

# 14 Developing a Public Presentation

**I**n the previous chapter, you learned how to select a topic, determine the purpose and thesis of your speech, and gather support material, and you learned to accomplish all of these activities with your relationship to your audience in mind. At this point in the speech development process, you know its purpose and what you want to argue. You even have support material to back up your claims.

Through acquiring this knowledge, you are hopefully gaining more confidence in the public process. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, fear of the unknown is often at the core of many speakers' apprehension about delivering a public presentation. Bit by bit, those unknown elements are becoming known to you, and that will continue as we examine the development of a public presentation.

Public speakers cannot just haphazardly throw around a thesis statement, statistics, quotations, illustrations, and other support material. They must combine and organize their material and package it in a manner that will have the greatest impact on a particular audience. They must also develop the material in a way that further connects them relationally to the needs and desires of an audience. Developing and presenting a speech to an audience is not just logical but relational. A speaker must connect with an audience, motivate its members to listen, present a well-argued case, and conclude with a logical and relational uplift.

In this chapter, we talk about developing an argument in that relational context. Argumentation is not just another word for *disagreement* but a careful way of laying out your thoughts. Something you engage in every day, developing an argument is not as unfamiliar as it may seem. This discussion will assist you when developing your speeches and when writing papers for this class and others (Yun, Costantini, & Billingsley, 2012). Talk about more bang for your academic buck!

Inherent in the development of a public presentation is the continued enactment of a relational connection with an audience. Having previously established the purpose of the presentation to meet audience needs and desires, you must organize your support material for your audience in a clear and understandable way that exhibits your ability to satisfy these needs and desires. You can select from several strategies (or patterns) to organize your material. We discuss ways of selecting the best organizational pattern for your speech based on your topic, the purpose of your speech, and, of course, the audience. Clear organization of an argument results in audience understanding and increased audience liking of the speaker.

## FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1 What are the four principles of speech organization and development?
- 2 What organizational patterns can you use in the development of the speech body?
- 3 What components must you include in a speech introduction?
- 4 What components must you include in a speech conclusion?



## By the way...

### We Have to Provide a What?

Many college students feel overwhelmed or confused when their instructors stress the need to provide a clear argument in their speeches or papers. Developing an argument is not always taught or required in high school, yet suddenly students are expected to know how to do it as soon as they enter college. If you feel stressed out by these demands, rest assured that you are not alone. Even better, once you finish this chapter, you will know how to do it!

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. How might understanding the development of an argument assist in your ability to think critically?
2. Should the development of an argument be something that is taught in high school or only at the college level?

The introduction and conclusion of your presentation also enact the relational connection with your audience. These parts of your speech, just as important as its body, must accomplish a great deal. Within the introduction, you must establish credibility and a relationship with your specific audience, stress the importance of the topic (i.e., how it relates to the audience), and prepare your audience for the remainder of the speech, using the same skills, techniques, and ways of relating to your audience discussed in the previous chapter. This relational connection continues when you reach the conclusion, in which you must reinforce your thesis and purpose, summarize your material, stress audience involvement, and provide adequate closure. While both introductions and conclusions include a lot of material, we break them down into manageable components to help you better understand and develop them. In addition, you should not write your introduction or conclusion until you have finished the body of your speech, so we begin by discussing that part of your presentation.

## The Body: How Do You Develop an Argument?

The **body** of your speech is where you develop and present your argument. When we talk about arguments and argumentation, we do not necessarily mean disagreeing with someone or engaging in a heated discussion. Rather, an argument is presented when you provide a thesis or claim and then back it up with evidence and support

material discussed in the previous chapter.

Providing claims and then support for those claims is actually something you do quite often. Whenever you try to convince a friend to do something, or whenever you explain or describe something to a colleague, you are essentially engaged in argumentation. For example, you may find yourself with a group of friends trying to decide what to do on a Friday evening. You really want to see a particular movie, so you tell your friends that you should all go to the theater and watch this movie. You might then describe the movie and provide reasons you should all go see it. Whether you realize it or not, you are engaging in a form of argumentation. Your thesis or claim is that you should all go to the movie. Your support comes from the various reasons your friends should do what you suggest—the movie has received favorable reviews, the theater is not very far away, and nothing tastes better than a \$50 box of popcorn.

So, while developing an argument might sound like an unfamiliar task, the basic ideas behind the process are nothing new. The primary difference between an argument constructed for an academic, civic, or professional setting and an argument presented to friends, family, or romantic partners is that the former is generally more structured and has undergone more development and planning.

### Principles of Speech Organization and Development

To better describe how to construct the body of your speech and develop your argument, we discuss the four principles of speech organization and development that can help you maintain a clear focus: points, unity, balance, and guidance. The first three principles underscore the logical development of an argument, and the final principle emphasizes relational development. You must adhere to all four principles to properly develop a presentation and to fully connect with an audience.

**body:** the part of a speech in which an argument is developed and presented

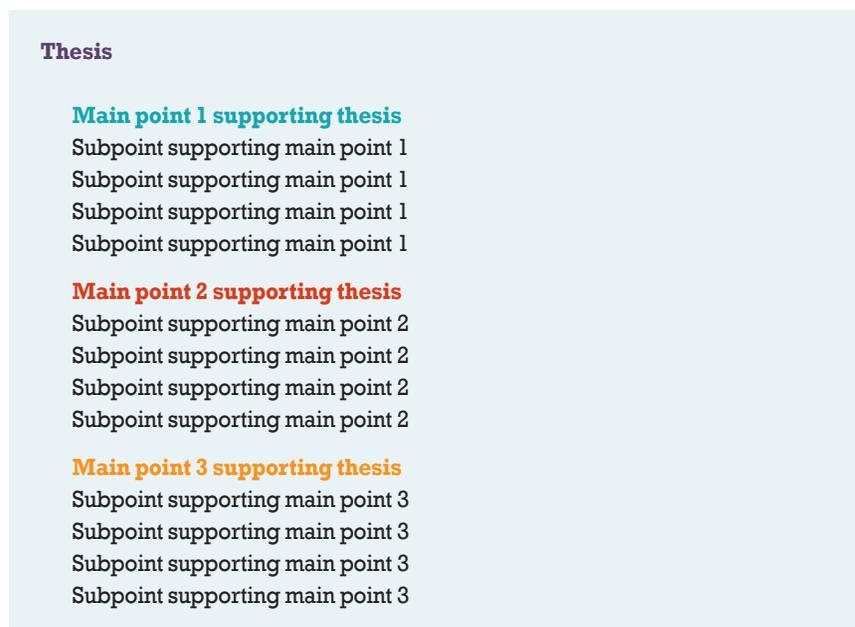
### Points Principle

The **points principle** highlights the basic building blocks of an argument: the main points and subpoints. The body of your speech will include **main points**, or statements that directly support or develop your thesis statement. As a general rule, include five main points at the absolute most. Ideally, and more often than not, you should include at least two but no more than three main points when supporting or developing your thesis statement. Including too many main points will make it difficult to provide adequate support and development.

