



Center for Writing and Speaking

P NO. 1 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Speech Anxiety

Why am I so nervous about this speech?

Roughly 70% of people experience some sort of speech anxiety; what you are experiencing is totally normal. Here's what causes this feeling:

- **Worrisome Thoughts**—fear of negative evaluation and failure or the feeling that you won't be able to meet expectations
- **Performance Orientation**—assuming that the audience expects your speech/presentation to be perfectly written and delivered
- **Perceived Lack of Skills**—feeling that you lack adequate speaking ability or knowledge of your topic
- **Physical Nervousness**—physical reactions such as trembling hands, nausea, rapid heartbeat, wavering voice, and shortness of breath are familiar as products of anxiety, but can also contribute to making you more nervous because you feel out of control
- **Situational aspects of the circumstance or the audience**—novelty (because it's unknown), conspicuousness (fear of being the center of attention), and audience characteristics such as size, status, similarity, or formality

How can I manage my anxiety?

The best advice is to prepare well in advance, practice over a period of days, and take care of yourself. Here are some specific tips:

In the Short Run:

- **Take deep abdominal breaths**—Take 3-4 deep breaths to help your mind and body relax.
- **Use physical exercise**—Take a brisk walk around the quad or some place outside. Press your palms together and release or tense of all of your muscles while sitting or standing and then release.
- **Mental rehearsal**—Mentally prepare yourself by envisioning yourself giving a successful speech from start to end.
- **Take good care of yourself**—Make sure you have slept well the night before, had a balanced meal, are hydrated, etc.

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Speech Anxiety, Continued

In the Long Run:

- **Preparation**—Work on your presentation well in advance and conduct ample research so that you feel comfortable with the material.
- **Get interpersonal support**—Have a social buffer of friends, family, and hall mates that you can talk to about your anxiety. Gather positive affirmations from them and believe in yourself.
- **Think positive thoughts**—Instead of fearing that your speech will be an absolute disaster, replace the image with images of successful *communication*, not performance--speaking is about contributing to the larger dialogue on your topic, not just memorizing rote material.
- **Physical exercise**—Follow an exercise routine to help your body deal with stressful situations and give you more mental strength and serenity.
- **Skills Training**—Take a Public Speaking class, work with a CWS tutor to learn more about and practice public speaking, or read materials such as books, articles, handouts, etc. that help you hone speaking skills.

How do I conceal my speech anxiety?

You will feel like members of the audience will notice more of your nervousness than they actually can, but here are some tips to minimize symptoms while you give your speech:

- If you are holding a **full-sized sheet of paper** in one or both hands, it will be hard to hide if your hands are shaking because you'll inadvertently shake the paper. If you have a podium available, try **resting the paper on the podium** and then gripping the podium (lightly) or keeping your hands out of view, except when you decide to emphasize your words with appropriate gestures.
- If you have portions of your **speech written on cards**, try **holding the cards with both hands**. Since notecards are smaller and you're holding them with both hands, tremors will be less visible to the audience.
- If your **voice quavers or cracks** while you are speaking, try **using more air and speaking at a slightly louder volume** than you might be inclined to do. When you are nervous, you are more likely to take shallow breaths and speak quietly, which can cause your voice to tremble or squeak. The combination of volume and force can stabilize your voice and give you a better speaking presence.

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Basic Speech Outline

This basic speech outline will help you start thinking and organizing your presentation. Remember, your audience will not see paragraph indentations, commas, or any of these visual cues used in written communication, so it is crucial that your outline is clear and concise to keep your audience on track. While looking at an outline one might assume that you begin with main points and work your way down to the evidence, in reality it is the other way. Outlines begin with evidence that support the claims (main points or sub-points) you identify in your speech. Do not begin creating your outline with the introduction! Think about your time limits and what information is most important; it is generally best to stick to 3-5 main points.

I. Introduction

- A. Attention getter – a rhetorical strategy for capturing an audience’s attention
- B. Thesis – the thesis captures the main idea that you are speaking about
- C. Motivation – this provides a reason why the audience should listen
- D. Preview – a brief overview of the main points of your speech
- E. Transition – a complete sentence that connects this with the next part of your speech

II. Body

- A. First Main Point (worded as a claim)
 - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim, supports main point)
 - a. Evidence supporting sub-point
 - b. Evidence supporting sub-point
 - 2. Any other potential sub-points, explained the same way as 1.
 - 3. Transition sentence
- B. Second Main Point (worded as a claim)
 - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim; supports main point)
(Continue to follow organization of First Main Point)
 - 3. Transition sentence
- C. Third Main Point (worded as a claim)
 - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim; supports main point)
(Continue to follow organization of First Main Point)
 - 3. Transition sentence

III. Conclusion

- A. Summary – brief review of the main points
- B. Closure – brings the speech to its completion; lets the audience know the speech is over

This simple format will allow you to organize your thoughts effectively. If you have any questions, or just want to practice your presentation, you can always book a CWS appointment!

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General Tips for Improving Your Presentation

Outline:

Create a speaking outline that is different than your writing outline. You will need to reorganize the information for the presentation, making sure that the audience can follow your argument. Also, do not read your speech. Most beginning (and some seasoned!) speakers are not good at reading speeches from a manuscript. Instead, sketch out an outline for the speech and talk to your audience based on that outline. For particularly complicated parts, you can read small sections. This takes practice, so give yourself plenty of time to work on practicing the presentation. In addition, note cards are great tools and are still professional if used in moderation.

