



# Speech Basics

## SPEECH CONTENT

### Introduction

- **Attention Getter** - Hook the audience from the beginning
- **Establish Credibility** - Give the audience a reason to believe you
- **Thesis Statement/Hypothesis** - Clearly state your main point
- **Preview Statement** - Verbally provide structure to the speech

### Body

- **Transition Statements** - Link your ideas to make the speech flow
- **Limit Number of Topics** - Don't over-complicate your subject
- **Balance Time on Each Point** - Give each point fairly equal attention
- **Provide Evidence** - Boost your credibility as a speaker

### Conclusion

- **Transition into Conclusion** - Make the audience aware of the ending
- **Tie Back to Introduction** - Create cohesiveness with your speech
- **Summary Statement** - Clearly express the "takeaway" message
- **Closing Thoughts or "Thank You"** - Give a clear signal to end

### Several Types of Speeches

- **Informative**: Provide unbiased factual information
- **Persuasive**: Attempts to convince the audience of something
- **Commemorative**: Recognizes the importance of something or someone
- **Demonstrative**: Shows a process, a "how-to" speech
- **Special Occasion**: Can be varied - includes toasts, panels, debates

## DELIVERY

## Types of Delivery

- **Full Text/Manuscript:** Write out the entire speech, and read it word for word
- **Extemporaneous:** Use a key word outline. It's rehearsed but not memorized, comes across as conversational, and is the most recommended for speeches.
- **Impromptu:** Entirely made up on the spot with no prior planning or rehearsal
- **Memorized:** Entire speech is written out and completely memorized beforehand so no text is needed when speaking

## Delivery Tips

- Always make **eye contact** with your audience
- Be aware of your **posture** - stand up straight with a solid stance, don't lock your knees, don't use excessive hand movement
- **Pace yourself**, talk at a steady pace that is not too fast
- **Vary your tone** - no one pays attention to a monotone voice
- **SPEAK UP** - project your voice so the audience can hear you

## VISUAL AIDS

Visuals should be your aid and not your crutch. Here are five common mistakes to avoid:

- **Too Much Info:** If you say it fully in your speech, don't put it on the slide. Avoid full sentences and go for keywords. Consider a picture or single statistic instead, and keep it to one main point per slide.
- **Not Enough Visuals:** Strong visuals = strong presentation. Do not use stock photos or clip art, and pick visuals that have good quality. Do not allow visuals make your text difficult to read.
- **Low quality:** Use coordinated templates or create your own. Avoid boring your audience with childish visuals and poor fonts, such as *Tahoma*, *Verdana*, *Comic Sans MS*, *Courier New*, *Times New*

Roman, or Lucida Console. A Google search for “beautiful fonts” will bring up better options for free. Also, remember that you aren’t limited to PowerPoint: explore other presentation tools, such as Prezi and Google Presentations.

- **Too much going on:** White space can be a good thing. Be mindful of the spacing and layout of your slides. Have a consistent use of colors, images, and alignment for a cohesive look to your presentation.
- **Lack of preparation:** Most presentations suffer because not enough time goes into making them. Put in the work and dedicate time into preparing your presentation, as well as developing the content that goes into them, and then practice, practice, practice. There is no substitute for rehearsal.

**Your presentation is a reflection of your work, of you as a student and as a professional.**

## **COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION**

Humans are wired to worry about reputation; it is part of our biological makeup. Fear of public speaking is a threat reaction that produces the “fight or flight reaction,” which causes people to have speech anxiety. It is important to understand where this apprehension comes from in order to master it - it is an ancient reaction that happens to *everyone*. Biological chemical reactions are what cause you to feel “butterflies” in your stomach, make your palms sweat, and turn your face red. To control your anxiety, keep perspective: the sensation you are feeling is a bodily reaction that is difficult to control. Instead of stressing about it, focus on what you can control.

- **Look at a friend, someone who’s bored, or someone who is enthusiastic.** One of these may be reassuring to you.

- Remind yourself that **you're awesome** and that **you are the professional** when it comes to your speech.
- **Visualize success.** Be positive, even though you are nervous.
- **Focus on your posture.** Keep your knees unlocked, lightly grip the edge of the podium to stabilize yourself, and stand up tall.
- **Don't be a perfectionist** - everyone is worried about their own speeches, they aren't judging yours.
- **Practice, practice, practice.**
- Take a **deep breath** and begin.

Speaking anxiety is something that affects even the greatest speakers. Don't expect it to ever fully go away. Instead, use these tips to know that you're in control and that you *can* do a great job.

## **COME TO THE SPEAKING CENTER!**

You can make an appointment to work with a student consultant on:

- Brainstorming speech ideas
- Practicing your speech
- Video Technology Services
- Communication tutoring
- Practice with small group communication/class discussion
- General speaking advice