. The speech's first main point describes the nature and seriousness of the problem, the second main point explains the problem's causes, and the third main point proposes the solution and describes its practicality and benefits.

If your listeners are well informed about the problem you are discussing and convinced of a need for action, you should spend the bulk of your time explaining your plan and its viability. In this case, a *comparative advantages* format works well. In this structure, you use each main point to explain how your plan is better than the alternative. For example, in a speech opposed to online education, your main points might be that in-person classes are more effective learning environments, that they better foster social skills, and that they are more effective at preventing cheating than online classes.

Understand Monroe's Motivated Sequence

Monroe's Motivated Sequence is another organizational framework that speakers on propositions of policy find particularly effective in motivating receivers to act. Alan Monroe, a professor of speech at Purdue University, developed the framework more than 50 years ago. Based on the psychology of persuasion, Monroe's Motivated Sequence has five phases that move listeners toward accepting and acting on a proposition of policy.

Phase One: Attention. At the speech's outset, you must arouse the interest of your audience.

Phase Two: Need. Show your receivers that there is a serious problem with a present situation by explicitly stating the need and illustrating it with an array of supporting materials, and by relating it to their interests and desires.

Phase Three: Satisfaction. After you show your audience that there is a need, you must satisfy their desire for a solution. Present your plan and explain it fully. Help them understand that alleviating the problem will also satisfy their interests and desires.

Phase Four: Visualization. Show receivers how your proposal will both benefit them and improve the situation. Asking receivers to visualize what the world will be like if they fail to act as you request can also be effective.

Phase Five: Action. Tell audience members specifically what you would like them to do and conclude with an appeal that reinforces their commitment.

The following outline illustrates how one educator used the motivational sequence as a guide when organizing her ideas for a speech on why public schools should promote multiculturalism.

INTRODUCTION

Phase One: ATTENTION

- I. Hate crimes attributed to ethnocentrism have become too prevalent in our schools.
- II. Racial, ethnic, and religious biases drive students apart.
- III. Today I would like to explain to you why the greatest concern of educators should be to promote multiculturalism in our schools.

Phase Two: NEED

- I. We need to promote multiculturalism in schools so students feel safe.
 - A. Children in U.S. classrooms represent all the world's races, religions, and ethnic groups.
 - B. We must educate all children so they can learn tolerance and acceptance.

Phase Three: SATISFACTION

- II. We would alleviate racial, ethnic, and religious tensions by promoting a curriculum that is pluralistic rather than ethnocentric.
 - A. The pluralist approach prepares children to live in a world of competing ideas and values, to be able to live and work with people from different backgrounds, and to learn to examine their own beliefs.
 - 1. Pluralism teaches children that they are part of a multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious world.
 - 2. Pluralism teaches that we are all part of a cultural mosaic.
 - 3. Pluralism stresses critical thinking.
 - B. The ethnocentric approach to American culture insists that we must identify only with people who have the same skin color or ethnicity.
 - 1. Ethnocentrism immerses children in a prideful version of their own race, ethnicity, and religion.
 - 2. Ethnocentrism teaches children to respect only those who are part of their own group.
 - 3. Ethnocentrism teaches children not to raise doubts.

Phase Four: VISUALIZATION

- III. The public schools must prepare the younger generation to live in a world of differences.
 - A. Imagine the history curriculum not as a tool to build ethnic pride, but as a subject in which we learn about our society.
 - B. Imagine if differences were not grounds for hatred, but grounds for respect.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Phase Five: ACTION

- IV. A program on multiculturalism has been proposed to the school board.
 - A. You can help ensure its passage by attending a school board meeting, offering to speak at the event, and circulating petitions I will give you after my speech.
 - B. If we all support these changes, we can build a better-balanced school curriculum.

CONCLUSION

- I. I urge you to help rid our schools of ethnocentrism.
- II. It is time to teach respect for those who are different.⁸

Using Monroe's Motivated Sequence enables a speaker to anticipate the questions and concerns audience members want addressed as they listen to the speech. Observe how the preceding outline established the topic's relevance, isolated the issue, identified a solution, helped receivers visualize the positive outcomes resulting from the solution, and appealed to them to act accordingly.



GAME PLAN

Using Monroe's Motivated Sequence

- I developed an attention getter to pique the audience's interest by connecting my topic to their concerns.
- Early in my speech, I showed receivers that there is a serious problem or issue confronting us that we must address.
- I proposed a satisfying solution to the problem or issue, supporting it with appropriate evidence.
- I prompted my audience to visualize how what I'm proposing will improve the situation.
- Finally, I laid out a concrete plan for my audience members, calling on them to take action.



Exercises

PERSUASION PREPARATION

Becoming an accomplished persuasive speaker, one who is ethical and a critical thinker, takes practice. So does processing the persuasive efforts of others. Use the following persuasive exercise to improve your skills at both.

1. Be a Fact, Value, and Policy Checker

Let's say that you decide to speak about the effects of corporate influence on the foreign policy of the United States, and you have the option of delivering a speech using a proposition of fact, value, or policy. Your propositions for each option might read as follows:

FACT	Corporate influence on the foreign policy of the United States is excessive.
VALUE	It is wrong for corporations to influence the foreign policy of the United States.
POLICY	Congress should act to reduce corporate influence over the foreign policy of the United States.

Now, to enhance your ability to create propositions of fact, value, and policy, choose two controversial topics such as “sexting” or “single-payer health care” and write a proposition of fact, value, and policy for each.

2. Incorporate Counterarguments Into Your Speech

In the book *Age of Propaganda*, psychologists Anthony Pratkanis and Eliot Aronson assert that well-informed members of an audience are more likely to be persuaded if a speaker introduces them to opposing arguments that the speaker refutes than they are by a speaker's presentation of a one-sided argument. Why is this? Because the more well informed audience members are, the greater their awareness of an issue's many sides—including arguments that run counter to the speaker's position. If the speaker ignores these, receivers may assume that the speaker is either unaware of them or unable to refute them.

In contrast, less-informed receivers are easier to persuade while leaving opposing arguments unaddressed. In fact, introducing a counterargument to an uninformed audience could result in confusion.⁹

- Consider this question: When a speaker on a controversial topic limits his or her discussion to just one side of the issue, what judgment is the speaker making about the intelligence of the audience, and how do you feel about that?
- Using one of the propositions you wrote for the previous exercise, brainstorm and jot down some of the opposing arguments that those who have knowledge about the issue might offer.

3. The Motivation Sequence

Identify a television ad or infomercial that illustrates Monroe's Motivated Sequence in action. Draft an outline that explains how the selected commercial fulfills each step in the sequence.

4. Analyze the Speech

In the speech that follows, the goal was to persuade the audience that people need to be careful to not spread misinformation and to engage in informed sharing instead. As you review the speech, consider whether the speech succeeds.

Respond to these questions:

1. To what extent, if any, do you find the speech's introduction and conclusion fulfilled their functions?
2. Was the proposition of the speech clearly stated? What action was the speaker encouraging the receivers to take?
3. What evidence is there that the speaker considered the attitudes, beliefs, and values of receivers?
4. Did the speaker demonstrate that there was a problem with the status quo?
5. Was the solution proposed by the speaker to fix the existing problem viable?
6. Was the organizational framework of the speech effective?

INFORMED SHARING

SN 1 The speaker uses a surprising piece of information and a series of rhetorical questions to introduce the speech and capture the audience's attention. The speaker immediately involves the audience in looking at a problem that is far from under control, the sharing of misinformation.



In 2010 a story broke reporting that the Los Angeles Police Department had ordered 10,000 jet packs for their officers. Pretty cool right? Until you realize that they cost 1 million dollars each. Not cool. Especially for a police force that couldn't even buy new squad cars. The story becomes a little less cool when you learn that it isn't even true. The fact that the article exists, however, is true. The story caught on like wildfire, and according to Cracked.com, was even picked up by national news outlets. While this anecdote is amusing, it isn't that important is it? I mean who cares about a story now-and-then that isn't true? However, there are more lies on the internet than you may realize. And I'm not just talking about articles from *The Onion*, or the *Babylon Bee*. Even trusted news sources get it wrong all the time.

SN 2 The speaker previews the contents of the speech for the audience.



Today we will first look at the importance of knowing the truth behind the articles that we read and share, and then we will look at how we can vet the information we take in, and finally examine the benefits of what I call informed sharing.

According to the World Economic Forum, the 2014 10th most important issue facing the world is the “rapid spread of misinformation.” In 2014 and 2015, the BBC published an article of 7 news events that were not real. Eighteen more were reported by Politifact, and the *Washington Post* highlighted 15 stories that were lies, including one that nude photos of Emma Watson were leaked. Not that it couldn’t happen, but it didn’t. Saul Eslake writes in a 2006 paper that “Accurate, reliable and timely information is vital to effective decision-making in almost every aspect of human endeavor.” This should be the goal of every article we crack open: to educate ourselves in order to improve our decision-making process, and ultimately our lives.

The concern here is that every time we get on Facebook or Twitter, we are bombarded with news stories from all kinds of sources written by all kinds of people, and many of them are not true. And then we click “share” spreading the lies to all our friends, who likely do the same. This makes it imperative for us, as consumers of media, active or passive, to know the truth behind an article before we share it with others. Plus, there is also the possibility you will embarrass yourself later when you reference a story you thought was true, but that everyone else knows was fake.

In a social web that is woven with posts, stories, articles, and memes, how is any sane person supposed to cipher through all the material they encounter? Well, you can’t. But that just means that the things you *do* choose to read or share need to be taken seriously. The first thing I do when I see a headline that catches my attention is look at the source. If it’s not one I know or trust, I am likely to skim over it. Especially if it’s from *The Onion*.

Secondly, Melanie McManus suggests—in her article titled, appropriately, *10 Ways to Spot a Fake News Story*—that you check other news sources. This will not only legitimize the article, but cross check the details. If multiple sources are coming to similar conclusions on an issue, then it is probably safe to say that it’s legitimate. The headline itself can also be very telling. McManus lists several types of headlines that are almost always a hoax, or at the least unverifiable. End of

continued

SN 3 The speaker establishes the topic’s importance.

SN 4 The speaker draws the audience further into the speech.

SN 5 The speaker uses another rhetorical question to involve receivers in coming up with possible solutions for the problem.

SN 6 The speaker relies on research that reveals how receivers can spot misinformation.

continued

the world announcements, or claims to have found cures to major illnesses often fall into this category. Other types of headlines that can be “internet garbage” are those that invoke a deep emotion. When the author uses loaded language that automatically makes you angry, it’s possible that they are playing with your emotions just to get you to read their article.

Other ways we can avoid sharing bad information is by simply reading the article in its entirety. Most people who have any common sense can tell that a story lacks validity just by reading it. It is when we read a headline, and immediately share the story without reading the article itself that we can be contributing to the rapid spread of misinformation.

This informed sharing can stop the spread of internet garbage. By checking our facts, reading entire articles, and reading other articles on the topic, we can reduce the amount of misinformation that is shared. Fact checking may not be important to everyone, but according to Larry Margasak of the News Literacy Project, it is for those “who want to base their decisions on accurate information.” And that *should* be important to everyone. By checking your facts, both those that you read, and those that you share, you add another layer of validity to the information on the web. Finally, by calling out authors or advocates of false stories you find, you not only make yourself look smart, but you educate others.

The spread of misinformation goes beyond the LAPD spending 10 million dollars on jet packs. It reaches into the fabric of our lives in the political, social, religious, and even personal arenas. Lies and false stories permeate the media, and it’s up to you to evaluate the sources and determine the validity of the things you believe and share with others. By understanding the dangers of misinformation, doing your part to be informed, and recognizing the benefits of informed sharing, hopefully together we can make the world a smarter place.

SN 7 The speaker incorporates a reliable source to explain the importance and nature of informed sharing, effectively emphasizing its benefits for receivers.

SN 8 By reiterating a theme originally broached during the speech’s introduction in the conclusion, the speaker achieves closure. The speaker also reiterates why it is important for receivers to get on board.

5. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Prepare an outline for a five- to seven-minute persuasive speech on a proposition of fact, value, or policy. Be sure to use an organizational format and integrate supporting materials that help you accomplish your persuasive goal. Include a bibliography of the sources you consulted.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Define persuasion.** Persuasion is the attempt to change or reinforce the attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors of others.
2. **Distinguish the differences among attitudes, beliefs, and values.** An attitude is a mental set or predisposition to respond to or evaluate stimuli positively or negatively. A belief is that which determines whether you accept something as probable or improbable, true or false. A value is an enduring and deeply ingrained indicator of what we feel is good or bad, right or wrong.
3. **Identify and define your persuasive goal, particularly the change you seek in receivers.** Among the goals persuasive speakers seek in receivers are for them to adopt a new way of thinking or behaving, sustain or reinforce a way of thinking or behaving, discontinue a way of thinking or behaving, or avoid a particular way of thinking or behaving.
4. **Compare and contrast the following types of persuasive speeches: a question of fact, a question of value, and a question of policy.** When speaking on a proposition of fact, you argue that something is or is not true. A proposition of value speech focuses on the worth of a given statement. In a proposition of policy speech, you argue for what you believe should be done to solve an existing problem.
5. **Explain and use Monroe's Motivated Sequence.** Monroe's Motivated Sequence contains five key phases designed to move listeners toward accepting and acting on a proposition of policy: attention, need, satisfaction, visualization, and action.

KEY TERMS

Monroe's Motivated Sequence 338	Proposition of fact 334	Reasons approach 336
Persuasion 330	Proposition of policy 336	Refutation format 336
Proposition 334	Proposition of value 335	



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20

Methods of Persuasion

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Use sound evidence
2. Apply Toulmin's Reasonable Argument Model
3. Use deductive, inductive, and causal reasoning, as well as reasoning from analogy
4. Arouse emotion
5. Name the three tenets of persuasive speaking
6. Avoid common logical fallacies
7. Design and deliver a persuasive speech

Contents

What makes one person more persuasive than another? According to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, it is **ethos**, the ability to convince the audience of your competence, good character, and charisma—your credibility; together with **logos**, the ability to use logical proof to demonstrate the reasonableness of argument(s); and **pathos**, the ability to develop empathy and passion in others. Whom have you attempted to persuade recently? Were you successful? What did you say that enabled your audience to perceive both you and your message positively? Of course, no one is successful at persuading all people all the time no matter how high their credibility or how skillful their persuasive techniques. However, if you use the strategies discussed in this chapter, you will increase both your credibility and persuasive potential.

COACHING TIP

“Don’t raise your voice; improve your argument.”

—Desmond Tutu

Yelling at those who do not share your views rarely succeeds in changing their minds. Use reason and emotion instead. Convince—don’t chastize. Give your audience solid evidence, effective appeals, and reason to trust you, and you’ll be on your way to achieving your goal.

Section 20.1 Varying Viewpoints and Your Target Audience

Section 20.2 Build Persuasive Credibility

Section 20.3 Use Evidence

Section 20.4 Make Inferences

Section 20.5 Appeal to Reason

- 20.5a Deductive Reasoning, 354
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Section 20.6 Arouse Emotions

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- 20.7a Think Small to Avoid a Big Fall, 360
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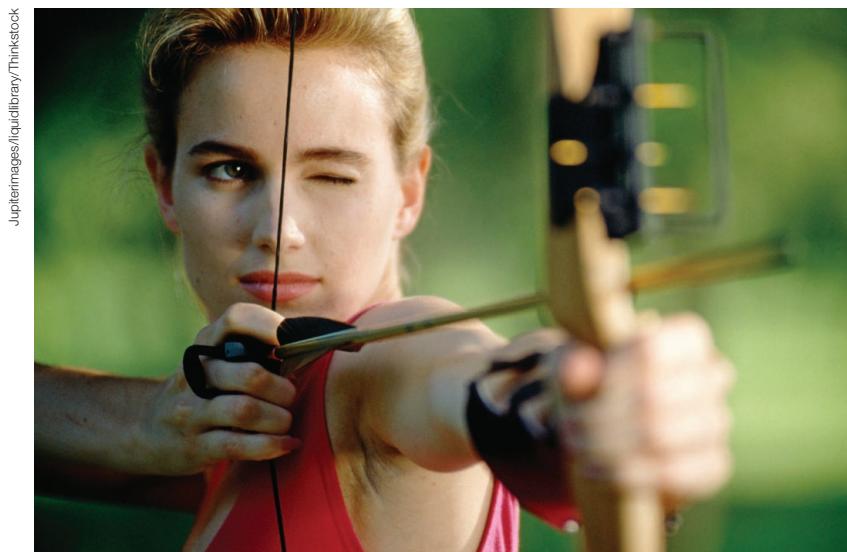
Section 20.8 Ethical Persuasion: Avoid Fallacies

section
20.1

Varying Viewpoints and Your Target Audience

Audience members are not necessarily unified in their thinking about controversial issues. For example, some members of the audience may hold a position diametrically opposed to yours. With this segment, you have little, if any, chance of changing their minds with a single speech.¹ You may, however, be able to move them closer to where you stand. Others in the audience may already accept your stance. You can assume they will stay with you. A third group will be undecided. Provide this segment of the audience with reasons to care, solid evidence, and effective appeals because they are your *target audience*. It is their needs, their values, their concerns, and their interests that you need to consider most (without ignoring the others) when designing your presentation.

Change, for most people, occurs over time. If you strive to create small changes in audience members and not instant conversions, your chances for success increase. Being able to address the same audience members more than once also improves the likelihood you will succeed.



Take aim. Tailor your message directly for your target audience.

Build Persuasive Credibility

An effective persuasive speaker is someone audience members perceive as qualified. The more **credibility** receivers feel you have, the more likely they are to believe what you say, and think and do as you advocate. Three major factors affect the audience's judgment of your credibility: (1) their perception of your competence, (2) their perception of your character, and (3) their opinion of whether you are charismatic.

We can divide credibility into its three constituent parts: **initial credibility**, how receivers perceive you before you speak; **derived credibility**, how they perceive you while you are speaking; and **terminal credibility**, how they perceive you after your speech. Having high initial credibility gives a persuasive speaker an advantage, as audience members are more likely to give your ideas a receptive hearing. But that's just the beginning. Your message and delivery style enhance *or* weaken your initial credibility in their eyes. The opinion audience members have of you at the end of one speech could also affect their view of you at the beginning of another. You are only as credible as your receivers perceive you to be—at the moment. Employ the techniques in Section 11.2 to establish your credibility.

section 20.3

Use Evidence

As we noted, perceived credibility, or what Aristotle labeled *ethos*, is helpful in realizing your persuasive goal. However, only when you unite credibility with evidence and reasoning, or what Aristotle called *logos*, will you have created a message that has believability. Because listeners are skeptical of unsupported generalizations, back your positions with strong **evidence**. Use facts and statistics to lay the groundwork for persuasion and validate the conclusions you are asking receivers to accept. Use detailed examples to create human interest and motivate receivers to respond as you desire. Expert testimony from sources that receivers respect also adds credence to the positions you advocate. When incorporated into a speech, these will change audience judgments of your initial, derived, and terminal credibility.

Review Chapters 7 and 8 for more on research and evidence, as we revisit the key types of evidence and establish guideposts you can use to test the strength and validity of each form of persuasive support.

- **Facts.** A fact is a statement that direct observation can prove true or false. Once proven, facts are noncontroversial and readily verifiable. Some common assertions aren't facts because there isn't enough information. For instance, we don't know that cellular phones cause cancer. Still, people may claim that such statements are true. To confirm the validity of the facts you use in support of a persuasive argument, make sure that there is little, if any, controversy regarding whether the statement made is true and that the statement is based on a report by someone who directly observed the situation or event.



Be a sleuth. Track down evidence to support your claims.

- **Statistics.** We can often summarize a group of observations with statistics. They are helpful in comparing observed data and in emphasizing and magnifying distinctive patterns and significant differences. Make sure your statistics are recent, unbiased, noncontroversial, and from a reliable source.
- **Examples and illustrations.** Both real and hypothetical examples and **illustrations** are used to support facts a speaker wants audience members to accept. Longer illustrations add more drama and emotional involvement to a message and help the speaker build a case that encourages audience members to draw desired conclusions. Only use examples that are typical, significant, noncontroversial, and from a reliable source.
- **Testimony.** Speakers use the opinions of respected individuals to add credibility to the conclusions they draw. Testimony should be fair, unbiased, appropriate, and from a recognized expert.

In addition to helping you prove the validity of your proposition, evidence helps “inoculate” your receivers against arguments made by those who disagree with you.² The most persuasive evidence is that which the audience was not aware of, that makes each listener question his or her position if it’s different from yours, and that anticipates the questions and doubts of receivers and puts them firmly to rest.



Facts are facts. Research is crucial in preparing your argument and presenting your case.

section 20.4

Make Inferences

An *inference* is a conclusion we draw *based on a fact*. They connect the dots for your audience, demonstrating how the facts you've presented support your position. But you must assess the validity of your inferences—to ensure they have a high probability of being true.

When George E. Curry of the National Newspaper Publishers Association spoke before that organization and BlackPressUSA.com, he contended that though the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision may have changed the course of history, racism is not a thing of the past. He used a series of facts to support his contention, telling his audience the following:

Society still has not adequately addressed the gap between the haves and have-nots in this country.

According to *The State of the Dream 2004*, a report published by United for a Fair Economy in Boston,

1. One out of every nine African Americans cannot find a job;
2. The unemployment rate for African Americans is more than twice the unemployment rate of Whites;
3. In 1968, for every dollar of White per-capita income, African Americans earned 55 cents. More than three decades later, that gap was closed by two cents. At the rate we're going, it will take African Americans another 581 years to get to the remaining forty-three cents;
4. Almost a third of African American children live in poverty—32.1 percent in 2002. At the rate we're going, we will not reach parity until 2212—another 208 years;
5. The high school dropout rate has improved dramatically, now to the point where 79 percent of all African Americans at least 25 years old have high school diplomas;
6. In 1968, only 4.3 percent of African Americans had completed college; today it's 17.2 percent, which is still less than 29.4 percent of Whites.

Even when we become educated, the typical African American high school graduate working full-time will earn \$300,000 less than his or her White counterpart over a 30-year period. An African American college graduate will earn \$500,000 less and the African American worker with an advanced degree will earn \$600,000 less.³

To confirm the validity of the inferences you use in support of a persuasive argument, apply these two criteria:

1. There is little, if any, controversy regarding whether the statement made is true, or
2. The statement is based on a report by someone who directly observed the situation or event.



Cable news hosts are known for taking social or political issues and turning them into arguments with guests. Though this may be entertaining, when we analyze them critically, the arguments often lack logic and sound principles of reasoning.

Effective persuaders reason with their audiences by presenting evidence and arguments that help move receivers closer to the speaker's view. In *The Uses of Argument*, Stephen Toulmin shows that effective reasoning has the following components:

1. **A claim.** The proposition or thesis you hope to prove, for example, *College football should be banned*.⁴
2. **Data.** Reasons, facts, and evidence for making the claim, for example, *College football should be banned because it has no academic purpose*.
3. **A warrant.** A logical and persuasive relationship that explains how you get to your claim from the data you offer, for example, *The primary purpose of higher education is academics*.
4. **The backing.** Supporting information that answers other questions of concern and strengthens the warrant when it is controversial, for example, *Football is a distraction benefiting alumni and coaches, but not students or players. Coaches make obscene millions while players receive no compensation. The majority of the student body receives no benefit because tuition costs continue to rise while colleges continue to slash budgets*.
5. **The qualifier.** Limitations placed on the connection between the data and the warrant, usually symbolized by words such as *often, rarely, or always*, for example, *Colleges often lose money on their football programs*.
6. **Rebuttal.** Potential counterarguments, at times proffered during the initial argument, for example, *The student-athlete is a false concept. Any Division I college player will tell you the demands of the game make the student aspect superfluous*.

In diagram form, the **Toulmin Reasonable Argument Model** shown in Figure 20.1, suggests that if you state your claim clearly and qualify it so as not to overgeneralize an issue, support it with reasons, and connect it to the evidence you offer via the warrant, you improve your chances of persuading others to accept it. You should also anticipate opposing arguments and prepare counterarguments that rebut them.

Persuaders rely on four key methods of reasoning to move receivers to affirm or act on their goal: (1) deductive reasoning, (2) inductive reasoning, (3) causal reasoning, and (4) analogical reasoning.⁵

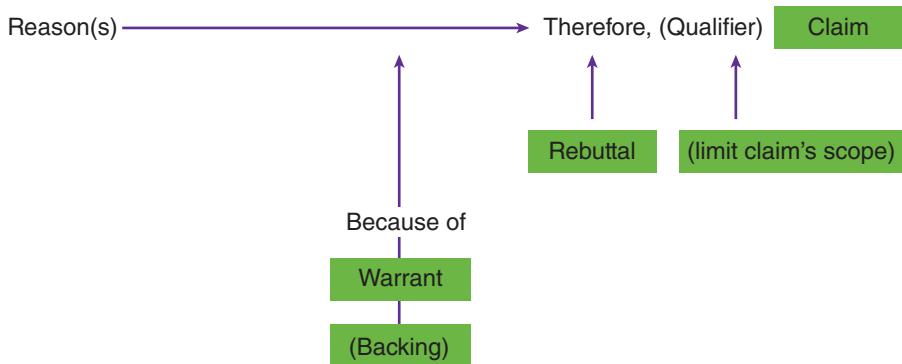
20.5a Deductive Reasoning

When you use **deductive reasoning**, you offer general evidence that leads to a specific conclusion.

Deductive reasons take the form of **syllogisms**, which are patterns to structure arguments. A syllogism has three parts:

1. A major premise, that is, a general statement or truth; for example, *we must condemn speech that precipitates violence*.
2. A minor premise, which is a more specific statement that describes a claim made about a related object; for example, *a speech by the grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan will precipitate violence*.
3. A conclusion derived from both the major premise and the minor premise; for example, *therefore we must condemn this speech*.

