



Writing a Speech With Purpose

Level 1 Project



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Writing a Speech With Purpose

About Writing a Speech With Purpose

Each speech you deliver during your Toastmasters meetings or outside of them is a reflection of who you are and what you want to contribute. You may be looking to share information, entertain your audience, or persuade or inspire them. Whatever your goal, the first step is to write a speech that has meaning, not only for you, but for every member of your audience.

About Project Resources

This project includes 4 resources. You can print your project, view and print the evaluation resources, or review the tools provided to support the successful completion of your assignment.

Every project in Pathways includes resources that are always found in the first section. Watch for references to the Speech Outline Worksheet and the Speech Topic and Purpose Worksheet as you work through your learning.

An interactive version of the Project Checklist can also be found in the Complete Your Assignment section of each project. An interactive, digital speech evaluation form is available on Base Camp for your convenience as well as that of your evaluator. You will find a tool to send a link to both the digital and downloadable and printable versions of the evaluation form for your speech directly from the Complete Your Project section in every project.

Resources

The following is a list of resources available in your digital project on Base Camp. Some of these resources, such as evaluations, are also available on the Resources section on Base Camp.

Project Checklist

Evaluation Resource

Speech Outline Worksheet

Speech Topic and Purpose Worksheet

Part 1: Get Started

In Part 1, you will find an introduction to the project, your assignment, an activity to assess your current skills, and the project competencies.

Introduction

In this section, you will find information about how this project can help you identify a clear purpose for every speech, along with reasoned steps for writing well-organized speeches that fully realize your purpose while delivering your message.

Complete Know-Wonder-Learned

This activity will support you in considering what you already know about speech writing, how well you understand the need to define a purpose for each speech, and what you can do to develop your speech writing skills.

Learn About Base Camp and Answer Questions

For most members, this will be among your first few Pathways projects. Set aside some time as you review your learning to explore Base Camp. Make sure you know where to find the Feedback page so you can send and receive messages and see your badges. Review the Tutorials and Resources page for anything that might help you as you work through your projects.

If you haven't already done so, visit the Resources page on Base Camp to review the How to Evaluate tutorial.

Introduction and Assignment

Introduction

In this project you will learn strategies for selecting a topic, defining a purpose, and producing a well-written and organized speech. You will learn different organizational structures for speeches and how to create clear transitions between sections of your speech.

Your Assignment

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to learn or review basic methods for writing a speech with a defined purpose and to present a well-organized speech on any topic.

Overview: Select a topic that appeals to you. It can be anything. Be sure your topic is narrow enough to be an effective 5- to 7-minute speech.

Clearly define your topic and consider your goal for your speech. Before you organize your speech, identify and express your purpose in a single sentence. Practice your speech and refine its organization. Present your speech at a club meeting.

Your speech can be persuasive, humorous, informational, or crafted in any style that appeals to you and supports your speech content.

Throughout this project you will see icons in the margins next to the text. These icons indicate additional resources available online.



Video: Sign in to Base Camp to watch a video that supports this project.



Interactive Activity: Sign in to Base Camp to complete an interactive activity.



Resource: Sign in to Base Camp to view this resource online.



Weblink: Return to your digital project when you see this icon to link to a website or Base Camp location.

For all assignment details and requirements, review the Project Checklist.

Learning in Writing a Speech With Purpose



Assess and Reflect

To assess and track your knowledge, complete the activity below by listing what you already know and what you wonder about the topic today. Add up to five items to each list. After you complete your project, you will have an opportunity to review your answers and add what you have learned.

Know

For example: I know how to select speech topics.

Wonder

For example: I wonder how to clearly define the purpose of a speech.

Competencies

The following is a list of competencies that you will learn and practice in this project.

- Write an engaging speech on any topic.
- Organize a speech clearly to maximize audience understanding.
- Establish and fulfill a clear purpose for your speech.
- Design and write a speech with meaningful content.
- Craft clear and engaging transitions between main sections of your speech.

Part 2: Write an Engaging Speech

In Part 2, you will find information about organizing and writing a speech. Review each section below for more information.

Organizational Structures

In this section, you will learn about the different organizational structures you can use to design your speech. You will also take a quick quiz to help you identify which organizational structure works best for a particular topic.

Planning Your Presentation

For some members, writing a speech is the easy part. For others, they struggle with the first step. There are as many methods for developing a strong speech as there are writers, but there are a few general tools that can help, starting with a strong topic. Choosing a topic that lends itself to the time you have to deliver your speech and will engage your audience is the first step to succeeding.

