

Ordering the Main Points

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

It is important to make sure that a speech flows properly to enhance understanding. When ordering main points, the speaker should consider the audience and find a way to make sure that the points are arranged to help retention and clarity. This lesson will cover:

1. How Many Main Points?
2. Ways to Organize the Main Points of Body

1. How Many Main Points?

Try to keep main points down to three or four with supporting sub points. An audience will only be able to grasp so much information at one time and the presenter does not want to bombard the audience with too much information at once.

Additionally, make sure that each of your main points are supported by the same number of **sub-points** or evidence. This adds balance and proportion to your speech.



TERM TO KNOW

Sub-Points

A sub-point has a direct, specific relation to its major point that you can make clear by the organizational method you choose.

2. Ways to Organize the Main Points of Body

The following are the 9 different ways to organize your speech, including examples to help you understand better.

Each of the main points, of course, would require additional support and evidence in a speech and are identified only to aid the conceptualization of the organizational forms.

Temporal organization: This is the **chronological** approach; it is good choice for when you are telling a story, explaining research, or outlining a future plan.

Cause-effect: Telling why something happened, cause-effect may be used for past, present, or future events

and processes. Cause-effect can also be reversed, from effect back to cause.

➤ **EXAMPLE** What causes something to happen, and the result (effect) of the occurrence.

Spatial patterns: When using spatial patterns, be sure to proceed systematically from one place to the next, following a clear order. A size sequence is a variation on spatial organization, describing different artifacts from smallest to largest (or from largest to smallest). This is useful when describing something, especially a progression through a place/time or a physical object.

➤ **EXAMPLE** First you enter here, then you go through there, and you end up...

Topical: Topical is an appropriate approach when the subject matter has clear categories of division.

➤ **EXAMPLE** My Family: my dad, my mom, my brothers.

Importance Patterns: This can be used to discuss the different reasons for something and then designating their importance.

➤ **EXAMPLE** If you were the President's advisor, you may come to him/her with three problems, organizing each in the order of importance to the country.

Compare/contrast: The compare/contrast takes two or more entities and draws attention to their differences and/or similarities.

➤ **EXAMPLE** If you were comparing apples and oranges, you could use this to better clarify and prove your argument.

Problem-Solution Organization: Problem-solution organization involves the identification of a problem followed by a possible solution.

➤ **EXAMPLE** 1. Timmy does not have enough skittles
2. Ask Bobby to share.

Stock Issues: Stock issues are designed to organize presentations on issues of policy in a more complicated way than simple problem-solution. There are generally four main components to this organizational scheme:

- A description of the current system (inherency, or the inherent flaws in the current system),
- Explanation of the harms that result from the current system (harms),
- A program to address those harms (a plan of action),
- Reasons why the plan would be preferable to keeping the current system (solvency or why the plan would help the problem).

Monroe's Motivated Sequence: This is a good organizational tactic for persuasive speaking. It has five components:

- Gain audience attention
- Show need for change
- Provide an alternative
- Benefits of the change
- A call for action



TERM TO KNOW

Chronological

In order of time from the earliest to the latest.



SUMMARY

When ordering main points, the speaker should consider the audience and find a way to make sure the points are arranged to help retention and clarity. **Try to limit a speech to three or four main points with supporting sub-points** to make sure the audience is not overwhelmed with too much information. Each of the main points would require additional support and evidence in a speech, and are identified only to aid the conceptualization of the organizational forms. Asking someone to listen to the speech can help **make sure that the main points flow well and are in an order that will help maximize understanding** for the audience.

Source: Boundless. "Ordering the Main Points." Boundless Communications Boundless, 3 Mar. 2017. Retrieved 21 May. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/communications/textbooks/boundless-communications-textbook/organizing-and-outlining-the-speech-10/main-points-52/ordering-the-main-points-208-6650/>



TERMS TO KNOW

Chronological

In order of time from the earliest to the latest.

Sub-Points

A sub-point has a direct, specific relation to its major point that you can make clear by the organizational method you choose.