**Subpoints**, or statements that support and explain the main points of your speech, will include much of the support material we discussed in the previous chapter. The actual number of subpoints you include to support each main point will vary. Similar to limiting the number of main points, you do not want to overwhelm your audience with too many subpoints. Including a limited number of strong subpoints to support a main idea is more effective than including numerous weak ones.

Being able to visualize the construction of an argument is sometimes helpful, which is one of the reasons your instructor may have you develop an outline for presentations you deliver in the classroom. While not an actual outline, Figure 14.1 will help you visualize the structure of an argument.

**Figure 14.1 Visualizing the Structure of an Argument**



**points principle:** the principle of speech organization that highlights the basic building blocks of an argument: the main points and subpoints

**main points:** statements that directly support or develop a thesis statement

**subpoints:** as statements that support and explain the main points of a speech

**unity principle:** the principle of speech organization that maintains the speaker should stay focused and provide only information that supports the thesis and main points of a speech

### Unity Principle

The **unity principle** maintains you should stay focused and provide only information that supports your thesis and main points. This principle sounds reasonable and easy to follow, but speakers often struggle to abide by it. As you conduct research for your speech, you will come across a wealth of information about your topic. You can use some of this material to support your thesis and include some of it in your presentation. Other material, while related to your topic, will not directly support your thesis or main points and should therefore not be included.



This speaker is providing members of her audience with a clear transition between sections of her speech in order to help them better understand the presentation. Which principle of speech organization and development emphasizes the relational development of a presentation?

## ETHICAL ISSUE

When developing a presentation concerning a topic about which there are multiple opposing positions, is it necessary to provide equal coverage for all sides of the issue? Are there certain topics or occasions when this may or may not be necessary? Be sure to support your answers.

**balance principle:** the principle of speech organization that maintains that the points of the body of a speech must be relatively equal in scope and importance

**guidance principle:** the principle of speech organization that maintains that a speaker must guide and direct the audience throughout the entire speech

The most obvious example of not adhering to the principle of speech unity involves the selection of main points that do not support the thesis. For instance, imagine you are presenting a speech in which you want to inform the audience about the treatments of a particular disease. In your first main point, you address one common type of treatment. In your second main point, you address another common type of treatment. In your third main point, you suddenly shift gears and begin discussing common symptoms of this disease. While the matter of symptoms associated with this disease is naturally associated with your topic, your speech is supposed to be about the treatment of the disease. You have not followed the principle of speech unity.

You might be thinking, “Wait a second. If I were telling my audience about the treatment of a disease, why would I not want to talk about the symptoms?” Depending on your audience, addressing the symptoms might be important; however, your main argument involves the treatments associated with this disease. Including anything else in the body of your speech will prevent you from fully explaining the treatments, what you set out to do in the first place. If you think it is important to let the audience know the symptoms associated with this disease, you can briefly discuss them in the introduction of your speech. We discuss introductions later in the chapter and, during something called *orientation to the topic*, specifically address such instances as the preceding, so stay tuned!

### Balance Principle

The **balance principle** maintains that the points of the body must be relatively equal in scope and importance. You must devote to them equal time and an equal amount of development and support. Your main points, as well as the subpoints supporting them, must also be equally important in their support of your thesis.

One common violation of the principle of balance involves the amount of time and support you devote to a particular main point. Suppose you have three main points in your speech. You have discovered a lot of material to support and develop your first main point, so you spend most of your time discussing it. When it comes to your second and third main points, you have not found as much support material or have not found them as interesting, so you devote less attention to them during your speech. While you have done an excellent job explaining and supporting your first main point, your other main points are not developed enough to support your thesis. Regardless of its strength, that first main point will not sufficiently support your thesis. Make sure to spend relatively equal time developing and discussing your main points (O’Hair, Stewart, & Rubenstein, 2001).

### Guidance Principle

The **guidance principle** maintains a speaker must guide and direct the audience throughout the entire speech. Fundamental to the effectiveness of a speech are audience members’ understanding and establishing a strong relational connection with them. Guiding them through a speech helps ensure that audience members comprehend the support provided and recognize and understand how it supports your thesis.

Guiding the audience members throughout the presentation will also enhance your credibility and relational connection with them, because it indicates your true concern for their understanding of your presentation as you construct the identity of a speaker who cares for the audience. Just as you help guide and support your friends through difficult problems when they need your direction and advice, you must guide your audience through the logic of your presentation. We talk about components of the introduction and conclusion that help guide the audience later in the chapter, but here we address the use of transitions.

Transitions, or phrases or statements that serve to connect the major parts or sections of the speech and to guide the audience through the presentation, should be included between the introduction and the body of the speech, between each main point, and between the body of the speech and the conclusion. These transitions should guide the audience members and inform them of where you are, where you have been, and/or where you are going in the speech. Examples of transitions include the following:

*To begin, let's examine the issue of . . .*

*Now that we have talked about X, let's turn our attention to the matter of Y.*

*The first item we must consider is . . .*

*This brings us to our second issue . . .*

The examples provided here might differ from transitions you have studied in English or writing classes. When taught about transitions in those courses, you were probably instructed that they guide the reader and set up the next paragraph or section of the paper or story. Transitions included in written work and transitions included in oral presentations are very similar. The key difference between them is that transitions included in oral work must be more obvious than those included in written work, and they must fully direct the audience through the speech.

To really grasp the need for such explicit transitions and the importance of the guidance principle in general, consider the difference between reading an article or a book and listening to a speech. When reading, you have the ability to reread a paragraph or section. You can flip back a few pages and remind yourself of what came before. You can scan ahead to see what comes next. When you listen to a speech, you do not have these luxuries. As a speaker, you must be aware of this limitation of the medium and fully guide the audience throughout the entire speech. You must maintain your relationship with the audience members by acting as their page-turner or reviewer, constantly helping them recognize and remember the key points.

