

Communicate with Confidence

Signal Words and Phrases

Using signal words when speaking helps the listener follow what is being said. Listening for these can help learners understand the organization of the information they are listening to. “For example” is a very common signal phrase that speakers use **to introduce an example**. Other common signals include:

- “There are three reasons why.....”
- “First.....Second.....Third.....”
- “What I want to talk about is.....”
- “And most important,.....”
- “A major development.....”
- “Why it was so important....”

The instructor may signal **supporting details** with phrases such as :

- “On the other hand.....”
- “Last time.....”
- “On the contrary.....”
- “For example,.....”
- “Just like.....”
- “Similarly,.....”
- “In contrast,.....”
- “Also,.....”
- “So.....”
- “And in fact,.....”
- “Further,.....”
- “A term for.....”
- “Furthermore,.....”
- “As an example,.....”
- “For instance,.....”
- “But.....”

The instructor may signal **conclusion** or **summary** with:

- “Therefore ,.....”
- “In conclusion,.....”
- “In other words,.....”
- “As a result,.....”
- “Finally ,.....”
- “In summary ,.....”
- “From this we see that.....”

“The speaker may signal **important information very directly** with:

- “Now this is important.....”
- “The thing about.....”
- “Remember that.....”
- “The important idea is that.....”