



## Outlining in Speeches (UW-La Crosse Public Speaking Center)

Most professional and classroom presentation require speakers to develop speech outlines. Here are some ideas for developing effective outlines:

### Functions of outlines

- A blueprint or road map of a speech
- Shows connections between ideas
- Provides structure for speaker and audience

### Types of outlines

- Full sentence preparation outline
  - All main points and subpoints in a speech
  - Includes examples, research, and transitions written out
- Developed as a full draft of the speech

### Key word speaking outline

- Created from the full sentence outline
- Uses key words and phrases
- Includes source citations from research
- May be transferred to notecards
- Might include delivery cues/notes for a speaker
  - Slow down, smile, breathe!
  - You are doing great!

## Incorporate principles of effective outlining

- **Subordination:** Speeches have “a hierarchy of ideas” (p. 143)
  - Main points are more important than subpoints
  - Use indentation to show subordination
- **Coordination:** All ideas at the same level have the same importance
  - All main points are of equal value in terms of time, support, and development in your speech
  - Consider coordination when developing the speech
- **Division:** any time a main point has a subpoint, there must be two or more subpoints
  - If not, revise speech to include an additional subpoint or eliminate subpoint
  - Include additional examples so each main point has enough support

## Tips for developing effective outlines

- Practice with key word outline (as opposed to practicing with a full sentence outline)
- Use automatic outlining function on Word programs
  - Using the space bar or creating your own outline can create inconsistent outlines
  - Automatic outlining can create a clean and consistent outline
- Be consistent with outline format
  - Use all key words or full sentences for your information
  - Check outline before submitting it
- If available, use instructor resources for specific formatting for the assignment

*Handout adapted from:* Huisman, D., Berry, I., Peterson, J., Van Oss, J. (Eds.) (2019). *Communicating Effectively*. Southlake, TX. Fountainhead Press & Julia Koenizer’s Outlining Workshop – Fall 2019.