Having talked about principles of speech organization, we can now discuss the variety of organizational patterns you can use to structure the presentation of your claims and support.

### Organizational Patterns

As we discussed with the principles of speech organization and development, the most effective speeches are focused, ordered, and understood by the audience. Consider how

## ANALYZING EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION

### Listening and Reading

Based on your own experiences, consider how the act of reading is similar to and different from listening to a public presentation.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In addition to transitions, what do these similarities and differences tell you about the needs of a listening audience?
2. Based on your responses from above, what strategies could you implement as a public speaker to assist your audience?

difficult even your friends might find it to follow and understand a story that offers main points at random. So too with an audience: One would have trouble following a speech where evidence, such as statistics, testimony, and examples, is simply scattered about. Members of the audience would find it very difficult to comprehend the material, and therefore, you would have a very difficult time successfully achieving the purpose of your speech and constructing a positive relationship with the audience. You must arrange the speech in a way that will allow the audience to clearly grasp the material and that will most effectively achieve your purpose.

An **organizational pattern** is an arrangement of the main points that best enables audience comprehension. Some organizational patterns are more effective for certain types of speeches and audiences than for others, and the following discussion covers various organizational patterns you may choose and when they might be most appropriate given the circumstances surrounding your speech. Various types of organizational patterns are summarized in Table 14.1 and are fully discussed below.

### Chronological Pattern

When using the **chronological pattern**, you arrange the main points according to their position in a time sequence. Often selected when explaining a process to the audience, this pattern conveys a sense of development, either forward or backward depending on your topic and purpose. For example, you may explain the process of passing legislation through Congress:

1. First, legislation is introduced and sent to the appropriate committee.
2. Second, legislation is debated and voted on by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.
3. Finally, legislation undergoes additional committee discussion and approval before being submitted to the president.

### Spatial Pattern

In the **spatial pattern**, the main points are arranged according to their physical relation, such as from left to right, top to bottom, north to south, or forward to backward. For instance, you may describe the layout of a new building on campus using this pattern:

1. The bottom floor of the new student union building will feature the bookstore and a food court.
2. The second floor of the new student union building will house student organization offices.
3. The third floor of the new student union building will include additional classrooms and a technology lab.

### Causal Pattern

When a **causal pattern** is used to organize the body of a speech, the main points are arranged according to cause and effect. The order in which you choose to place these two matters will depend on your purpose, topic, and audience. This pattern works best when you are attempting to explain to members of an audience or convince them that one thing causes another. For example, you could use

**organizational pattern:** an arrangement of the main points of a speech that best enables audience comprehension

**chronological pattern:** organizational pattern in which the main points of a speech are arranged according to their position in a time sequence

**spatial pattern:** an organizational pattern in which the main points of a speech are arranged according to their physical relation, such as from left to right, top to bottom, north to south, or forward to backward

**causal pattern:** an organizational pattern in which the main points of a speech are arranged according to cause and effect

**Table 14.1** Organizational Patterns

<b>Chronological Pattern</b>	Main points arranged according to their position in a time sequence
<b>Spatial Pattern</b>	Main points arranged according to their physical relation
<b>Causal Pattern</b>	Main points arranged according to cause and effect
<b>Question–Answer Pattern</b>	Main points arranged and posed as questions an audience may have about a subject
<b>Topical Pattern</b>	Main points arranged and presented as specific categories, groupings, or grounds
<b>Problem–Solution Pattern</b>	Main points arranged and presented as a problem and a solution
<b>Elimination Pattern</b>	Main points arranged and presented as possible solutions to a problem with the solution to be proposed appearing last

the causal pattern to discuss the impact of capital gains taxes on investment and development:

1. There has been a steady increase in the amount of capital gains taxes.
2. Small-business investing and development have substantially decreased in recent years.

Fundamental to the causal pattern is convincing the audience that a definite link exists between what you classify as a cause and what you claim are its effects. In the above example, you would have to convince the audience that the decrease in investments and development was the primary result of increased capital gains and not the result of federal guidelines, interest rates, global investments, or a host of other factors. A causal pattern sometimes proves challenging for speakers to use effectively. When using this pattern, make sure you provide a clear connection between your cause and its effects.

### Question–Answer Pattern

Using the **question–answer pattern** involves posing questions an audience may have about a subject and then answering them in a manner that favors your position (Gronbeck, German, Ehniger, & Monroe, 1995). When selecting which questions to include, make sure they are important to the audience and not just the easiest to answer in a way that supports your stance. You will likely use this pattern when addressing a voluntary audience with concerns about an issue. For instance, you may address a community group with questions about the impact of a particular city project. This organizational pattern may also be appropriate when speaking to your fellow students about issues on campus. For example, if you deliver a speech about possible tuition increases, arranging your main points in a question–answer format might be effective:

1. The major question students are asking is “Why is this tuition increase necessary?”
2. A second common question among students is “Can we expect similar increases over the next few years?”
3. Students are also wondering “How will this tuition increase affect grants, scholarships, and other financial assistance?”

#### **question–answer pattern:**

organizational pattern that involves posing questions an audience may have about a subject and then answering them in a manner that favors the speaker’s position

**topical pattern:** organizational pattern in which support material is arranged according to specific categories, groupings, or grounds

### Topical Pattern

The **topical pattern** arranges support material according to specific categories, groupings, or grounds. At times, the order of your assertions may follow a natural



This speaker wants to convince his audience that a particular solution should be enacted to address a problem the audience does not know exists. Which organizational pattern would be most appropriate in this situation?

progression. In the next example, when discussing available scholarships with your audience, you could begin with the scholarship offering the least amount of money and progress to the one offering the largest amount of money:

1. The Caton Scholarship pays for half of tuition for the entire academic year.
2. The Mitchell Scholarship pays for full tuition for the entire academic year.
3. The Cutter Scholarship pays for full tuition for the entire academic year plus full room and board for the recipient.

Other times, the order in which each main point in a topical pattern is presented does not really matter. For instance, you may provide your audience with reasons for a spike in medication prices:

1. Additional research and development by pharmaceutical companies have increased the price of medication.
2. Increased demand for different medications has led to an increase in their prices.
3. Federal legislation has resulted in the increased price of medication.

Although in a topical pattern the main points may not always follow a natural progression, do not place your main points at random without any thought or consideration. When using the topical pattern, you might use one main point to prepare the audience for another and should therefore address it first.