Provide Background Information:

Translate for your audience. Don't get wrapped up in your own paper. Think about who you are speaking to and what type of background information they do/do not need.

Support Material:

Use support material to keep your audience interested. Develop your ideas with stories, examples, vivid descriptions, statistics, etc.

Delivery:

Start and end with a bang. If you seem unexcited about speaking, your audience certainly won't be interested in listening to you. Have an interesting and well-practiced introduction and conclusion ready to go. Start and end with good energy, eye contact, and volume.

Visual Aids:

Don't use a visual aid (PowerPoint) for shorter speeches (2-5 minutes). If it doesn't add something to the speech, there's no reason to use it. However, it may be a good idea to use visuals for longer presentations.

Practice:

Practice your speech in front of someone else. They will be able to give you feedback and assure you that you are communicating effectively. The Center for Writing and Speaking staff is happy to listen to speeches.

Time Yourself:

Make sure that you know the time limits/expectations for the speaking occasion and that you stick to them. Also, be aware that different people react in different ways to nervousness. Some people talk a lot more when nervous, while others speed through their presentations.

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General Tips for Improving Your Presentation, Continued

Speak up:

Volume makes you appear to be more confident (even when your stomach is doing flip-flops) and can make that shaky voice go away. Don't forget to breathe—it makes all the difference.

Record yourself:

Take a video or a voice recording to hear how you might sound to the audience. This will also allow you to catch any excessive vocal fillers (um, uh, like, etc.) or long pauses.

Dress Appropriately:

Take note of your appearance on the day of the presentation. Think about what you are wearing (some suggest dressing one step above your audience), how you are standing, how you are using hand gestures, etc.

Fight Speech Anxiety:

Deal with nervousness by being well-prepared, visualizing yourself giving a successful speech, and taking deep breaths.

Remember, for more specific advice, visit the Center for Writing and Speaking and/or consult out other Public Speaking handouts.

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How to Motivate Audiences

In the 1930s Alan H. Monroe has developed a sequence for organizing persuasive speeches in order to maximize their motivational power. His design was influenced by John Dewey's reflective thinking sequence (a problem-solving method) and Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (a basic system addressing human motivation). Monroe's motivated sequence is still a very popular method for organizing messages that seek to influence audiences or move them to action. This handout is a step-by-step guide to crafting your speech to follow Monroe's motivated sequence.

I. Attention

Create interest in the topic and desire to attend to the problem. Establish your credibility and connection to the topic, and, if applicable, address the audience's psychological states or predispositions to the topic.

II. Need

The purpose of this step is to create or develop the problem. It is an analysis of what is wrong and how these wrongs affect the individual's interests and desires. In this step you relate your subject to the vital concerns and interests of your audience. You should:

1. **State need**—a clear statement of need or problem
2. **Illustrate**—use examples that describe the need
3. **Elaborate**—use additional examples and supporting materials (statistics and testimony) to show extent of need; you must show your audience how this is a severe problem
4. **Point**—use convincing demonstrations of how the need directly affects the audience's health, happiness, welfare-motivational appeals work well here

III. Satisfaction

The purpose of this statement is to state the proposition (what you want the audience to think, believe, or do) that will alleviate the problem and satisfy individuals' interests, wants, and desires. You should:

1. **State the proposition**—what you want from the audience
2. **Explain your proposal**
3. **Show how it meets the problem pointed out in the need step**
4. **Give examples** showing how your proposal **has worked or can work effectively**—use facts, figures, and the testimony of experts

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How to Motivate Audiences, Continued

IV. Visualization

The function of the visualization step is to intensify desire and seek belief or action from your audience. To accomplish this you need to project into the future and describe the results of your proposal from the last step. The visualization step should describe:

1. What the world would look like and/or feel like if the proposition was believed or followed.

OR

2. What the world would look like if the proposition was not believed or followed. You must state the benefits of the proposition; it is optional to describe the dangers of not accepting the proposition.

V. Action

This step is a final call for commitment or a call to action. As in the conclusion of an informative speech, you should restate the proposition or thesis and end with a clincher-type statement. The action step may use one or more of the following devices:

1. **Challenge** or **appeal** to perform an action
2. **Quotation** that highlights the severity or appeal of action
3. **Illustration** that inspires or frightens
4. **Summary** of proposition
5. **Steps to achieving proposition**



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Introductions and Conclusions

INTRODUCTION

First impressions are very important, especially in public speaking. Introductions are your best chance to catch your audience's attention, and build your own confidence. In general, an introduction should consist of the following:

- Attention getter
- Topic introduction
- Establishment of your credibility
- Thesis statement
- Speech preview

Grab your audience's attention:

- Relate the topic to the audience. Your audience will pay attention to something that relates to them directly. Try using vivid language, shocking statistics, make your subject personal, or ask a rhetorical question.
Ex: "Shut your eyes and imagine you are trapped in a cold, dark cell..."
Ex: "Have you ever felt so stressed out during finals that you thought you couldn't make it through that last exam?"
- Use quotations or stories. They are an effective and easy way to pique the interest of the audience.
Ex: "As Abraham Lincoln once said, 'a house divided against itself cannot stand.'"

Introduce your topic:

After you have the audience's attention, reel them in with a powerful introduction to your topic.

Ex: "Just as President Lincoln said, our country needs to pull together during these trying times."

Establishing credibility:

Credibility is, according to Stephen Lucas's book, *The Art of Public Speaking*, "the audience's perception of whether a speaker is qualified to speak on a given topic." Credibility can be based on your own life experiences, affiliations, or scholarship.