FIGURE 20.1
The Toulmin Reasonable Argument Model



Source: Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1958/2003.

You can evaluate examples of deductive reasoning with these criteria:

- Both the major premise and the minor premise must be true.
- The conclusion must follow logically from the premise.

When you use deductive reasoning, you introduce your receivers to your general claim first. One of the potential disadvantages of the deductive approach is that receivers who oppose your claim may tune out and not pay attention to the specifics you offer in the minor premise. Instead of giving you the opportunity to provide them with reasons to accept your conclusion, they may be too busy rebutting your initial contention in their own minds. Of course, if you are addressing an audience that favors your proposal and merely needs reinforcing, then deductive reasoning works well.

In this example from a speech entitled “Sacred Rights: Preserving Reproductive Freedom,” Faye Wattleton, then president of Planned Parenthood, defended legal protection for reproductive choice. Notice how she uses deductive reasoning to make a point:

We've already seen some bizarre legal outcomes of this religious definition of human life [*Major Premise*]. Lawsuits have cropped up claiming fetuses as dependents for tax purposes—or claiming “illegal imprisonment” of the fetuses of pregnant inmates—or seeking to reclassify juvenile offenders as adults by tacking an extra nine months onto their age [*Minor Premise*.]⁶ [*Wattleton's conclusion is that we need to defend legal protection for reproductive choice by avoiding using the religious definition of human life.*]

20.5b Inductive Reasoning

When you use **inductive reasoning**, you progress from a series of specific observations to a more general claim or conclusion. You offer audience members particular reasons why they should support your generalization. For example,

FACT 1: People who live in poorer countries experience less depression.

FACT 2: Non-modern countries have the lowest rates of depression.

FACT 3: The Amish have one-tenth the depression of other Americans.

CONCLUSION: Depression is a disease of modernity and affluence.⁷

You can evaluate whether a speaker's use of inductive reasoning is effective by asking and answering these two questions:

- Are enough reasons given to justify the conclusion drawn?
- Are the instances cited typical and representative?

20.5c Causal Reasoning

When using **causal reasoning**—that is, reasoning that unites two or more events to prove that one or more of them caused the other—a speaker either cites observed causes and infers effects, or cites observed effects and infers causes. We use causal reasoning daily. Something takes place and we ask, “Why?” Similarly, we hypothesize about the effects of certain actions. The next series of statements illustrates causal reasoning from effect to cause:

EFFECT: Women are discriminated against in the workplace.

CAUSE 1: Women earn less than men in virtually every occupation.

CAUSE 2: Women are not offered the same training opportunities as men.

CAUSE 3: Society expects women but not men to put family before their jobs.

The next series of statements illustrates causal reasoning from cause to effect:

CAUSE 1: Too much of the food children eat is low in nutritional content but high in sugar, carbs, and fats.

CAUSE 2: Too many of the activities children engage in are sedentary.

EFFECT: Childhood obesity rates are rising.

Of course, causal reasoning can be problematic. Just because one thing happens and another follows does not necessarily mean that the first event was the cause. You can evaluate the soundness of causal reasoning by asking:

- Is the cause cited real or actual?
- Is the cause cited an oversimplification?

Remember, causal reasoning associates events that *precede* an occurrence with events that follow. It shows us that antecedents lead to consequences.



Make the connection. Explain the linkages between evidence and your argument. How does a caterpillar become a butterfly?

20.5d Reasoning From Analogy

When **reasoning from analogy**, we compare like things and conclude that because they are comparable in a number of ways, they also are comparable in another, new respect. For instance, if you propose that the strategies used to decrease welfare fraud in San Francisco would also work in your city, you would first have to establish that your city was like the other city in a number of important ways—perhaps the number of persons on welfare, the number of social service workers, and the financial resources. If you can convince audience members that the two cities are alike, except for the fact that your city does not yet have such a system in place, then you would be reasoning by analogy.

Use these two questions to check the validity of an analogy:

1. Are the objects of comparison in the speech alike in essential respects? That is, are they more alike than they are different?
2. Are the differences between them significant?

The best speakers combine several kinds of reasoning to justify the positions they are taking. Thus, your reasoning options are open. If you are going to speak ethically, however, you do not have the option of becoming unreasonable—that is, of using an argument that has only the appearance of valid reasoning without the substance.



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Like apples and oranges. Use analogies to make new information easier to understand.

section 20.6

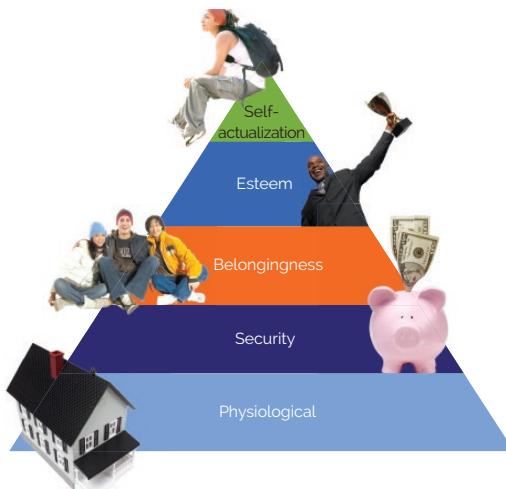
Arouse Emotions

We react most strongly when we feel angry, anxious, excited, concerned, or guilty. Speakers use *pathos*, which Aristotle defines as appeals to the emotions of the audience, to instill the audience with attitudes and beliefs similar to their own and elicit a desired action. The greater your understanding of what members of your audience need, fear, and aspire to achieve, the greater your chances of gaining their attention and persuading them to accept what you are advocating.

Abraham H. Maslow, a psychologist, developed a classic theory to explain human motivation. His theory is now referred to as **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**.⁸ Maslow depicted motivation as a pyramid, with our most basic needs at the pyramid's base and our most sophisticated needs at its apex (see Figure 20.2).

According to Maslow, basic necessities of life are physiological: air, shelter, food, water, and procreation. Next, we need to feel safe and secure, and to know that those we care about are protected as well. Our need for love and belonging is located at the third level of the hierarchy; there also lies our need for social contact and to fit into a group. The fourth tier focuses on esteem needs—our need for self-respect and to feel that others respect and value us. Finally, at the pyramid's apex is our need for self-actualization, defined as our need to realize our full potential and to accomplish everything we are capable of. By focusing on audience members' relevant need levels, speakers have in their possession the keys to unlock audience attention, involvement, and receptivity.

FIGURE 20.2
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source: Abraham Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (New York: John Wiley, 1962); images courtesy of Digital Vision/Digital Vision/Thinkstock; George Doyle/Stockbyte/Thinkstock; Thomas Northcut/Photodisc/Thinkstock; Stockbyte/Stockbyte/Thinkstock.

As a persuader, you should realize that unless audience members have their lower order needs met, you will rarely be able to motivate them by appealing to higher order needs. For instance, an appeal to esteem needs will likely fail unless the audience's physiological, security, and belongingness needs have been met. A speech on the importance of, say, achieving one's goals through higher education is unlikely to be successful if your receiver is homeless or hungry.

You can motivate the members of your audience using both positive and negative appeals. In a positive motivational appeal, you note how your proposal benefits audience members and improves their quality of life. However, a negative motivational appeal, such as a fear appeal, attempts to reach receivers by using the possibility that something dire will happen if they do not support what the speaker advocates.

In order for a fear appeal to work, audience members must believe

- You are a credible source.
- The threat you describe is real.
- Taking action to remove the threat will restore them to a state of balance.⁹

Keep in mind that your message must reveal how receivers can remove the threat. For example, one speaker attempted to persuade receivers that it was only a matter of time before a tsunami hit the United States—an appeal to fear with little if any means for receivers to do something to reduce it.¹⁰ Once you induce fear in audience members, you have an ethical responsibility to explain to them how your proposal will free them of it.

section 20.7



20.7a Think Small to Avoid a Big Fall

20.7b Use the Desire for Consistency

20.7c Don't Put the Best in the Middle

Use Three Tenets of Persuasion

Here are three principles to guide you as you prepare to deliver a persuasive speech.

20.7a Think Small to Avoid a Big Fall

Persuasion is traditionally a step-by-step process, so keep your expectations realistic. If you try to skip too many steps, or if you expect too much from your receivers, then you may be disappointed in your results. Your receivers will be much more apt to change their way of thinking and/or behaving if the change you request is small.

20.7b Use the Desire for Consistency

One way to convince audience members to accept or act on your proposition is to demonstrate for them that a current situation has created an inconsistency in their lives and that you can help them restore their lives to a balanced state. When we feel that what a speaker is asking us to believe, think, or do contradicts our current beliefs, we are unlikely to be persuaded by them. However, if that speaker can show us why what we currently believe, think, or do is out of sync with other attitudes or beliefs we hold or goals we value, then we are more likely to change as requested to restore our comfort or well-being.

20.7c Don't Put the Best in the Middle

Use both primacy and recency theories as guides when positioning key persuasive points. Either put your strongest point up front to win audience members to your side early in your presentation, or put your strongest argument last to build momentum as you approach the end of your speech. The middle position is weakest. Your best and strongest argument certainly does not belong there. By positioning your arguments appropriately, you can be more persuasive.



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Strategize. Don't bury your most important point in the middle of your speech. Either start your speech with it or bring it out at the very end.

Ethical Persuasion: Avoid Fallacies

A **logical fallacy** is a flawed reason. It is unethical to offer audience members reasoning marred by fallacies. In addition to not using fallacious reasons yourself, you also want to be able to spot them when other speakers use them. Among the reasoning fallacies are

- **Hasty generalizations.** You make a **hasty generalization** (in Latin, *dicto simpliciter*) when you jump to a conclusion based on too little evidence. To avoid this reasoning defect, you need to review enough typical cases to validate your claim.
- **Post hoc ergo propter hoc.** This phrase is Latin for “after this; therefore, because of this.” Reasoning suffers from this fallacy when you assume that merely because one event preceded another, the first event caused the second event to happen. The sunrise is not caused by a rooster crowing, nor did it rain because you washed your car. Reading scores in a school did not necessarily decline because (or only because) the curriculum was changed.
- **Slippery slope.** You find yourself on a **slippery slope** when asserting that one action will set in motion a chain of events. Though all choices have consequences, they rarely are as serious as users of slippery slope reasoning would have you conclude. Because once unwanted things happen, others do not certainly or even probably follow.
- **Red herring.** When you put a **red herring** in your speech, you lead your audience to consider an irrelevant issue instead of the subject actually under discussion. In an effort to defend the right of individuals to smoke in public places, for example, one speaker tried to deflect his listeners’ concerns by focusing instead on the dangers of automobile emissions.
- **False dichotomy.** When you employ a **false dichotomy**, you require your audience to choose between two options, usually polar extremes, when in reality there are many in between. This polarizes receivers and reduces a complicated issue to a simple choice that all too often obscures other legitimate options. “America: Love it or leave it” and “If you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem” are examples of the false dichotomy at work.
- **False division.** A **false division** infers that if something is true of the whole, it is also true of one or more of its parts. For example, just because a boat can float on water doesn’t mean its motor can and an organization may not be corrupt because one of its members was convicted of embezzlement. What is true of the whole may not be true of its constituent parts.

- **Personal attacks.** When you engage in name-calling, you give an idea, a group, or a person a bad name (“un-American,” “neo-Nazi”) so that others will condemn your target without thinking critically or examining the evidence.
- **Glittering generalities.** A **glittering generality** is the opposite of a personal attack. Here the speaker associates an idea with things that the audience values highly (such as democracy and fairness). Again, however, the aim is to cause audience members to ignore or gloss over the evidence.
- **Ad hominem attacks.** When you present your audience with an **argument ad hominem** (literally, an argument “against the man”), you ask your audience to reject an idea because of a flaw in a person associated with that idea. “She’s just a member of Generation X.” An argument *ad hominem* places the focus on the person rather than on the veracity of the argument.
- **Bandwagon appeals.** If everyone jumps off a cliff, would you jump off a cliff too? Also known as the appeal to popular opinion, the **bandwagon appeal** tells receivers that because “everyone is doing it” they should as well. Just because many believe something, however, does not make it true.
- **Appeal to fear.** A speaker who makes receivers feel overly fearful in order to accomplish his or her goals often ends up pandering to prejudices or escalating the legitimate fears of receivers. Once receivers find themselves “running scared” because the dangers alluded to by the speaker have been exaggerated beyond what is likely to occur, they are rarely able to think critically and rationally about the issue.
- **Appeal to tradition.** When appealing to tradition, you ask the members of your audience to accept your idea or plan because that’s the way it’s always been done, or to reject a new idea because the old way of doing things is better. But because it was or is that way today does not necessarily make it better or best.
- **Appeal to misplaced authority.** When a speaker asks us to endorse an idea because a well-liked personality who is not an expert on the subject has endorsed it, we should question the request critically. Name recognition does not necessarily equal expertise.
- **Straw man.** When you respond to another’s position by distorting, exaggerating, or misrepresenting their argument, you are depending on a “straw man” in an attempt to create the illusion that you refuted the other’s stance successfully. Effectively, you misrepresent the other’s position to make it easier to attack.

Such fallacies are dishonest and undermine reason and rational debate. Because they distort truth, logical fallacies are inherently invalid, and when detected, cause receivers to question the speaker's ethics.



GAME PLAN

Persuading an Audience

- I've considered my target audience and tailored my arguments to address them.
- I've reviewed the power of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and have included appeals to the audience's chief concerns such as safety, security, and quality of life.
- I've researched and used the most effective forms of evidence, including facts, statistics, examples/illustrations, or testimony.
- I've applied Toulmin's Reasonable Argument Model to test the integrity of my reasoning.
- I've reviewed my speech to be sure I haven't relied on any logical fallacies, and my reasoning is airtight.



Exercises

MASTERING METHODS

Understanding audience positions, building credibility, using solid evidence, and helping the audience feel that the change you call for is necessary are integral to achieving your goals. Completing these exercises will help you accomplish that.

1. Find the Fallacy

Select the transcript of a show from CNN.com, MSNBC.com, or FOXNews.com in which the host and one or more guests discuss a timely controversial issue. Analyze the claims made, the evidence offered, and the warrants used by each party. To what extent, if any, do you think the arguments made are defensible on the basis of logic and sound principles of reasoning? Support your answer.

2. The Hierarchy of Needs

Use Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to target the types of needs you will appeal to in the following situations:

- You want to persuade an audience of high school seniors not to text and drive.
- You want to convince parents that sex offender registries are too strict.
- You want to persuade an audience of college students to get involved in local politics.
- You want to convince veterans that they should not support the passing of an amendment to ban flag burning.
- You want to convince Congress to pass a law prohibiting former members of Congress from ever becoming lobbyists.

3. Analyze the Speech: Football Is in Trouble

The focus of the speech that follows is CTE, a brain disease endangering football's future. As you read it, assess whether the speech succeeds in sparking your interest in the topic, explains why the subject ought to concern you, builds your belief in the speaker's credibility, and contains both solid reasoning and arguments designed to win your support.

Are you a fan of high-school and college football? Do you ever watch Sunday night football? How about Monday night football? What about the Super Bowl? Football is America's game, but it's in trouble, very serious trouble. Why is football in danger? As a result of the National Football League's refusal to be honest with the players and the public, football, America's sport, has been put under a microscope—literally—and what researchers have discovered is alarming and threatens the game's future. Football is in trouble.

One reason football is in trouble is because an increasing number of football players are opting to retire early. Why are they choosing retirement over playing? They're retiring not because of bruises and broken ribs, but because they are experiencing life-altering injuries, and they fear what the game is doing to their brains and nervous systems. Not until 2013, after being pressured by physicians, the press, and league players, did the National Football League agree to a \$765 million settlement of a lawsuit filed by retired players that had accused league officials of covering up the health risks players faced from repeated concussions. In April of 2016, despite player's complaints that the settlement did not go far enough, an appeals court upheld the agreement. The fund created by the league, however, fails to solve the real problem. Football is in trouble.

What disease is driving football's troubles? It is CTE, chronic traumatic encephalopathy—a degenerative brain disease resulting from repeated blows to the head. The term encephalopathy derives from the ancient Greek—with *en* meaning in, *kephale* meaning head, and *patheia* meaning suffering—in head suffering. According to an op-ed piece published in the May 1, 2016 issue of *USA Today*, scientific studies have connected the repetitive head injuries of football with player depression, memory loss and worse. Dr. Bennet Omalu, the discoverer of CTE, and the subject of the film *Concussion*, believes that there is absolutely

SN 1 The speaker's opening questions are designed to involve the audience and demonstrate the popularity of football. The statement that follows the questions is simple but direct, designed to capture the audience's attention and foreshadow the speech's end. The speaker also introduces a speech motif, a refrain underscoring the speaker's message.

SN 2 The speaker identifies a reason for football's troubles.

SN 3 The speaker echoes the refrain motif.

SN 4 The speaker defines the problem threatening football players.

continued

SN 5 The speaker explains another reason why football is in trouble and why CTE research is being focused on the sport.

SN 6 The speaker exposes the league's neglect, supplying research supporting the speech's proposition.

continued

no way for the human brain to undergo hundreds, if not thousands of hits over time, and not be damaged. After he voiced this belief, the NFL tried to discredit Dr. Omalu as a quack. Sadly, many football players suffer from irreparable brain damage, without even knowing for certain if they have the disease. You see, doctors have to wait until after a player dies to determine if CTE was a contributing factor. Only once a person dies and their brains can be dissected can the doctor see the telltale brain scars or lesions and diagnose CTE.

Sadly, professional football players are not alone in facing CTE. Since the 1920s, we have known that boxers experience brain damage. CTE also is found in hockey players, is feared by soccer players, and has been determined to afflict military veterans. Football, America's game, however, remains the prime focus of research, probably because of its potential to affect so many. It is impossible for players to play football for a long time and not have it affect their brains. As far back as the fall of 2009, this realization was the subject of an October *New York Times* editorial, but the NFL paid scant attention to it. For too long, the league simply refused to concede a link between playing football and brain disease. According to league officials, the *Times* was exaggerating the problem, blowing the topic up into something it was not. In fact, NFL Commissioner, Roger Goodell, insisted that the game of football was safer to play than it had ever been and that only a minority of players suffered from brain damage. For years, the NFL persisted in ignoring the real risks of playing the game. According to the March 25, 2016 *New York Times*, for 13 years, the league stood by research which they said was based on a full accounting of all concussions diagnosed by team doctors.

Investigations by the *Times*, however, revealed that more than 100 diagnosed concussions were not included in those studies. The NFL did this even though CBS sports radio's John Feinstein reported that a league study already had revealed that 28 percent of players would suffer from CTE by the time they turned 65. Let's do the math together. There's close to 1,700 players on league rosters. So

that's almost 500 current NFL players who will be afflicted with the disease. And because football is a contact sport, the elevated risk of brain trauma that players face cannot be avoided. Football and violence to the brain are inseparable. As a result, according to *60 Minutes* reporter Steve Croft, the concussion problem can be catastrophic for the NFL. The Centers for Disease Control affirms that concussions from football are an epidemic with the resulting brain damage leading to permanent brain damage.

How does CTE happen? Let me explain it this way. (The speaker picks up a jar containing an orange.) Look at the orange in this jar. Watch what happens to the orange as I turn the jar back and forth, and upside down, giving it a good shaking. You can see the orange repeatedly hitting into the ends of the jar. That's what happens to a player's brain with each blow to the head. Imagine your brain being hit again and again with such force that it slams into your skull. The impact felt by colliding football players is almost unimaginable. Picture two players of very substantial size and weight running at each other at a speed of almost 20 miles per hour. When they meet, it feels like a car crashing into a brick wall at 40–45 miles per hour. According to a study conducted at the University of North Carolina, there is a significant correlation between the number of concussions that a player experiences and the onset of dementia and depression. Multiple concussions have ended the careers of many players, among them Steve Young, Troy Aikman, Junior Seau, Ken Stabler, and Ted Johnson. Johnson was so physical that when he ran into one opponent, he cracked his helmet in two. In the past, however, though they were concussed, players often kept playing. They didn't know any better. While you can't see the brain damage, life after a series of concussions often is not very good. Many players and their widows end up donating the player's brain to research. According to the May 1, 2015 issue of *USA Today*, of 79 former football players who donated their brains to medical research after their deaths, 76 had CTE. Football is in trouble.

SN 7 The speaker makes the cause and nature of CTE understandable to the audience by creatively offering a visual example of the problem.

continued

continued

SN 8 The speaker uses statistics to demonstrate CTE's seriousness—and again repeats the speech's refrain.

SN 9 The speaker uses an analogy for impact.

SN 10 Using different words, the speaker echoes the refrain motif, noting what needs to happen for football to become safer.

SN 11 The speaker notes more dangers facing football.

SN 12 The speaker concludes by summarizing and reiterating the refrain, achieving closure.

In 2016, a film about CTE and football, *Concussion*, was released. After viewing the film it is hard not to ask if we should stop watching and playing football until it is made safer. With what we now know, watching the game today is much like it must have been when Roman citizens went to a stadium to watch gladiators fight each other to the death. Not until March 2016 did the NFL admit the link between football and brain disease publicly. Speaking before Congress, the NFL's Senior Vice President for Health and Safety, Jeff Miller, acknowledged for the first time that there was no doubt that such a linkage exists. So, the link exists, but the problem persists. How can this be? The rules have not changed. The future of football depends on whether there are changes to the rules that eliminate the game's effects on the brain. Instead of working to make the game faster and more exciting, perhaps imposing weight restrictions and making the field larger can help save football and its players. But this has not happened. With the tarnishing of football's image, and little, if anything done to make it safer, it is increasingly likely that fewer parents will permit their kids to play the game. Eventually the talent pool for football could dry up.

Today I've shared with you the relationship between CTE and football. The health risks football poses for players is apparent. I have also shared with you the league's slowness to accept facts, and its failure to ameliorate the problem. Giving money to treat afflicted players is not an effective solution. It only demonstrates how much real trouble football is in. Unfortunately, as the research continues, the damage also continues. What kind of future is that?

After experiencing the speech, consider these questions:

- 1.** How would you phrase the speaker's proposition?
- 2.** Is the speech well organized? Is it easy to outline? Do its parts hold together? Were there sufficient transitions?
- 3.** What, if any, other visuals might you include were you delivering the speech?

4. Which of the speaker's arguments do you find the most and least effective and why?
5. What steps did the speaker take to be perceived as credible?
6. If you were the speaker's coach, what advice would you offer to improve the speech?

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Deliver a five- to seven-minute persuasive speech. Be sure to buttress your presentation with evidence designed to convince your audience that your claim is sensible, as well as with emotional appeals that arouse their desire to respond as you request.

In addition, prepare an outline and include a bibliography of at least five sources you consulted.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Use sound evidence.** The use of specific facts and statistics, examples and illustrations, and expert testimony increases a speaker's persuasiveness.
2. **Apply Toulmin's Reasonable Argument Model.** Toulmin's model divides an argument into three essential parts: a claim, reasons for making the claim, and a warrant that explains how one gets to the claim from the data used.
3. **Use deductive, inductive, and causal reasoning, as well as reasoning from analogy.** When a speaker reasons deductively, he moves from the general to the specific, whereas if using inductive reasoning, he moves from a series of specific observations to a general conclusion. With causal reasoning, the speaker shows that one event caused another. When reasoning from analogy, the speaker compares like things and concludes that because they are comparable in a number of ways, they are also comparable in another way.
4. **Arouse emotion.** Speakers use pathos, or appeals to emotion, to arouse our feelings, hoping to motivate us to respond as they desire.
5. **Name the three tenets of persuasive speaking.** Adhere to the following persuasive principles: (1) think small to avoid a big fall; (2) use the desire for consistency; and (3) don't put the best material in the middle.
6. **Avoid common logical fallacies.** A logical fallacy is a flawed reason that you should not use and should be able to spot should other speakers violate ethical practices and use one.
7. **Design and deliver a persuasive speech.** Speakers who build credibility, use a variety of types of evidence and sound reasoning principles, and avoid logical fallacies are more likely to deliver effective persuasive speeches that demonstrate respect for receivers.

KEY TERMS

Argument <i>ad hominem</i> 362	False division 361	Pathos 347
Bandwagon appeal 362	Glittering generality 362	<i>Post hoc ergo propter hoc</i> 361
Causal reasoning 356	Hasty generalization 361	Reasoning from analogy 357
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21

Planning and Presenting in Groups

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Define and identify characteristics of a small group
2. Compare and contrast speaking individually with speaking and presenting as a group
3. Demonstrate how group leaders and members contribute to or detract from a group's effectiveness
4. Use the Reflective Thinking Framework
5. Use brainstorming to facilitate group problem solving
6. Participate in a group presentation

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At school, at work, and in your personal life, groups are omnipresent. You may devote significant time to being part of an improv group, sports team, or a cappella group. Whatever the nature of your group, its success depends on your ability to work together and coordinate your performance. During your college and professional career, it is very likely that you will be asked to complete group projects, speak as part of a panel at an academic conference, or pitch a business proposal with a small group.

A **small group** is composed of a limited number of people who communicate over a period of time to make decisions and accomplish specific goals. Groups comprising five to seven people usually function best because members are able to communicate easily, but it is not uncommon for some to contain as few as three or as many as fifteen people. Each individual in a group has the potential to influence the others and is expected to function both as a speaker and a listener. Group members share a common objective. Each person occupies a particular role with respect to the others, and works with them, cooperating to achieve a desired end. As they interact, members develop certain attitudes toward one another and (ideally) a sense of satisfaction from belonging to and participating in the group. Members of a group are expected to adhere to group norms—the “do’s and don’ts” that groups establish to regulate the behavior of members and make it possible for them to work together to attain the group’s goals.