### Problem–Solution and Elimination Patterns

We discuss the final two organizational patterns somewhat in tandem to emphasize the importance of considering the audience when selecting which pattern to use in the organization of your speech. First, the **problem–solution pattern** divides the body of the speech by first addressing a problem and then offering a solution to that problem. You may want to convince your audience that an increase in domestic oil drilling will help lower gasoline prices:

1. An overreliance on foreign-based oil has led to a significant increase in gasoline prices in the United States.
2. Increased domestic oil drilling and exploration will reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil and lower the price of gasoline.

Using the problem–solution pattern, it is naturally imperative that the solution indeed solve the problem. Furthermore, you must convince the audience that your solution is practicable and realistic.

The **elimination pattern** offers a series of solutions to a problem, systematically eliminating each one until the solution remaining is the one you support. When using this particular organizational pattern, make sure that the solutions offered are widely accepted or legitimate and that the reasons for eliminating them are reasonable (Gronbeck et al., 1995). We can illustrate the elimination pattern using the above example. You want to convince your audience that an increase in domestic drilling is the best solution for lowering the price of gasoline. In doing so, you provide other

#### problem–solution pattern:

organizational pattern that divides the body of the speech by first addressing a problem and then offering a solution to that problem

#### elimination pattern:

organizational pattern that offers a series of solutions to a problem, systematically eliminating each one until the solution remaining is the one a speech supports

possible solutions, eliminating each of them until only the one that you support remains:

1. While increasing gasoline taxes to curb consumption has been proposed as a way of lowering prices, it will result in more hardships for consumers.
2. Decreasing government regulations oil companies must follow has been suggested as a way of lowering gas prices, but this will only be a short-term fix.
3. Increasing domestic oil drilling and exploration will reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil and lower the price of gasoline.

Both the problem–solution pattern and the elimination pattern are most often used to convince an audience of a particular action’s suitability to eliminate or manage a given problem. However, the problem–solution pattern is most appropriate when an audience does not know that the problem exists or does not recognize the pervasiveness or impact of the problem. Consequently, you will want to dedicate part of your speech to explaining to the audience the extent and impact of the problem in addition to promoting an acceptable solution. In the above example, if your audience were unaware of the problems surrounding high gasoline prices, the problem–solution pattern would be most appropriate. The elimination pattern, on the other hand, best suits an audience that is already aware of the extent and impact of a problem. However, these listeners are either unaware of possible solutions or aware that certain solutions exist but uncertain about which one to support. If your audience were already well aware of issues related to high gasoline prices but unaware or undecided about how they might be lowered, the elimination pattern would be most appropriate.



## COMMUNICATION + YOU

### Organization in Everyday Life

Recall an occasion when someone tried to convince you to do or believe something. Consider how that person’s ideas were presented.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Did that person organize his or her ideas according to one of the organizational patterns discussed here?
2. What impact did his or her use or nonuse of organizational patterns have on the outcome?

## Introductions and Conclusions

In addition to the body of your speech, you need to include an **introduction** that lays the foundation for the speech and establishes a positive relational connection with the audience. You will also need to include a **conclusion** that reinforces and completes the speech while also reinforcing a relationship with the audience. Here, we talk about why these parts are so important to your speech and then offer guidelines for developing effective introductions and conclusions.

Beginning speakers often wonder how much time they should devote to introductions and conclusions. A classic study (Miller, 1946) suggested that introductions make up approximately 10% and conclusions make up around 5% of all speeches. While this study was conducted around 70 years ago, these numbers are not too far off from what we see today. Generally, communication scholars recommend that you devote somewhere

**introduction:** part of a speech that lays the foundation for the speech and establishes a positive relational connection with the audience

**conclusion:** part of a speech that reinforces and completes the speech while also reinforcing a relationship with the audience

## By the way...



### Building a House/Speech

When considering how introductions and conclusions are just as important as the body of a speech, you might liken the development of a speech to the building of a house. No matter how strong the walls and frame are, without a solid foundation, the house will collapse and crumble to the ground. Further, regardless of how solid the foundation is or how strong the walls and frame are, without a durable roof on top, the house is not complete and will likely deteriorate. Likewise, you must support the body of your speech with a strong introduction and reinforce the speech with a thorough conclusion.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Can you think of other comparisons to developing a speech?
2. What do you suppose might actually happen as a result of a weak introduction and conclusion?

between 10% and 25% of your speech to the introduction and 5% to 15% to the conclusion.

Given the particular importance of establishing a relational connection with your audience at the beginning of your presentation, reinforcing this connection through the end of the presentation, and developing a logical foundation and closing, we recommend dedicating around 25% of your speech to the introduction and 10% to 15% to the conclusion. If you give an 8-minute presentation, your introduction should finish at around the 2-minute mark, and your conclusion should occupy approximately the last minute of the presentation. Spending more time than this will not allow you to fully develop the body of your speech. Spending less time will not allow you to adequately connect with the audience, lay the foundation for the speech, or conclude the speech effectively.

While you will spend less time presenting your introduction and conclusion, these parts of your speech are just as important as its body. Sure, you devote more time to the body during the presentation of your speech, and you may spend more time working on the body during its preparation. However, it is impossible to give an effective presentation with a weak introduction or conclusion. You must support the body of your speech with a strong introduction and finish the speech with a thorough conclusion.

### Introducing Your Presentation

When meeting someone for the first time, your initial impressions have a lasting impact on your perceptions of that person and determine if you desire additional contact. Often within the first few moments of a conversation, you determine if you would like to prolong your conversation and develop a relationship, if you would like to see this person in the future, or if you hope never to endure the excruciatingly painful experience of seeing this person again. Whether or not you actually engage in a relationship with someone is regularly determined in the first few moments of contact. The same holds true for the initial moments of a public presentation.

The first impressions an audience forms of you are critical for the reception of your presentation. As the audience listens to you, it is important that you perform your identity in an appealing manner so that the audience members can determine what type of relationship they will share with you. Whether you are speaking about an issue the audience supports or opposes, it is important that audience members respect and, ideally, like you as a person and a speaker. You must construct the identity of a credible speaker (who knows how to develop a proper introduction) and develop a positive relationship with the audience.

Below we discuss six components to include in the introduction of your speech (see Table 14.2). Including each component and following the guidelines offered will help you develop a strong, effective foundation for your speech.