Ex: "Protecting animals from cruelty has always been very personal to me. During my time as a volunteer with the Humane Society, I saw many animals that had been neglected and abused."

Thesis statement and speech preview:

Your thesis statement is simply a statement in the introduction that identifies the main points to be spoken on. Laying out exactly what will be talked about is important because the audience has nothing in front of them to follow along.

Ex: "In order to understand the importance of tax reform we will first look at the history of taxes, then examine why the current system is failing us and, finally, explore some alternatives."

(continued on reverse)

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Introductions and Conclusions, Continued

CONCLUSION

Your conclusion is the part of your speech the audience is most likely to remember. Therefore, the conclusion must be well planned out. A conclusion serves three purposes:

- Give the audience one last opportunity to understand the material.
- Provide the audience with a course of action.
- Let the audience know that the speech is ending.

Ask yourself this: What do you want the audience to walk out of the room remembering? That should help determine your concluding remarks.

Understanding the material:

This is best accomplished through a summary statement. Restating the main points synthesizes the information (as well as your arguments) for your audience.

Ex: “As we’ve seen during our examination of animal cruelty laws, there are many reasons an animal might be harmed, the majority of which are avoidable. These reasons include the maturity of pet owners, cultural ideas about pets, and other circumstances, like the owner’s death.”

Course of Action:

Here is your chance to take your speech to the next level and really make it count. Tell your audience what they can do with their new found knowledge.

Ex: “Things don’t have to stay this way. If what I have said about animal cruelty has moved you, donate your time or money to the local animal shelter.”

Ex: “Now that you know a little bit about the macrobiotic life forms in our pond, why not go to gogreen.com to learn ways to take advantages of their fertilization properties.”

Ending the speech:

By this point in your speech, you need a memorable statement to stick with your audience and indicate that your speech is over. Saying something simple, such as “In conclusion,” “In closing,” or “Let me end by saying” gives you a graceful and clear way to end your speech. Linking back to your introduction is an easy way to make your speech seem more polished and well planned.

Ex: “In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln’s quote concerning a house divided is especially important in our current time. We cannot expect to run a country when the working class are continuously exploited by the owning class, with their opportunities diminished and voices suffocated. Unless we are all equal, secure, and treated as humans, this nation will fall.”



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Speech Transitions

Transitions are your way of letting your audience know that you are changing ideas. Here are some guidelines for creating great transitions:

- It is generally best to write clear and concise complete sentences for your transitions. Your presentation organization should be crystal clear to the audience.
- In writing, the transition sentence could be the last sentence of a paragraph, the first sentence of the next one, or both. Since you introduce new ideas in every paragraph, it is vital to write concise transitions that ease the reader through the shifts.
- Use transitions every time you change ideas. As a general rule, you should use transitions after your introduction, between each main point, and before your conclusion.

Here are some suggestions for transition styles:

- **Review-Preview:** What you just said, then what you are about to say.

Example: *Now that we've established a need for fundraising, let's see which fundraisers might be most effective. I will focus on two types of fundraisers: silent auctions and sales.*

Example: *In short, fundraising efforts are needed because of budget reductions. Next, we'll look at our fundraising options.*

- **Rhetorical Questions:** A leading question that doesn't invite an actual response followed by the answer that you want.

Example: *Can a system designed to exploit the vulnerable really be called society? Not according to Rousseau.*

Example: *But couldn't other theories explain this discrepancy? They can certainly try, but only Zen Buddhism offers a full explanation.*

- **Signposting:** By including certain words in your transitions, you can alert your audience that you are about to switch ideas. Start with a signpost word and then complete the sentence for a transition. Signpost words are: next, first, last, we now turn, in the other hand, finally, now let's consider, if you think that's shocking, similarly, and yet, altogether, at present, etc.

Example: *Keeping these points in mind about Japanese internment camps, let's look at their historical context.*

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Transitions, Continued

Example: *Now that we understand differential equations, consider this problem.*

- **Themed transitions:** Be creative! Some speakers choose to carry out a theme throughout the speech.

Example: *Let's begin our journey by looking at the panhandle of Texas...The next stop on our journey is East Texas, known for its lush forests...Next we will drive down to South Texas to explore the Valley...etc.*

- **Story or example:** Another option is to carry a story or example throughout the speech. Let's say you tell a shocking story about a college student named Sara contracting bacterial meningitis in the introduction. The transitions might look something like this:

Examples: *Like Sara, you are at risk for contracting bacterial meningitis... Let's talk more specifically about how you can contract the disease... Unlike Sara, you have the ability to prevent bacterial meningitis... So, I encourage you to keep Sara's story in mind as you make decisions over the next few weeks.*

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Repetition as a Rhetorical Device

Speakers often forget the power of using repetition in speeches because of the negative stereotypes we have with being repetitive. Repetition means bounding, nagging, being redundant and boring. Yet we forget that some of the world's best speeches have utilized repetitive rhetorical devices to reflect the natural rhythm of oral communication. When done stylistically, repetition helps the audience remember and recognize the importance of your message.

Repetition of letters, syllables, or sounds

Alliteration—repeat similar sounds, usually initial consonants, in two or more neighboring words or syllables.

- Example: Jesse Jackson, "Down with dope, up with hope!"
- Example: Why not waste a wild weekend at Westmore Water Park?

Assonance—repeat similar vowels, preceded and followed by different consonants, in the stressed syllables of adjacent words.

- Example: The sergeant asked him to bomb the lawn with hotpots.