From Topic to Well-Organized Speech

Once your topic is decided, there are a few questions you can answer to help turn the topic into a compelling speech. This section includes resources to help you. Be sure to download the resources and try them. They might be just the tool you need to ease your writing process.

Organizing Your Speech

Organizational Structures

The first place to start is to understand what a well-organized speech looks like. The design of a speech can enhance audience members' understanding of your topic and your purpose. When your speech is well-structured and easy to follow, it is more effective. Review some of the organizational structures that may help you during the writing process.

Chronological

Chronologically organized speeches follow a sequence of events.

Topical

A topical structure organizes speeches by topics and subtopics. Break your speech into sections that explain major concepts related to your topic, followed by smaller and smaller subtopics.

Spatial

A spatial structure organizes a speech by geography or the physical structure of the topic. Construct a speech that discusses the impact of your topic upon a region or the world. Spatial also refers to content that covers the physical landscape of a specific location. For example, if you are giving a speech about Germany, you may organize your presentation in a way that implies movement across the country. Your content could begin in the south at the Alps and then travel northward towards the Baltic Sea.

Causal

A causal structure organizes speeches to link a cause to an effect, or an effect to its cause.

Comparative

A comparative structure organizes speeches by describing two or more objects and their shared and/or different attributes. Show how your topic compares to another by examining similarities and differences.

Problem/Solution

Speeches organized by problem and solution are arranged in a particular sequence. First, state the issue and explain its significance. Then propose a feasible and advantageous solution.

Particular/General/Particular

A particular/general/particular structure organizes speeches by a specific example that frames broader content and illustrates the main or personal objective of the speech. The example given at the beginning of your speech is echoed in the conclusion to help clarify or elucidate your primary message.

1. Marie feels that her Toastmasters club could be doing more to reach out to guests of the club. She wants to start an email list for new potential club members. What is the best way for Marie to present this idea in a speech for her club members?

Spatial

Comparative

Problem/Solution

Chronological

2. Tomasz is preparing a speech about the impact a positive attitude can have for everyone, and he wants to use an example of a day in his office when he worked with a colleague who approached a project positively. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

Spatial

Comparative

Particular/General/Particular

Chronological

3. Peter wants to present information about breeds of dogs from three different groups—hound, working, and sporting. He also wants to present examples from each group. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

Casual

Topical

Particular/General/Particular

Chronological

4. Saif is passionate about trains. He has liked them since he was a child. He wants to share the history of the locomotive with his Toastmasters club—its invention, how it changed the world, and its modern-day role in the transportation industry. What is the best way for Saif to organize his speech?

Casual

Topical

Problem/Solution

Chronological

5. Zhang wants to tell his audience that regular exercise contributes to better overall health. What would be the best way to structure this speech?

Casual

Topical

Problem/Solution

Chronological

6. Finley is interested in the different economic structures of two countries. They would like to present the similarities and differences to their fellow Toastmasters. What is the best organizational structure for Finley to use?

Spatial

Comparative

Casual

Problem/Solution

7. Francesco wants to talk about climbing the world's tallest mountain. He'd like to talk about what happens to the body at different levels of elevation on a mountain. What is the best way for Francesco to structure his presentation?

Spatial

Comparative

Particular/General/Particular

Problem/Solution

Answers: 1. Problem/Solution; 2. Particular/General/Particular; 3. Topical; 4. Chronological; 5. Causal; 6. Comparative; 7. Spatial

Writing Your Speech

Select a Topic

A successful speech begins with a meaningful topic. A topic that has little or no meaning to you is unlikely to produce an engaging speech. Keep in mind that even when your topic is determined by a Pathways project, driven by Table Topics during a Toastmasters meeting, or provided by the parameters of an assignment for your employer or other organization, how you cover that topic is often up to you.

Clearly define your topic and write it down. As you work through writing your speech, return to your topic and make sure your speech aligns with your topic from beginning to end.

For this project, focus on choosing a topic that is meaningful to you. Your goal is to write a speech that is compelling to any audience.

Tell a Compelling Story

You learned in your Ice Breaker project that a good speech is like a good story.

Topic

Once your topic is decided it is time to begin thinking about composing your speech.

The basic structure is an introduction, a main body with transitions, and a conclusion.

