

## Transitional Words

**Transitions are** words, phrases, or sentences that tie the speech ideas together and enable the speaker to move smoothly from one point to the next.

- Provide consistency of movement from one point to the next
- Cue the audience that a new point will be made
- Keep the listeners attentive

### Transitional Words Are Used to Move from:

- one main point to the next
  - main points to supporting points
  - one supporting point to another supporting point
  - the introduction to the body
  - the body to the conclusion
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- Transitions can be posed in **restate-forecast** form: the transition restates the point just covered and previews the next point to be covered
- “Now that we’ve ... let’s ...”
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- Transitions can be in the form of **internal previews**: they tell the audience what to expect next
- “I will focus on three ...”
  - “Not only was ..., it was also ...”
- 
- Transitions can be in the form of **internal summaries**: they draw together important ideas before proceeding to another speech point
- “It should now be clear that...”

O’Hair, D., Stewart, R., & Rubenstein, H. *A Speaker’s Guidebook*

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## **Checklist for Using Transitions**

1. Do you include enough transitions to adequately guide your listeners through your speech?
2. Do you use appropriate transitions when making comparisons, showing cause and effect, illustrating a sequence in time, contrasting ideas, or summarizing information?
3. Do you include full-sentence transitions that will alert listeners to shifts from one main point to the next?
4. Do you make appropriate use of the restate-forecast technique? Rhetorical questions? Internal previews and summaries?
5. Do you use a transition to alert listeners to the conclusion of the speech?

## **Transitional Words and Phrases**

### **To show comparisons**

- similarly
- in the same way
- likewise
- in comparison
- just as

### **To illustrate cause and effect**

- as a result
- therefore
- hence
- because
- thus
- consequently

### **To illustrate sequence of time or events**

- first, second, third ...
- following this
- later
- earlier
- at present
- in the past
- until now

### **To contrast ideas**

- on the other hand
- and yet
- at the same time
- in spite of
- however

### **To summarize**

- in conclusion
- in summary
- finally
- let me conclude by saying
- altogether
- as we have seen

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