



Methods of Persuasion

Building Credibility

Using Evidence

Reasoning

Appealing to Emotions

**Sample Speech with
Commentary**

Persuasion is big business. Authors and consultants promise to teach you the one key secret to persuading people to do what you want. Dan Lok claims to reveal “forbidden psychological tactics” that will “give you an unfair advantage in dealing with people.” Chris St. Hilaire offers “simple strategies to seduce audiences and win allies.” Kevin Dutton claims to have discovered “a single, definitive formula” for “a mysterious, previously unidentified, superstrain of persuasion.” These people charge thousands of dollars for their seminars and motivational speeches. Companies and individuals flock—and pay—to read and hear what they have to say.

It sounds good, but does anyone really have the “one key secret” to persuasion? Probably not. Persuasion is too complicated for that. Yet, as the number of books, seminars, and videos on the subject shows, there is a perpetual fascination with the strategies and tactics of effective persuasion.

What makes a speaker persuasive? Why do listeners accept one speaker’s views and reject those of another? How can a speaker motivate listeners to act in support of a cause, a campaign, or a candidate?

People have been trying to answer these questions for thousands of years—from the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle to modern-day communication researchers. Although many answers have been given, we can say that listeners will be persuaded by a speaker for one or more of four reasons:

Related Reading

For an excellent review of scholarly research on persuasion, see James Price Dillard and Lijiang Shen (eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Persuasion: Developments in Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2013).

Because they perceive the speaker as having high *credibility*.

Because they are won over by the speaker's *evidence*.

Because they are convinced by the speaker's *reasoning*.

Because their *emotions* are touched by the speaker's ideas or language.

In this chapter we will look at each of these. We will not discover any magical secrets that will make you an irresistible persuasive speaker. But if you learn the principles discussed in this chapter, you will greatly increase your odds of winning the minds and hearts of your listeners.

Building Credibility

Here are two sets of imaginary statements. Which one of each pair would you be more likely to believe?

The U.S. judicial system needs major organizational changes to deal with the growing number of court cases. (Sonia Sotomayor)

The U.S. judicial system can deal with the number of court cases without any organizational changes. (Aaron Rodgers)

Technology is changing professional football in ways that the average fan cannot see. (Aaron Rodgers)

Technology is not having a major impact on professional football. (Sonia Sotomayor)

Most likely you chose the first in each pair of statements. If so, you were probably influenced by your perception of the speaker. You are more likely to respect the judgment of Sotomayor, Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, when she speaks about the organization of the American judiciary. You are more likely to respect the judgment of Rodgers, quarterback of the Green Bay Packers, when he speaks about technology in professional football. Some instructors call this factor *source credibility*. Others refer to it as *ethos*, the name given by Aristotle.

ethos

The name used by Aristotle for what modern students of communication refer to as credibility.

FACTORS OF CREDIBILITY

Many things affect a speaker's credibility, including sociability, dynamism, physical attractiveness, and perceived similarity between speaker and audience. Above all, though, credibility is affected by two factors:

- *Competence*—how an audience regards a speaker's intelligence, expertise, and knowledge of the subject.
- *Character*—how an audience regards a speaker's sincerity, trustworthiness, and concern for the well-being of the audience.

The more favorably listeners view a speaker's competence and character, the more likely they are to accept what the speaker says. No doubt you are familiar with this from your own experience. Suppose you take a course in economics. The course is taught by a distinguished professor who has published widely in prestigious journals, who sits on a major international commission, and who has won several awards for outstanding research. In class, you hang on this professor's every word. One day the professor is absent; a colleague from the Economics Department—fully qualified but not as well known—comes to lecture instead. Possibly the fill-in instructor gives the same lecture the distinguished professor would have given, but you do not pay nearly as close attention. The other instructor does not have as high credibility as the professor.

It is important to remember that credibility is an attitude. It exists not in the speaker, but in the mind of the audience. A speaker may have high credibility for one audience and low credibility for another. A speaker may also have high credibility on one topic and low credibility on another. Looking back to our imaginary statements, most people would more readily believe Aaron Rodgers speaking about professional football than Aaron Rodgers speaking about the organization of the U.S. judiciary.

TYPES OF CREDIBILITY

Not only can a speaker's credibility vary from audience to audience and topic to topic, but it can also change during the course of a speech—so much so that we can identify three types of credibility:

- *Initial credibility*—the credibility of the speaker before she or he starts to speak.
- *Derived credibility*—the credibility of the speaker produced by everything she or he says and does during the speech itself.
- *Terminal credibility*—the credibility of the speaker at the end of the speech.¹

All three are dynamic. High initial credibility is a great advantage for any speaker, but it can be destroyed during a speech, resulting in low terminal credibility. The reverse can also occur, as in the following example:

Amit Patel is the information technology manager for a nonprofit research foundation. Soon after taking the job, he installed a new content management system for the company's Web site. He assumed there would be some glitches, but they turned out to be much worse than anything he had imagined. It took nine months to get the system working properly.

