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What is signposting in speech

image source: www.bigstock.com Fluency is a critical element of communication and is often a basis for how language levels are judged. Signposting is a technique which makes speech more fluent. Words or phrases that link speech together to make it coherent, and give the listener an indication of where our verbal communication is headed, are considered signposts. Does receiving an indication of the direction that a conversation will take make a difference to the listener? Absolutely! When we have a good idea about what we will hear, we can process the meaning faster. Hearing something contrary to what we are expecting causes our brain waves to spike. The spike causes a diversion of energy which can contribute to longer processing time. Considering how fast a brain processes language, a matter of milliseconds can slow down comprehension. The delay in comprehending could cause a listener to completely misunderstand what was said. Small words and phrases placed at the beginning of an utterance or sentence such as ‘well’, ‘actually’, ‘as a matter of fact’ etc., give a listener good indications of what they are about to hear. These indicators act as “warnings”, allowing the listener to prepare for what will come next. Consider the following spoken exchange: Harpreet: English is the most widely spoken language in the world. Svetlana: Chinese is. More than likely, Harpreet would respond “what” or “pardon me” to Svetlana, because he is not expecting Svetlana to disagree, and he doesn’t understand what she said. To Harpreet, it is an indisputable fact that English is the most widely spoken language, or else he probably wouldn’t have made the declaration. He might take Svetlana’s contrary statement as argumentative. In turn, Svetlana could feel that his response was condescending. Now consider the revised exchange: Harpreet: English is the most widely spoken language in the world. Svetlana: Actually, Chinese is. In the short time that Svetlana declares “actually”, Harpreet can reset his path in the continued conversation. He knows Svetlana is not going to agree that English is the most widely spoken language in the world. He now has an opportunity to retrieve facts or develop an explanation to support his idea. Language processing in the brain happens THAT FAST! Signposts such as well, frankly, actually, as a matter of fact, I’m sorry, yes but, etc. have a calming effect on our interactions. They help us to follow, process, and understand what someone is saying. These indicators are useful when we are agreeing, but they are especially useful when we would like to disagree while maintaining a positive interaction. Although they seem almost superfluous, signpost words and phrases impact how we are perceived in terms of our command of language and our ability to communicate well. Have you ever taught signposting? Now that you know the important role that signposts play in language development, would you consider it now? 0 Going from a blank page to a full speech can be an intimidating process; however, once you have your outline and key points in hand, you will want to ensure that your key points are expressed in a clear, concise, and logical way. This is where signposting can come in handy! Signposting is defined as, “the practice of using words, phrases, and pauses to direct listeners through a speech.” Signposting is a great way to make sure that your listeners are able to keep up with you and find a logical progression in your speech. Signposts are verbal clues and indications within a speech that connects the audience with the topic and structure of the overall presentation. In essence, signposts are like waypoints within your speech or presentation, connecting different topics and ideas as you guide your audience from point A to point B. These indicators articulate clear transitions between elements of your speech, highlighting both the beginning and end of each point, as well as the importance of any further detail you may wish to discuss. To illustrate this point further, imagine a speech about the many unique tourist attractions found in California. At the start of your talk, you may use a sign post such as “Today we will explore some of California’s most iconic locations” to clearly indicate both the start and main focus of your talk. As you progress through your presentation, you can also use signposts such as “Now let’s look at some famous beaches in California” to help make transitions more seamless and to keep the audience connected to their overall context. Finally, when it is time to wrap up your discussion, you might use a signpost such as “That was just a brief overview of some of California’s main attractions”. Signposting not only gives structure and clarity to any speech or presentation but also helps ensure that an audience can follow along easily with what is being discussed.

