

THE LANGUAGE OF PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

GREETINGS

- Good morning.
- Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.
- I'd like, first of all, to thank the organizers of this meeting for inviting me here today. It's also a particular pleasure for me to pay my first visit to this beautiful country.

GETTING ATTENTION

Sometimes, in informal presentations for example, there may be no Chairperson to introduce you, so you may need to get your audience's attention before you start:

- Can I have your attention, please?
- So, ladies and gentlemen.

OPENING REMARKS, PRESENTING THE PURPOSE

- The title of my presentation is ...
 - I'd like to talk today about...
 - My topic today is ...
 - My subject today is ...
 - I'm here to present ...
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- I shall be... • ...talking about...
 - Today we'll be • ...looking at...
 - ... • ...dealing with....
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-
- What I'm going to do is... • ...describe to you...
 - What I intend to do is... • ...tell you about...
 - My aim today is to... • ...show you...
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-
- I'd like to ... • ...take a look at...
 - What I'd like to do is... • ...present...
 - What I want to do is... • ...go over...

PRESENTING OUTLINE, ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESENTATION

It is important at the beginning to describe the order in which the main points will be made.

- I have divided my talk into four sections.
- I have divided the subject into four sections.
- I shall divide (up) my talk in the following way.
- I've broken my talk up into four parts.

- The first point I'm going to make concerns...
- My first point concerns...
- The first point I'd like to make is ...
- The first part of my talk will concern...
- I'd like firstly to talk about...
- First, I'll tell you about...
- To start with (off), I'll tell you about...
- To begin (with), I'll tell you about...

- My second point concerns ...
- The second part will concern ...
- My third point concerns ...
- In the third part I deal with the question of...

OR

- Next, I'd like to show you...
- After that, I'd like to describe...
- Then, I'll tell you about...

- Finally, I'd like to talk a little about...
- And finally, I shall raise briefly the issue of ...
- Finally, I shall address the problem of ...
- And finally, I want to discuss...
- And to finish off (with), I want to discuss...

OPENING THE MAIN SECTION & PROVIDING background

- Let me start by posing the question ...
 - I'd like to begin by suggesting that ...
 - I'd like to start by drawing your attention to ...
 - Let me begin by noting that...
-
- For those of you who...
 - If any of you...
 - ...are not familiar with...
 - ...are not acquainted with...
 - ...are outsiders to this subject...
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- As I'm sure...
 - ...many of you already know...
 - ...you are aware of...

MOVING TO A NEW POINT

It is important to "signal" that the new point is being introduced. It gives the audience a few seconds to reflect on the previous point and divides one section from another.

- So, having looked at (this subject)...
 - Okay, ...
 - Right (then), ...
 - So (then), ...
 - Now, ...
 - Then, ...
 - ...let me now turn to (the issue of)...
 - ...I'd like to turn now to the question of ...
 - ...let's now turn to ...
 - ...let's now take a look at...
 - ...let's look now at the question of...
 - ...let's now move on to take a look at...
 - ...if we now look at ...
 - ...if we (now) turn (our attention) to...
 - ...if we (now) move on to...
 - ...this then brings us to ...
 - ...this then leads u(s) to...
 - ...moving on (now) to the question of ...
 - ...turning (now) to ...
 - ...can we now turn to...
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- I'd like to bring up the point about...
 - I'd like to bring up the question of...
 - I'd like to mention briefly...
 - At this point...

- Now I'd like to talk about...
- Now I'd like to move on to...
- I'd now like to draw your attention to...
- Next I'd like to concentrate on...
- The next point I wish to deal with...
- I have a point which I'd like to take up.

SUMMARIZING THE MAIN IDEA

It is helpful to recap on key points you made and signal transition to a new topic.

- So, ...
 - ...we can see then that...
 - ...as you can see then...
 - ...it seems/appears then that...
 - ...what we can see then is that ...
 - ...what I'm saying then is that ...
 - ...to sum up then...
 - ...to tie this up then...
 - ...in a nutshell then...
 - ...in short then...

INTERACTING WITH THE AUDIENCE

- Is everyone
- Are you all
- still
- with me
- following me
- so far?
- Any questions?