Consonance—repeat consonants in words stressed in the same place (but whose vowels differ), or, repeat final consonants in nearby words (the following are also examples of alliteration)

- Example: Deep Dark Dungeon
- Example: Fully Functional

Repetition of words

Anaphora—repeat a word or phrase at the beginning of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences.

Example: Martin Luther King, *I Have a Dream*

- "I have a dream that my four little children will [...] I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia [...] I have a dream today!"

Repetition of clauses and phrases

Epistrophe—repetition at the end of a line, phrase or clause of the word or words that occurred at the beginning of the same line, phrase or clause.

- Example: Emerson, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny compared to what lies within us."

Repetition of ideas

Antithesis—set off two ideas in balanced (parallel) opposition.

- Example: Neil Armstrong, "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."
- Example: John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

Finally, don't forget to practice your speech or presentation out loud; in most cases you will feel if a repetition helps or harms your work. If you are still unsure, book an appointment at the CWS to have a tutor listen to you!

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Using Examples and Stories

Often, the most important element in a good speech is not the topic itself, but how it is developed and supported. Good speeches contain accurate, relevant, and interesting supporting material. This handout addresses two closely related kinds of supporting material: examples and stories.

EXAMPLES illustrate, describe, or represent things. They add interest and clarification to your points.

- **Brief examples** offer a single illustration of a point. In a speech about how much having a dog has made me more responsible, I could use this example:
 - I used to sleep in all the time, but when we got Fluffy, I had to start waking up every morning at five to let him outside. He would jump on my bed at 4:55 and lick my face like a 35 lb slobbering alarm clock.
- **Extended examples** are like brief examples, except they are longer in order to allow you to offer multifaceted illustration of an idea.
- **Hypothetical examples** are brief or extended like real examples, but they have the added bonus of being made up. This is particularly helpful when your speech addresses possible future outcomes of something that hasn't happened yet.
 - For example, if you were giving a speech about the social ramifications of achieving gender parity in elected positions in this country, you could use hypothetical examples to show what that might be like.

STORIES are one of the most engaging, poignant, and powerful meanings of conveying your message. Narratives can be real or imaginary, short or long, funny or sad, shocking or serious.

For example, Bonnie Campbell used the following real life to introduce her speech on domestic violence: *Last November 26, Christopher Bailey of St. Albans, West Virginia, finished the argument by beating his wife, Sonya, until she collapsed. Then he put her in the trunk of their compact car and drove for five days through West Virginia and Kentucky before taking her to the emergency room. Sonya Bailey suffered irreversible brain damage and remains in a permanent vegetative state—becoming another domestic violence statistic.*

CHECKLIST for selecting the right example or story:

- ✓ Does the example or story truly illustrate or support the point I need to make?
- ✓ Are there sufficient examples?
- ✓ Are the examples representative?
- ✓ Is it suitable for the audience's background and experiences, or would another illustration be more appropriate?

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Presenting with Presentation Software

PowerPoint (or other presentation software) can be a fast and effective way to help your audience follow along during the presentation and remember your message after they leave the room. Unfortunately, there are many common mistakes that can be made when using presentation software. Keep the following tips in mind as you prepare your slide show:

Do I even need slide software?

- You can often present most effectively without any visuals at all. Make sure that the slide show will add something to your presentation before you make the decision to use it.

Use a limited amount of information on each slide.

- The audience will either read your slide or listen to you, but not both. Having walls of text on each slide is the number one mistake that causes a visual aid to hurt instead of help a presentation.
- Wherever possible, reduce slides to bullet points with phrases, or better yet single keywords, so your audience can follow your argument without losing focus on your speech.
- Clip art or other icons can sometimes add to the slide, but they can also make it more difficult to read or too casual depending on the type of presentation you're giving.
- If you want to use images, use high-resolution graphics and make them as large as possible on the slide so the audience isn't squinting to see a tiny, grainy, or distorted image. A powerful image is often much more effective than a slide of text.

Make it clear enough to see in the back of the room.

- Use large and readable fonts, contrasting colors, and clear images.
- To check for clarity, practice with the presentation and walk to the back of the room to see if you can read it.

Choose readable colors and backgrounds.

- You should be concerned about the audience's ability to understand the material first and foremost; creativity should serve this purpose.
- Keep in mind that when the slide show is projected, the colors will become much more muted. The projected slideshow rarely looks the same as what you see on your computer screen.
- Use warm colors (yellow, orange, red) to highlight text or objects. For backgrounds, blues, greens, and neutral colors work best.
- Be cautious about the use of loud colors, and make sure the background is not too "busy." Some templates are too distracting, or can be inappropriate depending on how formal the presentation is.

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Presenting with Presentation Software, Continued

Avoid excessive animation and sound effects.

- Both are often distracting or inappropriate. However, animation that reveals text slowly can be effective in guiding the audience's focus--just make sure that you don't spend the entire speech clicking.

Practice your presentation beforehand.

- You need to be comfortable with the equipment and the software and keep in mind that visual aids add time to your presentation as opposed to just speaking. Plan to have timed practice with the equipment at least a day before the presentation.
- Your presentation might also look different on other computers. Try to check the presentation in the room where you will speak a day ahead of time when possible.

During the presentation, talk to your audience—not the screen.

- State the idea which the visual support is to illustrate before displaying and explaining it to the audience.
- Check the slide on the computer monitor and then maintain eye contact with the audience--you should never read straight from the slide.
- Try to move away from the computer when you have a few minutes before you click to the next slide.

Always have a backup plan.