Yet on the other hand, too much signposting can also be detrimental; if an audience feels like they are being pulled through a presentation too rigidly or excessively reminded about what is being discussed, then it may negatively affect their engagement with the material being presented. Therefore when using sign posts during a speech it is important to do so purposefully and strategically; they should be used judiciously and only when needed. This way they will help maintain focus while still allowing for natural conversational dialogue in order to create an enjoyable experience for both speaker and listener alike. With that in mind, this brings us to our next section which will explore how signposts can help guide the audience during presentations or speeches. Signposts help guide the audience through a speech or piece of writing.



What are they?

When effectively employed, they are important tools to clearly outline your key points and the progress between them to your audience.



Why are they so important?

A lack/inconsistent use of transitions puts the weight of understanding on your audience, so lowering their attention and reducing your clarity and impact.



Where do we use them?

Transitions should be consistently used throughout your presentation, meeting intervention or speech i.e. after your introduction, between each main point, within each main point and before your conclusion.

They work like stoplights, creating visual markers that direct readers to the important points quickly and effectively. Signposts can be used as simple summaries of a speaker’s main points or as more detailed explanations of how each point logically follows from the one before it. Used correctly, they not only allow the audience to keep up with the flow of the argument but also give them clues about what is coming next. It has been suggested that signposting is essential to an effective speech because it helps both the speaker and their audience stay focused on the material being presented. This type of structure assists in ensuring that everyone remains engaged, as well as allowing them to better absorb and remember the information being conveyed.



Signposting also helps ensure a smooth transition between various sections of a speech and prevents arguments from becoming disjointed or confusing. On the other hand, some argue that too much use of signposts can limit originality and may result in speeches lacking fluidity and creative expression. Furthermore, there are times in which it can be difficult for a speaker to identify when and how to use them appropriately within their delivery, resulting in their use feeling forced or interrupting the momentum of the argument. The best approach is therefore to strike a balance between providing the audience with enough information to assist in comprehending your message without overwhelming them with too many details or sudden shifts in direction. Signposting helps guide the audience through complex speeches and arguments by connecting ideas together and clearly signaling transitions between topics.

As we move into our next section on “Connecting Your Ideas Through Signposts”, you will learn more about how to properly utilize this helpful communication tool within your own speeches and presentations.

In order to effectively communicate a message, it is important to properly link the ideas in your speech together. This is where signpost language can be useful in helping an audience to perceive the message you are trying to convey. Signposts are verbal cues used to draw attention to a change in topic, or transition, between ideas in a speech. These transitions within the speech help audience members make sense of the message and can be critical for persuasion. When constructing signposts it is important to remain concise and articulate. Signpost language should not be overwhelming, rather they should act as simple cues that express what kind of message transition is taking place and subtly explain why they are necessary.



It is also important to connect signpost language consistently with the overall flow of your speech – use words and phrases throughout your address that naturally encourage movement or transition between ideas. Using signpost language helps structure an argument by breaking the larger concepts into smaller components that build upon one another. This builds interest because listeners can follow the progression more easily, understanding how each idea relates back to the main story line. By looking at the big picture and then slowly working through all of its facets, listeners feel more engaged as you take them slowly on a journey from point A to point B. Furthermore, signpost language is beneficial for debates because it allows for support of your arguments before contradicting them; making sure both sides of an opinion are heard. Constructive criticism then has more context when presented and understood by those participating in the discussion. Overall, effective use of signpost language can vastly improve the clarity and persuasiveness of your speech by providing structure and cohesion between ideas. To conclude this section, let’s move on to discussing how referring to previous ideas often ties well into using signposts in order to create connections among ideas throughout a speech. When you refer back to a previous idea in your speech, it helps remind the audience of what was previously discussed. This serves as an effective transition between topics and reminds people how one topic is connected to another. By referring back to previous ideas, you also demonstrate that you are speaking with knowledge and confidence about the subject. This type of signposting adds structure and clarity to your speech and can be used to link different points together. For example, if you are discussing the risks associated with investing in stocks, you can start by reminding the audience of the positive aspects discussed earlier. This allows you to smoothly transition from one topic to another while preserving continuity in the overall flow of your speech. On the other hand, over-referring to previous ideas can make your speech seem repetitive or even create confusion. If you reiterate something too many times, it may cause listeners to tune out or lose interest in what you are saying. It is therefore important to find a balance when referring back to previous ideas so that your speech stays interesting and engaging for the audience. The Benefits of Signposting is a valuable tool for any speaker because it helps keep ideas organized and structured. In order for signposting to be effective, speakers must learn understand how and when to refer back to their own ideas in order create a clear narrative for listeners. The benefits of signposting in your speech are numerous. By clearly outlining where the discussion is heading, you can help your audience grasp the main points more quickly and help structure your argument for better results. Signposting can also provide helpful reminders to help keep the conversation on track; it allows you to plan ahead and anticipate issues that may arise throughout the speech. Signposting helps guide the conversation organically and can be used to transition from one topic to another in a smooth and natural way. The use of signposts also gives your presentation a more professional feel, helping maintain an organized and efficient flow to your talk.

