

*The conclusion of your speech summarizes your purpose and main points while leaving a lasting impression with your audience.*

## KEY POINTS

- Use your conclusion as an opportunity to summarize the main points of your speech.
- Don't repeat your main points word for word; rather, paraphrase the key themes and arguments you have just presented.
- Consider ending your speech with an additional anecdote or quotation that captures the theme of your speech.
- Don't introduce any new points or supportive evidence into your conclusion as it will confuse your audience.
- Use trigger phrases such as "in conclusion" or "in summary" to prepare your audience for the end of your speech.
- Write your conclusion at the same time as the introduction (after you write the body) so that the introduction and conclusion complement one another.

## TERM

- **summarize**  
To give a recapitulation of the salient facts; to recapitulate or review

## EXAMPLE

- On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. addressed hundreds of thousands of supporters in Washington D.C. about necessity of civil rights in America. Dr. King's speech has often been recognized as one of the most memorable and important speeches of the twentieth century. What makes his speech so memorable is how he concluded it: "And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!'" By using both a powerful call to action combined with the lyric of slave-era spiritual, Dr. King expressed his argument for civil rights with passion, emotion, and fervor.

## Your Conclusion: Leave a Lasting Impression



The conclusion of your speech summarizes your main points and purpose while leaving a lasting impression on your audience.

Conclusion of a Presentation at Wiki Conference India.

If your body is the meat and potatoes of your speech, then the conclusion is the icing on the cake. Your conclusion is delivered at the end of the speech and is often what most people remember immediately after your speech has ended. As important as your introduction is for grabbing the audience's attention, the conclusion is doubly important as it leaves the audience with a lasting impression.

### Summarize Your Main Points

The purpose of the conclusion is to summarize your main points and to prepare the audience for the

end of your speech. You'll want to recapture the essence of your speech: your main points and the purpose of why you spoke. It is especially important to remember that the conclusion of your speech is not the time to introduce new points or new supporting evidence; doing so will only confuse the audience. Try to think of your conclusion like tying a bow or a ribbon: it's the final touch that makes your project stand out.

## Paraphrasing Versus Repeating

While summarizing your main points is important, be wary of simply repeating your main points word for word. You'll want to paraphrase your main points rather than directly repeat them from your speech's body. Paraphrasing allows you to capture the essence of your speech, unlike rote repetition of identical sentences you may have spoken just minutes earlier.

## End on a High Note

Your conclusion is the last thing your audience hears from you. Just as an introduction can make or break a speech, you always want to end your speech on a high note with something memorable. The conclusion is where you'll insert your take-away **message**: what do you want the audience to remember after you've finished speaking? What do you want them to recall in the days or weeks after your speech?

To create a memorable ending, you may want to share a quotation or anecdote. It's important to remain relatable and credible to the audience up until your final word, so be sure to craft your conclusion in a way that is still appropriate to the **topic**, audience, and **venue**.

## Writing Your Conclusion

Like the introduction, you'll want to write your conclusion last. The introduction and conclusion of your speech serve as bookends to your speech's body, so it only makes sense that you'll want to craft them *after* you've written your body.

Review your speech's body and ensure that you've touched upon all the main points you wish to discuss, then rephrase those main points in your conclusion. Determine the take-home message that you want to leave with your audience and either include it word for word in your conclusion or use it as a guiding theme for how you'll end your speech. If you have any final anecdotes or quotations to share that either drive home a particular point or capture the theme of your speech, include it here.

While there is no set time or sentence limit for your conclusion, make sure you don't finish your speech so suddenly that your audience is caught off guard when the speech ends. Using trigger phrases such as "in conclusion" or "in summary" signify to your audience that the speech is about to

end and that they should pay special attention to your final thoughts.