Introduction

At its most basic, your introduction is intended to grab audience members' attention while introducing your topic.

Body and Transitions

In the body of the speech, each section should pertain to a single idea with clear transitions to the next section.

Transitions can be as simple as "First, I'd like to talk about..." or "Next, we'll turn our attention to..."

The description of a scene can be used as a transition. For instance, "Now, let me take you to a mid-century farm outside of Dublin, Ireland."

Time in a speech organized chronologically (e.g., "11:30 a.m. on June 4") can work the same way.

Whichever method you choose, the transition signals to your audience that you are moving to an other part of the topic.

Conclusion

A strong conclusion brings your speech to a close, tying all the content together and leaving an impact on your audience.

Thoughtful Preparation

Consider your past experiences as a speaker and an audience member when you write your speech.

Timing

Most of your speeches for Toastmasters will be 5 to 7 minutes in length. For some speakers and speeches, that may seem like forever, but for others, you are likely to feel that you cannot possibly cover the information you want to share in that time.

Making Choices

Often, speakers feel pressure to include everything they know. They may find that even after a speech is written, they feel compelled to add more, want just a few more minutes to make their point, or wish they could add just one more detail.

Each speech will require you to make choices about how you will use your time, what is most important to you and your audience, and what content will deliver your message most effectively.

Past Experience

Compare a time when you weren't able to communicate what you wanted to say in a speech or even a conversation with a time when you accomplished your communication goals.

It is likely that you had a clear sense of what you wanted to say when you accomplished your goals. Uncertainty about what to communicate can make any public speaking situation a great challenge.

Strong Content

Stepping back to consider what matters most to you can help you outline your priorities before you begin writing your speech.

Finding Balance

Once you have a clear idea of what is most important to you, you can balance delivering the content of your speech with the time you are allotted and make conscious, well-informed choices about what to keep, remove, or add.

Before you begin to write, answer three questions:

What is the most important thing I want to say?

Choose one thing.

Why does it matter to the audience?

Consider only consequential reasons for audience members' attention and concern.

What do I want people to hold in their hearts and minds long after my speech?

Identify one thing.

Meet Alyssa: Alyssa has chosen growing orchids as her topic. She is a botanist specializing in the search for new orchid species. The breadth of her knowledge is hard to distill into a single, narrow topic, but answering the following questions can help.

What is the most important thing I want to say?

For Alyssa, it is that cultivating orchids locally encourages people to think about plants globally.

Why does it matter to the audience?

Alyssa comes from a place with long, dark winters. She knows that many members of her club like to find ways to bring spring inside during those months.

What do I want people to hold in their hearts and minds long after my speech?

Alyssa wants audience members to walk away feeling that it is worth the effort to understand orchids and their benefit.

Once those three questions are answered, Alyssa's overarching goal is clear to her. She is ready to organize her most important points and create a speech that is concise.

Take a moment to consider these questions and answer them for your upcoming speech.

What is the most important thing I want to say?

Why does it matter to my audience?

What do I want people to hold in their hearts and minds long after their speech?

Once the main idea of a speech is defined, the next step is to pull out the details that best support that idea. For Alyssa, there are **five** fundamental details:

DETAIL 1: Orchids are indigenous to the rain forest and are profoundly important to their ecosystem.

DETAIL 2: They are generally beautiful.

DETAIL 3: Many varieties make wonderful house plants.

DETAIL 4: Orchids are an excellent barometer for the health of a rain forest ecosystem.

DETAIL 5: Orchids have known and unknown beneficial qualities, including medicinal.

Part of developing a strong speech is smoothing the transitions between sections.

- **Transitions:** Alyssa will need polished transitions to help her audience members move with her from one topic to another. These valuable bridges help audiences follow the ideas presented.
- **Transitional Words:** Words that connect one section to the next are transitional words. There are many. A few examples include *afterward, also, but, then, finally, instead, and later.*
- **Transitional Phrases:** Common phrases can also connect parts of your speech. Phrases such as *according to, as a result, for example, and this means* can ease your audience from one part of your speech to the next.
- **When to Transition:** Transitions most often occur between the introduction and body of a speech, between thoughts in the body of a speech, and between the body and the conclusion.

Because of Alyssa's knowledge and interest, it would be easy for her to speak on any one of the details at length, create smooth transitions between sections, and develop a compelling speech.

However, Alyssa has a purpose beyond sharing information. Before she begins to write, she needs to consider her path.