- Plan on technological difficulties. You never know when the WiFi will suddenly stop working, the computer won't connect to the projector, or other common problems arise.
- Make sure that you have clear notes that you can use for your presentation.
- In situations where visual aids are essential to the presentation (for example, a map or graph that displays key data), you might consider printing a copy for you to reference in case of technological failure.

You can also come to the Center for Writing and Speaking to work on your presentation with one of the tutors; we can provide both technical and content help!

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Movement, Delivery, and Establishing Credibility

Once your presentation is ready, you can start practicing it. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do.

Movement

- Movement begins as soon as you stand up, and it ends when you are back in your seat. Approach the space you are speaking in with confidence. Take a deep breath, arrange your notes, and wait quietly for your audience's attention.
- Think “head to the toe:”
 - Your head should scan the room, making eye contact around the different sections of the audience. Hold your head high to ensure that your voice is projected.
 - Your arms and hands should be relaxed for most of your presentation. Keep your fingers apart, and your arms loose and flexible. Your gestures should be crisp and controlled, kept above the waist, but below the neck. Try to keep your hands stay away from your face!
 - Your hips should be square on and face the front of the room—this keeps your head forward and towards the audience, so that your voice projects through the room. If you walk, walk with a purpose, as opposed to wandering around from side of the room to the other.
 - Stand with your feet in “K” with the left foot straight and the right foot slightly pointed out at an angle to remain stable.

Delivery

- Volume should be adjusted based on the acoustics of the room, which means you should practice in the room beforehand, with someone in the very back. If they can't hear you, your volume must go up. Remember that you sound louder to yourself than you do to the audience!
 - Avoid sounding monotone. If you sound bored of your speech, others will too. Record yourself and listen, or have someone in the room with you when you practice to ensure proper variation in pitch and tempo.
 - No matter how slowly you think you're speaking, you are probably speaking quickly or at a normal pace. Nerves tend to make us speak faster and higher. Speak slowly to explain something complex (like a definition) and faster when it is already known to the audience.
 - Avoid vocal fillers—uh, like, er, um. If you've lost your train of thought, take a deep breath and continue.
 - **Manuscript delivery:** There are times when you will need to speak from a manuscript. If this is the case, use underlining, highlighting, and cues (“eye contact,” “slow down,” “pause”) to guide your reading. Place one hand on the manuscript while you are reading and follow along in order to keep your place when you
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Movement, Delivery, and Establishing Credibility Continued

look up. Practice turning the pages of the manuscript so that you can do so discreetly. Use at least a font size of 14 and double space your manuscript.

Establishing Credibility

- Whenever you speak, your audience is probably asking questions like “how do they know that” and “how can they be sure?” If they are not confident in you, they will be less likely to accept any of the points you are presenting in your argument. Establishing credibility should not be the main part of your presentation, but it is an important section that should not be disregarded. Here are some ways to do it:
 - *Claim a prior experience.* One of the best ways to convince your audience that you know about a topic is to incorporate your personal experience with the issue. If you are talking about the effect of Alzheimer’s on families and your Grandmother has Alzheimer’s, let your audience know. Nothing establishes credibility with your audience quicker than letting them know—if you are comfortable—that you have first-hand experience. However, make sure you only claim an appropriate level and area of expertise. Acting all-knowing might actually make your audience less likely to trust you.
 - *Emphasize any special knowledge or relationship you may have about the subject.* The next best thing to firsthand knowledge is an academic history within your topic. If you are a Marine Biologist, your audience for your “Why the Fish Need Us” speech would probably be interested to know that.
 - *Explain why your perspective on the subject is special.* Even though you might not have any more personal experience or academic background (beyond the research you did for your speech), you still might have a special perspective. If you are speaking about the race riots and you are a black woman, you might have a different (and valuable!) perspective to share with your audience. Putting forth your unique perspectives helps your audience understand where you are coming from, adds to the general debate, and supports your credibility as a speaker with an important point of view to share.

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Audience Analysis

Audience analysis plays into all aspects of speaking, ranging from selecting the topic all the way to your voice level when presenting. It is important to determine what part of your audience will most benefit from your message and speak directly to them, so that you can give them information that they can use to take action. Although not everyone can be specifically targeted, if the speech is presented with the audience in mind, they will feel a more personal connection and be more likely to remember the presentation.

Be an audience-centered speaker and ask these three questions before presenting:

- "Who am I speaking to?"
- "What do I want them to know, believe, or do because of my speech?"
- "How can I present the information in a way that will best convey my message?"

When evaluating who the audience is and how they perceive you, look at these factors:

Demographic and Socioeconomic Factors:

- Age
- Gender
- Marital status
- Income level
- Education level
- Sexual orientation
- Occupation
- Geographic region
- Religion, cultural, racial, and ethnic background

Psychographic Factors:

- Attitudes, beliefs, and values
- Lifestyle
- Knowledge of topic
- Personality
- Political views
- Loyalties

Environmental Factors:

- Size of group
- Seating arrangement
- Time of day
- Occasion
- Stage or platform
- Distance between speaker and audience

Develop a way to bond with the audience from the very beginning.

"Are you over 17 years old? Do you weigh more than 110 pounds? Do you believe you're fairly healthy? Do you want to save lives? If so, then you should donate blood." Because your audience will have a tendency to say "yes" to all these questions, they will be more inclined to listen and feel that you are really speaking to them.

Talk to your audience, not at them.

Change your vocabulary to fit the knowledge of your audience. If your audience has little knowledge of your topic, define basic terms for them to understand. If your audience is well versed in the topic, feel free to go in depth with the issue and skip the definitions.