Furthermore, research on public speaking shows that audiences prefer speeches with clear signposts as they make it easier for them to stay focused and follow the discussion. Moreover, signposting can assist you in delivering a polished final product by making sure the main points are covered while remaining clear and understandable. However, some may argue that too much signposting is distracting and takes away crucial time that could be used exploring each point in greater detail. In reality though, there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach – it all depends on how you as the speaker choose to craft your presentation. Signposting ultimately serves as an essential tool for effectively communicating ideas during any convincing presentation or persuasive speech. It helps create focus while establishing contextual links between your various thoughts and assertions which in turn encourages engagement from the audience members. As such, if used correctly signposting can effectively unlock the power of persuasion within any speech. Now that we have discussed the benefits of using signposting when crafting your narrative, let’s take a look at how it can help focus your speech in the next section. Signposting allows you to guide the flow of your speech, helping you to stay organized and focused. It provides structure and direction that keep you on track throughout the entire presentation. Using signposts helps you clearly articulate your message and ensure that your audience can follow the logical progression of your argument. There are two main ways to help focus your speech. First, use signposts to develop clear transitions between different points in your presentation, making it easier for audience members to follow along as you move from one idea to another. Second, use signposts to periodically reiterate the main point of your talk and how it relates to other points in the discussion. This will remind listeners of the overall scope of what you are discussing and help them remain focused on the big picture. Additionally, signposting allows you to anticipate potential areas where your audience might struggle with comprehension or begin drifting off topic, allowing you to address those issues before they become problematic. You can also use signposts to emphasize important ideas or points within your talk – by explicitly stating something like “this is an important concept!” or “let’s take a look at this data”. You are guiding listeners’ attention directly to the point that needs clarifying or elaboration. These strategies will help ensure that your audience is following along with your discussion and open up more opportunities for engagement. By effectively incorporating these elements into your speech, you can make sure that everyone is hearing what you have to say and remaining focused on the content of your talk. By recognizing our ability to tailor our language and visual cues while presenting we can help our audience understand our arguments more fully and with greater clarity. This will give us more opportunity for meaningful dialogue and effective communication across all perspectives which can ultimately help us accomplish our objectives through persuasive dialogue and negotiation. With this key information in mind, let’s take a look at how we can use signposting to help our audience follow our dialogue. Signposting is an effective way to guide the flow of your speech and provide structure that keeps you and your audience focused. It also helps to prevent confusion or misunderstanding by providing clear transitions between points and periodically reiterating main ideas. Signposting allows you to anticipate possible issues before they become problematic, highlight key concepts, and open up opportunities for more meaningful dialogue and engagement.

Examples of Signposts	
Numbers	Focused Attention Words
The first cause of this problem is...	Finally...
The second cause is...	First of all...
The final cause is...	Next...
	We now turn to...

