



# How to Write a Great Speech/Workshop

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## STRUCTURE

Writing a speech/presentation is akin to the 5-paragraph paper you wrote in elementary school:

Opening paragraph/main idea

Introduction – “Take the lid off”

3 supporting points

Body – “Tell ‘em what you’re gonna tell ‘em”

Concluding paragraph

Punch Line – “End with emphasis”

### Introduction: “Take the lid off”

The key to success or failure, arouses interest and gets the audience’s attention focused on the topic, evokes emotion, and stimulates thought. Options:

- Ask a question
- Provide a startling statistic
- Do a demonstration
- Tell an interesting, relevant anecdote
- Go over objectives, ask them or state them

### Body: “Tell ‘em what you’re gonna tell ‘em.”

Order the points of information so they are clear and easy to understand:

- By importance
- In sequence
- According to complexity
- By acronym

Flow:

- Cover a little at a time (check for feedback)
- Move towards a definite conclusion

Elements:

- State the point, then reinforce with examples, analogies, anecdotes, visuals
- Multi-sense appeal (people have different methods of learning)
- Spaced repetition

### Punch Line: End with emphasis!!

Provides closure, clarifies purpose, and offers something to remember/ponder. Options:

- Answer the “lid off” question (circular presentation)
- Finish with a question
- Give consequences of taking the proposed action (visualizing results, before/after)
- Use a quote or anecdote

What is most important — Introduction, Body, or Punch Line?

## **TIPS FOR WRITING**

- Speak from the heart and say something meaningful.
- Determine time frame. Never speak more than 15 minutes without supporting visuals.
- Let information about the audience shape the tone and information of your speech.
- Body can contain 3 to 7 points; delete points that are not critical to the speech.
- Make smooth transitions with repetition of key words and ideas.
- Simplify words and sentences, vary the length of sentences.
- Employ techniques to create a memorable turn of phrase.
- Infuse personal style. Your speech should sound like you.

## **TIPS FOR SCRIPT**

- Type script, double space, triple space between paragraphs, don't use the bottom third of the page.
- Put your name, title, the name of the group, date & time, and location at the top of page 1.
- Number all pages.
- Use a paper clip, rather than staple.
- Always bring a second copy of the speech.

## **TIPS FOR PRACTICING**

- Read (and possibly tape) the speech. Listen for:
  - Tongue-twisters and difficult words
  - Sentence structure and length
  - Clarity or confusion
  - Places to pause, words to emphasize
- Time the speech
- Mark the script
  - Underline words to emphasize
  - Spell difficult words phonetically
  - Use a "" or / to mark pauses

## **TIPS FOR PRESENTATION**

- Dress the part—sell yourself. Remember the Gourd Lady.
- Arrive early to style the room, take care of logistics (bulbs, cords).
- Don't let fear get ahead of you—meet & greet, establish common ground w/ audience.
- Adjust for the interest level and experience of the audience, be flexible, and improvise.
- Body language and eye contact are extremely important—look front to back, left to right.
- Give them something—brochure, handout.

## **TIPS FOR Q & A**

- If you don't know the answer, ask, What do you think? or, Who wants to answer that?
- If a question is pertinent to one person, answer in a manner that provides information to everyone if possible, while maintaining good eye contact with the rest of the group.