



## Finish With a Strong Conclusion

The primary purpose of a conclusion is to reinforce your program's theme. You want to show one last time the relationship between the theme (revealed in the introduction) and all the information you provided in the body of the program.

Some say a good conclusion is like a punch line of a joke because once people hear it, they get it. They understand the relationship between the information presented and the theme. Often this can be done simply by saying "So I hope you can see that..." or "As we learned today..."

Here are some tips to keep in mind when crafting your program conclusion:

**Restate your theme:** clearly state the program theme in your conclusion, but avoid too much repetition. Use fresh, stimulating phrases and images. Don't introduce new ideas at the conclusion—just reinforce what you've already shared. Example: If your theme is "Due to Boulder County's extreme elevation changes, we have a huge variety of wildlife," your conclusion could be, "We enjoy seeing so many different species of animals here, and we can thank the variety of ecosystems we have for that."

**Summarize the information:** if you are speaking about a complex subject, or audience members have various levels of knowledge, review your message in general terms so that everyone can reach the same conclusion that you do. A good technique is to summarize your key points, and offer ideas about the larger meaning of the theme. For example: what the "bigger picture" is, where do we go from here, or tell audience members what they can do to learn more about the topic.

**Let your audience know you're done:** don't fade-out or ramble. Give a final end to every presentation. A good way to do this is to say, "Thank you for coming—have a great night!" or something similar that lets them know you're done.

**Keep an eye on your time:** you don't want to rush, condense or eliminate your conclusion. It is better to eliminate some of the body of your material, rather than the conclusion. Make sure you respect their time and end at the scheduled time. People feel awkward leaving if you're not done, and they may have other responsibilities or appointments afterwards.

A good conclusion helps everyone (including you) feel great about the program. Be sure to practice it!