This allows us to use persuasive dialogue and negotiation to more effectively accomplish our objectives. The way you help your audience follow your dialogue is by providing signposts. Signposts are verbal markers such as statements, phrases and/or words that allow listeners to better understand the direction in which you are heading with your speech. They communicate important information so that audience members know where you’re going with your speech and how the various points connect to one another. Those opposed to the use of signposts may argue that they make speeches sound rigid and lacking in creativity. However, research suggests that signposting actually aids flow and transitions between points, making speeches more engaging for audiences. Others may also point out that using too many signposts causes speakers to sound repetitive and monotonous. While it is true to an extent, using signposts can actually help speakers demonstrate their audience’s main points more clearly without sounding redundant. When used effectively, signposting allows members of your audience to keep up with your arguments and stay on track throughout the duration of your presentation or talk, rather than getting bogged down in all of the details. Effectively using signposts helps listeners to have a much better grasp on what you’re talking about and allows them to draw connections between individual points, resulting in a more engaging experience overall. By providing helpful signposts in your talk or presentation, you can ensure that your audience understands precisely what you’re saying and can easily follow along with each point. Now, let’s move onto the next section about how to use signposts effectively! Signposting is an invaluable tool when giving a speech and can have a dramatic impact on the audience’s understanding and enjoyment of the material. As such, it is essential that speakers learn how to use signposts effectively, helping to provide structure and clarity to their presentation. There are a few key tips for effective signposting that speakers should take into account. Firstly, signposts should be used as often as necessary throughout a presentation in order to keep the audience engaged. Too few signposts can lead to confusion, whereas too many can sound tedious and detract from the content itself. Secondly, the language chosen for signposts should be kept simple and straightforward. The aim of signposting is to tell the audience where you are headed with your argument or ideas, not to confuse them further or introduce additional complexity. Finally, it is important to make sure that signposts fit naturally into the overall flow of a presentation. A succinct phrase is all that’s generally required, no more than 3-5 words if possible, so as not to detract from the content of the speech itself. That said, some would argue that rather than relying heavily on signposting each point in a speech with overly elaborate language, more attention should be paid to crafting powerful statements and stories around individual points. While there is value in this approach – ensuring that certain points stand out regardless of whether they have been prominently signposted or not – it should not come at the cost of clarity and structure entirely. Signposting can go a long way towards making sure that everyone is on the same page during a presentation and making sure the most important points are understood. With this in mind, it is crucial for speakers to ensure they properly highlight the most important points in their presentation through effective use of signposting. This will be discussed further in the next section. When you are giving a speech, it is important to highlight the most crucial points. This can help ensure that your audience is understanding and retaining key concepts. One way to do this is by using signposting language. Signposting language is language used to shift the audience’s focus from one point to another in order to guide them through your spoken message. It also communicates which of your points are the most significant. For example, when providing background information on a particular topic, you can begin with phrases like “What’s most important is...” or “Most notably...” These phrases give clear indications of which parts of the story are essential and should be remembered to understand the overall concept. Similarly, when transitioning between arguments, use phrases like “Let’s turn our attention to...” or “Essential to consider...” in order to equip the audience with crucial details. On the other hand, some may choose to not signpost at all. They believe doing so takes away from their natural flow and would rather rely on making a few key points throughout their presentation that yield the same purpose as signposting for listeners. Proponents of this school of thought may prefer a conversational style or storytelling format because it tends to be more engaging for audiences. In either case, being aware of how you can highlight your main points is important for conveying your message effectively and allowing your listeners to apprehend vital concepts from your speech. Now that we have discussed how you can emphasize the main points within your speech, let’s move on to understanding presentation structure. As a speaker or presenter, it is important to understand the structure of your presentation in order to master signposting effectively. The structure should be made clear from the beginning and should remain consistent throughout your speech. Signposting helps to make this transition between topics and ideas smooth for both the speaker and the audience. When constructing a presentation, consider both the logical flow of ideas and how much time you have allocated for each topic.