A year later, the foundation decided to purchase new tablets that would allow employees to interact more efficiently with data on the internal network. When Amit discussed the tablets at a weekly staff meeting, he had low initial credibility. Everyone remembered the content management system, and they did not want to go through the same problems again.

Aware of his low initial credibility, Amit began by reminding everyone that he hoped to make their jobs easier. He then acknowledged that he had told them the same thing about the content management system—an admission that drew a laugh and helped everyone relax. Finally, he explained that he had checked with other nonprofits that had adopted the same tablets he was purchasing, and they had all told him that the tablets worked flawlessly.

credibility

The audience's perception of whether a speaker is qualified to speak on a given topic. The two major factors influencing a speaker's credibility are competence and character.

initial credibility

The credibility of a speaker before she or he starts to speak.

derived credibility

The credibility of a speaker produced by everything she or he says and does during the speech.

terminal credibility

The credibility of a speaker at the end of the speech.

By the time Amit finished, most staff members were eager to start using their tablets. He had achieved high terminal credibility.

In every speech you give you will have some degree of initial credibility, which will be strengthened or weakened by your message and how you deliver it. And your terminal credibility from one speech will affect your initial credibility for the next one. If your audience sees you as sincere and competent, they will be much more receptive to your ideas.

ENHANCING YOUR CREDIBILITY

How can you build your credibility in your speeches? At one level, the answer is frustratingly general. Since everything you say and do in a speech will affect your credibility, you should say and do *everything* in a way that will make you appear capable and trustworthy. In other words—give a brilliant speech and you will achieve high credibility!

The advice is sound, but not all that helpful. There are, however, some specific ways you can boost your credibility while speaking. They include explaining your competence, establishing common ground with the audience, and speaking with genuine conviction.

Explain Your Competence

One way to enhance your credibility is to advertise your expertise on the speech topic. Did you investigate the topic thoroughly? Then say so. Do you have experience that gives you special knowledge or insight? Again, say so.

Here is how two students revealed their qualifications. The first stressed her study and research:

Before I studied antibacterial products in my public-health class, I always used antibacterial soaps and antibacterial all-surface cleaner for my apartment. I also know from my class survey that 70 percent of you use antibacterial soaps, cleaners, or other products. But after learning about the subject in class and reading research studies for this speech, I'm here to tell you that, try as we might, we cannot build a bubble between ourselves and germs with antibacterial products and that these products actually create more problems than they solve.

The second student emphasized her background and personal experience:

Most of us have no idea what it means to be poor and hungry. But before returning to school last year, I spent three years working at local assistance centers. I can't tell you everything I have seen. But on the basis of what I can tell you, I hope you will agree with me that government help for the poor and needy must be maintained.

Both speakers greatly increased their persuasiveness by establishing their credibility.

Establish Common Ground with Your Audience

Another way to bolster your credibility is to establish common ground with your audience. You do not persuade listeners by assaulting their values and rejecting their opinions. As the old saying goes, "You catch more flies with

Class Activity

The first Exercise for Critical Thinking at the end of this chapter focuses on credibility and its role in persuasive speaking. For full discussion of this activity, see the *Instructor's Manual*, pp. 238–239.

connect

View these excerpts from "Bursting the Antibacterial Bubble" and "Keeping the Safety Net for Those Who Need It" in the online Media Library for this chapter (Video 17.1).

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A speaker's credibility has a powerful impact on how her or his speech is received. One way to boost your credibility is to deliver your speeches expressively and with strong eye contact.

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honey than with vinegar." The same is true of persuasion. Show respect for your listeners. You can make your speech more appealing by identifying your ideas with those of your audience—by showing how your point of view is consistent with what they believe.²

Creating common ground is especially important at the start of a persuasive speech. Begin by identifying with your listeners. Show that you share their values, attitudes, and experiences. Get them nodding their heads in agreement, and they will be much more receptive to your ultimate proposal. Here is how a businesswoman from Massachusetts, hoping to sell her product to an audience in Colorado, began her persuasive speech:

I have never been in Colorado before, but I really looked forward to making this trip. A lot of my ancestors left Massachusetts and came to Colorado nearly 150 years ago. Sometimes I have wondered why they did it. They came in covered wagons, carrying all their possessions, and many of them died on the journey. The ones who got through raised their houses and raised their families. Now that I've seen Colorado, I understand why they tried so hard!

The audience laughed and applauded, and the speaker was off to a good start.

Now look at a different approach, used in a classroom speech favoring a tuition increase at the speaker's school—an unpopular point of view with his classmates. He began by saying:

As we all know, there are many differences among the people in this class. But regardless of age, major, background, or goals, we all share one thing in common—we're all concerned about the quality of education at this school. And that quality is clearly in danger.

The economic crisis has hit every aspect of life, and education is no exception. Budgets are shrinking, faculty salaries are falling, student services are

creating common ground

A technique in which a speaker connects himself or herself with the values, attitudes, or experiences of the audience.

connect™

View this excerpt from "Let's Protect the Quality of Our Education" in the online Media Library for this chapter (Video 17.2).