**attention getter:** a device used to draw the audience into a presentation

#### Attention Getter

The first thing to include in your introduction is an **attention getter**, a device used to draw the audience to you and hence your presentation. The placement of

**Table 14.2** Brief Guide to Introductions

<b>Attention-Getting Device</b>	Gain the attention of your audience
<b>Purpose and Thesis</b>	Inform your audience of the purpose of your speech and state your thesis
<b>Credibility and Relational Connection</b>	Explain why your audience should listen to you speak on the topic and discuss your personal connection with the audience
<b>Orientation Phase</b>	Familiarize your audience with the topic and define terms if necessary
<b>Impact of the Topic and Speech</b>	Explain how the topic impacts your audience and why the audience should listen to the speech
<b>Enumerated Preview</b>	Outline the main points of your speech for your audience

the remaining components of the introduction can vary, but the attention getter, ranging from one sentence to a few lines, always comes first. Some common types of attention getters are offered in Table 14.3.

When selecting the most appropriate attention getter, consider the topic, the audience, and yourself. Your attention getter must relate to the *topic* at hand in terms of both subject matter and tone. Many fascinating stories, colorful quotations, and extraordinary facts exist in the world, but the one you choose to gain your audience's attention must relate to the topic at hand and the occasion.

You must also consider the *audience* when selecting your attention getter. If audience members are very familiar with your topic, startling facts or statistics may not shock them as much as an audience unfamiliar with the topic. If audience members are unfamiliar with your topic, they may not fully understand complex illustrations, which thus may be ineffective at establishing a relational connection with them and capturing their attention.

Finally, when selecting an attention getter, you must consider *yourself*. Select an attention getter that is most comfortable for you. Some people feel awkward citing a quotation or reciting lines of a poem. Others feel ill at ease when attempting humor. Select an attention getter that is most suitable and natural for you. In particular, select one that lets you connect yourself to the audience.

### Purpose and Thesis

In the introduction, you must also inform your audience of both the purpose of your speech and your thesis. Be as explicit as possible when stating your thesis or central idea. Tell audience members exactly what you intend to argue; they should not wonder what your speech is about. In the most effective speeches, the audience knows precisely what the speaker will argue. Earlier, we discussed the need to guide the audience throughout the entire speech. When you provide your thesis statement, you are telling the audience the direction you are heading and that everything included in the body of your speech will support this statement.



What is the first component that must be included in the introduction of a presentation?

**Table 14.3 Attention-Getting Devices**

<b>Illustration</b>	A brief topic-related narrative can be used to grab your audience's attention. These narratives can be real or hypothetical, but if you provide a hypothetical narrative, make sure you tell the audience up front.
<b>Personal Reference</b>	Providing a personal narrative or an anecdote can be a very effective way of gaining your audience's attention. Personal references allow you to begin establishing your credibility and a relational connection with your audience, which you can also gain by establishing a level of trust between you and your listeners.
<b>Provocative Facts or Statistics</b>	Provocative facts or statistics that shock or surprise an audience can also be effective attention getters. When selecting such facts and statistics, it is especially important to make sure they are relevant to the topic and the audience.
<b>Rhetorical Question</b>	A rhetorical question—that is, one to which you do not expect the audience to offer a verbal response—gains audience members' attention by actively engaging them and causing them to think about their position or experience with a topic. A good rhetorical question also helps maintain audience attention throughout the speech, since members of the audience often wonder if their answer is accurate or appropriate.
<b>Quotation</b>	A relatively brief quotation can help gain attention and properly introduce the topic of your speech. Never just utter a quote and expect the audience to understand its relevance, why it was included, or who said it. Always explain why you selected a quote or what it may suggest.
<b>Humor</b>	A joke is an effective way to open a speech and gain your audience's attention, as long as it relates to your topic and allows you to effectively prepare the audience for your speech. Of course, a humorous opening does not have to be in the form of a joke. It can apply to all of the preceding attention-gaining strategies.

Supplying the purpose of your speech performs a few different functions. It often reinforces your thesis statement and will increase the listeners' understanding of the information you provide. When you get to the body of your speech, they will better understand why this particular material is included and its overall purpose.

Providing the purpose of your speech also enhances your credibility by establishing a sense of goodwill. By placing audience members at the forefront, you are letting them know that they are the reason you are speaking. You are presenting this information not for personal gain or because you like to hear yourself speak but because you care about the audience members and want to impact their lives in a meaningful and beneficial way.

Informing the audience of your purpose also helps comfort the audience and establishes trust. Especially if the audience is suspicious, it is good to be straightforward about your intentions. Letting the audience know your motives for presenting the speech will help you establish a trusting relationship, enhance your credibility, and ultimately help ensure the effectiveness of your presentation.

### **Credibility and Relational Connection**

As a speaker, you must convey to the audience that you are knowledgeable about the topic, that you can be trusted, and that you have its best interest at heart. As mentioned in Chapter 13, these characteristics touch on the three primary dimensions of credibility: knowledge, trustworthiness, and goodwill (Gass & Seiter,

2011). Notice once again that these components would likely be used to characterize someone with whom you share a positive relationship. Perceptions of credibility are closely connected to and frequently based on relationships.

The three primary dimensions of credibility are established throughout the introduction and throughout the speech, but knowledge is the one dimension that you must explicitly convey to your audience in the introduction. You need to assure the audience that you are knowledgeable and experienced in this area. You must establish a sufficient degree of expertise. Of course, by doing so, you also reinforce trustworthiness and goodwill. As someone knowledgeable and experienced in this area, the information you provide is probably accurate. As someone with personal experience in this area, you care enough about it and the members of your audience that you feel it is important to share it with them. Furthermore, you establish for the audience your personal relationship with the material.

As a speaker, at minimum you must relate your expertise and your personal experience with the topic about which you speak. You can best express this expertise to your audience members by informing them of your experience exploring and learning about this topic. Sometimes this credibility comes already partially established and embedded in a person's credentials. A person's rank, title, or advanced degree carries a certain degree of expertise. Of course, you do not need an advanced degree in an area to claim expertise or experience. Explaining to your audience how you have carefully studied the topic or have extensive experience or background with the material is often sufficient.

As a speaker, you must also establish a relational connection with the audience. You can accomplish this connection by noting your identification with the audience or how you and the audience are alike (Burke, 1969). People tend to trust and like others whom they perceive as similar to them. Additionally, through identification, the meaning framework of a speaker becomes apparent. People feel as if they understand the way a speaker thinks and views the world because of the similarities between them. Consequently, a speaker's words become more understandable and more believable because the audience members are able to match the speaker's ways of thinking to their own. As long as they are legitimate, noting similarities, such as having the same connection with the topic, the same experiences, or the same desires, fears, and joys, can connect you with the audience and create this sense of identification.