Make enough physical adjustments to suit the audience.

This can be anything from changing where you stand to ensure the best visibility, speaking loudly and clearly for those sitting far in the back, and making sure that your visual aids are clear and effective for all.

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P NO. 12 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Successful Speech Checklist

Speech Development Tips:

- Know your material, your audience, and your purpose.
- Develop a thesis statement and organize and support your argument just as you would for a paper. Make your thesis statement clear.
- Create an opening that engages your audience. Do not begin with, "My presentation is about." Think of your introduction as a roadmap to your speech. Your job is to encourage your audience to "ride along." Tell your audience where the speech is going, then go there.
- Discuss your main points carefully and succinctly, offering supporting evidence. Use transitions to connect your ideas and make it interesting!
- Be creative and use your sense of humor appropriately. Do not be afraid to try something unconventional, as long as it does not distract from your purpose.
- Craft a powerful conclusion. Leave the audience with something memorable. Do not say, "And, that is it!"
- Breathe, stretch, and imagine yourself delivering the speech easily and effectively.
- Time your speech beforehand, especially if you have limited time, in order to be respectful of others and reduce your own speech anxiety.
- Practice in front of friends or the mirror. Visit the Center for Writing and Speaking for feedback.

Delivery tips:

- Make frequent eye contact around the different sections of the audience.
- Use good posture. Hold your head high to ensure that your voice is projected.
- Avoid leaning on the podium or on the wall behind you, shifting your weight from one foot to another, or fidgeting.
- Keep your hips square on and face the front of the room. If you walk, walk with a purpose. Make sure it means something, as opposed to wandering around from side of the room to the other.
- Keep your hands in view and use them intentionally for emphasis.
- Prepare note cards, but do not memorize or read straight from them. Use them to guide your presentation and prompt your memory.
- Show enthusiasm. It will help engage your audience.
- Project and vary your voice. Decrease the use of verbal fillers (like, you know, um).
- Smile and relax to show your audience you are prepared and knowledgeable.
- Consider using a visual aid to illustrate your points, making sure it is relevant and visible to the entire audience.
- See our other Public Speaking handouts for more information.

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P NO. 13 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Self-Evaluation for Speeches

Unfortunately, it is difficult for most of us to know where to start in thinking about how to improve presentations. This form is intended as a starting point. You may find that some of the categories don't apply to your presentation or that some of the concepts are unfamiliar to you. The most important thing is that you take the time to reflect on what went well in your presentation and what you need to improve. Make sure to record yourself practicing the presentation so you can evaluate all aspects of it!

General Questions:

Topic selection

- 1) Is the purpose of the presentation clear?
- 2) Is this an appropriate topic and handling of the topic for the audience?
- 3) Is the presentation appropriate for the assignment? (Meets time limits, covers the appropriate material, etc.)
- 4) Is the presentation significant and relevant?

Audience adaptation

- 1) What persona (role) am I portraying in relation to the audience? (peer, expert, etc.)
- 2) What tone am I using in the presentation?
- 3) Who is my target audience? What am I doing to target them?

Outline

- 1) Follows correct guidelines
- 2) Easy to follow
- 3) Followed in speech

Introduction

- 1) Attention getter—do I pull the audience in right away?
- 2) Introduce topic—do I make the topic clear and give necessary background information?
- 3) Establish credibility/goodwill
- 4) Central idea/Preview—do I outline the main parts of the speech in one clear sentence?

Body

- 1) Main point statements—do I have a sentence at the beginning of each main point that clearly explains what that section of the presentation will cover?
- 2) Have I limited my main points to 2-5?
- 3) Is my presentation clearly organized and easy to follow? Could someone easily take notes based on the presentation?

(continued on reverse)

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P NO. 13 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Self-Evaluation For Speeches, Continued

- 4) Do I cite sources in my presentation (as in an essay)? Are my sources considered credible?
- 5) Is the topic explained well?
- 6) Do I have transitions between all of the main sections of my speech?

Conclusion

- 1) Do I have a clear summary of the speech?
- 2) Do I have a strong closer prepared?

Delivery

- 1) Did I maintain eye contact with all sections of my audience?
- 2) Did I have vocal variety (didn't sound monotone)?
- 3) Were my movements controlled, appropriate, and non-distracting (legs, hand gestures, facial expressions)?
- 4) How many vocal fillers did I have ("um", "uh", "like", etc.)?
- 5) Did the presentation/speech seem well-practiced?
- 6) Did I appear confident?
- 7) Did I pronounce words correctly? Use proper grammar?
- 8) Does my appearance affect my presentation/speech? If so, is it in a positive way?
- 9) Did I seem enthusiastic?
- 10) Did I sound conversational (rather than reading or just "saying my lines")?
- 11) Was I within the time limits allowed for this presentation?

Visual aid

- 1) Did the visual aid match the speech?
- 2) Was it appropriately professional?
- 3) Could everyone in the audience see the aid?
- 4) Was the visual aid well-used?

What were my 3 main weaknesses?

What were my 3 main strengths?

Have I gone to the CWS to practice?

yes no

If you need help with any of these areas, come to the CWS or see one of our Public Speaking ('P') handouts!

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P NO. 14 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Citing Sources in a Speech

What is plagiarism?

According to the *St. Martin's Handbook*, "To plagiarize is to use other people's ideas or words without acknowledging the source. The rule for avoiding plagiarism as a public speaker is straightforward: Any source that requires credit in written form should be acknowledged in oral form." In general, you should cite your sources whether you are quoting directly or paraphrasing.

