



**TOASTMASTERS**  
INTERNATIONAL

# ORGANIZING YOUR SPEECH



The Better  
Speaker Series



**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**



# ORGANIZING YOUR SPEECH

The Better Speaker Series

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Item 276A



**WHERE LEADERS  
ARE MADE**

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# THE BETTER SPEAKER SERIES

Toastmasters International's *The Better Speaker Series* is a set of presentations offering instruction on basic speaking skills. Designed to be delivered by members to their clubs, presentations in this series provide new speaking techniques and facts that can help all club members develop their communication skills.

Presentations in *The Better Speaker Series* may be offered by any club member and require 10 to 15 minutes to present.

## CONDUCTING THE PRESENTATION

"Organizing Your Speech" offers several strategies for planning an effective presentation. This product consists of four parts:

- ▶ Definition and explanation of the presentation
- ▶ Guidelines for your introduction to the audience
- ▶ Outline for the development of your speech
- ▶ PowerPoint presentation

### ***In Your Own Words***

*The outline is not a script and should not be read word-for-word. Instead, use the document as a guide for presenting the material in your own words and with your own narrative style. The outline is a structure on which to build your presentation. Use the points of the outline to develop your speech, but be the author of your own oration.*

Here are some tips on using this program to develop and deliver your presentation:

- ▶ Study the outline carefully. Familiarize yourself with the general structure. Preparation is the key to a successful presentation.
- ▶ Use the outline to build your own speech using your own words. Prepare a set of notes indicating where you wish to pause, gesture, or add special verbal emphasis. Highlight key words or sentences to help you present the material most effectively.
- ▶ Be expressive when delivering your speech. Use all of the presentation skills you have learned as a Toastmaster including vocal variety and gestures.

## USING VISUAL AIDS EFFECTIVELY

Visual aids add interest to any presentation and help your audience retain information. If you plan to use the PowerPoint slides for this presentation as visual aids, make sure you have the equipment and technology needed to share the slides with your audience. It is recommended that you test your technology and equipment in advance.

In the outline, there are indications for placement of the PowerPoint slides. Each is numbered. For example, V1 refers to the first visual.

Please note that the first slide in the PowerPoint show is a title slide and is not included in this numbering system.

If your presentation is taking place in a fully in-person format but you do not have the equipment needed to share the PowerPoint, you could create a flip chart using the visuals from the slides.

Follow these tips when using visual aids in an in-person setting:

- ▶ Set them up and test them before the meeting begins. Place them so they are easily visible to listeners.
- ▶ Bring backup equipment in case your technology fails.
- ▶ Display your visuals only when they are needed. If you are using a flip chart, flip the page back out of view when you are finished with it.
- ▶ Remember not to stand between the screen or flip chart and your audience or you will block their view.
- ▶ Maintain eye contact with your listeners. If you must turn your back to point out something, pause as you point it out, and then resume speaking only after you are once again facing your audience.

Follow these tips when using visuals in the online or hybrid setting:

- ▶ Share your screen. Be sure your PowerPoint presentation is visible in the room and on the screens of those members participating from another location.
- ▶ Consider having someone else share the visuals so you can maintain eye contact with the camera.
- ▶ Consider an online whiteboard when sharing information, as it will be visible to both members in the room and those participating online.
- ▶ Consider enlisting the assistance of a partner to join the meeting on their computer in the room with you so that they can facilitate the remote attendees and monitor what is happening online. This is a good practice for all hybrid meetings.
- ▶ Test your online platform and technology before the meeting begins. Have an online participant confirm they can see everything as expected.
- ▶ Forgo visual aids altogether if you cannot be sure they will work for everyone in attendance.
- ▶ Share any handouts or other documents you use as part of your presentation with all attendees in advance or via the chat function of your meeting app so that all participants have access to them at the same time.

## **BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

By giving this presentation, you will be helping your club build excellence and move toward the possibility of being a Distinguished club—or reaching an even greater Distinguished status.

While this is an outlined presentation, it still provides a good opportunity for you to further practice speaking and build your presentation skills.

# ORGANIZING YOUR SPEECH

## Introducing the Presenter

### TIPS FOR THE PRESENTER: WRITE YOUR INTRODUCTION

All prepared speeches in Toastmasters require an introduction. A proper introduction of you and your speech is important to the success of your presentation. Use the following as a guide in writing your introduction:

- ▶ Include the purpose of *The Better Speaker Series*.
- ▶ Explain why “Organizing Your Speech” is important for a Toastmasters club, stating the purpose and one or more objectives of your presentation.
- ▶ Incorporate some background about yourself.
- ▶ Read *When You’re the Introducer in A Toastmaster Wears Many Hats* (Item 1167D) for further details on giving a proper introduction.
- ▶ Give your finished introduction to the person who will be introducing you.