Every group defines its own objectives and establishes its own norms. Ultimately, how members relate to one another, the roles they assume, and how they exchange information and resolve problems determine the effectiveness of the group work. Member interaction—what members say and how they say it—affects both the group’s health and its long-term viability.

Healthy groups exhibit five characteristics:

1. Members support one another.
2. Decisions are made together.
3. Members trust one another.
4. Communication is open and candid.
5. The group aims to excel.¹

Whatever the specific nature of a working group’s task, whether it is to develop and present a strategic campaign to a client, develop a policy to recommend to management, or discuss conflicting opinions relative to a complex social issue, knowing how to speak effectively both in the group setting and as a member of the presentation team is vital for both the personal and professional success of members.

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Section 21.4 Assess Your Group's Development



21.1a Preparing as a Group

21.1b Member Roles and Responsibilities

21.1c Leadership Defined

Working Together

Although effective membership and leadership are both essential for group success, good leadership often begins with effective membership. All must participate fully and actively in the life of the group. Every member must fulfill certain responsibilities and recognize how his or her performance contributes to or detracts from the group attaining its goal.

21.1a Preparing as a Group

To work effectively together, the first thing members need to do is spend some time sharing their school and work schedules and getting to know one another. Part of this process is to figure out each member's strengths: Who, for example, is a visual artist? Who is into technology? Who is the most organized? Members also should share their expectations for working together. In other words, members need to decide how to work together to complete their task. They can designate a leader—the person the group determines it can count on to keep members focused and who will work out the logistics of and agendas for their meetings. The group can also establish a series of rules for its operation. They might decide, for example, that members must be on time and prepared for meetings and should behave appropriately when another group member is speaking.

Once this initial phase is complete, the task of preparing your group presentation has many of the same steps as any other speech, with the added job of splitting up the work to be done. As ever, you must figure out the audience for your presentation, do research, prepare your outline, and plan what you will say, but you must do all this in concert with the rest of the group.

During the planning period, members should establish how they will conduct their research and pool their findings. Once group members complete the research phase, they then need to spend time outlining the presentation to meet the demands of their assigned or selected delivery format. They also should identify any technologies that might benefit the group's presentation, being certain to develop a means for coordinating templates for presentation slides, including font size, colors, and style.

Members also need to work out the order in which group members will speak. And, of course, the group needs to practice its presentation, including the integration of technologies, many times before getting up to present.

Let's zero in on member roles and responsibilities.

21.1b Member Roles and Responsibilities

Positive group roles accomplish dual task and maintenance functions. That is, they both help meet the group's goal and contribute to the way group members interact with one another. Negative group roles limit the group's abilities to realize the group's goal. Each member can improve task performance, foster a concern for the needs and feelings of group members, or inhibit group performance by revealing an overriding concern for self instead of group success. The choice is yours.

What kind of group member are you? Consider the assets and liabilities you bring to a group experience by indicating which task-oriented, maintenance-oriented, or self-serving roles you characteristically perform (see Table 21.1). That done, consider specific instances of how your behavior either contributed to or detracted from the success of your last group.²



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Do you know your role? What strengths and weaknesses do you bring to groups?

TABLE 21.1 GROUP ROLES

TASK-ORIENTED ROLES		
Initiating	You defined a problem; suggested methods, goals and procedures; and started the group moving along new paths or in different directions by offering a plan.	“Rather than dwelling on problems, let’s work on discovering how we can make things better.”
Information seeking	You asked for facts and opinions and sought relevant information about the problem.	“Can you show me what you discovered about why this trend exists?”
Information giving	You offered ideas, suggestions, personal experiences, and/or factual data.	“The last time we experienced a drop-off in productivity, offering incentives helped.”
Clarifying	You elaborated on or paraphrased the ideas of others, offered illustrations, or tried to increase clarity by decreasing confusion.	“So, what I hear you saying is that we need to take a more direct approach. Did I get that right?”
Coordinating	You summarized ideas and tried to draw various contributions together constructively.	“If we combine each of your ideas, I think we can create a win-win situation.”
Evaluating	You evaluated the group’s decisions or proposed solutions and helped establish criteria that solutions should meet.	“We agreed that whatever solution we select should be comprehensive, fair, and able to stand the test of time.”
Consensus testing	You tested the state of agreement among members to see if the group was approaching a decision.	“Okay. Let’s poll the group. In your own words, say what you believe we are agreeing to.”
MAINTENANCE-ORIENTED ROLES		
Encouraging	You responded warmly, receptively, and supportively to others and their ideas.	“What a great idea!”
Gatekeeping	You sought to keep channels of communication open by helping reticent members contribute to the group and/or by working to prevent one or two members from dominating.	“Okay. Let’s hear how you feel about this too.”
Harmonizing	You mediated differences between members, reconciled disagreements, and sought to reduce tension by injecting humor or other forms of relief at appropriate opportunities.	“Let’s agree to disagree for now. We can come back to this later.”

MAINTENANCE-ORIENTED ROLES		
Compromising	You exhibited a willingness to compromise to maintain group cohesion; you were willing to modify your stance or admit an error when appropriate.	"Wow. I'll give you that one. I can see how making the change you suggest will put us in a stronger position."
Standard setting	You assessed the state of member satisfaction with group procedures and indicated the criteria set for evaluating group functioning.	"Let's see how you think we've done today. Did we all come prepared? Are we listening to one another? Are we building on ideas?"
SELF-SERVING ROLES		
Blocking	You were disagreeable and digressed so that nothing was accomplished.	"This is a waste of time. Hey, did you watch the game last night?"
Aggressing	You criticized or blamed others and sought to deflate the egos of other members as a means of enhancing your own status in the group.	"That idea is the worst idea I've ever heard. Can't you think? Can't you be creative? I'm the only one contributing anything worthwhile here."
Recognition seeking	You made yourself the center of attention; you focused attention on yourself rather than the task; you spoke loudly and exhibited unusual or outlandish behavior.	"Am I smart, or what? Did I tell you about the time I won a car?"
Withdrawing	You stopped contributing, appeared indifferent to group efforts, daydreamed, or sulked.	"Whatever you say. I don't care anymore."
Dominating	You insisted on getting your own way; you interrupted others; you sought to impose your ideas and run the group.	"Stop. My solution is the only one worth trying. We don't need to hear any more."
Joking	You engaged in horseplay or exhibited other inappropriate behavior.	"What are you wearing? You look like you just got up. What's with you? Had a late night with Robin?"
Self-confessing	You revealed personal feelings irrelevant to the work of the group.	"I haven't told anyone this. I lied on my job application."
Help-seeking	You played on and tried to elicit the sympathies of other group members.	"Come on. Help me out here. Please also research my part. I'm just overwhelmed right now."

21.1c Leadership Defined

Effective leadership is a defining quality of most successful groups. Effective leaders are versatile. They perform combinations of task and maintenance functions designed to move the group closer to its goal.

Task leadership behaviors include establishing an agenda, giving and soliciting information and opinions, offering internal summaries that describe the group's progress, helping to keep the group on track, and helping the group analyze and evaluate issues and reach a consensus.

Maintenance leadership behaviors include the expression of agreement and support, the reduction and release of group tensions, the resolution of differences of opinion and group conflicts, and the enhancement of morale and member satisfaction.

The leader also must fully comprehend the group's goals and have a clear vision of how to reach them.

Normally, when we think of a group leader, we think of someone who is in an appointed or elected position. However, leadership is not the exclusive possession of any single group member, and a group need not have a designated leader for members to exert leadership. Indeed, groups in which every member feels prepared to share leadership often work best. After all, to lead a group is to influence it. When influence is positive, the group is led toward the realization of its goal.³



Leader(s). A group doesn't need a designated leader to succeed; all members can share leadership and still be successful as a group.

Solving Problems in Groups

The dynamics of a group's interactions affect the outcomes the group is able to achieve. Although working in groups has both advantages and disadvantages, adhering to a problem-solving framework and engaging in brainstorming facilitate the group's realization of its goal(s).

21.2a The Advantages of Group Work

Working in a group has the following advantages:

- **Group work brings in the ideas and strengths of all members.** Instead of only one contributor, a number of people with different information and contrasting viewpoints are able to contribute to the decision-making process, so an effective solution is more likely to emerge.
- **Groups filter out costly errors before they do any damage.** Because everyone in a group is focused on solving a problem, errors and weaknesses are likely to be detected.
- **A decision made by a group is usually better received than a decision proposed by an individual.** When several people work cooperatively to explore potential solutions, they usually are able to agree on the best.
- **Participating in decision making strengthens individuals' commitment to implement the decision.** Participation and motivation are effective problem-solving partners.
- **Reaching a decision in a group can be more fulfilling and personally reinforcing than reaching a decision alone.** The feeling of belonging makes a difference.

21.2a The Advantages of Group Work

21.2b The Disadvantages of Group Work

21.2c The Decision-Making Framework

21.2d Brainstorming

COACHING TIP

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead

There is strength in numbers. Working together, you often accomplish more than working on your own. A well-functioning group almost always comes up with better decisions or solutions to problems than an individual working solo.

21.2b The Disadvantages of Group Work

There are potential disadvantages inherent in group work. Unless the group's norms establish that certain counterproductive behaviors will not be tolerated, they could impede effective group functioning. These behaviors include

- **Personal objectives at odds with the group's goals.** As a result, the group's objectives may be sacrificed or sabotaged as we undermine them in an effort to satisfy our personal needs.
- **Too much comfort in numbers.** When we know other people are available to cover for us, we may slack off.
- **More vocal, forceful, or powerful members may dominate the group.** By steamrolling others, we make it harder for all members to participate fully or make their true feelings known.
- **Intransigence of one or more members.** If a member comes to the group unwilling to listen to other points of view or to compromise, the decision-making process may become deadlocked.
- **The group experiences a risky shift.** Groups sometimes make decisions that are riskier than an individual working alone would be comfortable making, a change in behavior known as a **risky shift**.
- **Slower decision making.** It takes longer for most groups to make a decision than it does individuals.

Whether the potential advantages of working in groups outweigh the potential disadvantages depends on how effectively the group is able to perform its tasks.

21.2c The Decision-Making Framework

A group's success depends on both its leadership and its membership. It also depends on the nature of the decision-making system used by the group.



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Look out. What steps can you take to prevent typical conflicts that occur in group work from impacting your group?

One method that has been known to improve problem solving is the **Reflective Thinking Framework**, derived from the writings of philosopher and educator John Dewey⁴ (see Figure 21.1).

The Reflective Thinking Framework consists of six basic steps and offers a logical system for group discussion. As members work their way through the framework, they must ask and answer a series of questions before advancing to the next stage in the sequence.

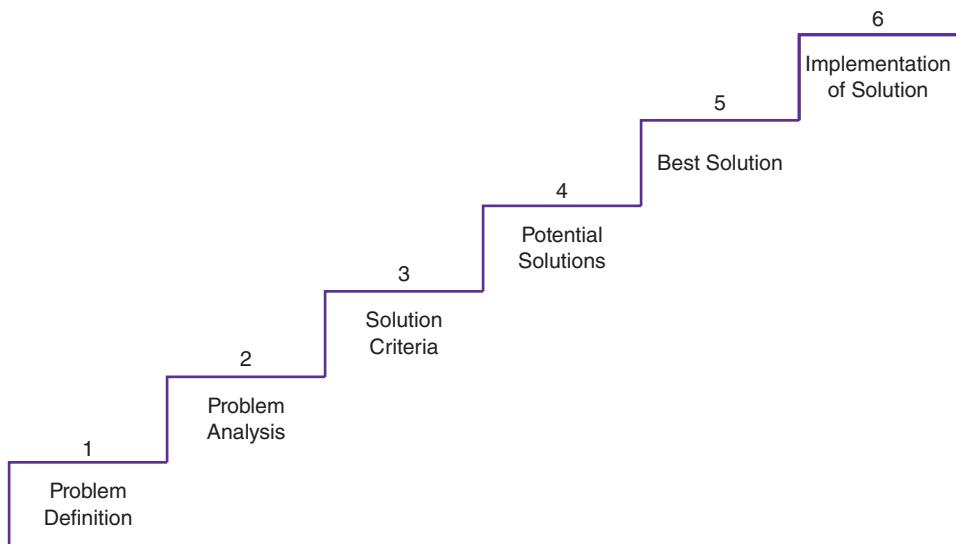
- **Step 1. Define the Problem.** Is the problem phrased as a clear and specific question that is not slanted and thus will not arouse defensiveness? Is it phrased so as to allow a wide variety of answers rather than a simple yes or no?
- **Step 2. Analyze the Problem.** What are the facts of the situation? What are its causes? What is its history? How severe is it? Who is affected and how?
- **Step 3. Establish Criteria for Solutions.** What criteria must an acceptable solution fulfill? By what objective standards should we evaluate a solution? What requirements must a solution meet? How critical is each criterion?
- **Step 4. Generate Potential Solutions.** How will each possible solution remedy the problem? How well does each solution meet the established criteria? What advantages or disadvantages does each solution present?

- **Step 5. Select the Best Solution.** How would you rank each solution? Which solution offers the greatest number of advantages and the fewest disadvantages? How can we combine solutions to produce an even better one?
- **Step 6. Suggest Strategies for Implementation.** How can the solution be implemented? What steps should we take to put the solution into effect?

By systematically working through this framework and suspending judgment as they do so, group members can keep the discussion on track and improve the quality of decision making. The Reflective Thinking Framework helps group members avoid **early concurrence**—the tendency to conclude discussion prematurely. By requiring members to explore all data and evaluate alternative courses of action methodically, and by opening them to new information rather than encouraging them to base decisions on what they know at the moment, the system also helps guard against **groupthink**—the tendency to let the desire for consensus override careful analysis and reasoned decision making.⁵

FIGURE 21.1

Reflective Thinking Framework



Source: Adapted from John Dewey, *How We Think* (Boston: Heath, 1910).

In order for the Reflective Thinking Framework to function effectively for your group, ask yourself the following questions as you work your way through it:

- Are the resources of all group members being well used?
- Is the group using its time wisely?
- Is the group emphasizing fact finding and inquiry?
- Are members listening to and respecting the ideas and feelings of other members?
- Is pressure to conform deemphasized and pressure to search for diverse viewpoints emphasized?
- Is the group's atmosphere supportive, trusting, and cooperative?

Decision-making effectiveness depends on the degree to which group members feel free to speak up, maintain open minds, and exhibit a willingness to search for new information.



Let it flow. No matter how wild or crazy your ideas may be, get as many on paper with your group and analyze them later.

prompt creative inquiry during any of its stages.

To ensure a successful brainstorming session, follow these guidelines:

- Suspend judgment.** Brainstorming is not the time to evaluate or criticize ideas.
- Encourage freewheeling.** Brainstorming is not the time to consider an idea's practicality. You can tame or tone down wild ideas later if necessary.
- Aim for quantity.** Brainstorming is not the time to concentrate on idea quality, nor is it the time to censor your contributions. The more ideas you generate, the greater your chances of coming up with a good one.
- Record all ideas.** Brainstorming is not the time to eliminate possibilities.
- Evaluate only when brainstorming is concluded.** Only after the brainstorming process is over should you evaluate the ideas you proposed.

COACHING TIP

"There are two kinds of people, those who do the work and those who take the credit. Try to be in the first group; there is less competition there."

—Indira Ghandi

Don't expect others to do your work and give you credit for their accomplishments. Slackers need to shape up or risk being the target of other group member complaints or even being asked to leave the group.

Presenting the Group's Work

Your group works its way through the Reflective Thinking Framework and comes to a decision through a series of private group meetings and without an audience present. The group's next task is likely to report its findings to an audience—to inform them of the group's decision, to advocate for the adoption of the group's proposals, or both. Most often, the group presents its findings or recommendations to an audience through an oral report, a panel discussion, a symposium, or a forum. Let us explore each of these formats in turn.

21.3a The Oral Group Report

Approach the oral report of group work as you would any other speech. Your report should contain an introduction, body, and conclusion. Consider your audience and your goal when deciding whether one or more group members or all members of the group should participate in delivering the oral report, perhaps dividing it up by topic or section. If more than one member speaks, make sure you incorporate transitions, not just between sections of the speech, but also between speakers. Like any speech, in addition to being well organized, an oral report must be adapted to reflect the needs, concerns, and interests of the people you are addressing, contain an array of supporting materials and evidence (including visual aids, if appropriate), use language that accurately and effectively communicates its content, and, of course, be well rehearsed. All group members should be prepared to respond to queries.

21.3b The Panel Discussion

A panel discussion requires group members to talk through an issue in front of an audience. The positive and negative aspects are debated, usually without the direct involvement of the audience.

In effect, the group replays in public the problem-solving discussion it had in private. While neither memorized nor scripted, the panel discussion is carefully planned so that all important points are made and all group members are able to participate.

Most panel discussions also include a moderator whose role is to introduce the topic and panelists and to ensure that the topic is explored adequately. Panel discussions are held on controversial topics, where panelists may disagree.



21.3a The Oral Group Report

21.3b The Panel Discussion

21.3c The Symposium

21.3d The Forum Presentation

21.3c The Symposium

A symposium is a discussion in which a number of individuals present individual speeches of approximately the same length on a central subject before an audience. Because a symposium's speakers address members of the audience directly, there usually is little, if any, interaction among the speakers during their presentations; however, participants may afterward discuss their reactions with each other as well as field questions from the audience.

Symposia are designed to (1) shed light on or explore different aspects of a problem, (2) provide material for subsequent discussion, or (3) review different steps covered during a group's problem-solving experience. Ideally, each speaker is aware of what others will present, so there is little, if any, duplication of information. Speakers are typically not in opposition to each other, but rather frame their contributions based on their focus and interests.

21.3d The Forum Presentation

The purpose of a forum is to provide a medium for an open and interactive discussion between the group and an audience. Unlike the other formats, a forum is a discussion requiring full audience participation. After a moderator and/or each speaker make a brief opening statement, audience members then are free to question the participants, who answer their queries with brief impromptu responses. A town meeting is one example of the forum in action.

A forum works best when there is a moderator to introduce the program and the speakers, as well as to clarify and summarize the program's progress as needed. It also helps when group members are aware of which issues will be discussed during the forum and are knowledgeable about the subject, because they can then prepare themselves to respond to questions quickly and thoroughly.

Assess Your Group's Development

If you consider how your group conducted its work, you will realize that its development moved through five stages:⁷

- 1. Forming.** In the first stage, the members of your group probably experienced some confusion or uncertainty about how the group would function and the roles they would play in it. As the group identified who was in charge and figured out its goal, members probably sought to fit in and be perceived as likeable.
- 2. Storming.** Next, members likely experienced some task and relational conflicts as work began. Members were focused on communicating their ideas and opinions and securing their position in the group's power structure.
- 3. Norming.** After early conflicts, the group's structure emerged. Leaders surfaced, and roles were firmed up. Behavior in the group had more predictability as members recognized their interdependence but also their need to cooperate.
- 4. Performing.** The focus of the group then transitioned to problem solving to accomplish the task. Members built on their skills and knowledge and surmounted hurdles in the effort to realize the group's goals.
- 5. Adjourning.** Finally members reviewed and reflected on what they did and did not accomplish and determined whether and how to end the group.

As you consider each stage, ask yourself how your group did, and what you could have done better.



GAME PLAN

Presenting in Groups

- While we may have designated one of our members as the leader who will coordinate the order in which we speak, we are all prepared to exert leadership.
- I understand the goal of our presentation, and I understand my own role within the group.
- I know who will speak before and after me, and I am prepared to transition from and to those individuals.
- Our group worked well together, and we tackled our topic using the Reflective Thinking Framework.



Exercises

PLANNING AND PRESENTING IN A GROUP

Planning and presenting in a group poses unique challenges. By participating in the following activities you can further develop the skills and understandings needed to succeed as both group member and leader.

1. Getting to Know You

Building on this opening line, “Once upon a time, there was a group of college students who decided to get to know each other better by sharing their work habits and strengths,” reveal something about yourself that others in your group should know in order for you to perform your best when working with them.

2. Assessing Group Interaction in the Media

Mediated forms of group discourse have grown in popularity over the years. The increasing number of hours devoted to talk radio programs, as well as to opinion and interview shows, testifies to this. But instead of engaging in reasoned debate, hosts and guests on some programs engage in uncivil wars characterized by escalating levels of conflict. What lessons can we learn from such programs? How can we use them to help us develop into more effective discussion group members?

Just as you need to evaluate the effectiveness of your own **fact-finding** and **decision-making groups**, so you also need to evaluate mediated discussion groups as a receiver by assessing both their methods and their conclusions. Using any mediated discussion offering of your choice, answer the following questions:

1. Was the program’s topic well analyzed by participants?
2. Were both host and guests free to share ideas and feelings?
3. Did guests or host monopolize discussion?
4. Did host or guests become aggressive or abusive?
5. What did the program’s host and guests do to handle any conflicts that developed?
6. Were claims made by the host or guests supported by evidence?
7. What norms appeared to govern the discussion?
8. What were the program’s outcomes? Did a consensus emerge?
9. What was learned?
10. What recommendations would you make to the show’s host and guests regarding their on-air behavior? What communication skills would both host and guests need to possess in order to put your recommendations into practice?

3. Brainstorming Your Way to Consensus

First read the research findings summarized following these instructions. Then brainstorm possible rationales for the statistics presented. Attempt to reach consensus as to which rationale is most likely. Once discussion is over, appoint a member to present the group's conclusions to the class:

Despite commonly held belief, chivalry does not appear to rule at sea. According to a recent study, in sixteen maritime shipwrecks dating from 1852 to 2011 two times as many men have survived the disasters as women. What is more, 18.7 percent more crew survived than passengers.⁸

Use the following checklist to analyze how effective your group was in discussing its task.

- Did the group define the problem?
- Did the group thoroughly analyze the problem?
- Did the group brainstorm to generate a wide range of possible rationales in support of the statistical findings?
- Did the group evaluate each rationale carefully?
- Did the group succeed in reaching a consensus with regard to the most likely rationale?

4. Analyze a Group Presentation

Attend a panel discussion, symposium, or forum on campus or in the community. Evaluate how well the moderator and group participants fulfilled their respective functions.

5. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Your instructor will divide you into small groups. Your assignment is to identify and formulate a question of fact, value, or policy for your group to discuss. Then, using the Reflective Thinking Framework, conduct a group discussion on your chosen question. Be sure to outline exactly what you hope to accomplish during each stage of the sequence.

After you complete your discussion, prepare a brief paper explaining your group's accomplishments and identifying obstacles to overcome while completing your task. Also analyze the quality of leadership, membership, and decision making displayed by your group.

Finally, your instructor will ask you to use one or more of the following formats to present your findings to the class: a panel discussion, an oral report, a symposium, or a forum presentation.

RECAP AND REVIEW

- Define and identify characteristics of a small group.** A small group contains a limited number of people who communicate with each other over a period of time, usually face to face, to make decisions and accomplish specific goals. All members of a group have the potential to influence all other members and are expected to function as both speaker and receiver.
- Compare and contrast speaking individually with speaking and presenting as a group.** In contrast to an individual speech in which the audience is focused on a solo speaker, a group presentation involves interaction among multiple speakers and listeners. As part of a group, members need to organize themselves and their information to present their findings to an audience.
- Demonstrate how group leaders and members contribute to or detract from a group's effectiveness.** Every group defines its own objectives, norms, and operating climate. More successful groups have a number of major attributes that distinguish them: in particular, these are

effective leadership, effective membership, and effective implementation of a decision-making system.

- Use the Reflective Thinking Framework.** The Reflective Thinking Framework involves six steps: (1) problem definition, (2) problem analysis, (3) the establishment of solution criteria, (4) the generation of solutions, (5) the selection of the best solution, and (6) strategies for implementation.
- Use brainstorming to facilitate group problem solving.** Brainstorming is an idea generation system during which group members suspend judgment, encourage freewheeling, aim for quantity of ideas, and record all ideas. Group members evaluate ideas produced during brainstorming after the brainstorming session concludes.
- Participate in a group presentation.** In many instances, after a group reaches a decision or solves a problem, the group presents its findings to others through an oral report, a panel discussion, a symposium, or a forum.

KEY TERMS

Decision-making group 386	Healthy group 373	Risky shift 380
Early concurrence 381	Maintenance leadership behaviors 378	Small group 373
Fact-finding group 386	Reflective Thinking Framework 380	Task leadership behaviors 378
Groupthink 381		



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22

Special Occasion Speeches

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain the goals and functions of special occasion speeches
2. Define and distinguish the similarities and differences between speeches of introduction, presentation, and acceptance
3. Explain the functions of the commencement address and a keynote address
4. Define the goals and distinguish the differences between a speech of tribute and a eulogy
5. Explain the key characteristics of the after-dinner speech

Contents

“Four score and seven years ago” begins one of the most famous special occasion speeches ever delivered in the history of the United States. Abraham Lincoln’s address at the dedication of the national cemetery at Gettysburg was designed to reflect the needs of a very special occasion. When delivering that speech, now referred to as the “Gettysburg Address,” Lincoln’s purpose was not only to pay tribute to those who died during the Civil War but also to help bring the nation together. As a special occasion speaker, you too may be called on to mark an event that is important to a particular group or community, to celebrate, commemorate, entertain, or inspire an audience.

The speeches we deliver to recognize life’s special moments distinguish themselves from other kinds of speeches. Though special occasion speeches may also inform or persuade, this is rarely their primary function. Instead, they acknowledge the special occasion that has brought the audience together.

Section 22.1 Goals and Functions of Special Occasion Speeches

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section
22.1

Goals and Functions of Special Occasion Speeches

Speeches on special occasions serve two important functions. First, they help magnify the significance of the event or person being honored, and second, they help unify the audience by affirming the common values exhibited through the celebration of this person or event. To accomplish these objectives, the speaker must fully understand both the nature of the special occasion and the role he or she is to play in it.

