**Introductions**

First impressions are very important. The way you begin a presentation or paper determines the audience’s level of interest. In general, an introduction should include the following:

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**Attention Getter: (Speeches)**

What can you do to pull the audience into your presentation? Your audience will pay attention to something that relates to them directly. You can use vivid language, statistics, rhetorical questions, or even quotes to make the audience feel like they are personally involved in the topic.

“Imagine you are in a dark room…”

“Think of three important females in your life. According to the Department of Justice, one in three of them will be sexually assaulted.”

“Have you ever felt so stressed during finals that you thought you would not make it through the last exam?”

“As Abraham Lincoln once said, ‘…a house divided against itself cannot stand.’”

**Introducing/Revealing topic: (Speeches and Papers)**

Do not keep your audience in the dark in regards to your paper or presentation, let them know what they will be reading or hearing about.

“Abraham Lincoln pointed out that the House and Senate should not be divided through petty party feuds.”

**Credibility: (Speeches)**

This can come from your own experiences or knowledge of topic.

“Protecting animals from cruelty has always been personal to me. During my time as a volunteer with the Humane Society, I saw many animals that were completely neglected.”

**Preview sentence: (Speeches and Papers)**

Laying out exactly what will be talked about is important for the audience and allows them to follow along, because the audience should never have to guess what is coming next. Using a preview sentence gives the audience a smooth transition into following your ideas.

“By looking at the history of taxes, examining why the current system is failing, and exploring tax alternatives, we will be able to understand the importance of tax reform.”
Conclusions

The way you end a presentation or paper is just as important as the way you begin it. The conclusion is what your audience will be left with and it serves a few purposes:

1. To give the audience one last opportunity to understand the material
2. A reconnection to the thesis of the project and repetition of the main ideas expressed.
3. Leave the audience with something memorable to take away from the speech or presentation.

You can use transitional phrases to let the audience know your paper or speech is ending by using phrases such as:

“In conclusion…”

“In closing…”

“Let me end by saying…”

Summary sentence: (Speeches or Presentations)

This is a great way to summarize and reiterate the main points of your paper or presentation, reminding the audience what they should come away with knowing.

“There can be many reasons why animal cruelty exists. These reasons include the maturity of the owner, sheer neglect, or other circumstances, like the owner’s death. Either way, it is important to give generously to animal rescues and shelters, whether with monetary donations or donations of your time in volunteering.”

Reconnection to the thesis:

Don’t forget to tie in your introduction to your conclusion, fluidly tying your entire paper or presentation together from beginning to end.

“In conclusion, Abraham Lincoln’s quote concerning a house divided is especially important in our current time. We can no longer expect to run a country effectively when we are fighting over trivial issues. Until politicians realize this, we will never be able to make positive changes in the world.”

Memorable Ending:

Leave your audience with lasting ideas to take away from the speech or presentation. You can also leave the audience with something for which they can feel a sense of duty or responsibility.

“Now that you understand how important volunteering can be to your life and the lives of others, you can no longer ignore the call to serve others. Make time to volunteer because you’ll get more from it than you could ever give.”

“Scholars argue that volunteering affects the mind, body, and spirit of the person doing the volunteering. The reader has no choice but to embrace the next volunteer opportunity that comes along.”