How do I avoid plagiarism?

It is essential to let your audience know exactly where you got your information. You do not have to include entire references in your oral presentations, but you must give your audience enough information so that they can track down the source on their own.

How do I cite sources in my speech?

Direct Quotations:

These should be acknowledged either as "And I quote..." or "As [the source] put it...".

Book: include title and author

Incorrect: "According to Jones, the best way to..."

Correct: "According to April Jones, author of *Readings on Gender...*"

Periodical (magazine): include title and date

Incorrect: "Time magazine wrote..."

Correct: "*Time*, March 28, 2005, explains..."

Correct: "*The New York Times*, June 5, 2006, explained it this way: ..."

Journal: include journal title, date, and author

Incorrect: "Smith writes..."

Correct: "Morgan Smith writes in the Fall 2005 issue of *Science...*"

Web site (organization site or other longstanding site): include title

Incorrect: "I found this on Google" or "At www.incrediblylongaddress.com/article.htm, they argue that..."

Correct: "The Center for Disease Control web site includes information..."

(continued on reverse)

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P NO. 14 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Citing Sources in a Speech, Continued

Website (news/magazine): include title and date

Incorrect: “www.CNN.com states...” Or “CNN.com writes...” (without date)

Correct: “CNN.com, on March 28, 2005, states...” (note that CNN is an exception to the “don’t use address rule” because the site is known by that name)

Interviews, lecture notes, or personal communication: include name and credentials of source

Incorrect: “Alice Smith said...”

Correct: “Alice Smith, member of Class of 2009, had this to say about her experience at ASC...” or “According to Dr. West, a professor of Mathematics at Emory University...”

Remember...

- Keep in mind that it's easy to start falling into the "According to..." broken record. In order to avoid this routine try to change it up a bit each time with phrases like:
 - "This is also supported by..."
 - "April Smith, founder of ... says"
- You can note when large sections of your presentation come from one source (as long as it is clear to the audience).
- It might be helpful to include a bibliography at the end of your PowerPoint presentation or in a handout if you feel that the audience should see the full citation.
- Finally, citations are important to make your speech sound credible and it is better to over cite than to under cite, however try not to sound like a vocal annotated bibliography.

Questions about citing your sources? Visit the Center for Writing and Speaking.

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Center for Writing and Speaking

P NO. 15 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Presenting a Paper

When preparing to present a paper, it is important to remember that papers and presentations have different goals and audiences. Papers use meticulous research and detail to back the overall claim; presentations should explain only an overview of this research in the context of the big picture. Therefore, the presentation should be very different from your paper, so you have to be open to omitting unessential details or using a different structure for the presentation than you did for the paper itself. The two biggest mistakes that presenters make when transitioning between paper and presentation are failing to translate for the audience and failing to engage the audience.

Translating for your Audience

- Look with a critical eye at the introduction. Many times, the written introduction doesn't come across as strongly when spoken. Think about a way to "hook" your audience from the beginning, and explicitly state your purpose for the presentation.
- Include a clear preview (different from the thesis) at the end of your introduction. Tell the audience what you will talk about in the appropriate order—think of it as a roadmap. You might also indicate what parts of the paper you have chosen to eliminate in the presentation and indicate that you'd be happy to discuss those parts in question/answer.
- Include strong transitions that help the audience follow along exactly where you are in the argument's progression.
- It's not easy, but you'll need to cut out a lot of your paper for the presentation. To some degree, what's necessary to keep will depend on your discipline, but in general the emphasis should be on cutting out detail in favor of the overarching argument. For example, the literature review or research methods section can often be significantly abridged to best serve your needs. Ask yourself, "What is the *core* of my paper? What parts can be taken out without weakening my argument?"
- For science/social science papers, audiences often want to hear a justification of the study, a brief description of how you set the study up, and a complete description of your findings/conclusions. For humanities, audiences generally want a justification of the paper, then a good description of your analysis and conclusions. When in doubt, ask your professor about how different sections should transition from paper to presentation.
- Construct a strong conclusion that summarizes your presentation and includes a good closer. Remind the audience of what you want them to take from your presentation. See our Public Speaking ('P') handout on Introductions and Conclusions for suggestions.

(continued on reverse)

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P NO. 15 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Presenting a Paper, Continued

Engaging Your Audience

- Many people think that the only delivery option for this type of presentation is to manuscript the speech. Most of the time, this doesn't work well because it prevents the speaker from engaging fully with the audience. Instead, try planning your speech with a thorough outline and talk to your audience based on that outline. If you do decide to manuscript your speech, be sure to practice in order to sound conversational and leave points in the manuscript where you can elaborate or improvise.
- Pique the audience's interest by sharing your personal story about how you came to the research topic, highlighting stories that emerged during your research, unusual findings, or examples that clarify your arguments. Analogies can be valuable as long as they are clear.
- Think about the differences between written and oral language; written language might come across as too formal when you speak it. Even if you really like the way you worded something in your paper, consider how it would sound in the context of your presentation environment. Clarity is always preferred over being verbose.
- Remember that this is an overview of your argument—you probably need to leave out some of the details, specifics, or terminology. You want the audience to remember your cohesive argument as a whole, not just a summary of your writing.

Check our other CWS Public Speaking handouts to help you continue the process of developing and delivering your presentation.