For example, commencement speakers frequently reinforce the value of education and try to spur graduates on to achieve greatness. Whatever the occasion, it is the speaker's obligation to deliver a speech appropriate to that specific situation. Audiences come to such events with particular expectations, and the speaker's success depends on his or her ability to conform to established norms (see Table 22.1).

TABLE 22.1 TYPES OF SPECIAL OCCASION SPEECHES

TYPE	PURPOSE
1. Speech of introduction	To introduce a featured speaker to the audience
2. Speech of presentation	To present an award or special recognition
3. Speech of acceptance	To accept an award or special recognition
4. Commencement address	To praise and congratulate a graduating class
5. Keynote address	To motivate and inspire an audience at a meeting or special event
6. Tribute speech	To honor or praise a person or event
7. Eulogy	To pay tribute to a person who has died
8. After-dinner speech	To entertain after a dinner event

Types of Ceremonial Speeches

In the years ahead, you will be part of a number of special occasions that may require you to deliver a ceremonial speech. Perhaps you will be asked to offer a toast to celebrate the wedding or anniversary of a relative or friend, the birth of a baby, the graduation of a son or daughter, or the success of a business venture. Although such toasts are composed of only a few brief sentences and are positive in tone, they typically are also very personal and made by someone who knows the subjects very well, and who is able to share insight about them. Now and again, however, you may be called upon to deliver an impromptu and more generic kind of toast like this Irish blessing: “May you have warm words on a cold evening, a full moon on a dark night, and a road downhill all the way to your door.” When you are presented with such a need, both the audience and the occasion should function as your guides.

In this chapter we explore those kinds of special occasion speeches you will be most likely to give: the speech of introduction, award presentation, award acceptance, the commencement address, the keynote address, the tribute, the eulogy, and the after-dinner speech.



Be kind. It's a wedding toast, not a roast!

section 22.3



22.3a Your Responsibilities as an Introducer

22.3b Sample Speech of Introduction

The Speech of Introduction

When you deliver a **speech of introduction**, your task is to create a desire among audience members to listen to the featured speaker. By serving, in effect, as a “warm-up” for the main speaker, you pave the way and psychologically prepare receivers for that speaker’s presentation.

22.3a Your Responsibilities as an Introducer

During your brief introductory remarks, your goal is to

- Identify why the speaker is to speak
- Enhance the speaker’s credibility with receivers
- Stress the importance and timeliness of the speech

Though your speech of introduction should be short, lasting no more than two to three minutes, your job is to tell receivers who will be addressing them, what the subject of that person’s speech will be, and why they should pay careful attention to it. Your role, though limited in scope (after all, you are not presenting the featured speech yourself), is nonetheless very important. The way you introduce the speaker will affect the reception given him or her.

Be sure your remarks are in keeping with the tone the main speaker will set. Focus a spotlight on the speaker, but avoid creating expectations he or she will be unable to fulfill.

The more renowned the featured speaker is, the briefer the introduction needed. For example, the president of a country is usually introduced with, “Ladies and gentleman, the president of . . .” And though brief remarks suffice to introduce Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, a longer introduction would be used to present an executive of lesser stature.

22.3b Sample Speech of Introduction

The following speech of introduction was used by a student to introduce Russel Taylor, the founder of the Taylor Study Abroad Scholarship at the College of New Rochelle.

Over the course of his teaching career at the college, a career that spans more than 35 years, Dr. Russel Taylor has had a significant impact on the study abroad program. In addition to serving as an unofficial advisor to aspiring entrepreneurs, Dr. Taylor also spearheaded the study abroad program—generously donating and raising funds to ensure that each year students like yourselves are able to secure the financial resources needed to spend a semester or a summer studying in another country. Because of Dr. Taylor's efforts, a number of you here tonight will also be able to live that dream.

Formerly a CEO and then a professor of business, Dr. Taylor is now a devoted mentor who makes it his mission to raise awareness about our need to be “global citizens,” individuals armed with the cultural experiences and knowledge we will need to connect with others, not only in business, but in life.

I am very pleased to present to you the originator of the Taylor Study Abroad Scholarship, Dr. Russel Taylor, my mentor and friend.

COACHING TIP

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.”
—Oprah Winfrey

Life itself is a special occasion. When giving a special occasion speech, be sure to affirm that. Speak the right words, and you bind those listening together. Acknowledge the events that mark our lives. Make the experience powerful!

section **22.4**



22.4a Your Responsibilities as a Presenter

22.4b Sample Speech of Presentation

The Speech of Presentation

The **speech of presentation** is another common form of ceremonial speaking. The occasion for this kind of speech is the presentation of an award such as the Nobel Prize, or a teaching award at your school. Like the speech of introduction, the speech of presentation is usually brief, but it often contains somewhat more formal praise for its subject.

22.4a Your Responsibilities as a Presenter

When delivering a speech of presentation, you are not just recognizing an individual, you are also honoring an ideal. You have three goals to achieve:

- 1.** To summarize the purpose of the award or gift, including its history, its sponsor, the ideals it represents, and the criteria used to select the recipient
- 2.** To discuss the accomplishments of the person being honored, including what the individual specifically did to achieve the award
- 3.** To introduce and present the award winner to the audience. When possible, leave identifying the recipient to the very end; it adds drama to the announcement.

As with the speech of introduction, you are not the star of the occasion; the audience did not come to listen to you, but rather to celebrate the winner.

Avoid overpraising the recipient. Instead, express sincere appreciation for his or her accomplishments, and highlight the behavior, values, and ideals that led to his or her receiving the award. After listening to your speech, there should be no question among audience members that the individual being honored deserves the award.

22.4b Sample Speech of Presentation

Peter Hero, president of the Community Foundation of Silicon Valley, delivered the speech of presentation when he presented Bill Gates, then chairman of Microsoft, with the foundation's 50th anniversary Spirit of Philanthropy Award. Notice how by focusing on the special contributions Gates made, Hero explains the reasons for bestowing the honor on him.

While most recognize Bill Gates for his global business acumen, it's his passion for philanthropy that has touched lives throughout the world. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has awarded more than \$4 billion—that's billion with a "b"—since it was created in 2000.

The Gates Foundation efforts in education, its libraries initiatives and its efforts to eradicate disease in our world's poorest nations are innovative and bold. . . .

Last year alone Microsoft contributed more than \$79 million in cash and \$367 million in software to nearly 5,000 schools and nonprofit organizations. . . .

I first met Bill Gates in 1999 when he stopped in San Francisco and met with a group of us responding to a call from one of our board members . . . Steve Kirsch. . . . Steve had sent out an e-mail urging high-tech CEOs to join him in each giving \$1 million to help resolve the unexpected \$11 million shortfall at our United Way in Silicon Valley. Bill Gates and the Gates Foundation responded with a \$5 million gift, more than any of our local donors. This visit gave me a preview of the generosity of both Microsoft and the Gates Foundation and for this we want to recognize and honor Bill Gates today.

So Bill, on behalf of the board of directors, the advisory council, the entire Community Foundation of Silicon Valley, I'm honored to present you with our 50th anniversary Spirit of Philanthropy Award.

 **SN 1** The speaker discusses the generosity of the honoree.

 **SN 2** The speaker summarizes the purpose of the award and presents the award winner to the audience.

section 22.5



22.5a Your Responsibilities Giving an Acceptance Speech

22.5b Sample Acceptance Speech

The Speech of Acceptance

The **speech of acceptance** is given in response to a speech of presentation. It is usually brief and gives the person being recognized the opportunity to formally accept the award or praise being given to him or her.

22.5a Your Responsibilities Giving an Acceptance Speech

In an acceptance speech, the recipient thanks, recognizes, and gives credit to both those who bestowed the honor and those who helped him or her attain it; reflects on the values represented by the award; explains, in particular, what the award means to him or her; and graciously accepts it. Speeches of acceptance, though usually brief, are often inspirational in tone, and when well done leave no doubt in the minds of audience members that the award was given to the right person.

22.5b Sample Acceptance Speech

In the following acceptance speech excerpts, notice how the late Elie Wiesel, World War II Holocaust survivor and human rights activist, upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize helped receivers understand the meaning of the award and the ideals it honors. By pledging to continue his efforts and by using language in keeping with the dignity of the occasion, Wiesel also communicated the deeper meaning inherent in the award.

ELIE WIESEL ACCEPTS AWARD

SN 1 The speaker accepts the award.



It is with a profound sense of humility that I accept the honor you have chosen to bestow upon me. I know: your choice transcends me. This both frightens and pleases me.



It frightens me because I wonder: do I have the right to represent the multitudes who have perished? Do I have the right to accept this great honor on their behalf? I do not. That would be presumptuous. No one may speak for the dead, no one may interpret their mutilated dreams and visions.



It pleases me because I may say that this honor belongs to all the survivors and their children, and through us, to the Jewish people with whose destiny I have always identified.

I remember: It happened yesterday or eternities ago. A young Jewish boy discovered the kingdom of the night. I remember his bewilderment. I remember his anguish. It all happened so fast. The ghetto. The deportation. The sealed cattle car.

The fiery altar upon which the history of our people and the future of mankind were meant to be sacrificed.

I remember: He asked his father, "Can this be true? This is the 20th century, not the Middle Ages. Who would allow such crimes to be committed? How could the world remain silent?"

And now the boy is turning to me: "Tell me," he asks, "what have you done with my future? What have you done with your life?"

And I tell him that I have tried. That I have tried to keep memory alive, that I have tried to fight those who would forget. Because if we forget, we are guilty, we are accomplices. . . .

And that is why I swore never to be silent whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must always take sides. . . . There is so much injustice and suffering crying out for our attention: victims of hunger, or racism and political persecution, writers and poets, prisoners in so many lands governed by the left and by the right. Human rights are being violated on every continent. More people are oppressed than are free. . . . One person—a Raoul Wallenberg, an Albert Schweitzer, one person of integrity, can make a difference, a difference of life and death. . . .

This is what I say to the young Jewish boy wondering what I have done with his years. It is in his name that I speak to you and that I express to you my deepest gratitude. No one is as capable of gratitude as one who has emerged from the kingdom of the night.

We know that every moment is a moment of grace, every hour an offering; not to share them would mean to betray them. Our lives no longer belong to us alone; they belong to all those who need us desperately.

Thank you Chairman Aarvik. Thank you members of the Nobel Committee. Thank you, people of Norway, for declaring on this singular occasion that our survival has a meaning for mankind.¹

SN 3 The speaker explains the personal meaning the award has for him.

SN 4 The speaker accepts the award graciously and with humility.

section 22.6



22.6a Your Responsibilities as a Commencement Speaker

22.6b Sample Commencement Address

The Commencement Address

The **commencement address** speaker praises and congratulates a graduating class. All sorts of people deliver commencement addresses, including politicians, distinguished alumni, actors, educators, and notable citizens.

22.6a Your Responsibilities as a Commencement Speaker

Because the commencement audience is predominantly composed of the families and friends of the graduates, commencement speakers usually acknowledge how both the graduates and the members of the audience contributed to the success being recognized that day.

Most commencement addresses do not stop with celebrating the recent achievements of graduates, however; they also challenge the graduates to focus on the future and the roles they will play in the months and years ahead. Commencement addresses that avoid clichés while emphasizing the accomplishments and promise of the graduates are the most effective.

22.6b Sample Commencement Address

President Obama delivered the following commencement address to Howard University's graduating class of 2016.

SN 1 The speaker recognizes, praises, and celebrates all those in attendance.

To President Frederick, the Board of Trustees, faculty and staff, fellow recipients of honorary degrees, thank you for the honor of spending this day with you. And congratulations to the Class of 2016! . . . To the parents, the grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, all the family and friends who stood by this class, cheered them on, helped them get here today—this is your day, as well. . . .

But seeing all of you here gives me some perspective. It makes me reflect on the changes that I've seen over my own lifetime. So let me begin with what may sound like a controversial statement—a hot take. . . . America is a better place today than it was when I graduated from college. [Applause.] Let me repeat: America is by almost every measure better than it was when I graduated from college. . . .

But think about it. I graduated in 1983. . . . Since that year, . . . the poverty rate is down. Americans with college degrees, that rate is up. Crime rates are down. . . . We've cut teen pregnancy in half. We've slashed the African American dropout rate by almost 60 percent, and all of you have a computer in your pocket that gives you the world at the touch of a button. In 1983, I was part of fewer than 10 percent of African Americans who graduated with a bachelor's degree. Today, you're part of the more than 20 percent who will. And more than half of blacks say we're better off than our parents were at our age—and that our kids will be better off, too.

So America is better. And the world is better, too

Yes, our economy has recovered from crisis stronger than almost any other in the world. But there are folks of all races who are still hurting—who still can't find work that pays enough to keep the lights on, who still can't save for retirement. We've still got a big racial gap in economic opportunity. . . .

We've got a justice gap when too many black boys and girls pass through a pipeline from underfunded schools to overcrowded jails. This is one area where things have gotten worse. When I was in college, about half a million people in America were behind bars. Today, there are about 2.2 million. Black men are about six times likelier to be in prison right now than white men.

Around the world, we've still got challenges to solve that threaten everybody in the 21st century—old scourges like disease and conflict, but also new challenges, from terrorism and climate change.

So make no mistake, Class of 2016—you've got plenty of work to do. But as complicated and sometimes intractable as these challenges may seem, the truth is that your generation is better positioned than any before you to meet those challenges, to flip the script.

 **SN 2** The speaker identifies challenges that have been overcome.

 **SN 3** The speaker identifies a series of challenges that the graduates will need to face.

continued

SN 4 The speaker reviews the graduates' experiences and their preparation for meeting the future and the challenges facing them head-on.

continued

Now, how you do that, how you meet these challenges, how you bring about change will ultimately be up to you. . . . With the rest of my time, I'd like to offer some suggestions for how young leaders like you can fulfill your destiny and shape our collective future—bend it in the direction of justice and equality and freedom.

First of all, . . . be confident in your heritage. [Applause.] Be confident in your blackness. One of the great changes that's occurred in our country since I was your age is the realization there's no one way to be black. . . . There's no straitjacket, there's no constraints, there's no litmus test for authenticity.

. . . Second, even as we each embrace our own beautiful, unique, and valid versions of our blackness, remember the tie that does bind us as African Americans—and that is our particular awareness of injustice and unfairness and struggle. That means we cannot sleepwalk through life. We cannot be ignorant of history. [Applause.] We can't meet the world with a sense of entitlement. . . .

. . . Number three: You have to go through life with more than just passion for change; you need a strategy. I'll repeat that. I want you to have passion, but you have to have a strategy. Not just awareness, but action. Not just hashtags, but votes. . . . And your plan better include voting—not just some of the time, but all the time. [Applause.] . . .

And finally, change requires more than just speaking out—it requires listening, as well. In particular, it requires listening to those with whom you disagree, and being prepared to compromise. . . .

So don't try to shut folks out, don't try to shut them down, no matter how much you might disagree with them. . . . That doesn't mean you shouldn't challenge them. Have the confidence to challenge them, the confidence in the rightness of your position. There will be times when you shouldn't compromise your core values, your integrity, and you will have the responsibility to speak up in the face of injustice. But listen. Engage. If the other side has a point, learn from them. If they're wrong, rebut them. Teach them. Beat them on the battlefield of ideas. . . .

So that's my advice. That's how you change things. Change isn't something that happens every four years or eight years; change is not placing your faith in any particular politician and then just putting your feet up and saying, okay, go. Change is the effort of committed citizens who hitch their wagons to something bigger than themselves and fight for it every single day.

. . . Now it's your turn. And the good news is, you're ready. And when your journey seems too hard, and when you run into a chorus of cynics who tell you that you're being foolish to keep believing or that you can't do something, or that you should just give up, or you should just settle—you might say to yourself a little phrase that I've found handy these last eight years: Yes, we can.

Congratulations, Class of 2016! [Applause.] Good luck! God bless you. God bless the United States of America. I'm proud of you.

 **SN 5** The speaker ends by reminding the graduates that the future is in their capable hands.

section 22.7



22.7a Your Responsibilities as a Keynote Speaker

22.7b Sample Keynote Address

SN 1 The speaker establishes the purpose of the occasion.

The Keynote Address

The purpose of the **keynote address** is to get a meeting or conference off to a good start by establishing the right tone or mood.

22.7a Your Responsibilities as a Keynote Speaker

The functions of the keynoter vary. Some keynote speeches challenge receivers to act or achieve a goal, while others outline a problem or series of problems for them to solve. Some keynote speeches are designed to generate enthusiasm and commitment, while others are designed to demonstrate the importance of a theme or outcome.

The best keynote speakers are adept at focusing audience attention on common goals, communicating the central focus of those gathered, and setting a tone that arouses interest and encourages commitment.

22.7b Sample Keynote Address

The functions of the keynote speech are illustrated in excerpts from this keynote address delivered by Monica Morgan at the National Conference on Racism held in Sydney, Australia.

I am an indigenous Woman of the Yorta Yorta people, situated in South Eastern Australia. I facilitate the activities of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, a non-governmental representative body. Our charter is to advance our sovereignty and self-determination—to be the authoritative voice responsible to advance our sovereignty and self-determination. . . .

I am the sixth generation to “Undarnying,” a Yorta Yorta woman who was present at the time of colonization of our territory by the English in the early 1800s. Since that time until today, our people have struggled to survive the attempt at genocide by all the instruments of oppression made possible by the colonizer, men who held a self-righteous, ethnocentric, possessive and controlled view of the world. The suppression of Yorta Yorta people, occurred by way of massacres, poisoned water holes, introduced diseases, dispersal, the abduction and systematic rape and torture of women and children. . . . This theft is today entrenched within Australian law. Before contact with European settlers, mounted police, missionaries and convicts, the Yorta Yorta population was estimated to be in the thousands. Our population, by the close of the 1800s was less than 100 persons. Today we number over 4,000. . . .

Today my people live in a state of trauma; this is the result of the collective effect of racism over the last 214 years. Many generations of my people have witnessed the emergence of policies that legalized the forced removal of over 100,000 children from their indigenous families in Australia; children known as the “Stolen Generation.” Incarceration rates for indigenous persons is twelve times higher than that of the rest of Australia. . . . The prevalence of substance abuse, mental illness, and family breakdowns together with a life expectancy twenty years below the national average are all indicators of the racism and marginalization we continue to endure.

The real solution rests with the Federal Government taking real leadership, leadership that can acknowledge the past not to evoke guilt but to advance real reconciliation outcomes that will lead to the special measures designed to achieve equality for indigenous Peoples. . . .

I speak not only for my ancestors and my people, but also peoples who are denied their inherent right to land and an identity.³

 **SN 2** The speaker focuses audience attention on the problems they need to face.

 **SN 3** The speaker’s inspirational tone reminds audience members of the importance of action.

section 22.8



22.8a Your Responsibilities Giving a Speech of Tribute

22.8b Sample Speech of Tribute

The Speech of Tribute

A form of commemorative speaking, whether delivered to honor a living or dead person or an event, the purpose of the **speech of tribute** is to acknowledge and praise the honoree.

22.8a Your Responsibilities Giving a Speech of Tribute

The tribute speaker's job is to inform the audience of the accomplishments of a person or the importance of an event, but it is also to heighten the audience's awareness of and appreciation for the contributions or values of the honoree.

To achieve this, the tribute speaker needs to involve the audience members by making those contributions relevant to their lives. He or she also needs to clearly explain why the individual or event is being celebrated or recognized, tell stories that show why the honor is merited, and honestly praise the honoree.

Success in delivering a tribute speech depends on using the right words to convey the thoughts and emotions inherent in the occasion. Sincerity and knowledge are key. The tribute speaker's focus is on creating vivid, specific images of accomplishments that demonstrate the influence and importance of the honoree.

Three main features characterize the speech of tribute:

1. A section that describes what makes the subject of the speech worthy of special recognition
2. A section that explains in more depth what the subject accomplished
3. A section urging the audience to be inspired by the honoree's accomplishments, so that they will seek new and greater goals

22.8b Sample Speech of Tribute

Although sometimes the subject of a tribute speech is a well-known figure, the person being singled out for special recognition does not need to be famous. In fact, each of us probably can think of one or more individuals who are neither famous nor public figures but who still deserve special praise, as did student Dolores Bandow. In her speech, "A Bird Outside Your Window," Bandow pays tribute to her daughter Elizabeth, who was born with a genetic anomaly.

SN 1 The speaker introduces receivers to the subject of the tribute.



I am here today to celebrate life. I am here to celebrate a particular life which began nine years ago. . . . The day I gave birth to our third child . . . I thought was the bleakest day one could experience. . . . Of two children born at the hospital that hour, both had birth defects. The other child died. For one dreadful, fleeting moment, I thought it would be easier if ours had.

To admit such a transient thought . . . is sobering. How selfish; how self-pitying; how wrong I was. I had wanted a “perfect” baby. But by shattering our illusion of perfection with her birth, she has been perfecting our reality with her life.

Elizabeth’s life has taught me compassion, unconditional love, humility; and has set me on a path to wisdom. . . . I thought I knew sadness; I hadn’t. I thought I knew happiness; I thought I knew love; not all kinds. I thought I knew compassion; I thought I knew humility; I hadn’t. . . .

As I lay in the hospital . . . following her birth, reading medical genetics textbooks . . . I learned that humans need 46 chromosomes—precisely. Any more or any fewer can result in abnormalities of every cell. Overwhelmed by the data . . . I would steal down to the nursery. . . . Elizabeth was caged in an isolet with tubes and wires reaching out from every orifice. . . . But when my hands found their way through the maze to stroke her face, she nuzzled against me in her suckling instinct. At that moment, I saw her not as a syndrome but as my infant daughter. She made me peer beyond the “accidentals” to the “essence” of human life.

Later, at the age of seven months, Elizabeth was in heart failure, fighting for her life. Before I took her to the hospital for heart surgery, I prepared to say “good-bye” to her. Unable to make myself cross the threshold with her, I turned around and saw the flowers. I carried her over and let her breathe the fragrance. I pointed up to the clouds; I lifted her up to the trees and told her to look at it all—see it. But it was I who was seeing it as never before. . . . Sunshine is indeed what Elizabeth brought us in the form of illumination and enlightenment. She still casts her light.

Recently I’ve been grumpy over turning 40. When I was bemoaning my greying hair, sagging skin, and aching joints, Elizabeth said, “Mom, you should be glad to be living a long, long time. Celebrate!” . . .

SN 2 The speaker explores what the tribute’s subject taught her and explains how the subject’s achievements helped her realize life’s value.

SN 3 The speaker shares stories that vivify the subject’s triumphs.

continued

continued

Elizabeth has been to me the bird that sings too early outside your window and rouses you from that dream state. . . . She sang her song to me. And like that bird's tune, I harked, heard, and hummed it back.

My song is this: keep in mind that children with birth anomalies are not the pitiful. Not they, but we with our attitude, ignorance, and insensitivities are pitiful. . . .

Yes, there was a brief moment at her birth when her unwelcome song jarred me awake. Sometimes the thing we welcome least is a blessing which, disguised, knocks boldly on our door; then rejected, sneaks quietly in the back door of the heart and establishes residence before being recognized—quietly working magic—quietly transforming.

So Elizabeth, I thank you for singing your song outside my window and forcing me to look through that window beyond the “accidentals” to the “essence.” Thank you for allowing me to glimpse through that window and see the flowers through your eyes. Thank you for showing me my reflection in that window—for making me realize that the alternative to growing old is not being alive. And thank you, Elizabeth, for making growing old worthwhile.

To you, Elizabeth: L’Chaim.⁴

SN 4 The speaker reminds receivers of what they need to be thankful for.

The Eulogy

A special form of tribute speech is the **eulogy**. When delivering a eulogy, you pay tribute to a person who has died. A eulogy is usually presented graveside or at a memorial service. Though some are very brief, lasting only a minute or two, others are more lengthy, lasting 10 or 20 minutes.

22.9a Your Responsibilities Delivering a Eulogy

When delivering a eulogy, your goal is to comfort the members of your audience without letting your own grief overwhelm you. This sometimes becomes difficult because of the emotional nature of the speech and occasion. The following qualities characterize the eulogy:

1. The speaker begins by acknowledging the special loss suffered by the family of the deceased and/or society.
2. The speaker celebrates the life of the deceased by acknowledging the legacy of the individual.
3. The speaker emphasizes the uniqueness or essence of the subject with honest emotion, anecdotes, personal recollections, and quotations from others. He or she brings the group together to share and ease their sense of loss by concentrating instead on how fortunate they were to have known the deceased and what they have learned from his or her life.

22.9b Sample Eulogy

President Barack Obama penned this eulogy for the late world champion boxer and humanitarian, Muhammad Ali.

Muhammad Ali was The Greatest. Period. If you just asked him, he'd tell you.

He'd tell you he was the double greatest; that he'd "handcuffed lightning, thrown thunder into jail."

But what made The Champ the greatest—what truly separated him from everyone else—is that everyone else would tell you pretty much the same thing.

Like everyone else on the planet, Michelle and I mourn his passing. But we're also grateful to God for how fortunate we are to have known him, if just for a while; for how fortunate we all are that The Greatest chose to grace our time.

In my private study, just off the Oval Office, I keep a pair of his gloves on display, just under that iconic photograph of him—the young champ, just 22 years old, roaring like a lion over a fallen Sonny Liston. I was too young when it was taken to understand who he was—still Cassius Clay, already an Olympic Gold Medal winner, yet to set out on a spiritual journey that would lead him to his Muslim faith,

 **SN 1** The speaker begins by acknowledging the loss of the subject and the legacy he left.

continued

SN 2 The speaker celebrates the subject's life and talents, identifying the qualities that made him special.

SN 3 The speaker describes for us the subject's legacy.

SN 4 The speaker directly addresses those in attendance and around the world reiterating what is to be learned from the subject's life.

continued

exile him at the peak of his power, and set the stage for his return to greatness with a name as familiar to the downtrodden in the slums of Southeast Asia and the villages of Africa as it was to cheering crowds in Madison Square Garden.