### Orientation Phase

In the **orientation phase**, you provide the audience members with any information you believe will allow them to better understand and appreciate the material you will present in the body of your speech. The actual information you include will vary according to your topic and the audience. It could include definitions of unfamiliar terms you will use during your speech. A brief explanation of what the topic entails

## Make your case



### Brag Much?

We believe it is important to discuss your credibility in the introduction of a speech. However, doing so could possibly be perceived as bragging by the audience, which might prevent you from developing a positive relational connection with audience members.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Do you believe a person can overdo the discussion of his or her credibility?
2. How might discussing credibility be accomplished without appearing to boast?

### ETHICAL ISSUE

What are the necessary qualifications for a speaker to claim expertise and experience with a topic? Are determining these qualifications and evaluating expertise and experience the responsibilities of the speaker, the audience, or both?

**orientation phase:** part of a speech in which the speaker provides the audience members with any information that allows them to better understand and appreciate the material presented in the body of the speech



Why might this speaker include an orientation phase as part of her introduction?

might benefit the audience, as might an overview of the historical development of an issue.

Describing your approach to a topic or your particular meaning can sometimes dramatically alter your audience's perspective and the speech itself. For instance, when you are giving a speech about abortion, some members of the audience may approach your speech differently depending on whether you define abortion as occurring in the first trimester or the last trimester.

During our discussion of the unity principle, we mentioned that the orientation phase is the place to include information you feel is important for the audience to know but whose inclusion in the body would get you off-track. So, returning to the example from a few pages ago, say you are informing the audience about the treatment of a disease, but you think it is important for audience members to know about the symptoms of the disease. Briefly include this material in the orientation phase.

Essentially, when providing an orientation to the topic during the introduction, you are getting the audience members up to speed on the topic and preparing them for the body of the speech. Include whatever information you consider most relevant to audience understanding and a successful speech.

### Impact of the Topic and Speech

As a speaker, it is your job to tell the audience members how the topic impacts their lives and how they might benefit from listening to your speech. In other words, you are establishing their relationship with the material and giving them a reason to listen to your presentation. This approach also enhances your credibility by conveying to the audience a concern about its well-being. The fact that you are aware of and are satisfying members' needs will assist in the establishment of an audience's relationship with you.

When considering how to explain the impact of the topic, you must fully consider the audience members and what they already likely know or believe. Do not take for granted that they already know the importance of the topic or fully understand its impact on their lives. Perhaps your topic does impact their lives and should be important to them, but they just do not realize this, in which case you need to inform them of the connection and importance during the introduction. Reinforce this link even if you feel audience members are already fully aware of the topic's impact on their lives.

When explaining how the topic impacts the audience, ensure that you make it as personal as possible. For example, if you are presenting a speech on preparing for floods, do not just say, "Many people will be affected by flooding this year." Instead, inform the audience members of the chances that they, a friend, or a relative will sustain damage or encounter danger as a result of flooding. Such comments as "Lots of people are affected" or general circular statements like "This is important to know because it is really vital" are not sufficient. Saying something like "If the people in this

### ETHICAL ISSUE

When describing the importance of the topic to an audience, some speakers may feel compelled to embellish the facts to make the topic seem more vital and to enhance audience attention. They may consider this necessary as part of the greater good. Are there occasions when this deceitfulness would be appropriate? Why or why not?

room represent the entire population of the state, five of us will have our homes devastated in a flood by the end of the year” will be much more effective.

### Enumerated Preview

Finally, you must provide an enumerated preview of your main points during the introduction of your speech. Essentially, you must list the main points of your speech. “First, we will talk about X. Then, we will talk about Y. Finally, we will talk about Z.” You may include this list at any point in the introduction following your attention getter, but generally it is located at the very end.

An enumerated preview helps position your audience for the body of your speech and provides a nice lead into your argument. Plus, remember how important it is to fully guide your audience throughout the speech. In an enumerated preview, you are guiding audience members by providing markers or landmarks for them to follow and recognize along the way.

An enumerated preview also helps the audience remember your main points. We have heard an adage, which has been attributed to many groups. Among others, it has been referred to as an Irish saying, a Native American saying, and an Eskimo saying. No matter its origin, the saying and its meaning remain the same: Tell them what you are going to tell them. Tell them. Then tell them what you told them. In other words, the more often you say something, the more likely your audience will remember it. In the introduction, you tell audience members what you are going to tell them. In the body of your speech, you tell them. Finally, in your conclusion, you tell them what you told them. We have already gone through the *tell them what you are going to tell them* and *tell them* stages. Now, we can discuss the part in which you *tell them what you told them*.

### Concluding Your Presentation

As we mentioned previously, the introduction, body, and conclusion are equally important. However, many speeches we hear often end with a very weak conclusion and just seem to stop—as if the speaker had run out of ideas and wanted to run out of the room. The introduction and body might be very well done, but the conclusion of the speech needs a great deal of additional development. If the speaker is so relieved to be near the end of the speech that he or she just abruptly quits after finishing the body, or if the speaker is not quite sure how to end the speech, any credibility he or she has



### By the way...



### The Case of the Cynical Audience Members

When they are developing the Impact of the Topic and Speech part of their speech, we often encourage our students to imagine cynical

audience members saying, “Who cares?” or “Big deal.” You need to tell them why they should care and why it is a big deal. Do not worry; most audiences are not cynical and will provide you with encouragement. You can be certain that your classmates will be very encouraging if you are giving a speech in class. After all, you are all in the same boat or floating on the same educational raft.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why do you think it is so important to convey the importance of the topic?
2. If you are in the process of developing a speech or will be doing so soon, why should the audience care about and consider your topic to be a big deal?

### Skills You Can Use: In Everyday Life

Most of what we are discussing within this chapter are skills that you can use when developing a public presentation. However, this material can certainly be applied to other areas of life. Although speaking and writing may require different strategies and approaches, applying the material discussed here can improve your written work. Applying this material can also improve everyday talk in which you are trying to convince or explain something to others.





Why should audience members clapping at the very end of a presentation not be the primary focus of a speaker when developing a conclusion?

**wrap-up signal:** indicates to the audience both verbally and nonverbally that the speaker has reached the conclusion of a public presentation; also a phrase, usually uttered by the interviewer, that signals the beginning of an interview's conclusion

tion they have just experienced.