Part 3: Know Your Purpose

In part 3, you will find a discussion about speech purpose. Review each section below for more information.

Introduction to Speech Purpose

In this section, you will find information about the fundamental importance of identifying the purpose of every speech and how a clear purpose contributes to success.

General Purpose and Specific Purpose

In this section you will learn about the types of general and specific purposes for a speech.

Define Your Purpose

In this section, you will find a discussion of how to identify your general purpose and steps for clearly defining the specific purpose of a speech.

The interesting thing about developing a speech is that you can have a very clear idea of what you want to say without ever considering why you are saying it. Alyssa has a pretty clear purpose for her speech already, but there are a few other things to know and consider.

Every speech has a general purpose whether it is defined by the speaker or not. A general purpose is the broad intent of a speech. The most common general purposes are:

To Inform

This type of speech includes lectures, briefings, or demonstrations.

To Persuade

This type of speech includes sales presentations, campaign speeches, or fundraising speeches.

To Entertain

This is often an anecdotal speech that makes a point.

To Inspire

This is the type of speech that might be delivered at a commencement or motivational seminar.

Defining Your Purpose

Specific Purpose

Concise, well-developed speeches also have a clearly defined specific purpose. A specific purpose focuses on one explicit aspect of the general purpose.

One Sentence

A specific purpose can be expressed as a one-sentence statement about what you hope to accomplish in your speech. The statement should be:

- Worded from the audience's viewpoint. Clarify exactly what you want the audience to be able to do when you've finished your presentation.
- Precisely worded so that you and anyone else who reads your speech will have no doubt about your purpose.
- Realistic and possible to achieve.

Because Alyssa is working in her Engaging Humor path, her general purpose is to entertain her audience.

With that in mind, she will work to bring humor into her speech while meeting her specific purpose.

Alyssa's purpose statement is: Audience members will learn about orchids and their value in rain forests and as house plants.

She will share anecdotes and use a multimedia presentation to fulfill both her general and specific purposes.

Part 4: Plan Your Presentation

In Part 4, you will review what you have learned and begin the steps to complete your assignment. Review each section below for more information.

Apply What You Have Learned

As adult learners, it can be a challenge to find the time to really think about new information and develop new habits. Every Pathways project includes a section called Review and Apply. It is intended to help you zero in on what matters in the project and, perhaps, to identify what you have learned and what you would like to learn more about.

Try Every Resource

Many projects in Pathways, including this one, include resources to support your work on the assignment. If you haven't already, be sure to download the resources and see if they help you accomplish your goals.



All resources can be found within the project. Many can also be found on the Resources page.

Prepare for Your Evaluation

Evaluations are intended to be a collaborative process. Just like the Ice Breaker evaluation, if you know who your evaluator will be, share the evaluation resource with them before your club meeting, with the top filled in with your speech title and any specific skills or behaviors you would like your evaluator to watch for you. Ask questions if you have any and know your fellow club members support you and your effort.

Review and Apply

Before you complete the assignment, take a moment to read through the questions you see here. If you are not able to answer them comfortably, review the project.

- What three questions can you ask yourself before you begin to write your speech?
- What is the value of writing a clearly organized speech?
- What is the value of an engaging transition between main sections of your speech?
- How can defining your general and specific purposes help you write an effective, engaging speech?

Complete Your Assignment



Project Checklist

Now that you have read through the project, plan and prepare your speech or report. First, review your assignment.

This project includes:

- Defining a general purpose and a specific purpose
- Topic and Purpose Worksheet
- The Speech Outline Worksheet
- A 5- to 7-minute speech

The following list includes tasks for this project. Please remember, your project is unique to you. You can use the checklist here or complete the digital version in your project on Base Camp.

Select a topic for your speech that is narrow enough to cover in your speaking time. For example, the topic of “dogs” is so broad that a 5- to 7-minute speech would appear shallow. Narrowing your topic to “young Golden Retrievers” allows you to develop a speech that will meet a defined, specific purpose.

Complete the Topic and Purpose Worksheet to choose a strong topic and identify your general and specific purposes.

Schedule your speech with the Vice President Education.

Write your speech. Focus on creating strong content that supports your topic and your purpose.

Rehearse your speech.

When all components of your assignment are finished, complete your self-reflection by adding what you have learned to the last column of the Know-Wonder-Learned activity.