### TIPS FOR THE INTRODUCER

- ▶ Ask the presenter any clarifying questions.
- ▶ Rehearse the introduction.

# ORGANIZING YOUR SPEECH

## Outline

### INTRODUCTION

Speech organization is more than just the order in which you introduce the points in your speech. The words in a well-organized speech work together to obtain and keep the audience's attention. Likewise, the order of the words and ideas let the audience know the importance of each point in the speech and how each point relates to the others.

There are many facets to organizing speeches but there are some basic speech organization methods one can apply.

### BASIC SPEECH ORGANIZATION METHOD

Stay focused by remembering the basic formula:

- ▶ Tell what you're going to tell them.
- ▶ Tell them.
- ▶ Tell them what you've told them.

### DEVELOP AN OUTLINE

This basic organization method can be developed into a traditional outline. The "tell them what you're going to tell them" section is the equivalent to the introduction section of a traditional outline.

#### I. **Introduction = Tell them what you're going to tell them.**

The first two minutes of a speech must be compelling enough that the audience is eager to hear more. The introduction acquaints the audience with the topic and helps establish the presenter as an authority on that topic.

#### II. **Body = Tell them.**

After the audience's attention is engaged, the speaker must focus on the presentation's central point using:

- a. main idea or points, making sure that each point is backed up by
- b. supporting material, such as statistics, quotations, or other researched information

#### III. **Conclusion = Tell them what you've told them.**

Use the final moments of your allotted time to sum up what you have just said.

### FILLING IN THE OUTLINE

For many people, the toughest part of a project is the beginning. Sometimes the best place to begin creating a speech is in the middle. While trying to create a compelling opening before anything else, one may end up feeling stalled, anxious, and overwhelmed. Instead, begin creating your speech with the main idea and then gradually branch out.

V1

V2



V3

### To effectively organize a speech:

- ▶ **List key points.** State the speech's central idea in one simple sentence. Follow this with three to five statements that support the sentence.
- ▶ **Arrange them in order.** Organize the statements into a loose outline. The outline should be logically and sequentially arranged and reflect the speech's central idea.
- ▶ **Expand upon these points.** Elaborate upon each supporting statement. Use examples and anecdotes involving people or events. Convert statistics and ideas to familiar terms.
- ▶ **Develop an introduction.** Review each supporting statement section. Is there a statistic, quote, or anecdote that would work well in the introduction? Consider asking the audience to answer a question with a show of hands, or ask a rhetorical question that will encourage immediate focus on the topic. Incorporate the first part of the tell-them formula because listeners appreciate a preview of what they will hear.
- ▶ **Develop a close.** Summarize your key points, make a call to action if applicable, and then return control of the lectern to the person who introduced you.

V4

### CREATE A MINDMAP

As an alternative to the outline method, you can try creating a mindmap. A mindmap is a diagram that represents an individual's random thoughts on a particular subject. Its purpose is to discover what will be included in the speech and when it will be mentioned.

V5

#### Step I:

In a mindmap, the main topic is printed in the center of the page and is circled to stand out. Ideas about how to organize a speech are recorded in squares around the main topic. The squares are linked to the main topic with lines. Finally, important points about those ideas are added.

V6

#### Step II:

On a separate paper create a mindmap for one of the ideas. The idea is in the middle of the page surrounded by specific elements of that idea. For example, the specific elements related to the "Outline" idea would be "Intro," "Body," and "Conclusion."

V7

Keep the mindmap free of clutter. Use a separate paper to record direct quotations or other extra material. Connect the extra material to the mindmap using asterisks, numbers, or color coding.

V8

### CONCLUSION

A disorganized presentation is less effective than an organized one. An audience is focused on trying to create order in the presentation instead of paying attention to the speaker's message. Use organizing tools to create presentations that attract and keep the audience's attention.

*"It is best to do things systematically, since we are only human, and disorder is our worst enemy."*  
– Hesiod, ancient Greek poet (Works and Days)

# Evaluation Guide

Evaluator's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Presentation Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- ▶ How effective was the speaker's introduction in helping the audience understand the purpose of *The Better Speaker Series* and the presentation itself?
- ▶ Was the presenter adequately prepared? How heavily did the presenter rely on notes?
- ▶ How did the speaker use vocal variety to enhance this presentation?
- ▶ What other techniques did the speaker use to personalize and augment the presentation? Were they effective? How?
- ▶ Did the speaker display the visuals smoothly and at the appropriate times? How could the speaker improve?
- ▶ What aspect of the speaker's presentation style did you find unique? Why?
- ▶ Did the speaker present the material clearly and simply so audience members could easily use the information to improve their own speeches?
- ▶ What could the speaker have done differently to make the presentation more effective?
- ▶ What did you like about the presentation?



## Notes



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