Make sure that each part ties into an overall goal or conclusion by using signpost words or phrases that indicate when you are changing direction or moving towards a conclusion. This can help inform your audience about what will come next without overwhelming them with too much information. It may also be helpful to provide some sort of visual aid or introduction at the beginning of your presentation so that everyone can be on the same page regarding where you are going in the discussion. It may also be useful to include a summary slide or wrap up your talk with a quick review of what has been said during the course of your talk if you feel it would assist the audience in understanding its structure better. Signposting during your presentation is essential in providing clarity and ensuring that all members of the audience are engaged in what you are saying. Using signposts alerts your listeners that something new is coming and allows you to transition more easily between topics. By understanding how to effectively present a structured speech, speakers can make use of signposting as an effective tool for connecting with their audiences and furthering their messages. By mastering signposting techniques, speakers can ensure their message reaches even further and engage wider audiences more deeply than ever before. With this guide on using signposting in speech, you can now begin developing effective presentations that leave lasting impressions on listeners. “First, I will give an overview of the issue we’re addressing. Then, I’ll outline some of the key challenges we face, and finally, I’ll propose some potential solutions.” Let me begin by introducing our panelists for today’s discussion. After their opening remarks, we’ll move on to a Q&A session, and then wrap up with some closing thoughts.” “To better understand the impact of this policy, I’d like to first provide some background information on the history of this issue. Then, I’ll examine the current state of affairs, and finally, I’ll offer some insights into the potential future implications.” “Before we dive into the details, let me start by giving you an overview of the structure of my presentation.

I’ll begin by discussing the problem we’re trying to solve, then I’ll move on to some potential solutions, and finally, I’ll offer some closing thoughts on how we can move forward.” In the next few minutes, I’d like to share with you three key takeaways from my research. First, I’ll discuss the overall trends in the data. Second, I’ll explore some of the factors driving those trends. And finally, I’ll highlight some potential implications and opportunities for future research.” Signposting is an invaluable tool that can take your speeches to the next level. By providing clear direction and purpose, your audience can easily follow along and understand the main points of your speech. Ultimately, signposting allows you to fully capture and communicate your message to those listening. In closing, it’s important to note that while signposting can be beneficial, its importance should not be overstated. Too much signposting can often become distracting rather than reinforcing your point. It’s important to strike a balance between continuously informing your audience while also using natural pauses, body movements, and other forms of non-verbal communication to control the flow of your speech. Although there are no hard and fast rules when it comes to utilizing signposting in your speeches, being mindful of how you address transitions and emphasize key points can greatly enhance their impact. The more practice you give yourself with signposting techniques, the more comfortable you’ll become at delivering speeches or presentations with confidence and poise. Overall, signposting offers a powerful way for individuals to deliver engaging speeches that are memorable and effective. While mastering the art of signposting takes time, implementing these tips into each speech will undoubtedly improve both its delivery and reception from the audience. Structuring signposting in a speech is not overly complicated, but it does require some preparation.

