

Presentations and Public Speaking

Useful Public Speaking Vocabulary

Audience Engagement
Bookending
Composure
Delivery
Diction
Dynamism
Enunciation
Eye Contact

Fluency
Gestures
Hook
Inflection
Intonation
Pace
Posture
Pronunciation

Rhetorical question(s)
Rhetorical strategies
Signposting
Transitions
Vocal Fry
Vocal Fillers
Volume

Consider Your Assignment: What type of speech are you giving?

- *Informative*: If your purpose is to inform the audience, you will seek to share ideas and knowledge, extend understanding, shape perceptions, or clarify opinions. Select clear, citable facts and data to present. Presentations of research or scholarly work fall into this category.
- *Persuasive*: When attempting to influence attitudes or behaviors, urge commitment or action, or encourage change, you will be giving a persuasive speech. These speaking occasions require you to think about your audience, consider opposing ideas, and present support for your opinions. Debates and argumentative speeches fall into this category.
- *Ceremonial*: Involves the celebration of events and special occasions, the recognition of heroes or heroines, revitalization of group commitments, and the inspiration of others. Graduation speeches, award speeches, or those celebrating achievements fall into this category.

Note: You may use a blend of these types as you develop your speech.

Prepare Your Materials, Practice Your Delivery, & Present Confidently: How can you engage the audience and give an effective presentation?

- 1) **Topic**: Choose a topic that is important to you and your listeners.
- 2) **Purpose**: Decide on the purpose of your speech and your intended outcome.
- 3) **Audience**: Consider your audience—age, location, occupation, common values, potential controversies, etc.
- 4) **Content**: Select the information you will use in the body of your speech—quotes, facts, examples, testimony, allegory, stories, humor, etc., and consider what will be an appropriate tone and length to engage your audience.
Note on Visual/audio Materials: If using visual aids such as handouts or PowerPoint, keep your designs simple and easy to understand. Try not to overcrowd PowerPoint slides and include content selectively, If you use video clips, make sure they are short and explicitly establish the relevance to your topic.
- 5) **Develop the Body of the Speech**: Organize your points and supportive evidence/anecdotes in a logical order and plan out the body of the speech.
- 6) **Develop the Introduction & Conclusion**: Create a meaningful introduction and conclusion; consider how to grab attention meaningfully in the opening moments (hook) and leave listeners with some important ideas to take with them in the closing moments.

- 7) **Organization & Structure:** Create a working outline of your speaking notes at this stage. Use this part of the process to experiment with the order, development, and style of your speech. This is a great time to get feedback on your project! As you create and refine your outline, make sure you know which method of presenting you plan to use (see step 8).

Basic components to include in an outline:

- I. Introduction
 - a. Hook
 - b. Topic (relate topic to self and audience)
 - c. Main Idea (thesis, call to action)
 - d. Preview of points
 - II. First Main Point (Consider using **transitions & signposting** as you plan your content)
 - a. Plan content here
 - b. Plan content here
 - c. Plan content here
 - III. Second Main Point (continue to develop your content under each point)
 - IV. Third Main Point
 - V. Conclusion
 - a. Briefly summarize points & restate main idea (in new words) or refer back to something mentioned in the introduction (a technique called **bookending**)
 - b. Emphasize the message and importance of your speech
 - c. Leave the audience with something to think about
 - d. Refer to or briefly discuss your references
 - e. Thank the audience in a meaningful way
 - f. Invite questions if appropriate for the occasion
- 8) **Method:** In most cases you should not read your speech word-for-word from a paper; instead, practice a great deal and prepare note cards or use a *concise* speaking outline)
Note: There are four basic methods of presenting—**manuscript** (reading word for word from a script—not recommended), **memorized** (committing the speech to memory and using no speaking notes—also not recommended), **extemporaneous** (prepared ahead of time and delivered from a set of notes—RECOMMENDED STYLE), and **impromptu** (“off the cuff” speaking where you are given no or limited time to prepare the content and deliver the speech).
- 9) **Rehearsal:** As you finalize your speaking notes, start practicing your speech. Practice presenting out loud using appropriate pauses and gestures, good posture, effective eye contact, and a well-polished delivery. Consider the importance of tone and inflection as you deliver your content—monotone speakers do not impart content as meaningfully as dynamic speakers. **Pro Tip:** Practice four times, back-to-back, every time you rehearse.
- 10) **Delivering the Final Speech:** Before the day of your presentation, check your materials carefully and save or submit electronic copies as needed. Get good rest the night before your speech, and make sure you’ve met basic needs in the hours before presenting (eating, drinking, bathroom). It’s a good idea to have some water with you when delivering your speech. Never chew gum when presenting. It is recommended that you do not wear hats that block your face when presenting. Dress appropriately for the speaking occasion, arrive early, and have all materials ready to go well in advance.