

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AN EFFECTIVE CONCLUSION

- I. Effective conclusions are critical to an effective presentation.
 - A. The conclusion is the last opportunity to affect the audience.
 - 1. An effective conclusion can leave the audience where you want them, whereas, a poorly developed conclusion leaves a "bad taste" in the mind (mouth) of the audience.
 - B. The conclusion, to be effective should be developed after the speech body and the introduction have been developed.
 - C. In a beginning speech class, the conclusion generally suffers from lack of attention.
 - 1. Adequate time needs to be taken to develop an effective conclusion.
 - 2. A single sentence conclusion will not be adequate to do the things a good conclusion should.
- II. There are six factors to be considered in the development and delivery of an effective conclusion.
 - A. ALWAYS determine the goal of the conclusion before it is written.
 - 1. There has to be a purpose to the conclusion.
 - a. If the purpose is to have the audience laughing, crying, angry, give you their money, to provide a summary of the speech content, etc. the conclusion is developed accordingly.
 - B. A good conclusion ALWAYS refocuses the attention of the audience back on the main idea or ideas of the presentation.
 - 1. One of the goals of the conclusion, therefore, is already determined.
 - 2. This completes the pattern of a good presentation: Tell 'em what you're going to tell 'em, tell 'em, then tell 'em what you've told 'em.
 - C. Have only one (1) conclusion per speech.
 - 1. An effective conclusion is focused.
 - a. When you are finished with the speech the audience should know you are finished.
 - b. You should not give false conclusions.
 - (1) False conclusions are created when you give the impression you are finishing, but you keep going.
 - D. Avoid saying "in conclusion" or "in summary".
 - 1. Should you say these words it is OK because this is a common way of moving into the conclusion but it should be avoided if possible.
 - 2. The reason these statements should not be used is the audience will tend

to stop listening as soon as they hear them.

- a. As a communicator, you do not want to create a situation where your audience stops listening to you.

E. Say the final sentence with finality and then pause.

- 1. As was mentioned above, the conclusion should be focused, not only in it's content but also in it's delivery.

- a. A speaker makes the final statement sound conclusionary in the following ways:

- (1) The final few words are spaced out or said more slowly.

- (2) The pitch of the voice, with the obvious exception of a question, drops.

- b. A speaker should end the speech with a pause.

- (1) The pause at the end of the speech is like a dramatic freeze.

- (a) This pause should just be for a moment.

- (2) You can tell when a speaker feels uncomfortable with the ending of a speech when they say "thank you" instead of pausing.

- (a) This "thank you" is not thanking the audience at all but it is a signal that the speaker is finished

- i) Like the "OK" at the beginning is a signal the speaker is ready to start.

- (b) A "thank you" is only appropriate when one of the goals of the conclusion to thank the audience, in which case it becomes a part of the content of the conclusion.

- (c) A "thank you" is also appropriate when the speaker thanks the audience for their applause.

F. The speech is not finished until the speaker leaves the presence of the audience.

- 1. Just as in the introduction where the speech really begins when the speaker comes into the presence of the audience, so speakers continue to leave impressions with the audience even after they are "officially" done speaking.

- a. Do not do anything that will give the impression you are unsatisfied with the presentation for this will taint the audiences perceptions of that presentation.