ELABORATING A POINT

"Elaborating" means that you are going to develop a point in more detail or expand it into a main issue.

- I'd like to look at this in a bit more detail.
- Can I develop this point a bit further?
- Let me elaborate on this point.
- Let's look at this problem in a bit more detail...

- The first aspect of this problem is...

POSTPONING

"Postponing" means that you are not going to deal with a particular topic immediately but will return to it later on.

- I'll be returning to this point later.
- I'll be coming back to this point later.
- As I'll show later...
- I'll come to this later...
- As will be shown later...
- Later, I'll come to ...
- Later, I'll be coming back to...

REFERRING BACK

Sometimes you may wish to refer back to some important point. The following expressions will provide coherence to you talk.

- Getting back to the question of...
- Coming back now to the issue which I raised earlier...
- Can I now go back to the question I posed at the beginning?
- As I said earlier...
- As I mentioned earlier...
- As we saw earlier...
- I'd like now to return to the question...
- As you will remember...

HIGHLIGHTING

"Highlighting" means verbal underlining an important issue. You may also use it if you wish to contrast two points.

- The interesting thing about ... is...
- The significant thing about ... is...
- The important thing about ... is...
- The thing to remember is...
- What you have to remember is ...
- What we have to realize is ...
- What I find most interesting about ... is...
- Strangely enough...
- Oddly enough...

INDICATORS

Indicators prepare the audience for introducing a new point or just provide pauses before continuing.

- Okay...
- Right...
- Right then...
- Good...
- Now...
- Now then...
- Well now...
- Well then...

EXPLAINING TERMINOLOGY

- ...occupational hazards ... that is to say... dangers which apply to certain jobs
- ...occupational hazards ... in other words... dangers which apply to certain jobs
- What I mean by ... occupational hazards is... dangers which apply to certain jobs
- ...occupational hazards. To put that another way dangers which apply to certain jobs...

CONCLUDING

Conclusion includes the summary of the main points you made throughout your presentation and corresponds to the outline of your talk presented at the beginning of the presentation.

- So, the main points that have been made are: ...
 - Let me now try to pull the main threads of this argument together.
 - In conclusion I'd like to say...
 - Just before concluding I'd like to say....
 - Summing up then...
 - By way of summary, the main points seem to me to be ...
 - Let me end by saying that...
 - I'd like to finish by saying that...
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- | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • So, ... | • ...in summary... | • ...there are three main... |
| | • ...in conclusion... | • ...this report finds... |
| | • ...to summarize (then)... | • ...our new method... |
| | • ...to conclude (then)... | • ...the module system we use... |
| | • ...to sum up (then)... | |

THANKING THE AUDIENCE

- Thank you.
- I'll finish there. Thank you.
- And let me finish there. Thank you.
- Thank you for your attention.

DEALING WITH QUESTIONS

At the end of the presentation the speaker should initiate the discussion by "encouraging" the audience to ask questions.

- Right, I'm sure you've all got lots of questions?
- Okay, any questions or comments?
- If you have any questions, I'll try/do my best to answer them.

If there are no (more) questions, you may try to give the audience "one more chance":

- Right then, if there are no further questions, (then) I should like to hand the floor over to our next speaker.

Questions, or very often, comments addressed to the speaker may serve several purposes:

1) Just asking...

- About what you said concerning...
- I was wondering if I could ask something about...

2) Asking for clarification:

- I didn't catch what you said. Did you say that...?
- I was wondering if I understood correctly...

3) Asking for confirmation of the questioner's own ideas:

- Wouldn't you agree that...?

4) Expressing an opinion for or against the topic:

- It seems to me that...

5) Showing polite interest in the subject. (NB: Silence may be interpreted as criticism):

- I thought it was quite interesting how... /what....

You can make a question less direct, particularly if it is a critical question, by using the following strategies:

1) Praise the content:

- I'd like to complement you on such an interesting talk.
- Thank you for an interesting presentation. Referring to what you said about ...

2) Claim ignorance:

- I'm not an expert in this field, but...

Adapted from:

Kushner, Malcolm and Yeung, Rob (2006) *Public Speaking and Presentations for Dummies*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons.