

Creating Effective Transition Statements

WHAT ARE SPEECH TRANSITIONS?

Speech transitions are words and phrases that help your argument flow smoothly.

EXAMPLES OF SPEECH TRANSITIONS

Transition between Similar Ideas or Points:

- Likewise ...
- Similarly ...
- This is just like ...
- In a similar way ...

Transition between Contrasting Ideas or Points:

- However ...
- Conversely ...
- On the contrary ...
- On the other hand ...
- Yet, we cannot ignore ...
- If we examine the opposite side, we see ...

Transition to elaborate upon an idea:

- Also ...
- Moreover ...
- In addition ...
- Furthermore ...
- In other words ...

Transition to Numbered Ideas or Points (or Process Steps):

- First ... (The first step is...)
- Second ... (The second step is...)
- Third ... (The third step is...)
- Last ... (The last step is...)

Transition to show Cause-Effect Relationship:

- Therefore ...
- As a result ...
- Consequently ...
- For that reason ...

Transition to a Supporting Example:

- For instance ...
- For example ...
- To illustrate this ...

Transition to a Supporting Demonstration:

- Now that we've covered the theory, let's see it in action ...
- To reinforce what we've learned, let's see a demonstration ...
- I've prepared a demonstration to show how this works.

Transition to a Supporting Quotation:

- X said: ...
- In 1968, X said: ...
- This idea was expressed clearly by X who said ...

Transition from Introduction into Speech Body:

- Let's begin ...
- To get started, let's examine ...
- Let's get started by talking about ...

Transition from Speech Body into Conclusion:

- For a short speech, you might conclude with a single statement:
- In short ...
- In summary ...
- In conclusion ...

In a longer presentation, your conclusion might include a review of the key points:

- Let's summarize the key lessons ...
- Let's recap what we've covered today ...

Transition to Another Speaker:

In a team presentation, it is necessary to transfer control between speakers.

The abrupt way to do this is to simply have one person stop talking, and then have the other person start talking. It is much smoother, however, to pass the verbal baton to the next speaker (X):

- To talk about our next topic, we have X ...
- I'll pass the microphone to X who will describe ...
- To guide us through a demonstration of this, we have X ...

Transition Back to an Earlier Point:

There are many occasions when you need to jump back to an earlier idea to add additional information (e.g., after a break, following an exercise, or returning from an unplanned interruption)

- Let's return ...
- Let's revisit ...
- Let's go back to ...
- We introduced X earlier; let's explore that further now.



AVOID FAULTY TRANSITIONS

Beware of these three types of faulty transitions:

1. Miscount Transition

This faulty transition occurs when a speaker begins counting main points, but does not do so consistently. (e.g., First, Second, Next, Next, Third, Third...) Faulty counting can also occur when a speaker tries to number both the main points and the sub-points and gets mixed up.

2. Incompatible Transition

This faulty transition occurs when a speaker uses a transition word or phrase that does not match the relationship. (e.g., they start with the word “however”, but they follow it with an example)

3. Tangential Transition

Transitional phrases like “That reminds me...”, or “As an aside...” are dangerous because they often lead to an off-topic diversion which blurs the focus of the speech and wastes time for you and your audience.

Dugan, A. (2013, August 26). Speech Transitions: magical words and phrases. Retrieved from http://sixminutes.dlugan.com/speech-transitions/
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