Lecture Outline:
In the following two lectures, we will learn to categorize speeches and presentations according to their purpose. Analyze the audience for speeches and presentations. Discuss the steps required in planning a speech or presentation. Develop an introduction, a body, and a close for a long formal presentation. Select, design, and use visual aids that are appropriate for various types of speeches and presentations. Deliver your speech or presentation and handle audience questions effectively.

Facing a communication dilemma at the Keys group
Brad Keys believes that acceptance in the community is their key. His company – the Keys Group – operates 11 KFC fast-food restaurants in Georgia. When Keys started out in the restaurant business nearly 30 years ago, he realized that good food was only half the battle. Keys realized that if he wanted to succeed in business, he’d have to gain people’s respect. He’d have to persuade bankers to loan him money and big companies to do business with him. He’d have to convince employees to work hard and customers to trust him. But how?

Preparing to speak
If you were Keys, whether you were addressing a large crowd or an audience of one, what would you need to know about preparing, developing and delivering speeches?
You need to:
• Define your purpose
• Analyze your audience
• Develop a plan for presenting your points

Defining your purpose
Speeches and presentations can be categorized according to their purpose, much as interviews and meetings are. The purpose helps you determine content and style. It also affects the amount of audience participation that occurs. When you’re trying to motivate or entertain your audience you generally do most of the talking. During your speech the audience plays an essentially passive role, listening to your remarks but providing little direct input in the form of comments or questions. You control the content of the message. When your purpose is to provide information or analyze a situation, you and the audience generally interact somewhat.

Basically a group of people meet to hear the oral equivalent of a written report. Then the audience members offer comments or ask questions. The most interaction occurs when your purpose is to persuade people to take particular action or to collaborate with them in solving a problem or reaching decision. You generally begin by providing facts and figures that increase your audience understands of the subject. You might also offer arguments in defense of certain conclusions or recommendations.

In addition, you invite the audience members to participate by expression their needs, suggesting solutions and formulating conclusions and recommendations. Because persuasive and collaborative presentations involve so much audience interaction, you have relatively little control of the material. To be flexible enough to adjust to new input and unexpected reactions, you cannot adhere to a prewritten script. A speech or presentation can often accomplish several of these purposes simultaneously.

Analyzing your audience
Once you have your purpose firmly in mind, think about another basic element of your speech or presentation: your audience. This is particularly important because you’ll be gearing the style and content of your speech to your audience’s needs and interests. First consider the
size and composition of the audience. You can easily involve audience members in your presentation when you speak to a relatively small group. With more than 12 people it gets difficult to manage the give-and-take that’s essential to building a consensus, so your approach may lean more toward telling than asking.

A homogenous group will benefit from a focused speech or presentation, a diverse group requires a more generalized approach, using less technical jargon and presenting a broader picture. Another important factor is your audience’s likely reaction to your speech or presentation. Decide whether your audience will be hostile, receptive, or indifferent to your point of view. Learn as much as you can about their level of understanding: how much do they already know about your subject?

Take a cold, hard look at their relationship with you:
– Do they already know you?
– Do they respect your judgment?
The answers to these questions will help you decide on the best way to go about planning your speech.

Planning your speech or presentation
Planning an oral message is similar to planning a written message
• You develop the main idea
• Construct an outline
• Estimate the appropriate length
• Decide on the most effective style

Establishing the main idea
Start by focusing on the “big picture”. What is the main idea (or theme) that you want to convey to the audience? Look for a one-sentence generalization that links your subject and the purpose to the audience’s frame of reference, much as an advertising slogan points out how a product can benefit consumers. Demand for your low-calorie, high-quality frozen foods will increase because of basic social and economic trends.

Reorganizing our data-processing department will lead to better service at a lower cost. We should build a new plant in Texas to reduce our operating costs and to capitalize on growing demand in the Southwest. Each of these statements puts a particular slant on the subject, one that is positive and directly related to the audience’s interest.

