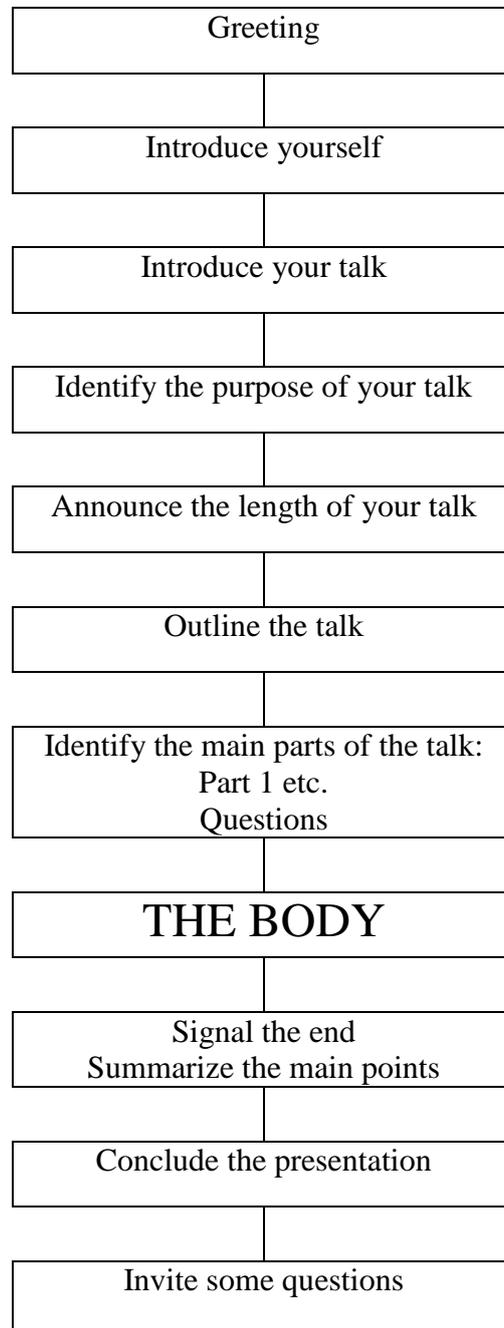


# The Structure of Oral Presentations AND Language Support for Oral Presentations

## The Classic Structure of Oral Presentations



Adapted from:

(1) *Language Reference for Business English Grammar Functions and Communication Skills*,  
Brieger & Comfort, 1992

(2) *Effective Presentations*, Comfort, J., 1996

with several revisions and additions by IUJ English faculty

# Language Support for Oral Presentations: The Sequence

## Greeting

### *Relatively Informal*

Good morning/afternoon/evening, ladies and gentlemen/colleagues/everybody.

### *Relatively Formal*

Ladies and gentlemen, it's an honor to have the opportunity to address such a distinguished audience.  
Good morning and welcome to IUJ.

## Introduce yourself

### *Relatively Informal*

As you know, my name is ...

### *Relatively Formal*

Let me introduce myself. My name is ... and I am the TITLE

## Introduce your talk

I'd like to talk to you today about...

I'm going to	present ...
	explain ...
	discuss ...
	give you a brief overview of ...
	give you some information about ...

The	subject focus topic	of my	talk	is ...
			presentation	
			paper (academic)	
			speech (to public audience)	

I'd like to	talk	to you today about ...
	share a few words	

## Identify the purpose of your talk

The purpose of this talk/presentation etc. is to  
This talk/presentation etc. is designed to  
My reason in giving this talk/presentation is to

give you some idea about ...
give you some insight into ...
give you a clear view of ...
bring you up to date on the latest ...
help you understand ...
etc.

## Announce the length of your talk

The talk/presentation will be brief.      I shall only take X minutes of your time.

I plan to be brief.

The talk will only take/last X minutes

## Identify the main parts of the talk

I've divided my talk/presentation into	four parts.	They are ....
I'm going to break my talk/presentation into	four sections	

This topic can be looked at under four main headings. They are A, B, C and D.

Firstly/First of all ...	I'll	talk about ....
Secondly/Then/Next ...	I'm going to	discuss ....
Thirdly/And then	I plan to	examine ....
Finally/Lastly/Last of all ...	I want to	look at ....
	etc.	etc.

## Questions

If you have any questions,	I'll be glad to (try to) answer them at the end of my talk
	I'll take them at the end of my talk

Please interrupt me if there's something which needs clarifying  
Please feel free to interrupt the presentation if you have any questions

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## THE BODY

### Introducing your first point

To start with, then, I'd like to consider...  
First of all, I'd like to look at...  
Let's start with...

### Finishing a point

So that, then, is...  
OK, I've now finished covering/looking at/discussing...  
That's all I need to say about...  
Let's leave that.

### Starting a new point

Now let's	turn to ...
	move on to ...

I'd like now to	consider...
	examine...

Next/Now, we come to...  
Turning now to..., I want to ....  
The next point I'd like to make is...

### Referring to what you have said

As I said at the beginning, ...  
As I've already said, ...  
As I mentioned earlier, ... [check the meaning of "mention"!]

I told you a few moments ago that...

### **Referring to what you will say**

I'll come to that later.

I'll return to this point in a few minutes.

... and I'll talk about this		in the next part of my presentation.
... and I'll discuss this in detail		in a later part of my presentation.

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### **Signaling the end**

That brings me to the end of my presentation.

That completes my presentation.

That covers all I wanted to say.

I think I should start wrapping up my presentation at this point.