To begin, you should determine the overall structure of the speech, including the main points and any relevant background information. Once this is done, you can then insert signposts identifying the points and giving an indication as to what each point entails. At each major transition in your speech, you should use a signpost such as: “Now that we have discussed XYZ, let’s take a look at ABC...” Signposting not only serves to indicate where you are going in your speech, it also aids in keeping listeners interested by giving them clues about what is coming next. Additionally, it can serve to reinforce key points and transitions within the speech so that they remain clear to the listener long after the speech is over. Finally, signposts increase continuity of presentation by indicating a logical progression from one point to the next. Signposting is a powerful technique to make your speech more organized and persuasive. It allows you to control the direction of your argument and give your audience a better sense of what you’re talking about, making it easier for them to follow your argument. To effectively use signposting in your speech: 1. Organize Your Ideas Before You Speak – Before delivering your speech, take some time to plan out the structure and main points of your arguments. This will help you focus on what’s important in terms of the message you want to convey, as well as allowing you to anticipate any questions or objections that might arise during your discussion. 2. Introduce Your Topic – Begin with a brief overview of the topic and state why it’s important or relevant. This will set the scene for the rest of your discussion and provide context for each point. 3. Use Signposts to Guide Your Audience – Introduce signposts throughout your speech, giving your listeners a sense of direction so they know what’s coming next and can follow along with ease. It may be helpful here to use phrases such as “firstly”, “secondly”, “in conclusion” etc., to ensure everyone is keeping up with where you are in the presentation/speech. 4. Repeat Key Points & Summarize – To ensure that all of your points have been taken onboard by your audience, repeat key points from time-to-time throughout the presentation/speech and at the conclusion, provide a summary of these points so they can be cemented into memory. By taking these steps when delivering a speech or presenting an argument, you can ensure that signposting is used effectively and efficiently, helping strengthen the overall message whilst ensuring continuity between each point made throughout the presentation/speech. Toastmaster Tom Updated March 4, 2023 Toastmasters report this ad report this ad One of the most important aspects of public speaking is signpost. It serves as a guide or outline for speakers to follow when giving a speech, and acts as a reminder for what they should talk about next. Signposts are used by many famous world leaders including President Barack Obama, former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and Winston Churchill during his historic “Iron Curtain” speech in 1946. In fact, John F Kennedy’s 1963 “Ich Bin Ein Berliner” speech would have been completely different without the use of signposts since his delivery throughout that powerful oration was flawless. In addition to this, signpost helps captivate audience attention and interest by creating a smooth transition between points and topics. It makes it easier for the speaker to deliver their speech while keeping their audience awake and attentive throughout. Signpost takes practice, but with the right techniques, you too can master this impressive public speaking tool. 1. Transition from point A to point B in a way that leads the audience to point C: “Well let’s look at how these two ideas developed separately, and then we’ll compare them.” (This transition helps lead the audience into thinking that they’re moving towards something big or profound.) 2.

Starting out with a summary of what you are going to talk about, followed by an introduction: “Today I’m going to be talking about 3 types of public speaking; informative, persuasive and inspirational. I will begin by defining what each type is, before giving examples of them.” (This transition helps the audience prepare themselves for what they are about to hear.) 3. Conclusion signpost: “In conclusion, today we have discussed three types of public speaking and how each one is important in its own way. We have also looked at some examples of them being used, and why it is a great art that must be mastered. Thank you for listening everyone.” (This transition shows that the talk has come to an

end, and encourages applause from the audience.) Signpost can be verbal or visual.

A verbal signpost is when the speaker says certain words, either to themselves or out loud, as a reminder of what they should say next. Visual signposts are when speakers employ various strategies such as pointing with their hands, underlining key points with different colors, and drawing arrows on a board/chart. When deciding on a signpost, it is important to focus on the strength and function of its words or design. The goal is for it to be significant in order to make an impression upon the audience when they see it. As with any public speaking technique, a signpost works best when it is used sparingly. It should only be employed when necessary such as when moving from one topic (point) to another. Too many visual aids can distract the audience's attention away from what you're saying about them and that will most likely put them off completely. It may sound counterintuitive, but practice makes perfect! The more you use your verbal and visual signposts, the better and more useful they'll become in your next public speaking engagement. This type of signpost becomes embedded in the speech through effective word choice, tone, and body language. For example, if your topic is about global warming, you could say "I'm going to tell you more about this issue". This signposts the audience that they will learn more about this issue after hearing what else you have to say. A topic sentence functions as a signal to the audience on which direction your speech is headed towards. It can be achieved by starting a section with a statement such as "In this section I am going to talk about..." or "Now I would like to discuss..." These phrases are used to connect one idea or section to another. They can be as simple as "In addition" or "And what's more". This signposts the audience that the information being delivered is associated with a previous point but also introduces new ideas and concepts. Signposting is vital in any speech, despite its length and purpose. In most cases, speakers should use at least 1 type of signpost throughout their speeches if not all 3 types. It helps them organize their thoughts better while keeping the audience awake and attentive throughout each part of their talk. Practice makes perfect! If you want to improve your public speaking skills then it is essential that you practice these techniques on a regular basis. It doesn't matter if it's a group of friends or an audience of thousands, people love to hear a good speech. A great speech can inspire us, educate us and even change how we think about the world around us. But what makes a speech so special? Though there are many variables that can influence a person's opinion on a certain talk - such as the speaker, the topic and the overall environment - one aspect that often goes unnoticed is its structure.