During the conclusion, you must reinforce your thesis and purpose, underscore audience involvement, and provide adequate closure. The impression made at the end of your speech will be long lasting and plays a predominant role in whether the audience uses the information you provided or is persuaded by your presentation. You must strive to make a positive lasting impression and end your presentation in a manner that is most effective and maintains your relational connection with the audience and the material presented. Conclusions contain six components that will help get this accomplished (see Table 14.4).

### Wrap-Up Signal

The first thing you must provide for the audience when concluding a speech is a **wrap-up signal**. You must indicate to the audience both verbally and nonverbally that you have reached the conclusion and are essentially wrapping things up. We have said it before, and we are saying it again: You must guide your audience through the entire speech.

**Table 14.4** Brief Guide to Conclusions

<b>Wrap-Up Signal</b>	Signal the beginning of the conclusion for your audience.
<b>Restatement of Thesis</b>	Restate your thesis for your audience.
<b>Summary of Main Points</b>	Provide your audience with a complete summary of your main points.
<b>Audience Motivation</b>	Encourage members of your audience to incorporate the material you have provided into their lives or to behave/think in a certain manner.
<b>Relational Reinforcement</b>	Reinforce the relationship between your audience and the material and between your audience and yourself.
<b>Clincher Statement</b>	Provide your audience with a memorable line or phrase that will enable you to end strongly and smoothly.

Verbally, incorporating phrases like “As we draw to a close,” “As we look back on what has been discussed during this speech,” and “As we near the end of this presentation” will signal the audience that you have reached your conclusion. The old standby “In conclusion” can also be used, but many people consider this cliché and a bit dull.

Nonverbally, you can indicate with your tone of voice that you have reached the final part of your presentation. An extended pause will work in some cases, as will a decrease in your rate of speaking. Whatever you include, make sure the audience knows that you have reached your conclusion.

While a wrap-up signal is valuable in guiding your audience through the speech, some audience members may view it as a cue to stop listening or to begin gathering their things in anticipation of leaving. Make sure that the wrap-up signal is clear, but do not dwell on it. Instead, move quickly to the remaining components of the conclusion. Clarify to your audience that you have reached not the end of your speech but the beginning of your conclusion. You will be able to maintain audience members’ attention in part through the full development of the conclusion, making it worthwhile for them to listen.

### Restatement of the Thesis

You must also restate the thesis during the conclusion of your speech to underscore the main idea and help your audience remember it afterward. When you restate the thesis is up to you. Like the components of the introduction, some components of the conclusion can occur at any point. Aside from providing a wrap-up signal at the very beginning of the conclusion and ending with the clincher statement (we discuss this one shortly), the order in which these components appear will be based on what you believe works best for your speech.

### Summary of Main Points

A summary of the main points allows you to stress the main points of your speech and helps the audience retain the information. Remember that in the introduction you provided an enumerated preview of the main points. There, you simply listed the main points of the speech without elaboration. When summarizing your main points during your conclusion, you do not simply list them but instead remind your audience what they are, briefly review each one, and accentuate their support of your thesis. Summarizing your main points is crucial to audience retention and understanding of the material.

## DISCIPLINARY DEBATE

### In Conclusion

We suggest verbally indicating to an audience that you have reached the conclusion of a presentation. However, a few communication professionals discourage the use of wrap-up signals because of the possibility that audience members will cease listening as carefully once they have been informed that the presentation is nearing the end.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Beyond guiding the audience, how might a wrap-up signal assist the audience?
2. What all could be done to prevent a possible drop in audience attention?



### By the way...

#### Do Not Just List

We have found that providing a complete summary of the main points instead of just listing them is the area in which beginning speakers struggle the most when developing conclusions. Keep the importance of the summary in mind when speaking in the community, on the job, or in the classroom.

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why do you think beginning speakers may struggle with this area?
2. What might you do to prevent making this mistake when speaking?

### Audience Motivation

You must also strive to motivate the audience to take action as a result of listening to the speech. In the introduction, you explained to the audience the importance of the topic and provided the audience with reasons for listening to your presentation. During the conclusion, reiterate why you gave the speech in the first place and encourage audience members to act as a result of the speech. A positive relationship with the speaker will increase the likelihood that an audience will go along with whatever is asked of it.

In speeches to persuade, this reaction is relatively easy to accomplish because the audience response is a bit more obvious. For instance, if the purpose of your speech is to get your audience members to wear their seat belts when traveling in a vehicle, urge them to always wear their seat belts when traveling in a vehicle. Do not assume your audience members will understand what course of action you want them to take or remember the purpose of your speech. It is important to be explicit by telling the audience members exactly what you want them to think or do. If the purpose of your speech is to convince the audience members that something is true or a certain policy should be enacted, tell them exactly what you want them to believe or support.

During speeches to inform, your purpose is to increase audience understanding or recognition of the topic. An effective informative speech will generate or enhance interest in your topic and will actually be used by your audience. To ensure members of your audience make full use of the material, encourage them to utilize the information and go beyond what you provide.

The impact of any message is greatest while heard and immediately afterward. As time goes on, this impact grows increasingly weaker. You have the most impact on your audience while presenting the speech, and as soon as you finish, the effects of your speech will increasingly diminish. The best way to ensure a lasting impact is to motivate the audience to use the information.

### Relational Reinforcement

You must also reinforce the relationship between the audience and the material and between the audience and yourself. Emphasizing the importance of the material in audience members' lives, like you did in the introduction, will increase their motivation to use the material and to act or think the way you want. By reinforcing their connection with the material, you also ensure that this relationship will not end with your presentation, just as a relationship among friends lasts after a conversation has drawn to a close.

In the conclusion, you must also remind the audience members of your relationship with them. You may want to touch upon the ways the material impacts your life just as it does theirs. You could also note other similarities with the audience members by emphasizing your connections with them. Much like reinforcing their relationship with the material, audience members should recognize that your relationship with them will continue once the presentation concludes.

### Clincher Statement

You must end your speech with a **clincher statement**, a phrase that allows you to end your speech strongly and smoothly. Your clincher statement needs to encapsulate your entire speech and leave the audience in the proper frame of mind. This technique will help make the speech memorable, and knowing the last line of your speech is often a comfort.

