

Presentation Skills Center

308 Park Library

Transitions

A transition is one complete sentence that makes a move between different sections or ideas in a presentation. As a general rule, you should use transitions after your introduction, between each main point, and before your conclusion. They can also be used within main points to shift examples or ideas.

Here are some suggestions for transition styles:

- **Review-Preview:** What you just said, then what you are about to say.
Example: Now that we've established a need for fundraising, let's see which fundraisers might be most effective. I will focus on two types of fundraisers: silent auctions and sales.
Example: In short, fundraising efforts are needed because of budget reductions and increased expenses. Next, we'll look at our fundraising options.

- **Rhetorical Questions:** A leading question that doesn't invite an actual response followed by the answer that you want.
Example: Will fundraising be too expensive to start up? Actually, it's cheaper than the alternative.

- **Signposting:** By including certain words in your transitions, you can alert your audience that you are about to switch ideas. Start with a signpost word and then complete the sentence for a transition.

Signpost Words include: next, first, last, we now turn, in the other hand, finally, now let's consider, if you think that's shocking, similarly, and yet, altogether, at present, etc.

Example: With these points in mind about National Parks lands, let's look at their historical context.

Example: Now that we understand the space-time continuum, consider this problem.

Example: Second, two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time.

Example: If you find that surprising, you will be shocked by the attrition rates one year later.

- **Themed transitions:** Be creative! For Example, some speakers choose to carry out a theme throughout the speech.
Example: We'll start by looking at the beach culture of the Florida panhandle. The next stop is Central Florida, known for its theme parks. Finally, we will travel to South Florida to explore Miami.
- **Story or example:** Another option is to carry a story or example throughout the speech.
Example: Like Eric, you are at risk for contracting the flu virus. Let's talk more specifically about how you can contract the disease. Unlike Eric, you have the ability to prevent the flu virus. So, I encourage you to keep Eric's story in mind as you make decisions over the next few weeks.

Have more questions? Make an appointment with a PSC tutor or check out our "Basic Outline Format for a Speech" handout to see where transitions fit in to your presentation outline.