



UConn 4-H Public Speaking 101

Presentation Building Blocks

You just found out you need to do a presentation in front of a room full of people and you don't know where to begin. There's no need to freak out. First, take a deep breath. You got this!

Next, take a few minutes to learn the building blocks to construct a presentation that will captivate, educate and inspire any audience. If you follow the steps below you will have the tools necessary to present like a pro.

Speaking with someone face to face is one of the oldest and most effective forms of communication and relaying of ideas. Effective speakers are not always polished and perfect but are energetic and knowledgeable about their subject matter and invested in their audience. Good speakers are not born, but rather developed.



4-H GROWS PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS

- ★ Greater skill to express yourself clearly and convincingly.
- ★ Heightened ability to organize ideas and present them in a logical order.
- ★ Improved research expertise to factually present information in support of core ideas.
- ★ Increased poise and confidence in presenting to a live audience.

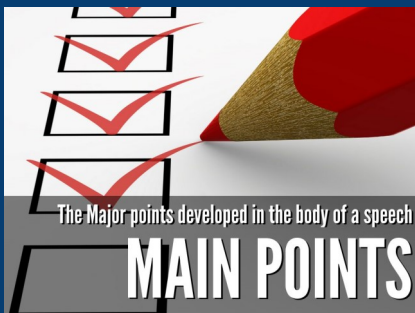
THE BUILDING BLOCKS

The purpose of any speech is to effectively communicate your ideas to your audience. First, you must decide on a subject matter that you can educate others about with knowledge and enthusiasm. There are four types of speeches to consider when putting together your ideas.

- ★ **Informative** - Provides the audience with information and facts on a subject.
- ★ **Persuasive** - Affects listener's behavior by changing their way of thinking.
- ★ **Motivational** - Encourages others to join an activity, or take some type of action.
- ★ **Entertaining** - Amuses the audience while communicating a message.

Once you decide on which of these forms to use, you are ready to move on.

Next, you need to organize your ideas into a format that will logically get across your intended message. Your goal is to get your audience to understand, believe and support what you are telling them. All good presentations are built around three major parts: the **introduction**, the **body** and the **conclusion**.



A good **introduction** presents you to your audience in a friendly way. The goal is to catch your listeners' attention and inform them of your subject to the point that they want to hear more of your message.

- ★ Should only be about 10% of your speech.
- ★ Highlight the main points that will be covered in greater detail later in the body of your presentation.
- ★ State the purpose of your presentation and what you hope to accomplish.
- ★ Should identify no more than 3-5 main points that you will cover in the body of the presentation.
- ★ Some examples of effective introductions include:
 - ◆ A personal story that establishes connection between the speaker, the subject and the audience.
 - ◆ A startling statement of fact or revealing statistic.
 - ◆ A quote from a famous voice of authority on the subject matter.
 - ◆ A question for listeners related to the subject matter.

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You have introduced yourself and your topic to the audience. Now it's time to expand on your main points, providing evidence to support your message. This is where you will focus on the heart of your presentation. Here are some things to keep in mind as you develop the body of your speech.

- ★ Should be 80% of your presentation.
- ★ Provides the important facts in support of the main points presented in your introduction. Keep it engaging and interesting.
- ★ Should develop the body of the presentation FIRST! This will make it easier to create an introduction and conclusion appropriate to your message.
- ★ Keep ideas well defined and short so they are easier for the audience to follow.
- ★ Keep focus on no more than 3-5 main points. Having too many points causes confusion for the audience.
- ★ Support each main point with a few, easy to understand examples. Examples should relate directly to the main point you are trying to support.
 - ◆ Facts and figures from research materials
 - ◆ Personal anecdotes and references
 - ◆ Statistics and other relevant quantitative data
 - ◆ Testimony of others familiar with the subject area
- ★ Your speech should be easy for the audience to follow, progressing in a logical order. Try to begin each point with something familiar to the audience.
- ★ Keep language simple and colorful. Help the audience visualize your intended message.



The conclusion is the part of your presentation that the audience will remember the most. This is your opportunity to summarize the main points of your presentation. As you close, you will want to "wrap up" your presentation in a way that leaves listeners with a fuller understanding of your message. As you prepare the conclusion, focus on these.

- ★ Should be no more than 10% of your presentation.
- ★ Do NOT introduce new material. You simply want to summarize the main points discussed in the body of the presentation.
- ★ Summarize important points one by one.
- ★ Opportunity to motivate your audience to action.
- ★ Use trigger phrases such as "in conclusion" or "in summary".
- ★ End with the idea you most want remembered.
- ★ The conclusion and the introduction should complement each other.

USING TRANSITIONS

Transition words or phrases are the connecting parts of your presentation by allowing you to move smoothly from one point to another. This will help listeners to better understand your intended message.

You will want to organize your main points into a logical order and then decide how you will transition from one point to the next. Here are some possible transitions.

- ★ **Further, besides, also, finally, again** - to add a point.
- ★ **But, despite, however, on the contrary** - contrasts one point with another.
- ★ **Either, both, not only, on the other hand** - links two alternate points.
- ★ **So this means, to be sure, in reality** - emphasizes a point.
- ★ **Consequently, therefore, accordingly** - identifies a result of an action.

There are many other transitions you can use in your presentation. Just find ones that best help you to convey your message.

Adapted from:

"A Guide to Making Great 4-H Speeches" by Sandra Stockall & Vickie Greve,
Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, 2008
"Public Speaking...4-H Style" by Gayle Hall, Texas Agricultural Extension Service

MORE TIPS AND TRICKS

When building your presentation you can remember the three parts of your speech like this...

"The INTRODUCTION tells what you are going to tell them, the BODY is where you tell them, and the CONCLUSION is where you tell them what you have told them."

Some other quick tips to remember:

- ★ Start by brainstorming the main ideas you want to convey to your audience.
- ★ Create an outline to help organize your ideas in a logical order.
- ★ Use your own words. Avoid words that are hard for you to pronounce.
- ★ Simplify points so the audience can understand and remember them.
- ★ Help your audience visualize what you are telling them.
- ★ Break your presentation into smaller bits that are easier to remember.
- ★ Put your main points on note cards and number them.
- ★ Make sure your presentation follows a logical order and all the main points connect back to topic.

The more prepared you are the better you will perform. Choose a subject that you are truly interested in. It will make preparing and delivering your presentation more enjoyable for you and the audience.

For more information on the UConn 4-H Public Speaking program, contact your county Extension 4-H Office or the State 4-H Office at 4-H@uconn.edu.

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