### **Summarizing**

I'll briefly		summarize		the main issues.
I'll just		go over		the main points.
Let me		recap		the salient points/issues.

To sum up, ...

In conclusion, ...

### **Concluding**

Well, that's the end.

That concludes my talk.

The last comment I want to make is that ....

If you want to find out more about..., ...

Thank you for your attention.

Thank you for listening.

### **Inviting questions**

And now, if you have any questions, I'll be glad to (try to) answer them.

Does anyone have any questions?

Any questions?

Let's throw the session open to questions.

## Language Support for Oral Presentations: Asking and answering questions

### “Direct” questions

Are you in favor of democracy?  
Is democracy appropriate for Eastern European countries?  
Does Mongolia have any foreign currency reserves?  
How much money does Mongolia have in the form of currency reserves?  
What is the capital of Mongolia?

### Formal (“indirect”) questions

Can you tell me		if/whether you are in favor of democracy.
Could you tell me		if/whether you believe democracy is appropriate for Eastern ...
I'm interested in finding out		if/whether Mongolia has any foreign currency reserves.
I'd like to know		how much money Mongolia has in the form of currency reserves. what the capital of Mongolia is.

### Questions on (potentially) sensitive issues

Do you mind if I ask (you)		if/whether you are a Buddhist?
Would you mind telling me		what Buddhist sect you belong to?

### Requesting question repetition

I'm sorry, I couldn't quite hear/catch your question. Could you repeat it?  
I'm sorry, I couldn't quite follow your question. Could you say it again?  
I'm sorry, I'm not sure what you are trying to ask/say. Could you repeat the question/comment?  
I'm sorry, but I was unable to hear what you said. Could you say it again more loudly?

### Clarifying/Confirming questions before answering them

[See the note at the end of this document for an explanation of why question clarification/confirmation is very important.]

If I understand you correctly,		you're asking me		if/whether I am in favor of democracy.
If I'm not mistaken,		you want to know		if/whether I believe democracy is appropriate for Eastern ...
OK, I think		your question is		how much money Mongolia has in the form of currency reserves.

I think I understand your question, but let me check that I have understood it. You want to know...  
Before answering your question, I would like to confirm that I have understood it. You're asking ...

Am I right?  
Is that correct?

## Answering negative questions

Negative questions are asked when the questioner is expecting a “yes” answer. Notice that “no” answers are often preceded by expressions such as “actually” which prepare the questioner for the surprise of the unexpected “no” answer.

Q.       Wouldn't you agree   | that eating hamburgers and ice cream makes people fat?  
          Don't you agree     |

A.Pos.   Yes, I would/do.  
          That's right.  
          Absolutely!/Exactly!  
          Yes..., and, furthermore, it makes people unhappy.

A.Neg.                   | actually,                   |  
          Well,           | as a matter of fact,     | I wouldn't/don't.  
                          | in fact,                   |

A. Neg. & Pos.   Well, I know a lot of people believe that ... However, I don't think that it's always true.  
                          Not necessarily. It all depends on how much exercise a person does.

## Avoiding giving an answer

Your question is a very big one and it would take a long time to answer it fully.

I'm afraid I don't know.

That's a very difficult question. I'm not sure that I can answer it right here and now.

## Checking that the questioner is satisfied

Does that answer your question?

Have I answered your question?

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## Note on Question Clarification and Confirmation

Question clarification or confirmation during the Question-and-Answer segment of an oral presentation is important for four reasons:

1. it gives the presenter a second (and, if necessary, a third, a fourth ...) opportunity to hear a question which the presenter did not understand or hear;
2. even if the question seemed clear the first time it was asked, it gives the presenter an opportunity to check that he/she really did understand the question;
3. it gives the audience a second (and, if necessary, a third, a fourth ...) opportunity to hear a question which may have been inaudible or unclear the first time it was asked;
4. it persuades the audience that any remaining problems with question clarity and/or audibility are the responsibility of the questioner.

Of course, there will be occasions when the question is both simple and spoken loudly and clearly enough for everyone to hear. On these occasions, question clarification and confirmation will be unnecessary. However, you are strongly advised to adopt a conservative interpretation of what is “simple” and what is “loud and clear.” It is the experience of OCS instructors that most audience questions require clarification and/or confirmation.

## **Signposting Function Language** Introducing the subject

- I'd like to start by...
- Let's begin by...
- First of all, I'll...
- Starting with...
- I'll begin by...

### Finishing one subject...

- Well, I've told you about...
- That's all I have to say about...
- We've looked at...

### ...and starting another

- Now we'll move on to...
- Let me turn now to...
- Next...
- Turning to...
- I'd like now to discuss...
- Let's look now at...

### Analysing a point and giving recommendations

- Where does that lead us?
- Let's consider this in more detail...
- What does this mean for ABC?
- Translated into real terms...

### Giving an example

- For example,...
- A good example of this is...
- As an illustration,...
- To give you an example,...
- To illustrate this point...

### Dealing with questions

- We'll be examining this point in more detail later on...
- I'd like to deal with this question later, if I may...
- I'll come back to this question later in my talk...
- Perhaps you'd like to raise this point at the end...
- I won't comment on this now...

### Summarising and concluding

- In conclusion,...
- Right, let's sum up, shall we?

- I'd like now to recap...
- Let's summarise briefly what we've looked at...
- Finally, let me remind you of some of the issues we've covered...
- If I can just sum up the main points...

### Ordering

- Firstly...secondly...thirdly...lastly...
- First of all...then...next...after that...finally...
- To start with...later...to finish up...