Transitional Words

**Transitions** are words, phrases, or sentences that tie the speech ideas together and enable the speaker to move smoothly from one point to the next.

- Provide consistency of movement from one point to the next
- Cue the audience that a new point will be made
- Keep the listeners attentive

**Transitional words are used to move from:**

- One main point to the next
- Main points to supporting points
- One supporting point to another supporting point
- The introduction to the body
- The body to the conclusion

Transitions can be posed in **review-preview** form: The transition restates the point just covered and previews the next point to be covered.

- “Now that we’ve…let’s…”

Transitions can be in the form of **internal previews**: They tell the audience what to expect next.

- “I will focus on three…”
- “Not only was…, it was also…”

Transitions can be in the form of **internal summaries**: They draw together important ideas proceeding to another speech point

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O’Hair, D., Stewart, R., & Rubenstein, H. *A Speaker’s Guidebook*

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“It should now be clear that…”

**Checklist for Using Transitions**

1. Do you include enough transitions to adequately guide your listeners through your speech?

2. Do you use appropriate transitions when making comparisons, showing cause and effect, illustrating a sequence in time, contrasting ideas, or summarizing information?

3. Do you include full-sentence transitions that will alert listeners to shifts from one main point to the next?

4. Do you make appropriate use of the preview-review technique? Rhetorical questions? Internal previews and summaries?

5. Do you use a transition to alert listeners to the conclusion of the speech?

**Transitional Words and Phrases**

**To show comparisons**
- Similarly, In the same way, Likewise, In comparison, Just as

**To illustrate sequence of time or events**
- First, second, third…, Following this, Later, Earlier, At present, In the past, Until now

**To illustrate cause and effect**
- As a result, Therefore, Hence, Because, Thus, Consequently

**To contrast ideas**
- On the other hand, And yet, At the same time, In spite of, However

**To summarize**
- In conclusion, In summary, Finally, Let me conclude by saying, Altogether, As we have seen


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