ORAL PRESENTATION
Language Expressions

The following are some useful guidelines and examples of expressions used in oral presentation.

**THE BEGINNING**

1. Get the audience's attention and signal the beginning

   *Right. Well. OK. Erm.*                   *Let's begin.*
   *Good. Fine. Great.*                     *Let's get down to business.*
   *Shall we start?*                        *Let's get the ball rolling.*
   *Can we start?*

A good technique is to try to get your audience involved in your talk either by asking direct or rhetorical questions. Ask for a show of hands for example, in response to a question or, present information in such a way that the audience can identify with it. You can give an anecdote, unusual or surprising facts, or an illustration from real life could be employed here.

2. Greet audience

It is important to greet the audience by saying something like:

   *Hello ladies and gentlemen.*
   *Good morning members of the jury.*
   *Good afternoon esteemed guests*
   *Good evening members of the board*
   *Fellow colleagues Mr. Chairman/Chairwoman*
   *Thank you for your kind introduction*

3. Introduce yourself (name, position, and company)
Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce myself.

Good morning everyone, I'd like to start by introducing myself. My name is Syakira.

I am a 3rd year student at UPM, I've had wide experience in the field of...

Good morning, my name is Syuhada. I am a student at UTM and I would like to talk to you today about some of my findings in a study I did on…

Sometimes, especially when invited to speak, the host introduces the guest, gives the same information as above and then gives the floor to the guest speaker.

I am very pleased and proud to introduce …who is…. He/she is known for…

Now I'll turn the floor over to today's speaker. (to take the floor, to have the floor, to give the floor to someone.)

4. Give title and introduce subject

What exactly are you going to speak about?

Situate the subject in time and place, in relation to the audience and/or its importance. Give a rough idea or a working definition of the subject.

I plan to talk about...

Today I'm going to talk about...

The subject of my presentation is...

The theme of my talk is...

Why are you going to talk about it?

I have chosen to talk about this because...

I was asked to talk about X because...

Have you estimated the time it will take? It is useful to give the listeners some idea of how long you will speak so as to maintain their attention better.
I will speak for about...
I have limited my speech to
My talk will last about 15 minutes

You may want to give acknowledgements here too. If you have been sponsored, supported or encouraged by a particular firm, organization, professor, etc. you may want to recognize their contribution. Your research and paper may have been the work of a collaborative effort and you should acknowledge this too giving the names of all the participants.

At some point you should ask a question or somehow try to determine the attitude and knowledge of the audience. How do they feel about the subject? You will then have to modify the contents, as you never know exactly what to expect.

Have you ever heard of...?
You may already know…
I feel sure that some of you…
Every day you encounter...

To get the audience's attention and perhaps to find out where they are you could introduce the subject by saying:

Have you ever heard of/seen X?
You've probably seen countless times...
You may have wondered...

5. Give your objectives (purpose, aim, goals)

The main purpose of an informative speech is to have the audience understand and remember a certain amount of information. You should therefore have two purposes: a general purpose and a specific one. The former is to inform: to give an overview, to present, to summarize, to outline; to discuss the current situation or to explain how to do something or how something is done. The latter is what you want the audience to take away with them after listening to you, what you want them to do, what they should remember.
My purpose in doing this paper is to give you a solid background on the subject of oral presentation skills so that in the future, at UPM or elsewhere, you can deliver a successful speech in front of a group.

What I would like to do today is
to explain
to illustrate...
to give you the essential background information on...
to outline...
to have a look at...

What I want my listeners to get out of my speech is...
If there is one thing I'd like to get across to you today it is that…

Once you have established your specific objectives you may go on to formulate your content.

6. Announce your outline

You want to keep the outline simple so 2 or 3 main points are usually enough. Concerning grammar the headings of the outline should be of the same grammatical form.

I have divided/broken my presentation/speech down/up into X parts.
In the first part I give a few basic definitions.
In the next section I will explain
In part three, I am going to show...
In the last part I would like/want to give a practical example...