"I am America," he once declared. "I am the part you won't recognize. But get used to me—black, confident, cocky; my name, not yours; my religion, not yours; my goals, my own. Get used to me."

That's the Ali I came to know as I came of age—not just as skilled a poet on the mic as he was a fighter in the ring, but a man who fought for what was right. A man who fought for us. He stood with King and Mandela; stood up when it was hard; spoke out when others wouldn't. His fight outside the ring would cost him his title and his public standing. It would earn him enemies on the left and the right, make him reviled, and nearly send him to jail. But Ali stood his ground. And his victory helped us get used to the America we recognize today.

He wasn't perfect, of course. For all his magic in the ring, he could be careless with his words, and full of contradictions as his faith evolved. But his wonderful, infectious, even innocent spirit ultimately won him more fans than foes—maybe because in him, we hoped to see something of ourselves. Later, as his physical powers ebbed, he became an even more powerful force for peace and reconciliation around the world. We saw a man who said he was so mean he'd make medicine sick reveal a soft spot, visiting children with illness and disability around the world, telling them they, too, could become the greatest. We watched a hero light a torch, and fight his greatest fight of all on the world stage once again; a battle against the disease that ravaged his body, but couldn't take the spark from his eyes.

Muhammad Ali shook up the world. And the world is better for it. We are all better for it. Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to his family, and we pray that the greatest fighter of them all finally rests in peace.⁵

The After-Dinner Speech

22.10

Generally designed to be entertaining, the **after-dinner speech** is a common form of public address. Neither overly technical nor filled with ponderous details or complex information, the after-dinner speech is usually upbeat and takes a good-natured, sometimes humorous, whimsical, or mildly satirical look at a topic of interest and relevance to the audience.

22.10a Your Responsibilities Delivering an After-Dinner Speech

If you are asked to give an after-dinner speech, you'll probably want to choose a lighthearted topic that allows you to inject humor into your presentation. Humor, when used appropriately, helps relieve tension and relax receivers. It also helps receivers remember your presentation.⁶ However, humor should be functional, not forced, and help you make a point.

The after-dinner speech depends on your ability to make a point while maintaining a sense of decorum and good taste. Remember, after-dinner speeches are usually delivered when audience members are in a mood for entertainment, and therefore must be easy to digest . . . as desserts usually are.

22.10b Sample After-Dinner Speech

The following are excerpts from an after-dinner speech, titled "Artificial Intelligence," that was delivered by Massachusetts Institute of Technology professor Marvin Minsky at a personal computer forum.

I've heard people explaining from time to time that there really wasn't any such thing, that artificial intelligence was just programs. And they were right, of course, because everything is just programs. That's called "nothing buttery." A program is nothing but a sequence of instructions, and a living thing is nothing but a bunch of atoms with various chemical bonds, and a machine is nothing but parts, and so forth. And that's a very important idea. People who don't believe that eventually get into very serious trouble, because then they end up believing that something comes from nowhere. . . .

continued **SN 1** The speaker sets a light tone.

SN 2 The speaker's good nature and appropriately humorous examples help receivers process the content.



continued

Have you ever had lunch with a writer and asked them how they write? They're always fidgety and embarrassed. Isaac Asimov is the master of this. He says that you sit in front of the typewriter and move your fingers. He's willing to face the whole mystery of that in its completeness and not pretend to know what to do. . . .

You see, you can be skeptical of artificial intelligence because it doesn't write Beethoven quartets. But the real reason to be skeptical of artificial intelligence is that it doesn't know how to eat with a fork or chopsticks, or dress itself, or walk across the room. . . . Nobody has the foggiest idea, really, of how that stuff is programmed. . . .

The number of pieces of brain that actually do anything like move your finger is very small. You'd be surprised at the number of people who think that the gift of playing the piano is in your hands. That's a joke. The hands are just I/O devices, and there's no difference between the nerves and muscles of a pianist and anyone else, except that pianists are stronger, you can believe. Never get into a fight with a pianist. They have terribly powerful arms.⁷



GAME PLAN

Giving a Special Occasion Speech

- I understand the occasion for my speech, my speech's purpose, and the audience attending my speech
- I have considered and fulfilled the responsibilities and goals of the speech.
- I have crafted a unique approach to the topic.
- Based on what I've learned in previous chapters of the playbook, I have prepared for and practiced my speech.



Exercises

SPEAKING ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

By developing the skills necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of a special occasion speaker, you prepare yourself to speak effectively throughout the life span. Participating in the following activities will help hone your understandings and abilities.

1. Family Introductions

Introduce a family member by specifying two of his or her defining characteristics and explain why the relationship you share is meaningful.

2. And the Award Goes to . . .

Select a historical figure, artist, author, athlete, or coach. Your selected person is to receive an award (silly or serious) that you create specifically for him or her.

1. Name the award and its purpose.
2. Outline the accomplishments of the person as they relate to the award.

3. Paying Tribute

Imagine being given the opportunity to compose a tribute speech for someone you believe instrumental in helping you grow as a person. What words would you use to celebrate that person and let him or her understand the role he or she has played in your life. Try your hand at writing such a speech.

4. Analyze a Commencement Address

Search for and watch Anthony Corvino's commencement address at Binghamton University, titled "Average Is the New Exceptional," on YouTube. Identify the specific techniques that Corvino used to connect with and inspire the students graduating.

1. How did Anthony establish his own credibility at the beginning of his speech?
2. How did he use humor to reach out to audience members?
3. How did he acknowledge the efforts of the graduating students and their families?
4. How did Anthony challenge other graduates to achieve more in their future work?
5. How did he craft a new and unique approach to his commencement address?
6. Had Anthony practiced his speech with you before the big day, what kind of critiques might you have offered?

5. Approach the Speaker's Stand: Let's Toast

You are giving a toast to celebrate a special occasion such as a birthday, a housewarming, or a wedding anniversary. What steps will you take to ensure the tone of your toast reflects the person(s) or event being celebrated? Specifically, think about the following:

1. What factors do you need to consider as you prepare the speech?
2. What will you do to build rapport with your audience?
3. What will you speak about?
4. What effect do you hope your speech has?

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Explain the goals and functions of special occasion speeches.** Special occasion speeches help punctuate the high-water marks of our lives. They are part of the rituals that draw us together. Speeches of celebration are designed to reflect the nature and needs of the occasions that prompted their delivery.
2. **Define and distinguish the similarities and differences between speeches of introduction, presentation, and acceptance.** An introduction functions as a “warm-up” for a featured speaker, whereas presenting an award to a recipient usually includes more formal accolades. An acceptance speech is given in response to a speech of presentation, affording the honoree the opportunity to describe how much receiving such an award means.
3. **Explain the functions of the commencement address and a keynote address.** Like a coach, the commencement speech praises and congratulates a graduating class for their accomplishments. The keynote speech gets a meeting off to a good start, establishing an appropriate mood and helping attendees focus on the challenges ahead of them.
4. **Define the goals and distinguish the differences between a speech of tribute and a eulogy.** A tribute is given to acknowledge and praise a living or dead honoree, whereas a eulogy, a special form of tribute, pays homage to a person who has died.
5. **Explain the key characteristics of the after-dinner speech.** The after-dinner speech is usually lighthearted and takes a humorous or satirical look at a topic of interest.

KEY TERMS

After-dinner speech 411	Keynote address 404	Speech of presentation 396
Commencement address 400	Speech of acceptance 398	Speech of tribute 406
Eulogy 409	Speech of introduction 394	



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23

Business and Professional Speaking

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Participate proactively in an employment interview
2. Interact effectively in a meeting
3. Pitch an idea
4. Deliver a briefing
5. Present a report
6. Conduct a training session



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Contents

What does speaking have to do with work? Everything! Much of your work life depends on how effectively you construct your professional image and build relationships. Speaking ability influences whether you get the job you want, hold onto the position, and advance in your field. Success at work depends on knowing how to present yourself and your ideas to others.

Section 23.1 First, Get the Job: How to Handle a Job Interview

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23.1a Research the Job and the Position

23.1b An Interview Is a Planned Conversation

23.1c Get to the Heart of the Questions

23.1d Be an Active Participant in the Interview

23.1e Make a Positive Impression

First, Get the Job: How to Handle a Job Interview

An interview with the hiring manager is often a key part of landing a job. Think of the answers you give in the interview as a series of impromptu speeches. Do the work to prepare and set yourself up for success.

23.1a Research the Job and the Position

A key part of preparing for an interview is to research both the job and the hiring organization as thoroughly as possible. If you know someone within the organization, speak with her or him. Search the Internet for the specifics of the job you seek, including typical employee responsibilities, assignments, advancement opportunities, and average salaries. Read what has been written about the company. Acquaint yourself with its successes and failures, products, and opportunities.

Compile a list of potential questions the interviewer might ask you and rehearse your answers. Possible questions include

- Why are you interested in working with us?
- How would you describe your greatest strength and weakness?
- How has your background prepared you for this job?
- Provide an example of when you convinced your supervisor to implement your idea. What was the outcome?
- Describe a time when you had to balance multiple assignments. How did you do?

Of course, in addition to preparing for potential questions, you also need to prepare yourself for the fact that you likely will be asked some questions that you have not anticipated. It is also likely that the interviewer will ask you if you have any questions for her or him. Thus, your role is not only to be able to respond seemingly spontaneously to questions you are asked, but also to come prepared to ask questions. Before arriving, compile a list of questions you want to ask the interviewer. The following are among the questions you might ask:

- What qualities are you seeking in the candidate you hire?
- How do you gauge an employee's value?
- What do you like best about the organization's culture?

Finally, be sure to review your application, and your résumé, updating each as needed.

23.1b An Interview Is a Planned Conversation

The conversation during an **interview** distinguishes itself from casual conversation in that it is planned and designed to achieve specific objectives. In an interview, you and your interviewer have opportunities to share information. Based on what is said, each of you is then left to decide whether continued association will be positive and productive.

Just as with a speech, to succeed in an interview you need to prepare, gain control of any nerves, establish rapport, communicate your confidence and competence, inform about yourself, and answer questions asked forthrightly. It is assumed that how you behave during an interview reveals how you behave in general. Potential employers rely on a number of interview formats. They may interview you using the traditional one-on-one format, have a panel of interviewers question you, or place you in a simulation giving you the opportunity to demonstrate your skills.

Well-planned interviews are structured, divided into stages. The interview's opening is an orientation to the interview process. It is also the stage during which rapport is built, figuratively breaking the ice between interviewer and interviewee. The middle or interview body is the longest interview segment. During this stage, participants get down to business. They discuss the interviewee's educational and work experiences, seeking to establish the applicant's strengths, weaknesses, accomplishments, and goals. The interview's close finds the parties reviewing the main points covered, offering final statements, and taking leave of one another.



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Let's get down to business. Like any speech, planning ahead is the key to interview success.

COACHING TIP

"Before a job interview, I think, What color tie best represents me as a person this company would be interested in?"

—Jarod Kintz

Professional image is critical. Work on yours! Knowing how to present yourself and your ideas is a ticket to success. Relationship building begins with the first impression others form of you. Make yours a good one!

23.1c Get to the Heart of the Questions

Remember, questions are key in gathering the information needed to make a decision. Most interviews contain different kinds of questions.

Closed questions can be answered with a few words. The following are closed questions: Where do you live? What was your major area of interest? What are your compensation expectations?

Open questions are broader, offering more freedom in answering them: Would you tell me about yourself?¹ How has your background prepared you for this position? What would you like to know about our firm? Please describe your greatest success and failure. Open questions like these foster the expression of feelings, attitudes, and values.

Open and closed questions can be either primary or secondary. **Primary questions** introduce a topic or area for exploration. **Secondary questions**, also known as probing questions, follow up on primary questions. Thus, the following is a primary question: What is your favorite assignment? And these are secondary questions used to follow up: What

specifically did you like about that assignment? What does that mean? Can you give me an example?

Once the interviewer begins asking questions, use the following acronym to guide you in answering: **S.T.A.R.** (situation, task, action, result).² For example, let's say that the interviewer asks you what others would say when asked what it's like to work with you. Using the S.T.A.R. system, you would answer the question by revealing a *situation* you faced when working with another person ("My coworker fell behind in completing an assigned project"), how you assessed the *task* needing to be completed ("I realized that if he didn't complete the project on time, the promotion he had recently been promised could be in jeopardy"), the *action* you took ("I'm a team player, so I stepped up, and did some of the research myself, which enabled him to complete his analysis"), and the *results* you achieved ("When he was promoted to regional director, he asked me to be his assistant. He knew he could count on me"). "So I think if asked what it's like to work with me, others would say I always have their back. I do whatever I can to help."

FIGURE 23.1
Common Interview Questions

- Tell me a little about yourself.
- Why did you apply for this position?
- What makes you qualified for this position? Why should we hire you?
- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?
- What would your former employer (professor, friend) say about you?
- What are three words that describe you?
- What are your short-term goals? What are your long-term goals?
- Do you have any questions for us?

Source: Kelly M. Quintanilla and Shawn T. Whal, *Business and Professional Communication: KEYS for Workplace Excellence*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014).

23.1d Be an Active Participant in the Interview

During the interview, you seek to present yourself well and answer questions clearly, providing the interviewer with sufficient information to determine whether you are the right person for the job. But you also need to ask questions that will help you decide whether to accept the job should an offer of employment be made.³ Asking, not just answering, questions demonstrates your enthusiasm for the job. In addition to asking the questions you prepared in advance, make sure that you ask secondary questions to follow up on what the interviewer says, which shows interest and engagement.

Interestingly, successful job applicants speak for some 55 percent of the total time allotted for the interview, and initiate 56 percent of the comments made, in comparison with unsuccessful applicants who initiate only 37 percent of the comments made and speak for only 37 percent of the time.

23.1e Make a Positive Impression

When you give a formal speech, you must consider not just what you will say, but how you will present yourself. The same is true in a job interview. Assuming you want the job, one of your goals is to help an interviewer perceive you in a positive light.⁴ Looking, sounding, and acting professionally throughout the interview facilitate this. If you can answer each of the following questions with a “yes,” you are on track:

- Am I dressed appropriately for the interview?
- Am I familiar with the company, its competition, and industry trends?
- Am I conveying enthusiasm and energy?
- Am I communicating my happiness at being interviewed?
- Does my nonverbal behavior send the right messages, underscoring my confidence, competence, and trustworthiness?

In contrast, the following interviewee behaviors turn off interviewers:

- Arrogance
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Immaturity
- Poor communication
- Unclear goals
- Unwillingness to travel or relocate
- Deficient preparation
- Unprofessional appearance⁵

To communicate professionalism, never inquire about vacation, personal days, or benefits on your first interview. Always end the interview affirming your interest in the position. Always follow up sending a thank you note to each person with whom you interviewed.⁶

section 23.2



23.2a Participating in the Meeting

23.2b Leading the Meeting

Speaking in a Meeting

Meetings are commonplace at work and in most professional arenas. Whether you will be the meeting leader or a participant, adequate preparation is essential. So too are understanding the meeting's purpose, reviewing its agenda, engaging actively in the exchanging of information, and ensuring the meeting does not veer off topic.

Again, how you come across counts. As with other kinds of communication at work, what you say and do during a meeting affects others' impressions of you and builds, maintains, or detracts from your professional image. Ability to relate to others interpersonally in big and small groups, large and small meetings, is essential for your professional growth.

23.2a Participating in the Meeting

Every participant shares responsibility for a meeting with the meeting's leader. When participating in a meeting, be sure to follow these guidelines:

- Review the reasons for meeting ahead of time and suggest items for the agenda if requested.
- Give yourself time to prepare by reading the agenda as much in advance of the meeting as possible, and considering the concerns and questions you have regarding each agenda item.
- Participate enthusiastically, but be certain to avoid interrupting when others speak and refrain from denigrating others' input.
- Praise others' comments when appropriate.
- Keep your contributions relevant by building on and responding to others' ideas.
- Solicit feedback, ask questions, and keep track of accomplishments and responsibilities.

When a meeting is effective, members seamlessly perform task and maintenance roles, but avoid performing self-serving roles—roles focused exclusively on a member's needs but not helpful to or in the best interests of others in the meeting. In contrast to selfish, self-centered roles, task roles facilitate the meeting and the realization of its goal. Maintenance roles facilitate interaction between members.

Meetings tend to be most effective when their working atmosphere is informal, comfortable, and relaxed; there is time for ample discussion with all members participating, listening to one another and expressing ideas and feelings freely; disagreement is not suppressed; decisions are reached by consensus; no one is personally attacked; and neither the leader nor any single member dominates.

23.2b Leading the Meeting

Although at this stage in your work life, you most likely will be a meeting participant, preparing yourself to lead a meeting can be a career builder. When leading a meeting, taking the following steps will help ensure it is a positive experience and productive:

- Formulate and share the meeting's purpose in advance with those who will be attending. When called to a meeting with no clear goal, employees worry that their time will be wasted.
- Develop an agenda and circulate it in advance.
- Arrive early to ask and answer questions, chat and/or talk off topic with others (saves doing it during the meeting), and build rapport to help others feel comfortable.
- Turn off your cell phone; have others do the same.
- Introduce any guests or new attendees.
- Provide a meeting orientation—referring to the agenda and your goals.
- Maintain control of the meeting. Seek to engage all present. Take steps to ensure that no one member monopolizes discussion. Focus on covering agenda items.
- Summarize results, reviewing what was covered, reminding members of their responsibilities, and affirming accomplishments or goals met.
- Answer any questions.
- Thank members for their attendance and input, and if needed, schedule the next meeting date.

An effective leader facilitates a meeting's start and contributes to its ultimate success. The leader sets the meeting's tone, which when constructive encourages everyone to participate, precipitating high-quality interaction and a positive and productive outcome.



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Team leader. When leading a meeting, make sure it has defined goals and objectives so as not to waste time.

section 23.3

The Pitch

A few years ago, Workman Publishing, an independent publishing house, held a “Pitchapalooza” session during which a few dozen aspiring authors were given one minute each to describe their book idea before a panel of publishing professionals.⁷ This kind of brief, highly prepared persuasive presentation of a new idea or product is known as a **pitch**. Many workplaces provide similar opportunities for you to sell your ideas to higher-ups on a regular basis.

When pitching, your goal is to convince the people holding the power that what you propose is worthy of their money, time, or energy. Promotional pitches are usually made in person or increasingly via video or video conferencing. Formulating an effective pitch is difficult work.

A pitch is a persuasive presentation in a business setting. Some pitches are very brief—we call them “elevator pitches”—and basically depend on you distilling your idea into a few words that can be conveyed to an audience within 5 to 10 seconds. If given the luxury of 30 seconds, you can also speak to the benefits of your proposal. If given 5 minutes to pitch, you have time to present your idea, the problem it solves, its benefits, supporting evidence, the challenges you face, and the resources you require to make it happen.

Whether your pitch is 5 seconds, 30 seconds, or 5 minutes, you need to do your homework if your words are going to excite those listening. You will need to decide how to involve your audience, connect your pitch with the organization’s mission, and get receivers to imagine the possibilities. A 5-minute presentation is enough time to use technology—PowerPoint or Prezi and

presentation aids—that transforms your proposal into an “aha” moment.

The following are typical pitch components:

- Identify a need or opportunity.
- State your proposal simply and clearly; tell what you do.
- Explain your rationale (the needs and benefits fulfilled) and strategy.
- Communicate your USP (unique selling proposition)—reveal what makes your idea unique.
- Engage with your audience; make it easy for them to respond affirmatively.
- Review the timeline, costs, and challenges.
- Integrate presentation aids to make your vision come alive.
- End by reiterating the benefits of your proposal, linking it again with the goals of decision makers, and appealing in your close for them to give you the go-ahead.

Sometimes it is better to pitch with a partner or a team. When presenting with others, prepare a detailed outline specifying each person’s role and responsibilities. Be sure to hold one another accountable as you work to coordinate the presentation’s parts. You are aiming for a coherent whole, not several individual little speeches.

As when preparing a speech, research thoroughly, know your audience, and rehearse, rehearse, rehearse! Anticipate possible questions and practice responses. Remember, you need to make it easy for those making the decision to say yes.

Thomas Northcut/Photodisc/Thinkstock



Down the middle.
Make your pitches clear and easy to understand for your audience so they don't get overwhelmed, bored, or forget them.

Briefings and Reports

Briefings and reports are informative presentations commonly delivered in organizations.

A **briefing** is a brief talk that provides information needed to complete a task or make a decision. Briefings may focus on the past to bring others up to date, letting them know what was accomplished in their absence or since their last briefing. Briefings can also be future oriented, focusing on client interests and needs. Whatever their purpose, briefings have the following in common:

- They are short, typically one to three minutes in length.
- They are simply organized, usually topically or chronologically.
- They concisely summarize what has been done and/or what needs to be done.
- They may utilize simple presentation aids.
- They are delivered conversationally.

A **report** provides a summary of what you have learned or accomplished. Status reports, feasibility studies, and investigative reports are presented regularly in organizations. Each of these reports informs decision makers or team members on goals that have been reached and remaining obstacles. Such information may be communicated to your boss, a project team, other committees or boards, clients, and the general public. An organization's culture influences the nature of the reports, including whether they are formal or informal, include presentation aids or not, and allow for question-and-answer (Q&A) follow-ups. The following guidelines will serve you in preparing and delivering a report:

- Begin by providing an overview or summary of the project's purpose.
- Describe the current status of the project, providing a brief summation

of progress made relative to each of the project's goals.

- Be open and forthright, explaining hurdles overcome, reasons for any delays, detailing what is yet to be accomplished, and requesting assistance, if needed.
- Conclude by sharing a realistic assessment of the project's future.
- Ask for and answer questions, being careful not to become defensive.
- Thank those listening for their attention.

Like pitches, reports can be presented with a team, requiring that members divide up responsibilities, agree on a timeline, and coordinate the preparation, rehearsal, and delivery of information. Members of a successful team formulate the report's purpose, craft its outline, and collaborate to answer the following questions:

- How do we introduce the information so those in attendance will listen attentively?
- What are the report's main points?
- How should we present its central message?
- At what point are transitions most appropriate?
- How do we conclude so that all aspects are summarized and the presentation ends on a high note?
- What presentation aids should we use?
- How should we prepare for the Q&A that follows?
- How do we approach and learn from the rehearsal period?

After the presentation, the group holds a debriefing session to assess its effectiveness. Keep in mind that when reporting, you are building on skills and knowledge gained in preparing other kinds of speeches.

section
23.5

The Training Session

Trainers teach their audience members how to do something. Although the content of a training session is similar to a “how-to” speech, both the purpose and method of delivery are substantially different.

Trainers give workshops on virtually any subject: how to develop sales or interpersonal skills, how to avoid a lawsuit, how to handle cultural diversity, or how to run a meeting. Sometimes training is conducted informally and involves relatively direct advice—such as appropriate business-casual dress or what to wear on casual Fridays. Other times, training is highly sophisticated and coordinated. For example, the Disney organization has an entire training institute devoted to running courses related to custom business solutions and professional development.

Although what follows is a prescription for adult learning, it applies to college students and others as well:

- Demonstrate the relevance of the training to those in attendance. Help them understand and be able to explain how they will use the material.
- Plan activities to ensure attendees are actively involved in the session. Avoid the lecture format. The session you lead should involve active learning so that those in it are given ample opportunities to apply and practice skills, experiencing for themselves the session’s content.
- Understand what attendees do and do not know. Aim the session “where they are,” not above or below their knowledge level.
- Pace the session appropriately. Spaced learning tends to work—learn, apply, learn, apply.



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Hands-on. Training should differ from any other speech because it should have interactive elements allowing staff members to practice their skills.



GAME PLAN

Preparing for an Interview

- I know the exact location of the interview and how long it takes me to get there, so I am certain to arrive on time.
- I will dress appropriately, choosing what I wear so that it does not distract from the professional impression I hope to make.
- I've practiced my handshake and greeting before a mirror or with another person.
- I've thoroughly researched the company as well as the position I seek.
- I've prepared a professional-looking résumé and considered what aspects of my experience the interviewer will likely question me about.
- I've practiced answering both common and challenging questions.
- I'm prepared to ask the interviewer questions.



Exercises

SPEAKING ON THE JOB

Mastering the ability to prepare and deliver different kinds of work-related presentations is a professional image enhancer. Participating in these activities will help you increase the value you bring to your employer.

1. Research the Employer You Want

Review the careers page on the website of a company or an organization where you would like to work.

Based on your research, answer these questions:

- What values does the company promote?
- What is the company looking for in an employee?
- What benefits does the company offer in return?
- Do you imagine you would be happy working for this company? Why?

Based on your exploration of the company's job postings and their descriptions, prepare a list of three personal traits you possess that you believe an interviewer at that company would value.

2. Practice Your Response

Review the following interview questions. Then pair up and practice answering them:

- Why do you want this job?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Would you tell me about a past experience that reveals you can handle pressure and are resilient?
- What was your greatest success in college?
- This job requires creativity. What have you done that demonstrates your creativity?

- What do you think would be your greatest challenge were we to hire you?
- If I were to Google you, what would I find out that we haven't discussed?
- What questions do you have for me?

3. Plan It

Develop a plan to interview for an on-campus position and brief your professor on progress, or develop a pitch to persuade the dean of students to grant club status and funding to a group you create.

4. Analyze the Pitch

Watch an episode of *Shark Tank*, a television show in which wealthy venture capitalists—the “sharks” — interview aspiring entrepreneurs who each deliver a pitch designed to persuade the sharks to invest in them and their business. Analyze the effectiveness of each entrepreneur's pitch, and evaluate the extent to which the individuals seeking funding effectively answered the questions posed by the sharks.