Organizing an outline
With a well-crafted main idea to guide you, you can begin to outline the speech or presentation.

Gear the structure
– The subject
– The purpose
– The audience
– Time allotted for your speech or presentation

If you have ten minutes or less to deliver your message, organize your thoughts as much as you would a letter or brief memo. Use the direct approach if the subject involves routine information or good news and using the indirect approach if the subject involves bad news or persuasion.

Longer speeches and presentations are organized like reports. If the purpose is to entertain, motivate, or inform, use a direct order imposed naturally by the subject. If the purpose is to analyze, persuade, or collaborate, organize your material around conclusions and recommendations or around a logical argument. Use direct order if the audience is receptive, indirect if you expect simplicity of organization especially useful in oral communication.
A carefully prepared outline may be more than just the starting point for composing a speech or presentation. If you plan to deliver your presentation from notes rather than from a written text, your outline will also be your final "script". For this reason the headings on the outline should be complete sentences or lengthy phrases rather than one-or two-word topic headings. Many speakers also include notes that indicate where visual aids will be useful. You might want to write out the transitional sentences you’ll use to connect main points.

Experienced speakers often use a two-column format that separates the “stage directions” from the content. You may have to adjust your organization in response to input from the audience, especially if your purpose is to collaborate. You might want to think of several organizational possibilities, based on “what if” assumptions about the audience’s reactions.

**Estimated length**
Time for speeches and presentations is often strictly regulated, so you’ll need to tailor your material to the available time. You can use your outline to estimate how long your speech or presentation will take.

The average speaker can deliver about 125 to 150 words a minute, which corresponds to 20 to 25 double-spaced, typed pages of text. The average paragraph is about 125 to 150 words in length, so most of us can speak at the rate of about one paragraph per minute. Suppose, for example, that you want to make three basic points. In a 10-minute speech, you could take about 2 minutes to explain each of these points, using roughly two paragraphs for each point.

If you devoted a minute each to the introduction and the conclusion, you would have 2 minutes left over to interact with the audience. If you had an hour, you could spend the first 5 minutes introducing the presentation, establishing rapport with the audience, providing background information, and giving an overview of your topic. In the next 30 to 50 minutes, you could explain each of the three points, spending about 10 to 13 minutes per point (the equivalent of 5 or 6 typewritten pages).

Your conclusions might take another 3 to 5 minutes. The remaining 10 to 20 minutes would then be available for responding to questions and comments from the audience. Which is better, the 10 minute speech or the hour long presentation? If your speech doesn’t have to fit into a specified time slot, the answer depends on
- Your subject
- Your audience’s attitude and knowledge
- The relationship you have with your audience

For a simple, easily accepted message, 10 minutes may be enough. On the other hand if your subject is complex or your audience is skeptical, you’ll probably need more time. Don’t squeeze a complex presentation into a period that is too brief, and don’t draw out a simple talk any longer than necessary.

**Deciding on the style**
Another important element in your planning is the style most suitable to the occasion. Is this is formal speech or presentation in an impressive setting, with professionally devoted visual aids? Or is it a casual, roll-up-your-sleeves working session? The size of the audience, the subject, your purpose, your budget and the time available for preparation, all determine the style.

In general if you’re speaking to a relatively small group, you can use a casual approach that encourages audience participation. A small conference room, with the audience seated around
Developing formal speeches and presentations

Developing a major speech or presentation is much like writing a formal report, with one important difference: you need to adjust your technique to an oral communication channel. This is both an opportunity and a challenge. The opportunity lies in the interaction that's possible between you and the audience.

When you speak before a group, you can receive information as well as transmit it. You can adjust both the content and delivery of your message as you go along, editing your speech or presentation to make it clearer and more compelling. Instead of simply expressing your ideas, you can raw out the audience's ideas and use them to reach a mutually acceptable conclusion. You can also capitalize on nonverbal signals to convey information to and from your audience.