7. Questions and comments from the audience

You should also let the audience know at some point in the introduction when and whether they may ask questions.

I'd ask you to save your questions for the end.
There will be plenty of time at the end of my oral presentation for a discussion.
You may interrupt me at any moment to ask questions or make comments. Please stop me if you don't understand anything I say but could you keep any specific questions until after I've finished.

8. Rhetorical questions

What is a rhetorical question? It is a question that you ask without expecting it to be answered. Why use such a question? In using such a question the speaker appears to be having a dialogue with the listeners. It also should catch their attention.

Have you ever seen/heard/experienced...?
How can we explain this?
What does that mean?
What can be done about that?
What does this imply for you, as a consumer?

9. Make a transition between the introduction and the body

You should refer to your transparency or outline.

Now let us turn to point one.
Let us now move on to the second part, which is, as I said earlier....

10. Emphasizing/highlighting

Say something is important.

The important thing to remember is...
The essential element is...

Stress verbs with your voice.

We experimented with the concept over a period of three years.
Add auxiliary verbs for emphasis.

We did see a noticeable difference.

Change the word order

What I’d like to show today is the difference between the two products.
Good it may be, easy it isn’t.

Repetition

As I’ve said before...
Let me repeat

Tripling, chunking and other techniques of word play and emphasis should be used as you become more fluent and confident.

This method is clearer, cheaper and more consistent.
Quality is not something that affects the bottom line, it is the bottom line.

THE MIDDLE OR THE BODY

1. Content

What information should you give in your oral presentation? All your information should support your purpose. In most cases you will have to limit the content, as time is usually precious!

2. Quantity

How much information should you give? Give enough to clearly develop your ideas. Don’t forget to illustrate through examples.

3. Sequencing your ideas
Here are a few possibilities for organizing your ideas:

*logical*; *chronological order*; *from general to specific*; *from known to unknown*; *from accepted to controversial*; *cause/effect*; *problem/solution*.

Whatever sequencing you choose, the headings should be all of the same grammatical form.

4. **Keeping the audience's attention**

The beginning and the end or the first and last parts of a talk are what listeners will remember best. Think of ways you can keep the audience's attention throughout the rest of the oral presentation.

5. **Signaling where you are**

Just as when you are driving along a road that you don't know very well, you depend on signs to guide you, you need to guide the listener by using expressions to tell him/her where you are going. That is to say, first announce what you are going to say (give an example) and then say what you want to say. This is very like verbal punctuation. Indicate when you have finished one point and then go on to the next one. It is redundant in text but very useful in oral presentations. Experienced presenters will also clearly pause, change their stance and the pitch of their voice as they move from one part of a presentation to another.

6. **Listing information**

Lists are often a necessary thing to do oral presentation. Vary your language whenever possible and avoid reading directly.

> There are three things we have to consider: one, two, and three. A, B, C.
> Now let us look at the first aspect which is...
> First of all,…
> In the first place…
7. Linking ideas, sections/making transitions

Indicate the end of one section and the beginning of the next.

- That’s all I would like to say about... (subject of part A) and now let us turn to....
- Now that we’ve seen... let us turn to...

8. Outlining options

If there are alternative ways of looking at a topic or proposal, outline them to show you are familiar with the different ways of dealing with a situation.

- There seem to be two possible ways of dealing with this...
- A number of options present themselves at this point....

If what you are dealing with demands a comparison of strengths and weaknesses, indicate clearly the different aspects and underline the points you feel are important or secondary.

- What exactly are the benefits?
- On the plus side we can add...
- This is not the only weakness of the plan...
- We cannot ignore the problems that such an action would create...
- We do not need to concern ourselves with...
- Of lesser interest are...