5. Approach the Speaker's Stand

1. *The Pitch.* Develop and deliver a pitch to persuade a loan officer at a bank in your community to lend you money for one of the following: a proposed business venture, to travel abroad, or to go to graduate school.
2. *The S.T.A.R.* You are being interviewed. The interviewer asks, “What do you think others would say if I asked them if you were dependable?” Answer the question using the S (situation); T (task); A (action); R (result) strategy.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Participate proactively in an employment interview.** You need to prepare yourself to interview. Research the company, anticipate questions, answer questions knowledgeably and honestly, and present yourself as professionally as possible.
2. **Interact effectively in a meeting.** Leaders and members work collaboratively to ensure the success of a meeting. Both need to prepare for the meeting, review its agenda, and participate enthusiastically.
3. **Pitch an idea.** Pitches are persuasive in nature and are planned to convince others that an investment in what is being asked for promotes the organization's mission, and is worth the time, money, and energy that needs to be expended.
4. **Deliver a briefing.** Briefings, though very short, make sure everyone is on the same page, reviewing or previewing what has or needs to be done.
5. **Present a report.** A report summarizes the status of a project or other undertaking, letting others know what you have accomplished, what remains to be completed, and what it means for the organization.
6. **Conduct a training session.** Training sessions are held on a wide range of topics related to the specific needs and goals of an organization and the specific audiences addressed.

KEY TERMS

Briefing 425

Closed question 420

Interview 419

Open question 420

Pitch, a 424

Primary question 420

Report 425

Secondary question 420

S.T.A.R. 420



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24

Storytelling

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Identify stories from your life to share when giving talks to others
2. Explain the ingredients integral to a story
3. Demonstrate ability in using a variety of language tools
4. Create narratives that motivate and involve others



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Contents

About a year ago, Suki Kim delivered a TED Talk titled “This Is What It’s Like to Go Undercover in North Korea.”¹ She started her presentation with these words, using pauses to punctuate her story:

*In 2011, [pause]
during the final six months of Kim Jong-Il's life, [pause]
I lived undercover in North Korea. [pause]
I was born and raised in South Korea, their enemy. [pause]
I live in America, their other enemy. [pause]
Since 2002, I had visited North Korea a few times. [pause]
And I had come to realize that to write about it with any meaning, [pause]
or to understand the place beyond the regime's propaganda, [pause]
the only option was total immersion. [pause]*

Suki’s story fascinated the audience. In this chapter, we explore how to tell stories that lead audiences to enter the speaker’s world. Are you prepared to tell stories that pass on understandings and dreams, bridge barriers, take hold of others, engender positive feelings, bring people psychologically closer, and help them adapt and engage?² Doing so will strengthen your presentation.

COACHING TIP

“Those who tell the stories rule society.”

—Plato

Tell a story and change the world. Good stories embody powerful messages. Tell one at the right time and you build a connection that will last.

Section 24.1 Discover Your Inner Storyteller

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**24.1a Find Your Voice****24.1b Give Voice to Your Goals****24.1c Use a Narrative to Frame Your Goals****24.1d Remember That Timing Matters****24.1e Lead With Stories**

Discover Your Inner Storyteller

Effective speechmakers tell a wide range of stories, some based on difficult experiences, others on formative ones. Your goal is to reframe your experiences, learn how to embody and perform them, and then create stories, articulating powerful messages that surmount boredom, inspiring and guiding others, fostering their participation. The more personal and authentic your stories, the easier it becomes for others to identify with and latch onto their themes and the more likely they are to take the action you advocate.

It's time to meet your inner storyteller. Begin with some self-reflection: Using a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 representing "Never," and 10 representing "Always," award yourself the number of points you believe you deserve for each of the following statements:

I speak to build connections with others.	<hr/>	My words are an apt reflection of me.	<hr/>
Most of the time, I tell a story to make my point.	<hr/>	Others remember my words.	<hr/>
Others respond favorably to the stories I tell.	<hr/>	Others find my words motivating.	<hr/>
I find it easy to speak in metaphorical language.	<hr/>	I repeat what I think is important.	<hr/>
I reach others on an emotional level.	<hr/>	When presenting ideas, I invite audience interaction.	<hr/>

The more points you award yourself on each item, the more proficient you believe your storytelling skill to be. What do your scores suggest about your readiness to use words to inspire and lead others to a new understanding?

24.1a Find Your Voice

What is a real voice? It is the voice we use when we are being genuine and true to ourselves. To discover this voice, we first figure out who we are and what of our life story can be shared with others. Our potential to affect and influence others emerges from this act. In fact, as the author John Barth noted, "The story of your life is not your life. It is your story."³

To be an effective storyteller, you need to be adept at using words to tell stories that demonstrate goals. To make an impression that lasts, you'll want to share the history and motivations of your life, because you convey your identity and beliefs as you do so.⁴ Because one of the speaker's tasks is to instill, describe, and communicate a vision, your success depends upon your ability to tell stories that capture your essence, create meanings, and shape others' expectations—motivating their positive response. If you can use words and narration that resonate with receivers, helping them to imagine new perspectives, then you have a valuable tool in facilitating your personal connection with others.⁵

24.1b Give Voice to Your Goals

Whether our goal is to share knowledge, inspire, remind others of the past or prepare them for the future, build credibility, or enhance brand recognition, the stories we tell help determine our success.

Storytelling is perhaps the most significant act anyone hoping to influence others can perform. Being able to translate thoughts and ideas into words that others understand and respond to is an essential speaking skill. Through the stories you tell, receivers reflect on experiences designed to capture their hearts and minds, or as executive coaches Richard Maxell and Robert Dickman assert, “A story is a fact, wrapped in an emotion that compels us to take an action that transforms our world.”⁶ Stories engage and inspire audiences. They help you shape the reality you seek others to imagine.

For example, if your goal were to convince your audience to take action against bullying, you might consider sharing with them the tragic story of two girls, ages 12 and 14, who were charged with committing a felony—aggravated stalking—because of their relentless bullying of another 12-year-old girl. The target of their bullying, Rebecca Sedwick, ultimately committed suicide by jumping off a tower.⁷

24.1c Use a Narrative to Frame Your Goals

A *narrative* describes what people are doing and why. It is an organized story of a sequence of events, characters or agents, a thesis or theme, and an outcome. Narratives enable you to personalize your speech's message, provide it with a frame, and reveal an outcome that offers a lesson we can learn from. Such stories reveal your perspective. We all present events in a way that suits our personal interests.

To influence others with a story, first reflect on the purpose(s) you want your story to serve. Consider how to reach and tap into the experiences of those whom you seek to influence, how you can build connections that impart information, facilitate learning, and spark the insights you desire.

Five key elements give a story legs.

1. A good story reflects your passion or a sense of purpose, rallying others to participate with you in creating a better future.
2. A good story supplies a source of conflict—something (or someone) that everyone is able to agree threatens the future.
3. A good story offers up a hero or protagonist who will conquer the villain or offer a solution to the problem.
4. A good story creates an awakening in the hero and audience—an “aha” moment—one that, once taken to heart, will make the world a better place.
5. And a good story reveals a need for change or an opportunity for transformation.

Let's try it. Pick one of the following story starters, and use it to tell a story from your experience that will teach others a lesson you learned. Tell us who the hero and villain are, describe them and the situation they face, explain the conflict, and reveal the solution or “aha” moment and its impact.



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Grandma's house. Stories can help personalize your speech and make it more memorable for your audience.

- Once upon a time . . .
- I'll never forget the first time . . .
- It was the scariest day of my life . . .
- It was the best day of my life . . .
- When I was growing up, my (grandma, grandpa, mom, dad, sister, brother, best friend) told me . . .
- What if . . . ?⁸

After telling your story and actively listening to the stories others tell, reflect on how the experience enhanced your awareness and understanding of self and others. According to Peter Senge, when people understand one

another, it is easier for a commonality of direction to emerge.⁹ By sharing stories, we are able to see through each other's eyes.

24.1d Remember That Timing Matters

When telling a story, timing matters. When you tell the right story at the right time, it's as though your words and actions are magical, causing others to respond to and follow you, taking your words to heart. Two examples come to mind:

First, picture this. Soon after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, president George W. Bush traveled to Ground Zero in New York City. Handed a bullhorn, the president stood on a pile of rubble, placed his arm around a fireman, and addressed the crowd. That image is implanted in the minds of those who experienced it in person or via the media. It represented the right story at the right time, offering the public a protagonist who was set on conquering those who attacked the United States.

Then, picture the following. President Bush now is standing on the deck of a Navy aircraft carrier wearing a flight jacket, declaring the war against Iraq over and claiming victory. Though this story also was compelling and has shown its staying power, we learned soon after the president's appearance on the carrier that it was far too early for the leader to be telling this story. The hero had not yet vanquished the enemy. The war would endure for many years more.

When a speaker tells the wrong story or tells a story at the wrong time, it causes us to pause, question the speaker's performance, and look elsewhere for inspiration.¹⁰

24.1e Lead With Stories

What kinds of stories do effective speakers tell? According to Stephen Denning, stories can spark action, reveal who the speaker is, transmit ideas, communicate the nature of the speaker's cause, share knowledge, and lead the audience into the future. For example, if your goal is to spark action, you might tell a story describing a successful change, yet leave room for the listener to imagine. You might even say, "Just imagine . . ." or "What if . . . ?" If your objective is to share knowledge, your story might focus on a mistake made, how it was corrected, and why the solution was effective. Those listening to you will benefit from thinking, "We'd better look out for that too."¹¹

By using and telling stories others identify with, you engage receivers, inspiring them to accept your message, follow your lead, and act.



24.2a Develop Language Sensitivity

24.2b Keep It Simple

24.2c Strategize About Word Choices

24.2d Use Word Pictures

24.2e Repeat/Repeat/Repeat

24.2f Speak of “I” and “We”

24.2g Generate Involvement and Participation

Use Language to Connect

When worded effectively, stories cement speaker–audience connection. When ineffectively worded, however, they precipitate questions and concerns threatening to sever those ties. Should this occur, you are left to clean up the mess made with words.

To be effective and enhance your ability to inspire, heighten your sensitivity to language. Choose words that (1) add vividness and force to ideas, (2) steer others toward your goal, and (3) strengthen a positive image among audience members. Language should function as a credibility enhancer. Your words can help others perceive you as confident and trustworthy or cause them to question your competence and confidence. Though there is no set formula that will ensure your storytelling success—we can’t tell you to add two similes, one metaphor, a moving illustration, and a startling example to a presentation to get others to accept your ideas—we can review some of the language tools at your disposal and how to use them in the stories you tell.

24.2a Develop Language Sensitivity

Avoid using words or expressions that insult, anger, demean, or devalue others. Calling others derogatory names, intimidating them, or using profanity typically produces negative outcomes. For example, calling environmentalists “tree huggers” or labeling people with conservative social and political values “country club fat cats” could reflect badly on a speaker among those who disagree with his or her assessment.

You would also be wise to avoid using clichés—words or phrases that at one time were effective but due to overuse have now lost their impact. For example, asking others to “think outside of the box” has now become cliché; it would be better to ask receivers to view the situation from an alternative perspective.

24.2b Keep It Simple

When insecure, speakers fall back on complex language. The most effective ones, however, forsake “word armor” or speech that cloaks thought or appeals to narrow audiences. Clear speakers use focused and jargon-free language and short sentences.

AP Photo/Shizuo Kambayashi



Short and sweet. Don’t complicate your message with complex, intricate, and confusing language.

24.2c Strategize About Word Choices

Remember that audience members are not walking dictionaries. Avoid using words that confuse and alienate. Most will respond to the connotative or subjective meaning of words, not their denotative or dictionary meanings. So recognize the feelings and personal associations that your words might stimulate in others. This enables you to control the perceptions, conceptions, and reflections of receivers so you can steer them toward the response you desire.

24.2d Use Word Pictures

Visionary stories—stories that paint a compelling picture of what things will look and feel like in the future—are powerful and motivating. You can harness visionary language by using metaphors. According to **framing theory**, when we compare two unlike things in a figure of speech, the comparison influences us on an unconscious level. The metaphor causes us to make an association. Change the metaphor and you change how others think about the subject.¹² Complex metaphors form the basis for narratives or stories. For example, one student compared Twitter to a tracking device when speaking about the hidden dangers of the service:

Using Twitter is an easy way to share information and thoughts. Sounds harmless, doesn't it? I don't think it is harmless. Like GPS, Twitter is one big tracking device. Hit the tweet button on websites, and Twitter knows what websites you visit. Tweet a link or share what you like via Twitter, and Twitter knows who you follow, your location, and what you usually tweet about.



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Worth a thousand words. Invoking visionary language through metaphors will help your audience make strong connections.

24.2e Repeat/Repeat/Repeat

Ideas fight for attention. They rarely get through the first time. They rely on restatement and repetition. The more you repeat an idea, the more receivers remember it. One of the most famous examples of successful use of repetition is the speech Martin Luther King Jr. delivered in 1963 at the Lincoln Memorial:

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, live out the true meaning of its creed: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.” . . .

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 that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places shall be made plain, and the crooked places shall be made straight, and the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.¹³

Because of the repetition of “I have a dream,” the speech has a rhythm that enhanced its memorability and staying power.

24.2f Speak of “I” and “We”

“**I** language” finds you taking responsibility for or ownership of your story. You assume responsibility for your thoughts, feelings, and actions. “**We** language” indicates shared responsibility.

For example, one student speaking about how to respond when you see someone being bullied told the story of freshman goalie Daniel Cui, who was publicly bullied on Facebook in 2011 after allowing the winning goal in a soccer game. But Cui’s teammates rallied behind him, posting a photo of him making a winning save in another game. The student told the audience, “We can make the difference. We can’t be bystanders to another’s bullying. We need to fight back. We can’t let the bullies have the last word.”

By using “we” language, you build a collaborative climate—a kind of “We’re in this together” story. When receivers feel this sentiment, they won’t forget it.

24.2g Generate Involvement and Participation

A speaker who creates an emotionally charged event captures our interest. Inviting participation accomplishes this. When you connect with audience members, they are more likely to become involved. When you also ask them to do something during your presentation, their engagement increases.

For example, here's how one student used audience participation to demonstrate the prevalence of lying:

How important is honesty to you? Let's conduct a class survey to find out. I'd like to start with everyone on his or her feet, so please stand up. I'm going to ask some questions now. If you answer "yes" to any question, please sit down and remain seated.

Have you ever had to lie or cheat?

According to an NBC poll on lying, some 39 percent of those surveyed reported that they never had to lie or cheat. I wonder if they were telling the truth.

Have you lied to anyone in the past week?

According to the NBC poll, only 25 percent of those surveyed admitted having told at least one lie in the past week. I wonder if they understood the question.

Do you think that you can ever justify lying to another person?

According to the NBC poll, 52 percent of those surveyed believe that lying can never be justified.

Have you ever lied to someone to avoid hurting his or her feelings?

The NBC poll reveals that 65 percent of those surveyed have done just that.

Look around. How many members of our class are still standing?¹⁴

What does that tell us about the role lying really plays in our lives?

The speaker drew receivers in by asking them questions that physically involved them in the speech. The speaker's visual depiction of the prevalence of lying added impact to the speaker's message.



GAME PLAN

I Know a Story Is a Good One When . . .

- It is delivered in simple language and is easy to understand.
- It contains rich visual imagery.
- The goal of the speech is easy to discern.
- The goal of the speech is delivered in compelling language.
- The speech engages listeners and encourages them to be involved and participate.



Exercises

STORYTELLING

Though we have told stories to our families, friends, and teachers all our lives, we can become better at telling them to members of different audiences—especially those we hope will follow our lead. The following activities prepare you to do that.

1. Your Day

Pair up with a partner and prepare a short outline that describes a day in your life. Instead of merely listing your schedule of events, tell a story about them. Using the guidelines from this chapter, describe in detail what you had hoped to accomplish, whom you worked with, what you did to motivate or energize yourself and them, and how you felt about the results achieved at day's end.

2. Unifying Metaphors

Suppose you had to give a speech on what it means to think globally. First, identify the specific points you would make in your talk. Next, identify a unifying metaphor, explaining how you will use it to relate to the audience. Last, choose three additional language tools and describe how you will integrate them into the five ingredients of a story.

3. Analyze the Speech: What Separates Us From Chimpanzees

View Jane Goodall's speech "What Separates Us From Chimpanzees" on TED Talks. Focus on Goodall's use of props, sound effects, and stories in the speech.

1. How did Goodall establish a connection with the audience?
2. What purpose do you think that Goodall's imitation of a chimpanzee's voice served?
3. To what extent, if any, did Goodall's integration of stories influence your reaction to the speech?

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

According to Marshall Ganz, an expert on public policy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, a social movement emerges as a result of the efforts of purposeful actors who assert new public values, form new relationships rooted in those values, and mobilize followers to translate the values into action by telling a new story.¹⁵

For example, in 1962 Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring*, a book that is widely acknowledged to have launched the American environmental movement. Craft a speech that focuses on a story about a movement of your choice in one of the following ways:

- Make your story a story of *self*: a moment when you or someone else faced a challenge
- A story of *us*: a story that expresses shared values
- A story of *now*: a story articulating an urgent challenge that demands immediate action

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Identify stories from your life to share when giving talks to others.** Finding your authentic voice and sharing stories that motivate others to join you in seeking a goal will make you a more effective speaker and help you bring about the transformations you seek.
2. **Explain the ingredients integral to a story.** Stories reflect the speaker's passion or sense of purpose. They supply antagonists or villains that threaten the future. They offer up heroes or protagonists who offer solutions. They create an awakening or "aha" moment. They reveal a need for change or a transformation opportunity.
3. **Demonstrate ability in using a variety of language tools.** Effective storytellers have language sensitivity. They make strategic word choices, use word pictures or figures of speech, understand the value of repetition and restatement, employ both "I" and "we" language, and generate audience involvement and participation.
4. **Create narratives that motivate and involve others.** Stories make words memorable. They challenge us to make the speaker's dream of the future a reality.

KEY TERMS

Framing theory 437

Storytelling 433

"I" language 438

"We" language 438



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25

Speaking in College Courses

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Discuss dimensions of presenting orally in courses across the curriculum
2. Adapt oral presentations to specific educational contexts and audiences
3. Prepare and deliver a report on a professional or scholarly article, poster presentation, position presentation or debate, and service learning or internship report



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Contents

The skills needed to speak in a public speaking course share much in common with the skills needed to speak before any audience. In academic settings, students are often given assignments in which they must develop a topic and communicate findings to their instructors and fellow students. In every class in which an oral presentation is assigned, students need to define the purpose of the assignment, the professor's expectations, and their fellow students' needs. Not much different from giving a speech in speech class, is it?

COACHING TIP

"There is no such thing as presentation talent; it is called presentation skills."

—David JP Phillips

This book gives you the skills you need to speak well and purposefully in every course, not just speech class. Use these skills to your advantage. Apply your skills across the curriculum and you expand your reach. Presentation skills make a difference.

Section 25.1 Presenting Across the Curriculum

- 25.1a Communicate Your Ideas to Others, 444
- 25.1b Pay Attention to Context, 444

Section 25.2 Speaking Assignments in Every Course

- 25.2a Review a Scholarly or Professional Article, 445
- 25.2b Deliver a Poster Presentation, 446
- 25.2c Present or Debate a Position, 448
- 25.2d Report on a Service Learning or Internship Experience, 449

section **25.1**



25.1a Communicate Your Ideas to Others

25.1b Pay Attention to Context

Presenting Across the Curriculum

Speech class offers you numerous opportunities to practice presenting to an audience. However, such a course probably is not the only college course in which you will give oral presentations.

25.1a Communicate Your Ideas to Others

Oral presentations are a staple in many courses across the college curriculum. Engineering students are expected to present their designs. Art students are expected to explain their approaches to a piece and critique the work of others. No matter your major, it is important for you to be adept at communicating your ideas to your peers.

25.1b Pay Attention to Context

Class presentations strike a happy balance. They tend to be less formal than public speeches but more formal than daily conversations. Class audiences tend to be more homogenous than public audiences because receivers usually have a knowledge base similar to that of the presenter. It is probably safe to assume that your classmates have retained the information covered in the course to date, but beyond that it is still wise to double-check your receivers' level of understanding. Some members of the audience will match your expertise, others will surpass it or not measure up, and others will have no special expertise at all.

Although you will speak less formally before an audience of your peers than to a general audience, demonstrating your respect for everyone present remains essential.



You cannot hide. No matter your field, communicating with others and presenting your ideas well are essential skills to develop.

Speaking Assignments in Every Course

section

25.2



The nature of the presentations assigned to you in courses other than speech class may involve alternative topics and formats such as reviewing a scholarly or professional article, delivering a poster presentation, debating a stance on a controversial issue, or reporting on a service learning or internship experience.

25.2a Review a Scholarly or Professional Article

Part of the learning process in any college course is to become conversant in the scholarly and professional literature of the field. Sometimes, an instructor will assign a student to read and review an article in class. To do so, follow this outline:

- Introduce the article by identifying its author(s), title, the issue, date, and pages of the journal in which it appeared. Next, summarize its purpose, the thesis, or hypothesis it advanced, and your understanding of the author's theoretical perspective.
- Describe the research methods the author(s) used, identifying subjects, instruments, and procedures.
- Discuss findings, specifying what the author(s) concluded and the implications of the conclusions drawn.
- Evaluate the article, summarizing its weaknesses, strengths, and significance.
- Discuss the author's credibility based on the work completed and sources consulted, and the validity or reliability of the study.
- Explain how you and others can apply the article to your own lives.
- Offer suggestions for further research.



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20 percent of your grade. While perhaps a little less formal, a class presentation still necessitates following the other rules of speaking.

25.2a Review a Scholarly or Professional Article

25.2b Deliver a Poster Presentation

25.2c Present or Debate a Position

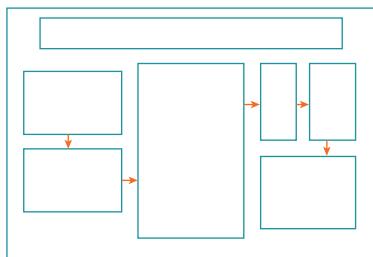
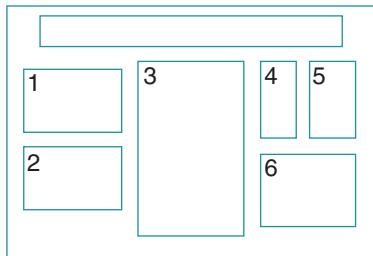
25.2d Report on a Service Learning or Internship Experience

FIGURE 25.1

Sample Poster Layout

Conventional layout for a poster.

Long panel at top center is title/author banner. Individual panels can be connected by numbers and arrows. Also, note the use of space between panels to achieve visual appeal.



Source: Carol Waite Connor, "The Poster Session: A Guide for Preparation" (U. S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 88-667), 1992.

25.2b Deliver a Poster Presentation

A **poster presentation** is a graphical approach to presenting information. A poster shows and tells a story on virtually any subject.

When preparing a poster, simplicity is key. In poster text sections, headings should be bold and the body kept brief, with any text block typically not exceeding 50 words. Those looking at your poster should be able to read it from a distance of five feet. Thus, lettering should be at least 24 point with heads a minimum of 36 point. Use bold visuals to augment the text with two or three colors. Both the poster's text sections and visuals should be given titles.

The poster's layout should be visually creative. Open layouts help maintain interest. The poster should pull the viewer from its top to the bottom and from left to right. Text and visuals should be balanced with white (empty) space defining the information flow. Sample layouts appear in Figure 25.1.

Offer a short abstract to orient the poster viewer. On the poster, summarize your message clearly. Design the poster to cut through jargon and get at the heart of a topic—its central message. Objectives and main points should be crystal clear and well organized with graphs and images doing much of the work. The goal is to engage others in conversation about the poster. While you may have prepared a brief oral summary of your work, as others ask you questions about your poster, you may find yourself delivering what are actually a series of brief impromptu speeches. In fact, as you prepare the poster, it is good practice to anticipate the questions others might ask you.

When well prepared and presented, a poster fulfills one or more of the following objectives:

- It is a source of information.
- It begins a conversation.
- It advertises your work.
- It summarizes your work.

Use the following suggestions to guide you in creating and presenting a poster:

- Consider the message you want your poster to communicate before starting it.
- Give the poster a short but informative title.
- Keep the message focused and simple—identifying what the audience should come away knowing.
- Use a logical and easy-to-follow layout.
- Use headings to orient viewers and establish main points.
- Edit text judiciously.
- Emphasize graphics.
- Use color to attract and appropriate font sizes to make it easy to read.
- Prepare to discuss and answer questions about the poster by rehearsing.
- When presenting, explain your work succinctly, speaking clearly and establishing eye contact with receivers.

25.2c Present or Debate a Position

Position presentations and **debates** are also used across a variety of disciplines. Both call upon you to use your persuasive skills to argue an issue.

When giving a position presentation, you deliver a persuasive argument on a controversial issue. In a debate, two sides take turns presenting pro and con positions, with each side competing to win over the audience.

The “pro” side of a debate is called the **affirmative side**. The role of the affirmative side is to support a resolution calling for change, such as: “Resolved: Congress should increase the inheritance tax.” In contrast, the “con” or **negative side**, seeks to convince the judges and/or members of the audience that change is not needed, working to defeat the resolution and maintain the status quo.

Whether you are debating solo or as part of a team, your role is to develop and present arguments to support your stance. Throughout the course of a debate, you will have the opportunity to refute the arguments the opposing side presents.

This phase—known as refutation—involves pointing out the flaws of the other side’s arguments and rebuilding the arguments you presented yourself. This may require you to point out their errors in reasoning, demonstrate their use of weak evidence, and offer new evidence in support of your claims.

Think of a debate like a fencing match: You need to attack the other side while defending your own arguments and position. If you ignore an argument or error made by the other side, you weaken your ability to win. Thus, it is important to keep track of everything the other side says and every argument they put forth, being certain to effectively refute or weaken them.