Evaluation Criteria



Review the criteria for the evaluation in this project. Your evaluator will use the following scale:

5 – Exemplary 4 – Excels 3 – Accomplished 2 – Emerging 1 – Developing

Clarity

- 5 – Is an exemplary public speaker who is always understood
- 4 – Excels at communicating using the spoken word
- 3 – Spoken language is clear and is easily understood
- 2 – Spoken language is somewhat unclear or challenging to understand
- 1 – Spoken language is unclear or not easily understood

Vocal Variety

- 5 – Uses the tools of tone, speed, and volume to perfection
- 4 – Excels at using tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 3 – Uses tone, speed, and volume as tools
- 2 – Use of tone, speed, and volume requires further practice
- 1 – Ineffective use of tone, speed, and volume

Eye Contact

- 5 – Uses eye contact to convey emotion and elicit response
- 4 – Uses eye contact to gauge audience reaction and response
- 3 – Effectively uses eye contact to engage audience
- 2 – Eye contact with audience needs improvement
- 1 – Makes little or no eye contact with audience

Gestures

- 5 – Fully integrates physical gestures with content to deliver an exemplary speech
- 4 – Uses physical gestures as a tool to enhance speech
- 3 – Uses physical gestures effectively
- 2 – Uses somewhat distracting or limited gestures
- 1 – Uses very distracting gestures or no gestures

Specific Purpose

- 5 – Exemplary speech content and organization clearly fulfilled the specific purpose of the speech with precision
- 4 – The specific purpose was well-executed and the speech style and organization enhanced the speech and topic
- 3 – The specific purpose was clear and supported by the speech style and organization
- 2 – The specific purpose was unclear and/or the speech style and organization did not support the specific purpose
- 1 – The specific purpose was not expressed and the speech style and organization detracted from the speech topic

Comfort Level

- 5 – Appears completely self-assured with the audience
- 4 – Appears fully at ease with the audience
- 3 – Appears comfortable with the audience
- 2 – Appears uncomfortable with the audience
- 1 – Appears highly uncomfortable with the audience

Interest and Purpose

- 5 – Fully engages audience with exemplary, well-constructed content that expertly meets the purpose of the speech
- 4 – Engages audience with highly compelling, well-constructed content that meets the specific purpose of the speech
- 3 – Engages audience with interesting, well-constructed content that supports the specific purpose of the speech
- 2 – Content is interesting but not well-constructed or is well-constructed but not interesting and may or may not meet the specific purpose of the speech
- 1 – Content is neither interesting nor well-constructed and does not meet the specific purpose of the speech

General Speech Purpose

- 5 – Expressed general purpose was met with excellent content and exemplary delivery
- 4 – Expressed general purpose was well met with excellent content
- 3 – The speech effectively met the expressed general purpose
- 2 – The speech came close to meeting the expressed general purpose, but some points or parts missed meeting that goal
- 1 – The speech did not meet the expressed general purpose

Part 5: Reflect on Your Learning

In Part 5, you will go through the steps to complete your project, including the Learned section of the Know-Wonder-Learned activity.

Focus on Content

Plan your speech before you schedule it with your Vice President Education. Because the content of your speech is so important, be sure you have taken the time you need to develop the best speech you are capable of preparing at this time.

Complete the Learned Section of Know-Wonder-Learned

The Know-Wonder-Learned activity in this section will help you think about what you know and what you have learned. It also serves another purpose. It will support you as you consider what you would like to learn next and how you can make the most of your Toastmasters learning.

Complete Your Project

- Know-Wonder-Learned activity
- Careful review of the Writing a Speech with Purpose project
- Deliver your speech
- Receive your speech evaluation by a fellow club member

Complete Your Project



Once you have delivered your speech and received your evaluation, take a minute to review what you recorded under “Know” and “Wonder” in the Assess and Reflect section at the start of this project. Then add what you have learned while working through this project. Add up to five items.

Learned

For example: I learned how to organize information into a presentation.

Before You Move On

Review Your Learning

Review all the material in this project.

Deliver Your Speech

Plan, practice, and deliver your speech.

Receive Your Evaluation

Receive your evaluation and complete any other tasks required by your club.

Assess and Reflect

When all components of your assignment are finished, complete your self-reflection by adding what you have learned to the last column of the Know-Wonder-Learned activity.

Congratulations!

If you have completed every task, CONGRATULATIONS! You have completed your Writing a Speech with Purpose project and you are ready to move on to your next project.



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