



# Center for Writing and Speaking

## **P NO. 2 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES**

### **Basic Speech Outline**

*This basic speech outline will help you start thinking and organizing your presentation. Remember, your audience will not see paragraph indentations, commas, or any of these visual cues used in written communication, so it is crucial that your outline is clear and concise to keep your audience on track. While looking at an outline one might assume that you begin with main points and work your way down to the evidence, in reality it is the other way. Outlines begin with evidence that support the claims (main points or sub-points) you identify in your speech. Do not begin creating your outline with the introduction! Think about your time limits and what information is most important; it is generally best to stick to 3-5 main points.*

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Attention getter – a rhetorical strategy for capturing an audience’s attention
- B. Thesis – the thesis captures the main idea that you are speaking about
- C. Motivation – this provides a reason why the audience should listen
- D. Preview – a brief overview of the main points of your speech
- E. Transition – a complete sentence that connects this with the next part of your speech

#### **II. Body**

- A. First Main Point (worded as a claim)
  - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim, supports main point)
    - a. Evidence supporting sub-point
    - b. Evidence supporting sub-point
  - 2. Any other potential sub-points, explained the same way as 1.
  - 3. Transition sentence
- B. Second Main Point (worded as a claim)
  - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim; supports main point)  
(Continue to follow organization of First Main Point)
  - 3. Transition sentence
- C. Third Main Point (worded as a claim)
  - 1. Sub-point (worded as a claim; supports main point)  
(Continue to follow organization of First Main Point)
  - 3. Transition sentence

#### **III. Conclusion**

- A. Summary – brief review of the main points
- B. Closure – brings the speech to its completion; lets the audience know the speech is over

This simple format will allow you to organize your thoughts effectively. If you have any questions, or just want to practice your presentation, you can always book a CWS appointment!

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