An exceptional introduction will do all of the following:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

How to grab attention:

________________ – People love to laugh. By telling a good joke early in the speech, you not only build your rapport with the audience, you also motivate to listen with the promise of more humor. Just make sure that the joke isn’t offensive and that it fits well with the rest of your speech.

________________ – Typically, if a quotation has stood the test of time, it offers some sort of humor or insight that will interest the audience. Also, a good quote by a known author will enhance your credibility.

________________ – A good story is a very effective attention-getter. If you tell a story about yourself, you can build your credibility, and the story will probably be more relevant to your audience.

________________ – It’s a public speaking myth that statistics shouldn’t be used in speeches. If you use too many statistics, perhaps, it could be problematic. However, if you select a few really startling statistics that illustrate your point, they can be quite effective. If you are going to use a statistic as an attention-getter, make sure that it’s relevant and has a lot of impact.

_________ – Just as with statistics, you’re looking for relevance and impact.

_________________________ _____________ – This involves asking the audience to become part of your speech. That could mean asking them a question (rhetorical or otherwise), asking them to do something physical (raise their hands, close their eyes), or asking them to think about something related to your speech.
Some ways to enhance your perceived character in the introduction include:

__________________: Smile at your audience and guess what happens? They smile back. Smiling is a good idea in 99% of all speech situations, even business presentations and other “serious” speeches. It’s the easiest way to show your character to the audience.

______ __________________: This is the second easiest way to show your character. Besides, if you can’t get excited about your speech, your audience certainly won’t.

_________________ __________________: In most cases, audiences prefer speakers whom they feel are similar to themselves. Even if your not similar to your audience on a superficial level, there is always some area of commonality. Stress it.

_________ , _________ , or _______ __________________ of the audience: Make them feel important, because for the rest of your speech they are very important.

____ ___________________: Simple enough.

Perhaps the audience will know of your credentials before you begin speaking, whether through a separate introduction of you as a speaker or through your reputation on your topic. If they don’t, you can mention your competence by simply stating your experience and expertise relative to the topic. Of course, you don’t want to damage your perceived character by bragging, but if you just state the facts it shouldn’t be a problem.

The average audience member asks themselves this at the beginning of every speech: “_________________?” It’s up to you as the speaker to show the audience how the speech you are about to give is ___________ to their lives. Think in terms of the ___________’s ___________ and let them know how your speech will help them fulfill those needs.

Typically, the preview of the speech will come near the end of the introduction. All that is required is just a few lines dedicated to outlining the main points that will be discussed in your speech.
Finally, the last goal of the introduction is to let the audience know that the body of the speech has begun. This can be accomplished with a signpost, a blatantly obvious transitional statement. Examples of signposts that can be used at the end of the introduction include: “__________________”, “__________________”, etc.

Overall, your introduction should be about ____- _____ % of the total speech length. Any shorter, and you probably haven’t accomplished everything that you should. Any longer, and you are taking valuable time away from the body of the speech.

**Overcoming Anxiety**

____________, ____________, ____________ – The more prepared you are, the more confident you will feel.

____ ____________ - Imagine yourself giving a successful speech. Think about your past speaking successes. Prepare yourself mentally to succeed. Or, imagine how happy you will be when your speech is over. Whatever puts you in a positive frame of mind.

__________ the speech- Think about the speech as a simple conversation. Think of your audience as friends. You wouldn’t be frightened to converse with your friends. A speech is fundamentally the same thing, except that you may not have yet met your “friends” and they are unlikely to interrupt you.

__________ - OK, so it may not be practical to sprint from your car to the podium on speech day, but exercising a couple hours before your speech can have a great effect. Exercising releases stress and tension, two feelings synonymous with speech day.

__________ ____ ______- The more you understand the speech-making process, the better equipped you will be to succeed.

____ a ____________- Don’t let yourself worry about skipping a step or leaving out some important element of your speech. Use a checklist to ensure that you’ve covered all the bases.
Successful speech closings meet three criteria:

1. ___________________________________________________________________: People need and expect closure. An effective closing signals to the audience that your speech is ending and reminds them to pay attention to your final words. The following are common ways and phrases to tell listeners you will be ending your speech and leading them to closure:
   - 
   - 
   - 

2. ___________________________________________________________________: A good ending makes a lasting impression on your audience. As mentioned earlier, people remember the last thing they hear the longest. After a few weeks, your listeners may have forgotten most of your speech. However, they will remember the last words you said to them and how they felt after hearing those words if you deliver the ending in a striking, forceful, or meaningful way.

3. Take __________________________ of the entire speech time: Most of your allotted speaking time should be spent on the body of your speech. Your conclusion should take only five to 10 percent of your entire speech time. For example, a 10-minute speech should have a closing of 30 to 60 seconds.

   with an appeal for listeners to take action, refer to it when you discuss “Call for action” below.
There are certain techniques, if applied with the criteria that will create a lasting and vivid impression with your audience. The following six techniques will help you create strong speech endings:

__________________: Used properly, a quotation can add authority to your closing, amuse your listeners, or dramatize your speech points. Whatever quote you choose, keep it short and related directly to your speech topic.

**Example**: A presentation encouraging people to become concerned about the future environment could close with George Bernard Shaw’s words, “Some men see things as they are and ask, ‘Why?’ I dare to dream of things that never were and ask, ‘Why not?”

Tell a _____________ or _______________: A powerful story or anecdote can make a memorable close. It can be inspirational or funny, but it should be short, develop quickly, and be related to or reinforce your message. Personalize it if possible, too.

_________________________: If your speech was intended to persuade or urge your listeners to take some kind of action, your closing statement should clearly explain what action they should take.

**Example**: You could conclude a speech about drug abuse prevention by saying, “Educating our young people about drugs begins with you. After you leave here tonight, I urge you to go home and talk to your children. Tell them you love them and are concerned for them. Talk to them about drugs.”

______________________________: End a speech by asking one question or a series of questions that relate to your topic. The audience will think about an answer and thus your speech.

**Example**: “You may ask, ‘Can we afford to do this?’ I ask, ‘Can we afford not to?”

Refer to the beginning of the speech: Tie your closing words to the beginning of your speech to reinforce your message.
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**Example:** “I began my remarks by reviewing the challenges our company must confront if we are to continue to be successful. I believe these challenges provide opportunities for each of us to learn and grow as individuals. Let’s not be afraid of these challenges; let’s welcome them as opportunities and move forward.”

Repeat the points presented in the body of the speech.

**Example:** “Remember, please, the three keys to making this new program work: understanding, commitment, and teamwork. Only when we all know the program, commit to it, and work together will we achieve our goal.”

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

You can do several things to ensure that your speech ends with impact:

A memorized, polished ending enables you to end confidently and adds impact to your speech.

Too many speeches are ruined because the speaker goes far beyond the allotted time. By ending on time and with a dynamic conclusion, you will leave your audience with a favorable image.

Occasionally, you may forget to mention a point in the body of your speech. Bringing it up in the conclusion of your speech detracts from the effectiveness of the conclusion and can confuse the audience.