



Developing a Speech Outline

Once assigned a speech, you will be tasked with creating an outline. The purpose of this outline is to provide you with a guide that helps effectively sequence your information, as well as helps you to remember all of your main points while in front of an audience! Much like an essay, this outline will consist of an **introduction, body, and conclusion**. Your outline will also have **Transitions** embedded throughout.

Introduction

The introduction of your speech will start with an **attention getter**, followed by a **relevance statement** and a **credibility statement**. You will then introduce your **thesis statement**, and finish with a **preview** of what is to come next.

⇒ Attention Getters

An attention getter is the device a speaker uses at the beginning of a speech to draw the audience in and encourage interest in the speech topic. They can be as simple or as detailed as you would like, but when creating an attention getter always keep **appropriateness/relevance to audience, purpose of speech, topic, and occasion** in mind.

⇒ Relevance Statement

A relevance statement ties the topic of your speech to your audience. It answers the question “What’s in this for me?” or “Why should I listen to this?” Relating your speech topic directly to your audience will help you draw them in and keep their interest. Here are three different ways to create a relevance statement:

- Use a **localized statistic**: For example, if you were giving a speech about naps, you could report on how many students either do or do not take naps at Lewis University.
- Use a **local statement**: Perhaps there is a local expert whose opinion you can quote. For example, you might be able to quote a Lewis anatomy professor if you are doing a speech about the effects of tanning on the body.
- Use **proximity**: You could explain how this topic impacts the community your audience lives in. For example, a speech on a new weather warning app might mention that Illinois is part of ‘tornado alley.’

⇒ Credibility Statement

A credibility statement tells the audience why you are experienced enough to give this speech, whether that be through personal experience or education. For example, you could tell the audience that you took a class on this topic or worked a job pertaining to the topic. In the case that you do not have any prior knowledge on the topic, you can tell the audience why you chose the topic and what interested you about it.

⇒ Thesis Statement

A thesis statement reflects the focus of your speech and tells the audience what to expect. Before creating an outline, you should have a thesis statement developed that will help guide the body of your speech. For more information on thesis statements, [click here](#).

⇒ Preview

A preview is merely a statement at the end of your intro that shows movement or continuation onto the transition statement by providing a glimpse of what you will be talking about next.



Body:

The body of your speech is where you will present all of your main points and their relevant supporting materials. The information should be clearly, creatively, and strategically organized to help the audience follow along with your speech. The body should have **main points, supporting points, and transitions**. Here are a few tips for developing the body of your speech:

⇒ Main Points

- Depending on the guidelines given to you by your professor, your speech should have 2-5 main points.
- There are five different ways to organize your main points: **chronological, spatial, causal, problem-solution, or topical**.
 - **Chronological**: When the main points follow a time pattern
 - **Spatial**: When the main points follow a directional pattern
 - **Causal**: When the main points show a cause-effect relationship
 - **Problem-Solution**: The first main point(s) deals with a problem, while the second/third discuss a solution
 - **Topical**: The main points divide the topic into logical and consistent subtopics

⇒ Supporting Points

This is the majority of your speech. Your main points are just general claims, while supporting points are the actual facts, examples, and/or statistics you have researched to support those claims. As a general rule of thumb, every 'a' should have a 'b', meaning, each of your supporting points should have at least two bullets of information about them.

I. Body

A. Healthy Foods to Eat

1. Fruits
2. Vegetables
 - a. Provide the body with vitamins and minerals
 - b. Vegetables are on the USDA's MyPlate for a balanced meal (choosemyplate.gov)

⇒ Transitions

Transitions should be used between each main point in your speech. These allow you to **give a small recap** of what you previously talked about, then **introduces where you will be going next** with your speech. The purpose of transitions is to help your audience remember your material, as well as provide them with a point of reference that you will be moving on to the next main idea. For more information on transitions, [click here](#).

Conclusion:

This will be the final portion of your speech outline. Your conclusion should consist of a **review** of the material you covered, a **restatement of your thesis**, and a **memorable close**. Typically conclusions are written out word for word, much like the conclusion of an essay.

Further Assistance: For more detailed help or if you have questions, visit the Writing Center located in the Lewis University Library or call 815-836-5427.

Sources Consulted: *The Art of Public Speaking*, CLA Purdue Owl, lumenlearning