



Tips for effective key word speaking outline (UW-La Crosse Public Speaking Center)

In most speaking situations, you will not be able to have a full sentence outline to use as speaking notes. Here are some tips for developing keyword outlines.

Consistently use keywords and/or phrases on the outline

- Use full sentences sparingly (for important quotes)
- Avoid using paragraphs or lots of full sentences

Include source citations on the outline

- Author and date (minimum) written out on the outline
- Practice with qualifications of sources to use in your speech

Make notes to yourself on key word speaking outline

- Reminders (“slow down,” “don’t forget to breathe”)
- Include supportive notes (“you’re doing great”)

Submit outline formats as requested by your instructor

- Consult syllabus and/or assignment sheets to make sure that you submit the proper outlines
- Many instructors request both preparation (full sentence) and presentational (key word speaking outline), particularly in CST 110
- Instructors might limit the amount of information included on key word speaking outline or notes

For more examples – see the sample key word speaking outlines available at the Public Speaking Center.