

Body

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WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn about developing the body of your speech. Specifically, this lesson will cover:

1. Your Speech Body: Deliver Your Main Points
2. Organize Your Content
 - a. Establish Your Purpose
 - b. Determine Your Main Points
3. Decide How You Will Tell Your Story
4. Writing the Body

1. Your Speech Body: Deliver Your Main Points



Once you've captured the attention of your audience with a smashing introduction, it's time to move into the meat-and-potatoes of your speech: the body.

The body should take up about three-quarters of your entire speech time, since this is where you will go into detail about your main points.

2. Organize Your Content

2a. Establish Your Purpose

Typically, there are three general reasons why you might be giving a speech:

- To entertain
- To inform
- To argue a point

Each of these purposes requires a slightly different approach in order to successfully communicate its objectives to an audience.

Once you've established your purpose, you can formulate a strategy for achieving that purpose with your main points. To illustrate each main point, you will need to use a series of examples.

2b. Determine Your Main Points

Once you have your purpose established, it's time to decide what main points you will use to achieve that purpose. You'll want to start by **brainstorming** a list of all possible main points to support your purpose.

Once you've completed this list, begin to assign them weights and priorities. Consider which points more effectively communicate your purpose than others. You may want to nest some points under others, thereby creating a natural hierarchy of main points and sub-points.

Equally important is determining exactly what does not belong in your speech or is irrelevant to your subject. Ultimately, you'll want to boil down your main points to no more than three or four points. While this may seem minimalistic, know that your audience will only be able to remember so much, and you don't want to overwhelm them with too much information.

Three or four main points allow you to develop complete arguments in order to support your purpose, while still enabling your audience to follow your logic.



TERM TO KNOW

Brainstorming

A method of problem solving in which individuals or members of a group contribute ideas spontaneously.

3. Decide How You Will Tell Your Story

You'll want to have compelling evidence to support each main point of your speech. This evidence can be in the form of researched data, facts and figures, or even personal anecdotes and references. You may cite quotations and historical or current events to further bolster your arguments. Depending on your subject, audience and venue, humor may also be appropriate to weave throughout your speech.

If the purpose of your speech is to inform, you will rely heavily on data, statistics and research to illustrate your

points. You may even use an accompanying presentation, video, chart, or images to help support your purpose.

If the purpose of your speech is to argue, you may find yourself using a combination of research and anecdotes to get your points across. You may also use accompanying media to illustrate your points; however, your data should be tailored to best argue your particular case. This is not to say that you should manipulate your data; rather, present only the information that your audience needs to see and hear to support whatever argument you are trying to make.

If the purpose of your speech is to entertain, you'll rely more heavily on anecdotes than on hard research to get your points across. Humor is more than appropriate in this situation, but use it in moderation. You don't want to jeopardize your credibility in front of your audience.

No matter the purpose or order of your main points, it's important that you remember to stick to the outline of your speech. If you begin to wander off topic by sharing too many anecdotes or presenting extraneous data, your audience may not be able to keep up, and you will quickly begin to lose their interest.

4. Writing the Body

Once you've brainstormed and refined the main points of your speech, you can begin to write the body of your speech.

The easiest strategy is to create an outline of your main points and list the supporting evidence you'll provide for each main point. Depending on how comfortable you are with memorization, this may be all you need when you get up in front of your audience.

Many professional speakers do not rely on anything other than a brief outline of their speech, either memorizing what they plan to say in advance or simply speaking extemporaneously with only a basic guide. If this is one of your first speeches, and the situation allows, you may want to write your complete body word for word.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that **the body of your speech** is where you will present your big ideas. When **organizing your content**, ensure that each **main point of your speech** supports **your speech's purpose**. Use a variety of examples to illustrate the main points of your speech, from facts and figures to personal anecdotes and references. Don't be afraid to let your personality come through when **telling your story**; know your audience and tailor your approach accordingly.

When **writing the body** of your speech, remember that it should be creative and engaging; however, don't stray too far from your outline. You will quickly lose your audience's interest if you begin wandering off topic into points or anecdotes that don't support your speech's purpose or objective. You don't want to appear disorganized or sound overly verbose.

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