Different speeches call for different organizational formats. While many elements of most speeches are common (e.g., parts of an introduction, transitions, parts of a conclusion, etc.), the larger organizational structures vary depending on factors such as the purpose of the speech, the speech topic, instructor directions, or what the speaker feels is the best fit for a particular speech. Below, you will find some different organizational formats for your next speech. Some of these formats fit best with informative speeches, some with persuasive speeches, and some with either type of speech.

**Chronological**
- Requires you to organize your main points by time or sequence of events.
- Often used for an informative speech about a person, place, thing, or event.
- For a person, think of your speech as telling the story of their life. Begin with their background (birth date, education, etc.), include relevant facts about their life, and finish with their death or what they are doing today.
- For places or things, your speech may trace the development or evolution of the place or thing. For example, you may discuss the growth of a major city over time, the changing formula of Coca-Cola from the founding of the company until the present, or the development of international law.

**Complexity**
- Requires you to arrange your main points from simple to complex.
- This approach is typically used when you are informing or teaching an audience about a topic with which they may not be familiar.
- For example, think of your high school or college chemistry class. Your instructor did not explain balancing equations on the first day of class. Instead, she first explained the periodic table and how to interpret its letters and numbers. Then, she moved on to chemical compounds and how to combine the elements. Finally, she moved on to the complex idea of balancing chemical equations.

**Recency**
- Requires you to organize your main points from least important to most important, or from weakest to strongest.
- For informative speeches, you will likely use the least to most important design. For persuasive speeches, you will likely use the weakest to strongest point design.
- Deciding what is least/most important will be determined by either the speaker or the reason for giving the speech.
- For example, if you give a speech on the Empire State Building in a business course, the least important main point might be architecture and the most important point might be what corporations are housed in the building. However, if you give a speech on the same topic in a construction class, the importance of the points would be inverted.
- In a persuasive speech, if you have three points that are designed to persuade an audience, your final point should be the best and strongest. The idea here is that audiences remember best what they hear last. Therefore your final (and strongest) persuasive point will resonate with them long after your speech is over.
Cause-and-Effect
- Requires you to discuss a situation and its causes and/or effects.
- This setup is typically used for a persuasive speech because there are multiple possibilities for what caused something to happen and what effects (either good or bad) resulted from the situation.
- Consider the example of teenage pregnancy. There may be many contributing factors to an increase in teen pregnancy (e.g., poverty, lack of education, family values, lack of contraception, etc.). Your job is to choose one or more of these possible causes and argue that they have a more true causal relationship to increase in teen pregnancy. There are also many effects of teen pregnancy (e.g., school dropouts, increased poverty, loss of opportunity, etc.). Again, you would argue that your selected effects are the most important.

Problem-and-Solution
- Requires you to discuss a problem and various solutions to that problem, typically advocating for a single solution that you think is best.
- For this design you may choose to break your solution down into multiple points, or you might break it down as sub-points of a single point. If you offer multiple solutions, each solution will act as an individual main point.
- For example, if your selected problem is drivers not wearing seat belts you may argue for the single solution of heavy fines for those who do not wear seat belts. However, you may argue for a combination of heavy fines, manufacturer designs that make it difficult not to wear seat belts, and ad campaigns aimed at motivating people to wear seat belts.

Monroe's Motivated Sequence
- Requires you to address the five steps developed by Purdue Communications Professor Alan Monroe to complete a persuasive speech.
- Attention: grab your audience’s attention by using a typical attention getting strategy (e.g., rhetorical questions, illustrations, humor, etc.).
- Need: describe the problem, or what you think needs to be fixed. Be sure to cite evidence that proves your issue is problematic.
- Satisfaction: provide a solution to the problem, or your plan to fix it. Be as detailed as necessary and address important issues (e.g., who will fix it, when, how much will it cost, etc.).
- Visualization: share how your solution will benefit your overall audience once it is completed. Consider a “before” and “after” model to strengthen your argument.
- Action: urge your audience to take action in order to make your plan happen. Be specific and simple so that the action is seen as clear and obtainable.

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