



## Introductions and Conclusions

Two of the most important elements of any presentation are the introduction and conclusion. As a presenter, you want to both begin and end your speech with confidence and clarity.

1. **Introduction:** Your introduction should both introduce your speech and gain your audience's trust.
  - A. **Attention Getting Device:** This is the first sentence of your speech, and it is designed to captivate your audience and introduce your topic. When selecting an attention getting device, choose one that is relevant to your speech and interesting to your audience. For more information, see [Attention Getting Devices](#) on the Walton Business Communication Center website.
  - B. **Credibility Statement:** Connect with your audience by explaining why you will speak on a particular subject and how it benefits the audience to listen.
    - I. Establish your credibility to speak on this topic: "As a business professional, I've studied crisis responses of several corporations across the private sector."
    - II. Explain how this information can benefit your audience: "Researching vehicle recalls strengthened my understanding of the many effective and appropriate ways that a company can respond to a potential crisis, beyond the automotive industry, making this information beneficial to all current and potential business owners."
  - C. **Thesis Statement:** Verbalize the main argument or goal of your speech in a single sentence.
    - I. Informative: "Today, I will tell you about Terrific Trucks' voluntary recall of several thousand vehicles in 2010, and how its response to the situation differed from previous vehicle manufacturers that faced similar problems, as a case study for understanding business ethics."
    - II. Persuasive: "In this speech, I argue that staffing systems are vital to the success of organizational development because they increase employee retention, production, and quality of work while also reducing overall costs to the company."
  - D. **Preview Statement:** Following your thesis, you will outline your main points, or provide direction for how you will accomplish the goal outlined in the thesis statement.
    - I. Informative: "First, I will provide a background of the 2010 Terrific Trucks' recall. Next, I will describe the recall responses of both Pretend Pickups and Cool Cars before explaining how Terrific Truck's response differed, and why it is considered a positive case for understanding business ethics."
    - II. Persuasive: "In this speech, I first explain what a staffing system is and then lay out four arguments for why our company should implement a staffing system. I conclude by presenting a model system for our company to follow."
  - E. **Transition Statement:** A short statement that signals to the audience when a speaker is moving from one thought to another. Ideally, your speech will be arranged so that the content of one paragraph flows logically into the next. The transition then serves to very briefly summarize the previous paragraph and hint at the paragraph to come so that the connection between the two is explicitly drawn for the audience.



2. **Conclusion:** The conclusion is your last chance to restate or reinforce your thesis statement in your speech.
  - A. **Signpost:** The transition from the body of the speech to the conclusion requires a signal to indicate to the audience that the speech is ending. The signpost is important and must be clear without being cliché, so try to avoid overused phrases such as, “in conclusion” to signal the end of your speech.
  - B. **Restated thesis:** Reminds the audience of your overall goal in the speech.
  - C. **Summary of main points:** Briefly reviews the main points to ensure that the information is easily recalled by the audience.
  - D. **Final appeal/ Clincher statement:** Makes a final appeal, provides a sense of completion, and leaves the audience with something to think about.

A cohesive introduction and conclusion lends clarity to your presentation, and with practice, it can assist in building your credibility as a speaker. When developing your speech, always be sure to include these important elements.