In terms of writing novels, authors tend to follow similar structures for their plots. There are those who use linear storylines from beginning to end while others prefer jumping between different times and scenarios.

Think of your favorite book or movie series: It was probably written or produced using one of these two structures. In the same way that famous novels have a common structure, great speeches also tend to follow an underlying pattern. Whether it's being delivered in front of a large crowd or a small group of friends, all good talks share some qualities that make them so powerful and memorable. Though this structure can vary from person to person, every great speech is similar in at least one aspect: signposts. Just as novelists use signposts to keep track of their storylines, speakers can use these 'markers' to remind themselves (and their audience) what they'll be saying before getting into the bulk of their presentation.

This strategy allows people who are delivering a talk - especially those who aren't accustomed to public speaking - to organize their thoughts and present their ideas in an easy-to-follow manner. Whether you're writing a novel or giving a presentation, signposts are one of the most useful storytelling tools around.

No matter where you are in your speech's journey, knowing what comes next can make all the difference. Signposting is a concept in information design that helps people follow along and understand what they are seeing. As a presenter, you have to think about how you will communicate information to your audience. If they don't understand what you are saying or can't remember what comes next, they will not be able to follow along with the rest of your presentation. Signposting is one of the most important parts of a presentation because it helps people stay on track and know where they are going. Signposts tell us where we're going. It's the presenter's responsibility to make sure that everyone understands their topic well enough to follow along and get something out of all the hard work and effort they put into it. It is the presenter's job to make sure that the audience understands what comes next, when appropriate with a few simple words or phrases at strategic points in their presentation. Sometimes this communication may be as simple as introducing a new topic or point of discussion, such as saying "Now we're going to talk about how...." Other times it may be necessary to add more detail so that people understand exactly where you are going with your information, such as... — Now we're talking about how... — To demonstrate this, we will... — Next I'm going to tell you about... Each step in your explanation should come with its own signpost so that your audience can follow along and keep up. If anyone misses a step, they can easily be brought back up to speed on where you are going with your information. People need signposts to stay on track. When giving a presentation, it is important to communicate effectively with your audience so that everyone stays on the same page and understands what you're saying. If someone gets lost along the way, it's likely that they will have no idea what you're saying from that point forward. Anything after that moment of confusion is a waste of valuable time for both yourself and your audience. This goes for large crowds as well as small groups because both will lack context if one person doesn't understand something - which means none of them do - and people have a hard time following along all the relevant information available to them. In a larger group, this can cause an unintentional domino effect and soon the whole audience has lost track of where they are in your explanation. This is not only confusing but also frustrating and time-consuming. If you want to give a successful presentation that keeps everyone engaged and interested, signposting becomes very important. Everything should be signposted. As a presenter, it is easy to get so caught up in what you're saying that you forget to mention certain things at appropriate times. You might breeze right through something or add it as an afterthought because you think the information is obvious enough by itself but it could easily leave your audience feeling confused and wondering what comes next. Signposting every point along the way ensures that no one gets lost and everything is communicated clearly. If you don't have time to add all the signposts, then you need to rethink your presentation plan and find a way to fit in what's most important. Don't just assume that it will be obvious or remember it on your own; make sure everyone knows about these important items by adding specific signposting along the way.