

Lecture 3

SELECTING A TOPIC AND SPECIFIC PURPOSE

Choosing a topic

- Topic is the subject of a speech.
- The topic is determined by the occasion, the audience and the speaker's qualifications.

Choosing a topic

- There are two broad categories of potential topics:
 - Subjects you know a lot about
 - Subjects you want to know more about

Brainstorming for topics

- Brainstorming is a method of generating ideas for speech topics by free association of words and ideas.

Brainstorming for topics

- Brainstorming procedures:
 - Personal inventory
 - Clustering
 - Reference search
 - Internet search

Determining general purpose

- General purpose is the broad goal of a speech.
- The three major kinds of general purposes are **to inform**, **to persuade** and **to entertain**.

Determining general purpose

- General purpose to inform:
 - to convey information.
 - to enhance the knowledge and understandings of your listeners

Determining general purpose

Examples:

Topic: Computer

General purpose: **To inform**

Topic: Drunk driving

General purpose: **To persuade.**

Determining the specific purpose

- Specific purpose is a single infinitive (specialised) phrase that states precisely what a speaker hopes to accomplish in his or her speech.

- It should focus on one aspect of a topic.

Determining the specific purpose

Example:

Topic: Computers

General purpose: To inform

Specific purpose: **To inform my audience**
the major factors to consider when buying
a notebook computer.

Determining the specific purpose

Tips for formulating the specific purpose statement

- Write the purpose statement in full sentence.
- Do not write purpose in question form.
- Avoid figurative words when writing specific purpose.

Determining the specific purpose

Tips for formulating the specific purpose statement

- Limit your purpose statement to one distinct (noticeable) idea.
- Make sure your specific purpose is not too vague or general.

Phrasing the central idea

- The central idea is a concise statement of what you expect to say.

- Sometimes it is called the thesis statement, the subject sentence or the major thought.

Phrasing the central idea

- “sums up” the speech in a single sentence.
- **residual message**- what you want your audience to remember.

Phrasing the central idea

Example:

Topic: Computers

General purpose: To inform

Specific purpose: To inform my audience
the major factors to consider when buying
a notebook computer.

Continue

Phrasing the central idea

- Central idea: The major factors to consider when buying a notebook computer are price, speed, screen quality and special features.

Phrasing the central idea

- The central idea should be:
 - Expressed in a full sentence.
 - Should not be in the form of a question.
 - Should avoid figurative language.
 - Should not be vague or overly general.

Summary

Choose a topic



General purpose of your speech



Specific purpose of your speech



The central idea refines and sharpens your specific purpose.