To prevail in a debate, be sure to

- Present an organized speech.
- Communicate your passion for your position.
- Identify and present credible and convincing evidence in support of your side’s position.
- Either tell the judges and receivers what they should decide or, if your position is an unpopular one, ask them to suspend judgment until hearing both sides’ arguments.
- Stress your side’s strong points.
- Emphasize the opposing side’s weaknesses.
- Think quickly and creatively.



En garde. Be ready to both defend your side and attack the other in a debate.

25.2d Report on a Service Learning or Internship Experience

Reporting on a service learning project or internship requires that you reflect on what you gained from participating in the experience.

When first engaged in **service learning**—a project that addresses a community or public agency need—or an internship, keep a weekly timetable and daily log of your experiences. Keep notes on the meetings you attended, conversations you had, challenges you faced, and any relevant interactions and relationships.

Begin by providing the audience with background information on the organization, agency, or group you served and your specific department or assignment in it. Then share your expectations going into the experience. Review the kinds of tasks you performed, telling stories about the nature of particular days as appropriate. Describe how the tasks affected you, explaining what you learned both personally and professionally, and reflecting on how your work contributed to the organization. End by sharing whether your expectations were fulfilled, identifying how you will apply new skills, qualifications, and understandings you were able to acquire during the experience, and offer your recommendations for future service learning volunteers or interns at the same site.

Because both service learning and internships are learning experiences, reflection and analysis play integral parts in your report for either.



GAME PLAN

Debating

- Whether or not I personally believe in the pro/con stance I've been asked to take, I've prepared to deliver an argument that is passionate in defending my assigned position.
- As part of my research, I have examined and read up on both sides of the issue. Doing so helps me prepare refutations.
- I've researched the opposing side's arguments to find flaws that expose the other side's weaknesses.
- I've practiced delivering a defense of the strongest points of my position.
- I've practiced my opening and closing statements.

Exercises

SPEAKING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Good presentations, whatever the course, can be informative, persuasive, and entertaining. Every presentation helps the audience think and learn. Participating in the following activities will help you develop the skills needed to present in different classes and to different audiences.

1. The List

Opportunities for oral assignments, group or individual, include more than podium speeches, especially in courses other than speech class. Identify courses you are currently taking in which you can apply the skills learned in this chapter. Be specific in detailing the skills learned that benefited you the most.

2. Student Observation

Observe a student delivering an oral presentation in a course other than speech. Note the following:

1. What was the course? What was the assignment?
2. How did the speaker approach the assignment?

Then, depending on the type of presentation the speaker completed, explain the extent to which the speaker succeeded in doing one or more of the following:

- Effectively provided the background of the scholarly article
- Presented a clear poster presentation
- Convinced or left you undecided by the debate
- Demonstrated the meaningfulness of the service learning or internship experience

3. Analyze the Speech

In this excerpt from a debate on the following question: “Should states repeal felon disenfranchisement laws?” the student taking the affirmative position offered the following argument.

SN 1 The speaker clearly states the affirmative position.



States should repeal felon disenfranchisement laws because having a right to vote is essential to the functioning of our democracy. Despite this, 6 million of our fellow American citizens have had that right taken away—many of them forever—because they have been found guilty of committing crimes and put in prison. In some states, more than 7 percent of the state’s adult citizens have been disenfranchised

in this manner—with a disproportionate number of them minorities. In Florida, Kentucky, and Virginia, 20 percent of African Americans cannot vote because of having formerly been convicted of a crime.

According to Eric Holder Jr., attorney general of the United States, this system of disenfranchisement is both outdated and counterproductive. Here's why.

Once a convicted felon serves out a sentence, that person should be considered rehabilitated. Instead, in states with disenfranchisement policies, former convicts are stigmatized and isolated, which only increases the probability of their committing crimes in the future.

Additionally, disenfranchisement may be affecting the outcome of elections. Remember presidential elections can end up being decided by one state's voters. For example, when George W. Bush won the state of Florida by 537 votes in 2000, some attribute it to the fact that more than 800,000 Floridians who had criminal records were not allowed to vote.

In order not to undermine the citizenship of those who have paid their debt to society, and to preserve the integrity of our democracy, we need to make it easier for former convicts to regain the right to vote.

SN 2 The speaker uses statistics to explain the problem's magnitude.

SN 3 The speaker references a credible source.

SN 4 The speaker explains the dangers of not supporting the affirmative position.

SN 5 The speaker closes the argument's presentation by affirming what is to be gained if receivers support it.

1. Do you think the student's argument was effective? Why or why not?
2. How do you imagine the negative side refuted the argument?

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Select and deliver a position statement on one of the following belief statements, or one of your own choosing:

- Anyone in the United States can make it if he or she works hard.
- Shakespeare is the most influential writer of all time.
- Actors are role models whether they want to be or not.
- A parliamentary system is a superior form of government.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. **Discuss dimensions of presenting orally in courses across the curriculum.** Although oral presentations differ from class to class, you can apply the skills you have acquired in planning and preparing public speeches to presentations assigned in other classes.
2. **Adapt oral presentations to specific educational contexts and audiences.** Every audience is different, requiring different information and the application of a different skill set. Although some audiences you address will share your knowledge level, others will match it, surpass it, or not measure up.
3. **Prepare and deliver a report on a professional or scholarly article, poster presentation, position presentation or debate, and service learning or internship report.** One format differs from another, requiring you to master the requirements for each kind of presentation. Reviews need to be thorough, posters need to tell a cogent story, the arguments you use in a debate need to be persuasive, and in a service learning or internship report you need to demonstrate what you have accomplished and how you have profited from the experience.

KEY TERMS

Affirmative side 448

Negative side 448

Poster presentation 446

Debate 448

Position presentation 448

Service learning 449



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Program

12:30 Feelings Round

12:45 Business

1 1:10 - 2:10 / 1 Sabrina Vincent
2:10 - 2:30 Deepa

2:30 - 2:50 Break

2:50 - 3:50 / 2 Angels Peter
3:50 - 4:10 Shirley

4:10 - 4:30 Break

4:30 - 5:30 / 3 Karen James
5:30 - 5:50 Fates

6:00pm Finish

26

Presenting Online

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Compare and contrast presenting online and off-line
2. Distinguish among online formats
3. Distinguish among online platforms
4. Develop and deliver an online presentation



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Contents

Recording a presentation and posting it online extends its life—disconnecting it from time, place, and audience constraints. Online presentations also have the potential to reach a wider audience. Whether used during webinars, voice or video Internet conferences, or streamed events, recorded presentations are playing increasingly common roles in the digital and real world.

Section 26.1 The Technological Difference

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- 26.1b Presentation Cues for Online Speeches, 456

Section 26.2 Formats for Online Presentations

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- 26.2d When It's an Interview, 459
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section **26.1**



26.1a Technology-Dependent Delivery

26.1b Presentation Cues for Online Speeches

The Technological Difference

You need to plan, prepare, and deliver your online presentation, just as you would in person. Despite these similarities, the online format is distinct in several ways.

26.1a Technology-Dependent Delivery

Although face-to-face presentations may use technology to support the speaker's delivery, online presentations are totally dependent on technology for their delivery. The speaker must be trained in using the technology and the audience requires Internet connectivity and the skills to view and respond online.

The items on the following list constitute the equipment essential for creating online presentations. Both presenters and users must be proficient in understanding the technology and its requirements.

- A computer with sufficient memory
- A hard drive with sufficient space
- Recording and editing software
- Webcam, high-quality smartphone, or video camera
- A microphone
- A broadband Internet connection

26.1b Presentation Cues for Online Speeches

Video accentuates facial cues. As a result, the speaker needs to adjust as an actor might when transitioning from stage to television. Though live theater calls for

larger gestures and exaggerated facial expressions, mediated screens call for more nuanced nonverbal expressions and require speakers to tone down their gestures and face work. To be considered genuine, body language in the virtual world should connect presenter and receiver without seeming forced or unnatural.

Corbis/Stockbyte/Thinkstock



Loud and clear. Having a firm grasp on technology is obviously essential for an online presentation but also for many other speeches.

Formats for Online Presentations

Like live presenters, online presenters have an array of formats to choose from, including but not limited to the single-speaker presentation (interactive or not), the panel presentation (moderated or not), the interview, and the digital story. No matter the content's nature or format, you will need to practice until you own the material and the technology.

26.2a Choose a Synchronous or Asynchronous Format

Online presentations can be streamed (presented live) or recorded and presented at a later time. Presentations delivered in real-time are **synchronous**. Presentations recorded and played back at another time are **asynchronous**. A synchronous webinar, like a face-to-face presentation, for example, allows for audience participation and questions, is conversational in tone and precipitates more of a connection between speaker(s) and receiver(s). As a result, synchronous online speakers are able to interact with and receive immediate feedback from their audiences, which can be a significant advantage. But there are also disadvantages. For example, the synchronous speaker has just one chance to achieve his or her goals. Once the webinar begins, the speaker cannot start over without adversely affecting his or her credibility with members of the audience. In addition, since a synchronous presentation is given at a set time, some members of the audience can be unavailable simply because the presentation begins very late or very early in their time zone.

In comparison, a talk delivered asynchronously has other challenges and benefits. One benefit is that audiences can view asynchronous presentations as many times as they want and whenever it is convenient for them to do so. For this reason, speeches delivered synchronously are sometimes saved and posted online. Another advantage is that the speaker has the ability to refine the final performance before it is released to the audience. The speaker can stop and start over as many times as needed to produce a polished final product without adversely affecting the speaker's credibility. Recording too many times, however, may result in the speaker appearing less natural to the audience. Similarly, the lack of immediate feedback and the loss of direct interaction between the speaker and audience are additional challenges associated with asynchronous presentations.

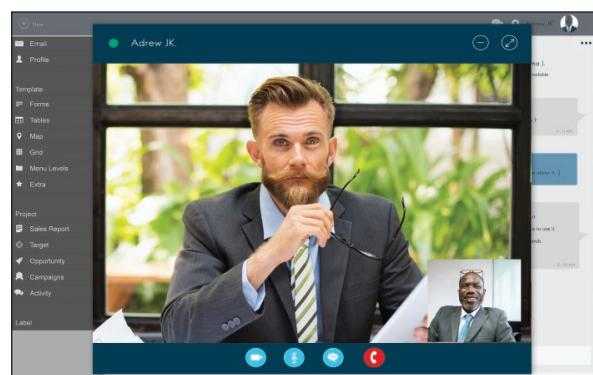
26.2a Choose a Synchronous or Asynchronous Format

26.2b When It's Just You

26.2c When It's You With Others

26.2d When It's an Interview

26.2e When It's a Digital Story



Concerned with delivery? Like most speeches, you get one chance with a synchronous presentation, while an asynchronous one gives you multiple chances to nail your delivery.

26.2b When It's Just You

Like public presentations, online presentations may rely on a single speaker communicating content. When the camera is focused on a single person, it is essential to offer a compelling visual that won't distract your audience. Get ready for your close-up, and keep these suggestions in mind:

- **Make sure you have good lighting.** If the audience can't see you, they're less likely to absorb your message. Check that the light is bright and even.
- **Present in front of a neat background.** Consider what's behind and above you. A simple background is best.
- **Wear colors, clothing, and jewelry that are technology friendly.** Avoid loud clothing patterns. Blue is a safe color for the screen, while green can be tricky. Pastels and shades of brown are generally acceptable, but consider the color of your background, so you don't blend in. Avoid wearing jewelry that moves (like long earrings) or makes noise (such as bangle bracelets) to minimize distractions.
- **Keep your energy up.** Demonstrate your enthusiasm, but be sure to modulate your voice, pausing for emphasis.
- **Refrain from fidgeting.** Unnecessary movement can be distracting. If your whole body is on camera, gesture naturally. If you are sitting, gesture sparingly. If the chair you are seated in swivels, avoid spinning or switch to a chair that is stationary.
- **Know where to look.** Don't look up at the ceiling or down at your notes for more than a couple of seconds. Your eyes should not wander aimlessly. Look at the camera as if it is a person. When presenting online, the camera is your substitute audience.
- **Avoid slideshow speak.** Use photos, graphics, and video clips to capture and maintain interest, but don't read slides aloud. You should remain the key source of information.

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Where's Waldo? Make sure that what the viewer sees online is clear and not distracting.

Most single-person online presentations are kept brief because of the tendency of the audience to become bored if the speaker delivers a monologue lacking in dynamism. As with face-to-face presentations, delivery matters.

26.2c When It's You With Others

Some topics benefit from having multiple speakers involved. Panel presentations find you and usually three to four others discussing a subject, with a moderator also present to ensure that you stay on topic and that no one member monopolizes the discussion. The moderator plays an important role. She or he is present to guide the conversation—not to outshine the participants. The best moderators have a good sense of pacing, making sure that no one panelist talks too long on any one aspect, redirecting when a panelist strays from the topic, weaving questions from the audience seamlessly into the conversation, and following up when appropriate by asking a more probing question.

The advantage of a panel is that different views are shared and commented upon. As with the single-speaker presentation, a panel presentation can be interactive and media rich or not. Synchronous online panels mirror their face-to-face counterparts. Software programs such as Adobe Presenter allow members of the audience to interact with the panelists by asking questions or providing commentary during or after each presentation. If the panel discussion will be recorded and shared, panels may request that the asynchronous audience email comments and questions to the presenters or moderator.

As with a solo online speech, consider the visual aspect of the presentation. Make sure the participants' apparel and manner, as well as the physical space, do not distract from the message.

26.2d When It's an Interview

Sometimes the delivery of information is made more interesting if one person questions or interviews another person about a preselected subject. Just as with face-to-face interviews, the online interview format works best when the interviewee is a credible source and the interviewer is well prepared. During interactive, synchronous interviews, audience members are sometimes able to submit questions they would like the interviewer to ask, often via email, Twitter, or text. Interviews conducted in a conversational manner usually appeal more to audience members than strictly Q&A interviews, and remember not to distract your audience from your message with your apparel or setting.



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Video chat. Interviews online can be just as effective as in person, and multiple people can usually submit questions.

26.2e When It's a Digital Story

Storytelling is a powerful promotional tool. With technology, speakers can integrate audio, video, verbal content, and narration to create story-based presentations. Digital storytelling can highlight the importance of an event or communicate the essence of a particular individual. Featuring such a presentation on YouTube, LinkedIn, or on a personal website increases its reach.

To prepare a digital story, first outline the story's components, describing its plot, characters, setting, and theme or moral. Then prepare a storyboard or structured presentation blueprint detailing the audio, video, and any other illustrative support to be included to enhance dramatic interest. Consider using narrative infographics, which convey more information than typical stylized data presentations because they take full advantage of the capabilities of the visual medium, including its capacity for animation.¹

A special kind of digital story is a digital portfolio. A digital portfolio is designed to showcase or market you, demonstrating your skills and highlighting what you can do. It is particularly helpful in interviewing and other competitive situations. Among the contents of your digital portfolio might be a discussion of who you are, what you hope to accomplish professionally, successes you have experienced, the best thing about working with you, sample reports you are proud of, a training session you designed and/or conducted, and sample letters or testimonials of recognition or praise—all reinforcing and building your personal brand.

COACHING TIP

"Whether speaking online or face to face, the best way to sound like you know what you're talking about is to know what you're talking about."

—Author unknown

Prepare yourself! Though presenting a speech online doesn't change the basics of speechmaking, you now also need to adapt to the demands of whatever technology platform you use. Choose your platform based on its ability to support your presentation goals and keep your audience engaged.

Online Platforms for Presenting

section

26.3

Among the online platforms you should be familiar with are video, podcasts, webinars, and PowerPoint or other graphical presentation software. Let us look at each in turn.

26.3a Video

A well-made or well-chosen video adds impact to a presentation. A site like YouTube is populated with a plethora of presentations including how-to speeches, political statements, civic appeals, and tributes, ranging from amateur videos produced using webcams or cell phones to professionally-produced presentations created using high-definition digital video equipment. Both unsophisticated and sophisticated videos can go viral and spread rapidly across the Internet.

As we have discussed, video can be used successfully for presentations involving any number of people. The greater the number of people involved, however, the more complex the shoot. Users may record directly from a video camera or webcam or use programs such as Vimeo and Panopto, which can record the presentation directly from a computer or other device that has a video camera. Such programs are designed to capture the user as well as what appears on a computer screen, making it easy to incorporate video and other visuals or provide voice-over. Once the recording has been completed, the user can save the file and upload it to YouTube or another distribution platform to share with others.

26.3b Podcast

When video is unavailable, unaffordable, or unnecessary, the online presenter(s) may rely solely on audio for message delivery. A popular audio format is called a **podcast**, a digital audio recording that is made accessible online. The Library of Congress, iTunes, and Stitcher are three of many podcast repositories. Podcasts can feature a single speaker, two speakers, perhaps using the interview format, or a panel. Most news organizations, such as National Public Radio, offer podcast versions of their programs for download. Following this model, you might create a podcast that the members of your class can download. Speakers presenting via podcast can use a script or speak extemporaneously.

Podcasts are relatively easy to create, requiring only a computer with a built-in or plugged-in microphone, free audio-recording software such as Audacity, the ability to save the recording as an audio file or mp3, and a website from which it can be downloaded.

You might also make the podcast part of your rehearsal regimen. Simply record one of your rehearsal sessions, send it to a few friends and family members, and solicit their feedback.

26.3a Video

26.3b Podcast

26.3c Webinar

**26.3d PowerPoint/
Graphical Presentation**

26.3c Webinar

A **webinar** is a conference held online that is viewable by invited guests with a Web connection. Though initially delivered synchronously, webinars can also be saved for later viewing. Webinars can present a single speaker, panel, or group collaborating in real time across time zones. They are especially useful for training seminars when participants are geographically dispersed. An advantage of a webinar is that the facilitator or presenter can obtain feedback from participants, respond to questions, and adjust the webinar content and presentation during the session.

For your presentation you need access to a webinar hosting platform such as GoToMeeting that will provide a Web link or phone number for audience members to use to access the event. Most webinar software also allows you to show slides, incorporate videos, and moderate audience participation. Creating a chat window for participants or encouraging participants to share, tweet, or blog reactions during the online event fosters engagement. Periodically integrating polls, chats, and instant feedback increases interactivity while also letting you gauge the pulse of the remote audience.

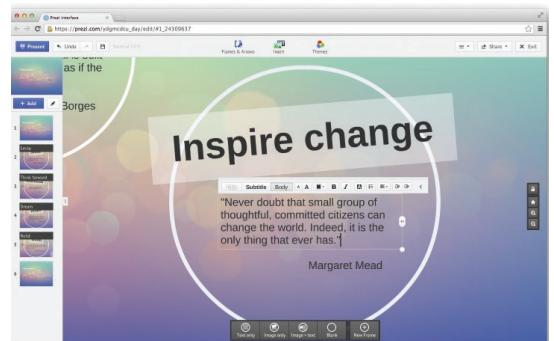


Come together. Webinars are a great way to hold classes online for people spread far apart.

26.3d PowerPoint/Graphical Presentation

Wisely used, slides help maintain a presentation's momentum and help the speaker move through his or her points smoothly. Online presenters often use more visual aids than live presenters in an effort to keep participants fully engaged. PowerPoint presentations can be synchronous or asynchronous. You can record a voice-over to accompany the slides that are saved and given to an audience. Speakers can also use PowerPoint live during the online presentation.

Though PowerPoint has become a presentation staple (sometimes overused in face-to-face presentations), it also may stand alone as a graphic-rich online presentation—with or without audio or video enhancements. Prezi (prezi.com), another Web-based resource for creating dramatic online graphic presentations, offers a free basic version that is easy to use. Many graphical platforms offer user tutorials.



Prezi.com

Text overload. When using PowerPoint or a similar program, be sure not to overwhelm your audience with heavy text paragraphs on your slides.



GAME PLAN

Preparing for a Webinar Presentation

- I've identified the format for my webinar.
- I've organized my information to fit the time constraints.
- I've planned for interactivity and a means by which audience members can ask questions or respond to a poll.
- I've prepared visuals to integrate into the webinar.
- I've prepared an introduction for myself and any other presenters.
- I've prepared an explanation of how a webinar works, its interactive nature, and how the audience can participate by asking questions.
- I've rehearsed and held dry runs prior to holding the webinar.
- I've made a plan to record the webinar to make it available for those unable to participate in real time.



Exercises

PRESENTING ONLINE

Developing your understanding of online presentations and the skills needed to present online will increase your breadth and depth as a speaker.

1. Know What You Need

Using the equipment list in Section 26.1, review the technology available to you. Explore the equipment in your classroom and the media center. Does your classroom feature a Smart Board? If not, does it have a projector and screen? Is there a DVD player? Can you easily stream video? Do you have whatever cables are required or do you need to have them delivered from the media center?

Troubleshoot technology well before you present. Try to anticipate anything that can go wrong during your presentation. The goal is to solve a potential problem before it presents itself.

2. Know Your Options

Explore and discuss the merits of various media platforms or software for the following formats:

- Podcasting: SoundCloud versus iTunes
- Video sharing: YouTube versus Vimeo
- Webinars: GoToMeeting versus WebEx

3. Analyze This

View an online presentation of your choosing, such as a how-to video on YouTube, a TED Talk, or a training video for software. Using a 10-point scale ranging from 1 (totally ineffective) to 10 (totally effective) and the following criteria, evaluate the selected speech or presentation:

1. Adaptation of content for online platform _____
2. Adaptation of speaker to online platform _____
3. Speaker's ability to sustain interest _____
4. Organization of presentation _____
5. Language _____
6. Timeliness of content _____
7. Integration of audio, video, graphical support _____
8. Speaker's physical and vocal delivery _____
9. Quality of recording _____
10. Overall effectiveness _____

4. Approach the Speaker's Stand

Prepare and post online a how-to speech on a technology topic such as “How to Prepare a Podcast” or “How to Post a Video Online.” Each speech should include the following steps:

1. Identification of equipment required
2. Review of software and platform used
3. Clear instructions on preparation and presentation
4. Anything more you believe necessary

RECAP AND REVIEW

- 1. Compare and contrast presenting online and offline.** Online presentations have fewer time, place, and audience constraints than face-to-face speeches, as well as the potential to reach a global audience. An online speech is dependent on technology and the speaker must be aware of his or her facial and body language cues.
- 2. Distinguish among online formats.** Among popular online formats are the single presenter, the panel of presenters, the interview, and digital storytelling. Online speeches can be presented live or be prerecorded.
- 3. Distinguish among online platforms.** The most popular online platforms regularly used for presentations include video, podcasts, and webinars.
- 4. Develop and deliver an online presentation.** Online presentations require many of the same skills, abilities, and preparation as presentations made before live audiences. However, the online presenter must also be versed in the demands and requirements of the technology being used.

KEY TERMS

Asynchronous presentation 457

Podcast 461

Synchronous presentation 457

Webinar 462



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27

Answering Questions

UPON COMPLETING THIS CHAPTER'S TRAINING, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

1. Explain the purpose of the question-and-answer (Q&A) session
2. Determine how best to schedule a Q&A session
3. Use guidelines to manage the Q&A session



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Contents

The question-and-answer (**Q&A**) session plays an integral role in most business and professional talks. It can be enjoyable as well as challenging. Q&A sessions give audience members a voice, affording them the opportunity to ask the speaker questions about his or her remarks and to share their reactions. From both the speaker's and the audience's perspectives, these are real advantages. The Q&A gives the speaker one more crack at winning over the audience and gives the audience another opportunity to assess the speaker's preparedness and expertise. For example, if a speaker's answers leave receivers confused or unconvinced, the speaker may lose ground. Thus, speakers need to be able to voice skillful responses to the questions audience members ask.

COACHING TIP

"Questions are great, but only if you know the answers."

—Laurell K. Hamilton

Be a mind reader! Anticipate the questions audience members will ask you after listening to your speech. Answer questions clearly and competently and receivers will conclude you were prepared, knowledgeable, and confident. Take control of the Q&A session. Keep your focus on the question asked you. Relate every question asked to your goal.

Section 27.1 The Timing of the Q&A Session

- 27.1a Before Presenting, 468
- 27.1b While Presenting, 469
- 27.1c After Presenting, 469

Section 27.2 Managing the Q&A

- 27.2a Anticipate Questions—Especially Hard Ones, 470
- 27.2b Don't Pontificate, 470
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- 27.2h Address Answers to Both the Questioner and the Audience, 472
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section 27.1



27.1a Before Presenting

27.1b While Presenting

27.1c After Presenting

The Timing of the Q&A Session

At what point(s) during your talk should questions from the audience be asked and answered? Should they be asked before, during, or after your presentation? Should they be separate from or part of the presentation itself? The answer to each of these questions is, it depends.

27.1a Before Presenting

Sometimes a speaker solicits questions from the audience in advance, perhaps passing out note cards and asking potential receivers to jot down and submit questions they would like answered. Doing this prior to speaking lets the speaker adapt the talk so it covers the key concerns of receivers.

Other times, to demonstrate their expertise and confidence, speakers solicit questions personally from the audience at the outset of a presentation. If the speaker has prepared effectively, many of the questions asked will be ones the speaker anticipated, and he or she can assure receivers that all their questions will soon be answered.



Raise your hand. Getting questions from the audience prior to your speech can be an effective way to tailor the speech to the crowd's needs.

27.1b While Presenting

A speaker can also allow questions during a presentation. If you are giving a business presentation, for example, your boss may interrupt with a question at any point—and you likely have no choice but to stop and answer it. Although such questions may disrupt your presentation’s flow, you can respond immediately to any concerns, which can keep receivers focused on your message instead of fixating on their objection. However, audience members may ask questions prematurely about points you intend to cover later. When this happens, you have a choice: You can answer the question, or you can tell the audience that you will answer it shortly if they will just be patient for a few moments. For example, you might respond, “Great question. In fact, I’m going to cover that in just a minute.”