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P NO. 16 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Group Presentations

Working as a Group

- Assign group roles early in the process. It helps to have one person who keeps notes and checks in with other members to keep them on task. If you have someone who is good with technology, you might want to assign the visual aids to them, or your strongest writers might be most effective in getting the presentation outline together. If you divide parts of the content to each person, make sure everyone is familiar with each others' information.
- Make an agreement that includes specific, measurable goals, such as who is responsible for each part of a goal, when the parts should be completed, and the consequences for when goals are not met.

Preparing the Presentation

- Determine what each member will do during the presentation. Who will run the visual aid during each part of the presentation? How should you divide the speaking content, and how will you transition between each speaker? Where should each person be positioned before, during, after they have spoken?
- Consider how familiar your audience is with your group and the topic in deciding things like whether you need to introduce yourself or how much context you need to provide for your presentation.
- Give yourself plenty of time so you can rehearse the speech many times (both as a group and individually) to work out any bugs beforehand. Make sure that you time your rehearsals so that you have a good idea of the length of the presentation. Come to the CWS as a group.
- Use discrete hand signals to indicate when a speaker is speaking too quickly or slowly, too quietly or too loudly. Time the speech and let others know how much time they have left.
- Create a consistent presentation. As a group, try and dress in a similar manner. The same can be said with the presentation—create a visual aid that flows from one section to the other in similar font and color. Look back over speech content to ensure there is continuity in voice and terminology.
- Make sure you look at our other Public Speaking handouts for tips.

Group presentations can be challenging because of the effort that it takes to coordinate all of the members and the different sections of the presentation, but you can use these tips and come to the CWS for more help to ensure your presentation goes smoothly.

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P NO. 17 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Leading a Discussion

Leading a discussion is very different from delivering a formal speech because you can't predict the direction of the conversation. However, that doesn't mean that you don't need to do any preparation. There are three important points to keep in mind when you are leading a discussion: structuring the discussion, getting the audience to talk, and thinking about your delivery style.

Structuring the Discussion

Even though you aren't giving a formal speech, you still have an agenda. Make sure you get to it by considering the following:

- Put all of the points you want to be talked about in a logical, flowing order.
- Have examples ready for each major point in case the discussion stalls or there is a need for clarification of a point.
- Carefully craft your questions, making sure that they are clear and direct. Make sure that you can answer the questions yourself; this may seem obvious, but speakers are often guilty of asking unanswerable questions. Keep in mind, however, that you may hear very different kinds of answers from the audience.

Getting Your Audience to Talk

The most effective tool for engaging your audience is to ask them questions. Here are a few guidelines on how to frame the discussion:

- Start asking questions from the beginning. Ask how they feel about the topic, their initial reactions, problems that they had with the readings, etc.
- Start with some easy questions and then move to more complicated questions once everyone seems more comfortable with the discussion.
- The key to leading a discussion is to gently lead, not to force the conversation. Let the discussion flow for a little while before guiding it in a new direction.
- Tie the questions into other class discussions/readings/presentations in order to get the audience to make connections. This often makes them feel more confident and might stimulate a good discussion.
- Be prepared to rephrase your questions. This is where your prepared examples can come in handy.
- Follow the ten second rule: when waiting for an answer or a response, wait about ten seconds before trying a different tactic.
- If nothing else is working, give them a small prompt, but try not to answer the question for them.
- As always, be conscious of your time limits and how much time you are spending on each topic.

(continued on reverse)

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P NO. 17 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Leading a Discussion, Continued

Delivery Style During the Discussion

Delivery when leading a group discussion is usually more informal than a presentation. That doesn't mean that typical delivery tips don't apply, however. Keep these in mind:

- Maintain good eye contact with the audience.
- Make sure that you are paying attention to volume, rate of speech, eye contact, and posture, just as you would in any other speech. It is particularly important that your audience is able to follow your words because you are asking them to respond to your questions.
- Even though you may be sitting down, continue to think about posture. Sit up in your chair and avoid leaning on the table. If you have a chair that rocks or swivels, try to sit still. This may seem like a minor point, but all of your nonverbal cues add to your audience's assessment of your credibility.

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P NO. 18 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

Special Occasion Speeches: How to Present or Accept an Award

Presenting an Award:

- Describe the award. Unless you are presenting an Oscar or the Noble Peace Prize it is unlikely your audience will fully understand what this award is. Briefly describe what this honor entails and how the recipient earned this recognition to guarantee that everyone is cognoscente of this person's achievement.
 - Ex. "The Citizens Who Care Award is not just about community service..."
- Focus on achievements solely relating to this award. When presenting an award one must describe the recipient's achievements, but for the sake of the audience please limit your accolades to facts pertaining to the specific honor you are presenting.
 - Ex. It is unimportant to mention a recipient's basketball record when you are presenting them with an academic scholarship.
- Make sure to praise everyone's hard work. Do not go through everyone's individual accomplishments, but do come up with a couple of sentences that sum up the collective experiences and efforts of the group.
 - Ex. "Every one of the nominees for the Citizens Who Care Award has dedicated themselves to their communities above and beyond their share. Their passion for and commitment to helping others is truly inspiring."

Accepting an Award:

- Let your listeners know what this award means to you.
 - Ex. "To me, the Citizens Who Care Award has always stood for ... I am proud and humbled to be included in such a selfless group of individuals."
- When accepting an award it is essential that you express your gratitude. Remember to thank the organization presenting you with this award, but also be sure to single out any team players or advisors who helped you gain this recognition.
 - Ex. "I could not have gotten where I am today alone. Thank you..."
- Don't procrastinate. If you have any suspicion that you might win an award at a special event please write your speech in advance. This does not make you conceited; it makes you a prepared speaker.

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