Speech Conclusions

The introduction and conclusion are essential to a speech. The audience will remember the main ideas even if the middle of the speech is a mess or nerves overtake the speaker. So if nothing else, get these parts down!

Conclusions

The speech is almost over and the audience needs closure. The conclusion needs to be a clincher (definitive end to the speech) – “That’s it” is not a conclusion.

Signal the Ending

Just as the audience has been led through the speech, there must also be a signal to the end of the speech.

- Signpost (indication)
  - Tone of voice
  - Pause
  - Simple statement
    - *My purpose was to make sure everyone knows how to make a better PB&J.*

Logical Conclusion

The main points and topic are brought together in a logical conclusion.

- Emphasize the thesis statement
- Review the main points
  - *Soggy bread*
  - *Sticky hands*
  - *Starving children*

Psychological Conclusion

Psychologically the audience should walk away emotionally touched.

- Make a reference back to the introduction and the attention getter.
- Tell the audience what their next steps should be.
  - *Now that you know the secret to making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, go home and try this technique.*
Clincher

- Final call to action (if appropriate) — similar to next steps
  - Seen in political speeches
    - If you want change, vote for Snoopy! Or Go out and collect 100 more signatures!
- Bookend speech — make sure the introduction and conclusion balance the main points of the speech.
  - Remember to savor each bite as the jelly remains safely in the sandwich and not on your hands.

As you decide which of these conclusion styles will work best with your speech, keep in mind your conclusion needs to restate your claim.

- Remind the audience of your claim/thesis
  - Especially important if there is a question and answer period

References

Vrooman, S. S. (2013). The zombie guide to public speaking: Why most presentations fail, and what you can do to avoid joining the horde. Place of publication not identified: CreateSpace.