9. To be clear and concrete

Use examples, rephrasing, summaries etc.:

To give an example:

- Now let’s take an example.
- An example of this can be found...
- To illustrate this...
- Let’s see this through an example.
- For example,
- For instance,
To rephrase:

*Let me rephrase that,…*  
*In other words….*

*Another way of saying the same thing is…*  
*That is to say….*

To summarize:

*To summarize*  
*To sum up,*

*Let me summarise by saying*  
*In conclusion*

*So that concludes my overview*  
*Briefly said*

*What I’ve tried to show in this part…*  
*In short,*

*To recap what we’ve seen so far…*  

10. To emphasize

*What is very significant here*  
*What is important to remember…*

*I’d like to emphasize the fact that…*  
*I’d like to stress the importance of…*

*to highlight…*  
*to underline…*

*What I tried to bring out…*  
*What we need to focus on…*

11. To refer to what you have said previously:

*As I have already said earlier…*  
*As we saw in part one…*

*To repeat what I’ve said already…*

12. To refer to what you will say:

*We will see this a little later on. This will be the subject of part 3.*

*We will go into more detail on that later.*  
*For now, suffice to say…*

13. To refer to what an expert says:

*I quote the words of …*  
*In the words of…*

*As Dr. Shukri says in his book…*  
*According to…*
There is a famous quotation that goes... Here I'd like to quote...

14. To refer to common knowledge:

As you all may well know...
It is generally accepted that...
As you are probably aware (of)...

THE END OR CONCLUSION

The end of an oral presentation should never come as a surprise to an audience; it needs special consideration.

1. Content

The end or the conclusion of your oral presentation should include four parts:
- a brief reminder of what you tried to show in your speech and how you tried to do so
- a short conclusion
- thanks to the audience for listening
- and an invitation to ask questions, make comments or open a discussion.

At the end you should briefly summarize your speech in a few lines to make sure the audience has retained the main points. Alternatives are:
- to state the point of the speech;
- give the essential message to retain;
- list the main points and what you want the audience to remember;
- review informally or indirectly by using a quote, a comparison or example.

Then you should give some kind of conclusion. That is to say you should give a message that logically comes out of the ideas developed in your speech. This could be:
- a commentary
- the lessons learned
- some recommendations, or the next steps.
- a call to action (what the audience should do)
Thirdly, thank the audience for being there.

Finally, ask for questions and comments or invite a discussion. If you choose the former, you put yourself in a superior position compared to the audience and should be considered as an expert. You will need to be very prepared intellectually and psychologically to transfer control to the audience and be able to answer any questions. However, in the case of the latter, you put yourself more or less on equal terms with the audience and do not have to be the expert with all the answers! The audience may have some clear ideas or some practical knowledge about the subject themselves!

Naturally you need to signal the end of your talk. This may take the form of a recapitulation of the main points.

*I'd like to summarise/sum up*

*At this stage I would like to run through/over the main points...*

*So, as we have seen today....*

*As I have tried to explain this morning....*

Or there may be recommendations or proposals that you wish to make:

*As a result we suggest that…*

*In the light of what we have seen today I suggest that...*

*My first proposal is...*

Above all when you conclude do not do it abruptly or as if surprised to get to the end of your talk.

*In conclusion I would like to say that...*

*My final comments concern...*

*I would like to finish by reminding everyone that...*
You may at this point wish to distribute a vocabulary list or more detailed information that you wish to make available.

I've prepared a slim folder of the proposals...
In the sheets that are now being distributed you will find a breakdown of the...

And finally you may well have to deal with questions.

I'd be happy to answer any questions....
If there are any questions please feel free to ask.
Thank you very much for your attention and if there are any suggestions or comments.

2. Dealing with difficult questions

Make sure you understand the question. Ask a question to see if you understand. Repeat the question in your own words to check that you have understood. In answering: delay the answer (ask for time and/or repeat the question)

Just a minute please. What is a...?
How can I put it?
I'm glad you asked that question.
That's a good question/point/remark.
Can I answer that question later?

Agree but give an alternative point of view.

I agree with you but there is another way of looking at it.

Source: http://people.engr.ncsu.edu/txie/publications/oral_presentation_skills.pdf