Organizing a Speech

When developing ideas into a speech, it is important to have structure, beginning with an attention-getting device and thesis, supporting main ideas with clear points and credible details, and concluding with a summary and definitive close.

I. Introduction

- A. Secure audience's interest with an attention-getter
 - 1. Use an illustration, such as a story, anecdote, example
 - 2. Include a quotation from an expert or a credible source
 - 3. Include a reference to literature (novel, short story, poem)
 - 4. Use a rhetorical question
 - 5. Make a shocking statement
 - 6. Identify speaker with the audience ("We've all....")
 - 7. Make direct reference to the audience ("You are...")
 - 8. State statistics
- B. Give the thesis of your speech
 - 1. Clarify for audience the main or controlling idea for your speech
 - 2. Preview main points about which you will be speaking (helps audience stay focused on what you are saying)
- C. Overall, introduction should indirectly explain to audience why...
 - 1. you are motivated to speak about your chosen topic
 - 2. and why the audience should be interested in your topic

II. Body of Speech

- A. Needs to be well organized
 - 1. Audience must be able to follow your speech (Remember: they will only hear it once, so they need to understand what you are talking about)
 - 2. Establish a pattern: chronological, topical, cause/effect, comparison/contrast
 - 3. Include transitions to show connection between ideas
- B. Demonstrate reasons and significance of your speech
- C. Provide support and details for main points, such as quotations, examples, etc.
- D. Cite all sources from which information taken
- E. Must be interesting to maintain audience's attention!

III. Conclusion

- A. Restate the thesis (main idea) of your speech (remind the audience)
- B. Review the main points of your speech
- C. Refer back to attention-getter
 - 1. Include interesting or memorable story, example, etc.
 - 2. Give last thought for audience, something that catches their attention and makes them think!

**Helpful Hint: May use what Dr. George Grice calls the 4-S Approach:

Signpost Alert the audience to where you are going in your speech

State Get the idea out clearly; state the specific points of the speech

Support Back up the point with something substantial

Summarize Tie the package together before moving on to the next part of your speech