**clincher statement:** a phrase that allows a speaker to end a speech strongly and smoothly

Many of the attention-getting strategies used in speech introductions can be used here. Sometimes humor is most appropriate. A final illustration or anecdote can be used as a clincher statement. Linking the clincher statement to your introduction is often an effective way of ending your speech and completely wrapping up the entire presentation. For instance, if you began with a rhetorical question, providing an answer as your final statement may reinforce your thesis. Audiences often remember the last thing said longer than anything else in the speech, so make sure you carefully choose your conclusion.

Never, however, end your speech by saying, “Thank you.” This is incredibly forgettable and ineffective. We are sure you are a considerate person who will be eager to express your gratitude to the audience for its attention. However, most presenters who end their speeches this way are doing so not out of appreciation for the audience but because they are finished and the audience does not know it. Ending a speech without making the audience aware of it results in the speaker staring at the audience, the audience staring back at the speaker, and nobody knowing quite what to do next. So, the speaker meekly utters, “Thank you.” At this point, the audience members realize it is over and start clapping, primarily because they are relieved to know what is happening. The speaker in the above example likely did not guide the audience through the entire speech, include a wrap-up signal, or incorporate any of the other components of an effective conclusion. After reading this book, you will be certain to fully guide your audience through the speech. You will know what components to include when developing a successful conclusion, and you will end strongly with a memorable clincher statement.

Of course, you can still express gratitude and appreciation for your audience by saying, “Thank you,” but wait until the applause has died down following your clincher statement and the audience has finished showering you with roses and words of praise.



## By the way...



### Comedy Genius

Comedians like Chris Rock always know their last joke or line before they go up to the microphone. Once on stage, they may vary the rest of their act, but that last line will remain the same. They want their audience laughing when they finish, ending in a memorable fashion. Previously establishing the last line of their act and knowing its strength also reassures and helps calm them through the rest of their performance. Your speeches may not end with a huge laugh from the audience, but they will need to end in a memorable way.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. In what ways is public speaking like a stage performance?
2. How might knowing your last statement assist you as a public speaker?

## »»» Focus Questions Revisited

### 1 What are the four principles of speech organization and development?

The four principles of speech organization and development are (1) points, (2) unity, (3) balance, and (4) guidance. The points principle highlights the basic building blocks of an argument: main points and subpoints. Unity is a principle of speech organization and development that maintains you should stay focused and provide only

information that supports your thesis and main points. Balance is a principle of speech organization and development that maintains the points of the body must be relatively equal in scope and importance. The amount of time you devote to the main points and to the development and support you provide for them must be relatively equal. Guidance is a principle of speech organization and development that maintains a speaker must guide and direct the audience throughout the entire speech.

## 2 What organizational patterns can you use in the development of the speech body?

An organizational pattern is an arrangement of the main points that best enables audience comprehension. You should base the selection of an organizational pattern for your speech on the topic, your purpose, and the audience. Use the chronological pattern when arranging the main points according to their position in a time sequence. Use the spatial pattern when the main points are arranged according to their physical relation. Use a causal pattern to organize the main points according to cause and effect. The question–answer pattern involves posing questions an audience may have about a subject and then answering those questions in a manner that favors your position. The topical pattern arranges support material according to specific categories, groupings, or grounds. The problem–solution pattern divides the body of the speech by first addressing a problem and then offering a solution to that problem. Finally, the elimination pattern involves offering a series of solutions to a problem and then systematically eliminating each one until the only solution remaining is the one you support.

## 3 What components must you include in a speech introduction?

During the introduction of a speech, you must begin to establish your credibility and connect with the audience on a relational level, reinforce connections between the topic and your audience to increase its desire to listen, and lay the groundwork for the remainder of the speech. Six components must be included in the introduction to achieve these requirements. The first thing to include in your introduction is an attention getter, a device used to draw the audience into your presentation. The placement

of the remaining components of the introduction may vary, but the attention getter will always come first. In the introduction, you must inform your audience of both the purpose of your speech and your thesis. You must tell the audience members why they should perceive you as credible, and you must develop your relationship with them. You must orient the audience members by providing them with any information that will allow them to better understand and appreciate the material you will present in the body of your speech. You must inform the audience members of the importance of the topic and its impact on their lives. Finally, you must provide an enumerated preview of your main points during the introduction of your speech.

## 4 What components must you include in a speech conclusion?

During the conclusion, you must reinforce your thesis and purpose, underscore audience involvement, and provide adequate closure or sense of finality. Six components of the conclusion will help you accomplish these requirements. You must first provide the audience with a wrap-up signal when concluding a speech. You must indicate to the audience both verbally and nonverbally that you have reached the conclusion and are essentially wrapping things up. You must restate the thesis during the conclusion of your speech. You must summarize the main points to reinforce them and help the audience retain the information. You must strive to motivate the audience to take action as a result of listening to the speech. During the conclusion of your speech, you must also reinforce the audience members' relationship with the material and their relationship with you. Finally, you must end your speech with a clincher statement, a phrase that allows you to end your speech strongly and smoothly.

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### »»» Questions to Ask Your Friends

1. What types of attention getters do your friends find most effective? Which types of attention getters do they find least effective? Do their evaluations change depending on circumstances or what is discussed?
2. Ask your friends to describe the characteristics of what they consider an effective public presentation. Limit their responses to those not involving delivery. Consider their responses in regard to the guidelines for developing public presentations discussed in this chapter.
3. Ask your friends to recall an occasion during which they listened to a presentation they considered confusing. What do they believe made it difficult to understand? As a speaker, what would you have done differently?

### »»» Media Connections

1. We discussed how written transitions are often less obvious than oral transitions. Find examples of written transitions in magazines, newspapers, and books. Once you have gathered these examples, turn each one into an oral transition that would clearly and effectively guide a listening audience.
2. Watch a public presentation on television or on the Internet. Which elements of introductions discussed in this chapter are evident? Are any elements of introductions absent from that presentation? What could the speechwriter have done to improve the introduction?
3. Locate examples of archived speeches from at least 20 years ago. Many can be found on the Internet. Then find examples of recent speeches. In terms of development, how are these speeches similar, and how are they different? How has the passing of time altered the development of public presentations?

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## Chapter Outline

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### **What Are Informative Speeches?**

- Speeches of Definition and Description
- Expository Speeches
- Process and How-To Speeches
- Strategies for Successful Informative Presentations

### **What Are Persuasive Speeches?**

- Speeches to Convince
- Speeches to Actuate

Persuasive Speaking and Artistic Proofs

Persuasive Speaking and the Social  
Judgment Theory

*Focus Questions Revisited*

*Key Concepts*

*Questions to Ask Your Friends*

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