



Structure for Simplicity

What makes a great speaker is very similar to what makes a great leader. One of the key ingredients to both is that they have a direction that they are going, and their team or audience is made clear of it from the beginning.

A great speaker “leads” the audience and makes them aware of it right from the beginning

To do this effectively one must have a structure to their presentation.

Tips for creating structure

This first rule to follow when creating a basic structure is to have 3 things, you need an intro, a body and a conclusion. Another way to say this is, tell them what your going to tell them, then you tell them, then you tell them what you told them. This format is so simple, yet extremely effective in creating interest at the beginning of your talk as well as utilizing repetition so that the message sinks in.

Here are 3 simple speech formats that you can use. Always make sure that when using these formats, you follow an intro, body and conclusion structure.

1. **Numerical Format:** This is every presenters bread and butter format. For a numerical format you will use a point-based system. For example,
 - Following an intro, body and conclusion structure
 - Intro: “Today I am going to talk about 3 ways to be more secure when checking your email”
 - Body: “point 1 is....., point 2 is....., point 3 is.....”
 - Conclusions: “To recap on my 3 ways to be more secure when checking your email, the first point was....., the second point was....., the third point was.....”
2. **Structural format:** People are visual learners, if you were to think back to what you ate for breakfast you would not see the word “bagel” but instead you would visualise an actual bagel filled with cream cheese. Structural speech format means attaching your speech to some visual aid.
 - Following an intro, body and conclusion
 - Intro: “Today I want to talk about how life is a lot like a ladder (show a picture of the ladder)”
 - Body: “when you start learning something new you usually start at the base of the ladder....., then you get a bit better and you begin to move up the rungs of the ladder....., Finally you begin to master it and you reach the top of the ladder...”
 - Conclusions: “To recap life if a lot like a ladder you begin at the bottom and it takes work to move towards the top....”





3. **Chronological format:** Human society has been structured largely around time. We have time lines, deadlines, a 24-hour day and the list goes on. Therefore, having a chronological format for a speech makes so much sense. A chronological format in simple terms means a time-based format having the talk move through some number of minutes, days, months or years. A great way that this is used in the professional world is for projects. For example.
- Following an intro, body and conclusion
 - Intro: Today I would like to talk to you about a recent project. We will start at the beginning of the project, move towards present day and then look towards the future of the project.
 - Body: The project began a few years ago.... (point 1), at present day the project looks like this... (point 2), looking towards the future we want to have the project look like.... (point 3)
 - Conclusions: To Recap we took our project from point A (beginning of time line) to point B (present day) and we intend on taking it even further to point C (future on the time line).

Once you have a structure for your audience to follow the next step is to begin to write your speech. For any great speech there is one common ingredient that all possess. That key ingredient is stories. Stories help you as a speaker build credibility and context around a key point or a key message.

Tips for telling a great story

When telling a great story, the speaker needs to remember a few key points.

1. Clear and concise

- Only use the details necessary to help you get your point across.

2. Keep it short

- Keep it around 2 minutes. This will help you to keep the audience engaged and stay on time.

3. Great personal

- Stories happen in the moment. When you tell a story that is personal try to relive that moment. Put yourself into the story and feel all the emotions, sights and sounds.

4. Always finish with a conclusion or an action & benefit

- This will give the story relevance and importance. If you do not conclude your story the audience will have no take away for their own independent life. An action and benefit are just like a conclusion except it is split into two parts. The first is the action (“if you do this”, “If you try this”), followed by the benefit (“then ___ will happen”, “then you will experience this ___”).

