



HELPFUL HINTS: THE EIGHT COMPETENCIES

Competency 1: Choosing a Topic

An effective topic is clear, relevant to the audience and occasion, and appropriately narrowed to time constraints.

SPEECH PURPOSE

Informative — to provide information or educate, not persuade, the audience to think differently, belief or take action in this speech.

Problem/Cause/Solution— to present a problem and some proposed solutions, with the idea that you specifically favor one solution. Do not persuade your audience to take action in this speech.

Monroe's Motivated Sequence — to persuade your audience to ACT or do something as a result of your speech.

Competency 2: Thesis/Preview Statement

The thesis (or preview statement) should be approximately 1-2 sentences long and should be located at the very end of the introduction right before the first transition into the body. This thesis statement briefly mentions each main point and serves to outline the direction of the speech.

EXAMPLES

Informative — “Today, I’m going to tell you about bubblegum: its history, its ingredients, and how it is made.”

Problem/Cause/Solution— “In my presentation, I will tell you about the problem of expensive parking at UCCS, some of the causes for this issue, and a solution to make parking more affordable and convenient for students.”

Monroe's Motivated Sequence — “Today, I will discuss the issue of obesity in America and what you can do to help create healthy choices and lower obesity rates.”



Competency 3: Supporting Material

There are two main categories of supporting material within a speech: sources/research and visual aids. Both of these areas help to increase the speaker's credibility and the quality of the speech. It is important to consider the audience, the purpose of the speech, and the occasion when choosing supporting material.

Sources

1. Choose credible sources, such as scholarly articles and academic books. Also, make sure that the information you select for your speech is the most recent, appropriate, and accurate information about the topic.
2. Avoid sources such as Wikipedia and ".com" websites.
3. Select objective sources that do not have a major bias towards the subject or, when finding a biased source, acknowledge that opinion and why that source is appropriate to include.

Competency 4: Organization

This competency focuses on the various elements of organizing a speech, including formatting, introductions, transition statements, and conclusions.

Formatting

1. All COMM 2100 speeches should be in APA formatting.
2. When using a WRITTEN in-text citation, make sure that the date and author's last name are referenced. Ex: (Jones, 2008).
3. When using an ORAL in-text citation, you also need to make sure that the date and author's last name are said out loud; you may also choose to reference the mode of publication. Ex: "According to a study conducted by Jones in 2008..."
4. With APA formatting, the introduction, body, and conclusion must appear in that order and according to the assigned template (Narrative, Informative, Monroe's Motivated Sequence, etc.).

Introductions

1. Make sure that your introduction has key elements of an attention getter, a relevancy statement, a credibility statement, and a thesis statement.
2. Put your best foot forward in your introduction, as it sets the stage for your success!
3. State your points in your thesis statement and stick to that order. This will clearly communicate to your audience your plan for your speech.



Transition Statements

1. Use relevant, connecting wording that helps the entire speech flow and make sense to your audience.
2. Avoid choppy, unoriginal statements such as “And now I’m going to talk about...”
3. If you’re still struggling with writing strong transition statements, see our “Creating Effective Transition Statements” handout or ask a tutor in the UCCS Excel Communication center.

Conclusions

1. Conclusions include a summary statement, audience relevance statement, and a WOW statement.
2. It is at this point in the speech that the speaker can summarize what they have said and leave the audience thinking about their topic after the presentation is over.
3. A conclusion is not simply a summary. Try to follow the “upside down triangle” method: start specific and end broad.
4. Leave your audience with a positive, lasting impression of you as the speaker as well as the topic.

Competency 5: Language Use

This competency focuses on the use of language within a speech. You want to make sure that the language you use make the points in your speech sound professional and knowledgeable.

EXAMPLES OF CASUAL VS. ACADEMIC DIALOGUE

Informative

NO: “Today, I will tell you about what you need to know about bubblegum.”

YES: “Today, I am going to inform you about the history, the ingredients, and the production of bubblegum.”

Problem/Cause/Solution

NO: “The problem with UCCS parking is that it’s way too much money for kids who are broke.”

Yes: “One of the reasons the expensive parking passes at UCCS present a problem is the inability for low income college students to afford them.”



Monroe's Motivated Sequence

NO: "The visualization part of this presentation is healthy fast-food joints."

YES: "Imagine for a moment a logical alternative—healthy meals being served at every fast-food restaurant."

Competency 6: Vocalics

This competency focuses on the use of language within a speech. Public Speaking is not just about what you say, but also how you say it. You want to make sure you adjust your volume, pitch, tone, and rate to heighten and maintain audience interest.

Competency 7: Pronunciation, Grammar, and Articulation

This competency focuses on grammar, pronunciation, and articulation to a designated audience. In addition to engaging audiences through vocal variety as discussed in the previous competency, be sure to follow general mechanics and guidelines of language.

Competency 8: Physical Behaviors

This competency focuses on physical behaviors that support your verbal message, such as eye contact, hand gesturing, posture, stance, motivated movement, and physical appearance.

TIPS

- Avoid pacing during your presentation. Keep your feet planted unless utilizing motivated movement.
- Practice motivated movement: for each transition, move across the room to engage the audience and keep their attention through your verbal and nonverbal messages throughout your speech. This type of movement helps to keep the audience engaged without causing distractions.
- Do NOT memorize your speech for class assignments. If you forget one part when you memorized the speech, you will be lost for the remainder of the speech. Instead, remember to deliver your presentation extemporaneously, which means brief notes/bullet points to cue your thought process.
- Maintain eye contact with the audience. If this is too intimidating for you, have no fear! You can look at the audience members that are communicating positive nonverbal expressions or people that you know well. After you become more comfortable, you can address the more difficult audience members with direct eye gaze



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- Dress appropriately! No offensive writing on clothing, torn clothing, short shorts, skirts that are too revealing, sweats, or anything that you would not wear to work. Build your credibility as a speaker by presenting yourself professionally.
- Use appropriate gestures. It is okay to talk with your hands, but waving them around excessively will be distracting. Gesture with a purpose, such as pointing something out, motioning to an audience member, or making an emphatic point.