What if during your talk a listener raises an irrelevant question—one that could throw your presentation off track? When this happens, you need to take control, by reframing the question to focus on your goal. For example, if you were asked about the effects of diet on childhood diabetes during a speech on Type II diabetes, you could reframe the question noting, “Childhood diabetes is Type 1 diabetes; diet, however, is also consequential for Type II diabetes. . . .”

27.1c After Presenting

Questions can also be held until the presentation’s end. This has a number of benefits:

- You control how and when you share your presentation’s content.
- You avoid being distracted by poorly timed or irrelevant queries.
- You avoid the objection-finder or rude questioner whose goal it is to demonstrate how much she or he knows and focus attention on her- or himself.
- It helps ensure you will complete your talk on time.
- It helps audience members to focus on what you are saying, instead of being preoccupied with formulating questions while you speak—thereby missing key content.

This is not to suggest that saving questions to the end does not also have its drawbacks. Sometimes, for example, if a question occurs to you as an audience member, you find it difficult to maintain your concentration on what the speaker is saying. Another drawback has to do with how receivers remember—or the **primacy-recency factor**. We tend to remember what we hear first and last—losing much of the middle over time. Thus, saving questions to the end makes it more likely receivers will remember how you answered a question, rather than the points you made during your talk.

section **27.2**



27.2a Anticipate Questions—Especially the Hard Ones

27.2b Don't Pontificate

27.2c Understand Every Question Asked

27.2d Give Audience Members the Green Light

27.2e Stay on Course

27.2f Think Through Your Answer

27.2g Keep Defensiveness at Bay

27.2h Address Answers to Both the Questioner and the Audience

27.2i Gracefully Bring the Q&A Session to a Close

Managing the Q&A

Whenever questions are asked, they can pose challenges for you. Some questions may attack your position. Others may be stated so poorly that you have difficulty understanding them. And others may be completely off topic. Whatever their nature, by giving the questioner your full attention while she or he is speaking, and following these guidelines, you will be able to handle most questions posed.

27.2a Anticipate Questions—Especially Hard Ones

Empathy is a speaker's ally. Being able to put yourself in the shoes of audience members will enable you to look at your presentation through their eyes and anticipate questions they will likely ask. For example, what aspects of your remarks might they find confusing? Which might they find objectionable? Which of your points might they like to know more about? Preparing your responses to potential questions is just as important as preparing the presentation itself.

27.2b Don't Pontificate

Every question deserves an answer that demonstrates your respect for the questioner. An answer should never be a put-down. If you belittle or embarrass a questioner, even if the question she or he posed was demeaning, hostile, or has an answer obvious to many in the audience, you lose. Instead of pontificating and attempting to one-up the questioner, work to build support by taking the question seriously and answering politely. You might even offer the questioner a compliment: "I understand why you find this point troublesome. We did too. However, the more we researched, the more evidence we uncovered that told us we were on the right track. Let me share some of that evidence with you."

27.2c Understand Every Question Asked

Rather than multiply confusion, **paraphrase** each question asked you to confirm you understand. "What I hear you asking is . . . Am I correct?" In addition to uncovering if you "get the question," or heard it correctly, restating a question in your own words also helps you provide a frame or context for the question that makes it easier for you to answer and easier for the audience to understand.

27.2d Give Audience Members the Green Light

Adhere to protocol when fielding questions: The first hand up or first question submitted should be the first you answer. But be prepared. Audience members sometimes hesitate to ask questions, fearing asking a question that you or others might consider stupid. Let receivers know that there is no such thing as a stupid question. Help them understand that you hope they will ask questions because your goal is to ensure their understanding. If they still hesitate, ask yourself a question you believe they might want answered, saying something such as “A question you probably have is . . .” Receivers will be pleased you opened the channel.

27.2e Stay on Course

When off track, a question can sidetrack you and your talk, defeating your purpose for speaking. Instead of being drawn off target, respond to every question in a way reflective and supportive of your ultimate goal. You might say, “Let me approach the question this way . . .” If the questioner objects, agree either to meet with the questioner later to discuss the issue or promise to send him information clarifying your position.

27.2f Think Through Your Answer

Use caution, pausing before answering a question, especially a question you find particularly challenging. First, repeat or paraphrase the question asked, and then ask the questioner how she or he might answer the question him- or herself. If needed, you might also defer to another audience member prior to responding yourself. If you don’t know or can’t come up with a good answer, don’t bluff or say “No comment.” Simply respond, “That’s a question I would like to look into. Let me have your contact information, and I will get back to you.”



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Control the traffic. What methods can you use to manage hostile and inappropriate questions while maintaining a healthy dialogue?

27.2g Keep Defensiveness at Bay

Some members of the audience may ask you questions that you don’t like. If this happens and you are asked a hostile question, don’t be put off or get defensive. Maintain your composure, expressing your respect for the questioner, rephrasing the question more appropriately, and responding politely. This will earn you the respect of the audience.



Graceful finish. Smoothly transition toward the end of the Q&A, and let the audience know you're coming to a close.

27.2h Address Answers to Both the Questioner and the Audience

Though a specific individual asked you a question, address your answer to the entire audience. Make initial eye contact with the questioner, but then widen your gaze to encompass everyone in the room. This will connect you to the audience, keep everyone interested and involved, and make it less likely that the person asking the question will become hostile if she or he does not like your answer. It will also decrease the likelihood of the questioner trying to engage you in a one-on-one debate.

27.2i Gracefully Bring the Q&A Session to a Close

A Q&A session should not terminate without warning. Rather than ending abruptly, tell the audience when the Q&A session is about to end. You might say, “I will take two more questions, and then we will have to call it a day.” Take the two questions, closing with a statement that reinforces your message: “It has been a pleasure spending time with you today. I’m glad for the opportunity to answer your questions. I appreciate your willingness to share your thoughts with me.”



GAME PLAN

Prepping for a Q&A Session

- While preparing for and researching my speech, I kept a running list of my own questions, taking note of the ones that were left unanswered.
- I’ve reviewed my speech for potentially confusing language.
- I’ve reviewed all of my research and notes (even material that did not make it into my final draft), so I would have the information needed to answer potential questions.
- I’ve reviewed the guidelines in this chapter and have reserved enough time to conduct a Q&A session, confident in my ability to come up with reliable answers to questions asked.



Exercises

THE QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION

Developing skill in handling the question-and-answer session helps build a speaker's comfort, expertise, and overall credibility. Maintaining composure while handling challenges and clearing up confusion helps receivers view you as confident, competent, and trustworthy. Completing these exercises will pave the way to a more productive Q&A.

1. Vital Questions

Select a recent TED Talk at www.ted.com. Imagine you are a member of the audience. What questions would you want to ask the speaker? Were you the speaker, how would you answer the questions you posed?

2. Anticipate and Prepare

The topic you have been assigned is “Mental Health in the National Football League.” Develop a list of five questions to ask about the subject. After creating your five questions, prepare an information sheet containing details you could consult if asked any one of the five questions.

3. Analyze the Speech: The Interview

Search for a prerecorded interview with a person you admire—a scholar, politician, musician, artist, writer, or actor. Write down the names of the interviewer and interviewee, and assess the effectiveness of the questions asked by the interviewer and the responses given by the interviewee. To what extent did the interviewee do the following?

1. Have facts needed to answer the questions asked
2. Answer questions courteously
3. Display good will
4. Exhibit a lack of defensiveness
5. Acknowledge respect for the interviewer
6. Avoid answering impulsively
7. Communicate credibly

4. Approach the Speaker’s Stand

Attend a presentation at your school. After listening to the speaker(s) present, ask at least one question plus a follow-up question. Using the questions in the previous exercise, critique the speaker’s response to your questions. In a report to the class, share your evaluation, explaining your expectations about how the speaker ought to have answered. Role-play how you would have responded to one of the questions you posed.

RECAP AND REVIEW

1. Explain the purpose of the question-and-answer (Q&A) session.

(Q&A) session. The purpose of the question-and-answer session is to clear up any confusion or misperceptions on the part of members of the audience. It is also the speaker's final opportunity to demonstrate topic mastery and credibility.

2. Determine how best to schedule a Q&A session.

Though usually held at the end of a presentation, the speaker may also field questions prior to or during a speech.

3. Use guidelines to manage the Q&A session.

Effective speakers anticipate tough questions and adhere to certain guidelines when providing answers. They call on questioners in the order that hands were raised or questions were submitted and they don't shy away from answering difficult questions. Good speakers demonstrate their respect for questions. They think through questions to avoid inappropriate responses and keep defensiveness in check. They address answers to the questioner and the audience as a whole. They gracefully close the Q&A session.

KEY TERMS

Paraphrase 470

Primacy-recency factor 469

Q&A 467



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Glossary

Abstraction Something that is vague; language that is neither concrete nor specific

Affirmative side The pro side in a debate; the side speaking in support of a resolution calling for change

After-dinner speech A speech that is relevant to the occasion and designed to entertain

Ageist language Language that discriminates on the basis of age

Alliteration Repetition of the initial consonant sounds in nearby words

Antithesis The presence of opposites within the same or adjoining sentences; the juxtaposition of opposing ideas

Argument *ad hominem* Name-calling; the use of offensive and insulting words to win an argument

Articulation The act of producing individual sounds

Asynchronous presentation An online presentation that is recorded and then viewed at another time

Attending The listening stage during which an individual selects to pay attention to one or more specific aural stimuli

Attitude A mental set or predisposition to respond to something favorably or unfavorably; a readiness to respond positively or negatively

Audience analysis The systematic identification of the demographic and psychographic characteristics of an audience to determine member interests and motivation

Bandwagon appeal An appeal to popular opinion

Bar graph A type of graph used to compare or contrast two or more items or groups

Behavioral objective A desired specific speech outcome; a desired observable and measurable audience response

Belief That which one holds to be true or false, probable or improbable

Body of the speech That portion of the speech made up of and elaborated by the speech's main points

Brainstorming A system of idea generation devised by Alex Osborne

Briefing A short talk providing those with a stake in the outcome a summary of what has been done or still needs to be done to complete a project

Causal reasoning Reasoning that unites two or more events to prove that one or more of them caused the other

Causal transitions Transitions that help show the cause-and-effect relationships between ideas

Cause-and-effect order An organizational pattern in which information is categorized according to whether it is related to a problem's causes or effects

Centering The directing of thoughts internally via a deep or centering breath

Centering breath A deep breath followed by a strong exhalation

Central idea The topic statement of a speech

Channel A pathway through which a message passes

Chart A visual aid used to compress or summarize a large amount of information

Chronological order An organizational format based around time or the order in which things happen

Chronological transitions Transitions that help in understanding the time relationship between ideas

Claim An assertion made in arguing; a debatable conclusion

Closed-ended questions Highly structured questions requiring only that the respondent indicate which of the provided responses most accurately reflects his or her answer to a question

Closed question A highly structured question seeking a short and precise answer such as yes or no

Closure A technique designed to achieve psychological symmetry or balance; the speaker refers in the conclusion of a speech to the same ideas explored during the speech's beginning

Co-culture A group of people who share a culture outside of the dominant culture

Cognitive restructuring A technique designed to redirect thinking away from body sensations and irrational beliefs to beliefs that promote growth

Commencement address A speech given to a graduating class

Common ground The concerns and interests shared by the speaker and the audience

Communication A process that involves the attempted sharing of information; the means by which people generate meaning

Complementary transitions Transitions that help the speaker add one idea to the next

Computer-generated graphics The use of technology in creating graphics

Concrete A description attributed to words that evoke precise meaning; language that is free of jargon

Conclusion The ending of a speech; designed to reinforce the central idea or thesis, motivate an appropriate audience response, and achieve closure

Configural formats Listener-responsible organizational formats in which examples and stories carry the crux of a message

Connotative meaning Personal meaning; meaning that is subjective and variable

Contrasting transitions Transitions that show how the idea that follows differs from the ones that precede it

Coordinate points Points in an outline that are of equal weight or substance

Coordination The principle establishing that main points should be relatively equal in importance

Covert lie An unspoken lie; a lie designed to conceal sensitive information that needs to be said but isn't

Credibility Audience judgments of a speaker's competence, character, and charisma

Critical thinking The process of arriving at a judgment only after an honest evaluation of alternatives; the exhibiting of careful and deliberate evaluation of a claim

Cultural diversity The recognition and valuing of difference

Cultural identity The internalization of culturally appropriate beliefs, values, and roles acquired through interacting with members of a cultural group; a product of group membership

Culture The system of knowledge, beliefs, values, attitudes, behavior, and artifacts that the members of a society learn, accept, and use in daily life

Debate A form of argument in which two sides take turns presenting pro and con positions, with each side competing to win adherents

Decision-making group A group whose members seek a consensus regarding what the group should or should not do to solve a problem

Deductive reasoning Reasoning that takes a known idea or principle and applies it to a situation; reasoning that moves from the general to the specific

Deferred-thesis pattern A kind of configural format in which the main points of a speech gradually build to the speaker's thesis

Definitions Statements used to clarify the meaning of words and concepts

Demographic profile A composite of audience characteristics including age; gender; educational level; racial, ethnic or cultural ties; group affiliations; and socioeconomic background

Denotative meaning The dictionary meaning of a word

Derived credibility	Audience perception of a speaker's credibility during the giving of a speech	Expert testimony	Testimony provided by sources recognized as authorities on the topic
Descriptions	Words that evoke fresh imagery or sensory response	Explanations	Clarifying words
Dialect	A speech pattern characteristic of a group of people from a particular area or of a specific ethnicity	Extemporaneous outline	An outline containing brief notes, also known as speaker notes, to remind the speaker of key parts of the speech and references
Drawings and maps	Visual aids used to illustrate differences, movements, or geographic information	Extemporaneous speaking	Speaking that is planned and rehearsed but delivered using only a few notes
Early concurrence	The tendency to conclude discussion prematurely	Fact-finding group	A group whose members share thoughts and information to enhance understanding and learning
Effects of communication	Communication outcomes	False dichotomy	A proposition that requires the audience to choose between two options when in reality there are many
Emblems	Nonverbal symbols with direct translations that are culturally learned	False division	A false division suggesting that if something is true of the whole, it is also true of one or more of the parts
Ethical communication	Communication that presents ideas fairly; the revealing of information receivers need to assess both the message and speaker critically	Feedback	Information received in response to a sent message
Ethical speechmaking	Speech that involves the responsible handling of information and an awareness of the outcomes or consequences of a speech	Field of experience	The sum of all experiences; the attitudes, values, and lessons one brings to a situation
Ethics	An exploration of how values distinguish actions; a society's notions about the rightness and wrongness of behavior	Figurative analogy	An analogy comparing two things that are distinctively dissimilar
Ethnocentricity	A belief that one's culture is better than others	Figurative language	Words that facilitate the picturing of meaning
Ethnocentrism	Judging another culture solely by the standards of your own culture	Framing theory	A theory focusing on the shaping of experience to promote an interpretation
Ethos	The ability to convince the audience of your good character or credibility	General purpose	The overall purpose of a speech, such as to inform, persuade, or entertain
Eulogy	A special form of tribute speech that pays tribute to a deceased person, usually given at a gravesite or at a memorial service	Glittering generality	The use of positive association designed to encourage idea acceptance
Euphemism	An indirect expression that makes it easier to handle unpleasant subjects	Graphs	Visual aids that are designed to communicate statistical information, illustrate trends, and/or demonstrate patterns
Evaluating	The process of using critical thinking skills to weigh a message's worth	Groupthink	The tendency to let a desire for consensus override careful analysis and reasoned decision making
Event/person speech	A speech designed around a remarkable person or compelling event	Hasty generalization	The act of being too quick to draw an inference; jumping to a conclusion on the basis of too little evidence
Evidence	Material used to validate a claim		

Healthy group A group in which members support one another, make decisions together, trust one another, have open communication, and aim to excel

Hearing An involuntary physiological process

Heterogeneous audience An audience whose members possess dissimilar characteristics, rich in age, attitude, value, and knowledge diversity

High-context communication Communication that avoids confrontation; communication that relies on indirect messages

Homogeneous audience An audience whose members possess similar characteristics such as age, attitude, value, and knowledge similarity

Human visual aid The use of a real person as a visual or audio aid

Hyperbole Extreme exaggeration

Hypothetical examples Examples that have not actually occurred, but might

Idea/concept speech A speech given to explain or define something intangible or abstract

"I" language Language of responsibility and ownership

Illustrations Extended examples or narratives

Illustrators Gestures to reinforce, clarify, describe, and demonstrate the meaning of your words

Immediacy A sense of closeness

Impromptu speaking Speaking that is “off the cuff” and accomplished with little or no notice

Inductive reasoning Reasoning that relies on observation and specific instances to build an argument; reasoning progressing from specific observations to a conclusion

Infographic A composite of information, illustration, and design

Information overload Being given too much information to process or handle

Information underload Being given too little information; underestimating the amount of information needed

Informative speech A speech designed to impart new information, a new skill, or a fresh way of thinking about something

Initial credibility The receiver’s perception of a speaker’s credibility prior to his or her speaking

Internal preview A speech segment that helps the speaker hold a speech together by indicating what to look for as a speech progresses

Internal summary A speech segment that helps the speaker clarify or emphasize what was said

Interpreting A listening stage during which the focus is on meaning and the decoding of the speaker’s message

Interview A meeting during which questions are asked and answered by both interviewer and interviewee

Introduction The opening of a speech; designed to capture the audience’s attention, build credibility, orient receivers to what is to follow

Jargon and technospeak Types of specialized language clear only to people with specific knowledge

Keynote address A speech usually given at a conference and designed to generate enthusiasm for and commitment to a desired outcome

Kinesics The study of body language or human body motion, including gestures, body movements, facial expressions, eye behavior, and posture

Lay testimony Peer testimony, the opinions of “ordinary people”

Linear formats Speech formats by which the main points relate to the topic sentence

Line graph A graph that shows trends over time

Listening A voluntary mental process occurring in stages

Literal analogy An analogy comparing two things from similar classes

Logical fallacy A flawed reason

Logos Logical proof demonstrating the reasonableness of argument(s)

Low-context communication Communication that is direct and addresses issues head-on

Main points The central themes of a speech; the key ideas that serve as the outline's framework; the subtopics directly supporting the thesis

Maintenance leadership behaviors Roles focused on maintaining the group, including expressing agreement and support

Manuscript reading A speech in which the speaker delivers a written manuscript word for word

Marginalized group A group whose members feel like outsiders

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs A pyramid progressing from the most basic to the most sophisticated human needs

Message The content of communication

Metaphor A direct comparison between two things or ideas

Monroe's Motivated Sequence An organizational framework particularly effective in moving receivers toward accepting and acting on a proposition of policy

Narrative An extended example or illustration; a story describing what people are doing and why

Narrative pattern A configural format in which the speaker tells a story or series of stories without stating a thesis or identifying main points

Negative side The side in a debate seeking to maintain the status quo

Noise Anything that interferes with the ability to send or receive a message

Object speech A speech about something tangible

One-sided presentation A presentation offering only a single perspective on an issue

Onomatopoeia A word or words that imitate natural sounds

Open-ended questions Questions allowing a respondent to answer fully and in his or her own words

Open question A question offering freedom in answering by calling for more than a one-word response

Outline A speech skeleton on which main ideas and support are hung

Overt lie A deliberate lie; a distortion of the facts

Paralinguistics The study of messages sent using vocal cues

Parallelism Words, phrases, or sentences that parallel or balance each other; repetition of words, phrases, or sentences

Paraphrase Restating material in your own words

Pathos The ability to develop empathy and passion in others

Peer testimony Testimony provided by lay or ordinary people who possess firsthand experience on a subject

Performance anxiety A variant of communication anxiety; fear of presenting a speech

Persuasion The deliberate attempt to change or reinforce attitudes, beliefs, values, or behavior

Pictograph A simplified infographic; a pictorial representation of a graph's subject

Pie graph A graph used to illustrate percentages of a whole or distribution patterns

Pitch The highness or lowness of the voice on a tonal scale; a voice's upward or downward inflection

Pitch, a A kind of persuasive or sales presentation during which the speaker attempts to obtain an endorsement for a proposal

Plagiarism The deliberate or accidental claiming of another's words or ideas as one's own

Podcast A digital audio recording accessible to Web users

Political correctness The act of using words that are polite and convey respect for the needs and interests of different groups

Position presentation A presentation in which the speaker delivers a persuasive argument on a controversial issue

Poster presentation A graphically based approach to presenting information or research

Post hoc ergo propter hoc A logical fallacy asserting that because one event preceded another, it caused it

Presentation aids Audio and visual stimuli that support and enhance speech content

Primacy-recency factor The tendency to remember information that is placed at the beginning and end of a speech better than the information that is placed in the middle of the speech

Primary question A question that introduces a topic or area for exploration

Primary research Original research involving the collection of firsthand data

Probing question A question that seeks more information

Problem-solution order An organizational format that divides information into two main parts, the problem and its solution

Process anxiety Fear of preparing a speech

Process/procedure speech A speech designed to convey how something works or how to do something

Pronunciation The accepted way to sound a word; identifying whether the production of the individual sounds used to form a word is correct

Proposition The relationship the speaker wishes to establish between accepted facts and his or her desired conclusions

Proposition of fact An assertion that something does or does not exist, is or is not true, or is or not of value; an effort to prove something factual

Proposition of policy A recommendation for change or no change; a type of persuasive speech focusing on what speaker thinks should be done

Proposition of value An assertion of a statement's worth; a type of persuasive speech rendering a judgment about something

Proxemics The study of space and distance in communication

Psychographics A description of values, beliefs, and interests, including how members of an audience see themselves, their attitudes, and motives

Public speaking anxiety A variant of communication anxiety, made up of process and performance anxiety

Q&A A question-and-answer session

Racist language Language discriminatory toward the members of a race; words that express bigoted views

Rate The speed at which words are spoken

Reasoning from analogy The process of comparing like things and concluding that because they are comparable in a number of ways, they also are comparable in another, new respect

Reasons approach The presentation of reasons to justify a speech's goal

Receiver The recipient of a message; a party to communication

Red herring A distraction; the process of leading the audience to consider an irrelevant issue

Reflective Thinking Framework A problem-solving system advanced by John Dewey

Refutation format The style of debate when one side points out the flaws in the other side's arguments and offers new evidence to support its own claim

Remembering The mental saving of a message for further use

Repetition Restatement of the exact same words

Report A summary of what you have learned or accomplished

Responding The process of replying and providing feedback

Restatement Rephrasing an idea in different words to more fully explain it

Rhetorical questions Questions requiring no overt answer or response

Risky shift A group phenomenon in which a group makes a decision that is riskier than an individual would make if working alone

Scaled questions Questions enabling respondents to indicate their views along a continuum or scale

Secondary question A probing question; a question following up on a primary question

Secondary research Research carried out with existing data such as published statistics, texts, and

articles by experts together with media and personal documents

Self-analysis A means of identifying what is important to you by using a series of self-investigation strategies

Self-talk Internal communication; intrapersonal communication

Service learning A learning project addressing a community or public agency need

Sexist language Language that suggests the sexes are unequal and that one gender has more status and value and is more capable than another

Signposts Signaling cues designed to help focus the attention of receivers

Simile An indirect comparison of dissimilar things usually with the words *like* or *as*

Situational/cultural context The setting for communication; the communication environment

Slippery slope An erroneous assertion that one action will set in motion a chain of events

Small group A limited number of people who communicate over time to make decisions and accomplish goals

Sound bite speaking A short clip of speech promoting or spinning a perspective

Source The message originator

Spatial order An organizational framework that uses space as the means of arrangement

Speaking from memory Making a speech that is committed to memory and then spoken without using any notes

Specific purpose A single sentence or infinitive phrase identifying the speaker's goal

Speech of acceptance A speech given in response to a speech of presentation

Speech of introduction A speech designed to create a desire among audience members to listen to a featured speaker

Speech of presentation A speech presenting an award

Speech of tribute A form of commemorative speaking honoring a living or dead person or an event

Speech-thought differential The difference between speaking speed and thinking speed

Spotlighting A sexist language practice used to reinforce inequality

S.T.A.R. An acronym for answering interview questions; the letters in S.T.A.R. stand for situation, task, action, and result

Statistics Numbers summarizing a group of observations

Storytelling A means of communicating a complex idea clearly and powerfully through words and images

Subordinate points Information supportive of the main points in a speech; the foundation on which larger ideas are constructed

Subordination The support underlying an outline's main points

Syllogism A form of deductive reasoning containing a major premise, minor premise, and claim

Synchronous presentation An online presentation delivered in real time

Task leadership behaviors Roles that advance the group's completion of its task

Terminal credibility The audience's perception of a speaker's credibility after listening to his or her speech

Testimony The use of opinions of others to support positions the speaker is taking or to reinforce claims the speaker is making

Thesis A clear statement or claim about a topic; a means of dividing a speech into its major components

Thesis statement The expression of a speech's central idea; the claim or core idea of a speech

Thought stopping A technique designed to control speech anxiety; an example of cognitive restructuring

Topical order An organizational pattern composed of a series of topics related to the subject

Toulmin's Reasonable Argument Model A model describing the parts of an argument

Transitions Words that bridge ideas

Triangle of Meaning The model depicting the relationship that exists among words, things, and thoughts

Twitter speak A sound bite containing no more than 140 characters

Two-sided presentation A presentation containing two alternative perspectives

Understanding A stage in listening

Understatement Drawing attention to an idea by minimizing its importance

Values Core beliefs; the standards we use to judge that which is good and bad, worthwhile and worthless, ethical and unethical, right and wrong

Volume The loudness or softness of the voice; vocal intensity

Webinar An online conference

Web pattern A configural format in which threads of thought refer back to the speaker's central purpose

"We" language Language indicating shared responsibility

Wiki A collaborative website whose content is composed and edited by members of the public

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