The challenge lies in maintaining control and accommodating your audience’s limitations. To get the benefits of oral communication, be flexible. The more you plan to interact with your audience, the less control you'll have. Halfway through your presentation an unexpected comment from someone in the audience could force you to shift to a new line of thought, which requires great skill.

At the same time, accommodate the limitations of your listeners. To prevent your audience from losing interest or getting lost, use special techniques when developing the various elements of the presentation:

– The introduction
– The body
– The close
– The question-and-answer period
– Visual aids

The introduction

You have a lot to accomplish during the first few minutes of your speech or presentation, including

– Arousing your audience’s interest in your topic
– Establishing your credibility
– Preparing the audience for what will follow

That's why developing the introduction often requires a disproportionate amount of attention.

Arousing interest

Some subjects are naturally more interesting than others. If you happen to have discussing a matter of profound significance that will personally affect the members of your audience, chances are they’ll listen regardless of how you begin. All you really have to do is announce your topic (“Today I’d like to announce the reorganization of the company”) the best approach to dealing with an uninterested audience is to appeal to human nature. Encourage people to take the subject personally. Show them how they’ll be affected as individuals.

For example, when address clerical employees about a pension program; you might want to start off like this:
If somebody offered to give you $200,000 in exchange for $5 per week, would you be interested?

That’s the amount you can expect to collect during your retirement years if you choose to contribute to the voluntary pension plan. During the first two weeks, you will have to decide whether you want to participate. Although for most of you retirement is many years away, this is an important financial decision. During the next 20 minutes, I hope to give you the information you need to make that decision intelligently.

Make sure your introduction matches the tone of your speech or presentation. If the occasion is supposed to be fun, you might begin with something light; but if you’ll be talking business to a group of executives, don’t waste their time with cute openings. Avoid jokes and personal anecdotes when you plan to discuss a serious problem. If you’re developing a routine oral report, don’t be overly dramatic.

Most of all, try to make your introduction natural. Nothing turns off the average audience faster than a trite, staged beginning.

**Building credibility**

One of the chief drawbacks of overblown openings is that they damage the speaker’s credibility, which is even more important than arousing interest. A speaker with high credibility is more persuasive than a speaker with low credibility.

When developing a speech, it’s important to establish your credentials quickly; people will decide within a few minutes whether you’re worth listening to. Establishing credibility is relatively easy if you’ll be speaking to a familiar, open-minded audience.

The real difficulty comes when you must try to earn the confidence of strangers, especially those predisposed to be skeptical or antagonistic. One way to handle the problem is to let someone else introduce you. That person can present your credentials so that you won’t appear boastful, but make sure the person introducing you doesn’t exaggerate your qualifications. If you plan to introduce yourself, keep your comments simple. At the same time, don’t be afraid to mention your accomplishments.

Your listeners will be curious about your qualifications, so plan to tell them briefly who you are and why you’re there. Generally speaking, one or two aspects of your background are all you need to mention:

– Your position in an organization
– Your profession
– The name of your company

**You might plan to say something like this:**

I’m Karen Whitney, a market research analyst with Information Resources Corporation. For the past five years, I’ve specialized in studying high-technology markets. Your director of engineering, John LaBarre, has asked me to brief you on recent trends in computer-aided designs so that you’ll have a better idea of how to direct your research-and-development efforts.

This speaker establishes credibility by tying her credentials to the purpose of her presentation. By mentioning her company’s name, her position, and the name of the audience’s boss, she lets her listeners know immediately that she’s qualified to tell them something they need to know. She connects her background to their concerns.
Preview the presentation

Giving your audience a preview what's ahead adds to your authority and, more importantly, helps people understand your message. In an oral presentation, however, the speaker provides the framework. Your introduction will summarize your main idea, identify the supporting points, and indicate the order in which you’ll develop those points. Once you’ve established the framework, you can move into developing the body of your presentation, confident that your audience will understand how the individual facts and figures relate to the main idea.