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disappearing, and we are being crowded out of classes we need to take. Whether we like it or not, we have a problem—a problem that affects each of us.

There are no easy answers, but one thing that will help solve the problem is an increase in tuition. I don't like it any more than you do, but sometimes we have to do what is necessary to protect the quality of our education.

By stressing common perceptions of the problem, the student hoped to get off on the right foot with his audience. Once that was done, he moved gradually to his more controversial ideas.

Deliver Your Speeches Fluently, Expressively, and with Conviction

Teaching Tip

Make sure students understand the powerful relationship between credibility and speech delivery. Even speakers who are recognized experts on their topics can undermine their credibility with poor delivery. By the same token, speakers who are not experts can boost their credibility by presenting their ideas sincerely, dynamically, and with strong eye contact.

There is a great deal of research to show that a speaker's credibility is strongly affected by his or her delivery. Moderately fast speakers, for example, are usually seen as more intelligent and confident than slower speakers. So too are speakers who use vocal variety to communicate their ideas in a lively, animated way. On the other hand, speakers who consistently lose their place, hesitate frequently, or pepper their talk with "uh," "er," and "um" are seen as less competent than speakers who are poised and dynamic.³

All of this argues for practicing your persuasive speech fully ahead of time so you can deliver it fluently and expressively. In addition to being better prepared, you will take a major step toward enhancing your credibility. (Review Chapter 13 if you have questions about speech delivery.)

Speaking techniques aside, the most important way to strengthen your credibility is to deliver your speeches with genuine conviction. President Harry Truman once said that in speaking, "sincerity, honesty, and a straightforward manner are more important than special talent or polish." If you wish to convince others, you must first convince yourself. If you want others to believe and care about your ideas, you must believe and care about them yourself. Your spirit, enthusiasm, and conviction will carry over to your listeners.

Using Evidence

Evidence consists of supporting materials—examples, statistics, testimony—used to prove or disprove something. As we saw in Chapter 8, most people are skeptical. They are suspicious of unsupported generalizations. They want speakers to justify their claims. If you hope to be persuasive, you must support your views with evidence. Whenever you say something that is open to question, you should give evidence to prove you are right.

Evidence is particularly important in classroom speeches because few students are recognized as experts on their speech topics. Research has shown that speakers with very high initial credibility do not need to use as much evidence as do speakers with lower credibility. For most speakers, though, strong evidence is absolutely necessary. It can enhance your credibility, increase both the immediate and long-term persuasiveness of your message, and help "inoculate" listeners against counterpersuasion.⁴

Evidence is also crucial whenever your target audience opposes your point of view. As we saw in Chapter 16, listeners in such a situation will mentally argue with you—asking questions, raising objections, and creating counterarguments to "answer" what you say. The success of your speech will depend

evidence

Supporting materials used to prove or disprove something.

partly on how well you anticipate these internal responses and give evidence to refute them.

You may want to review Chapter 8, which shows how to use supporting materials. The following case study illustrates how they work as evidence in a persuasive speech.

HOW EVIDENCE WORKS: A CASE STUDY

Let's say one of your classmates is talking about shortcomings in the U.S. mental health system. Instead of just telling you what she thinks, the speaker offers strong evidence to prove her point. Notice how she carries on a mental dialogue with her listeners. She imagines what they might be thinking, anticipates their questions and objections, and gives evidence to answer the questions and resolve the objections.

She begins this way:

Right now in our city, there is a homeless man muttering to himself on a street corner. An elderly woman living with too many cats. A teenager cutting her arms and legs. Some call them crazy. But to me, these are people who need help—help that they're not receiving because of our nation's inadequate mental-health services.

How do you react? If you already know about the deficiencies in mental-health services, you probably nod your head in agreement. But what if you don't know? Or what if you're skeptical? Perhaps you think taxpayer dollars could be better spent elsewhere. If so, a few anecdotes probably won't persuade you. Mentally you say to the speaker, "These are sad stories, but maybe they're isolated cases. Do we really have a national problem?"

Anticipating just such a response, the speaker gives evidence to support her point:

According to a recent story on *CNN.com*, the number of state-run psychiatric beds across America has decreased by 14 percent during the past five years. More shockingly, since 1960 that number has fallen by a whopping 92 percent.

"Okay, that's a big decline," you may think. "But people with mental-health issues receive care in other ways. The number of psychiatric beds doesn't tell the whole story." The speaker answers:

What happens to the people who can't receive treatment at a state-run facility? According to Bernard Harcourt, a criminology professor at the University of Chicago, many end up behind bars. Fifty years ago, there were almost 1.1 million people in mental-health facilities, compared with 270,000 people in prison. Today, there are only 150,000 people in mental-health facilities and 2 million in prison. As the mental-health population has declined, the prison population has skyrocketed.

"That's an interesting correlation," you say to yourself. "But is that the extent of the problem?" Keeping one step ahead of you, the speaker continues:

Nor is the mental-health crisis isolated to our prisons. Consider the following statistics from the National Alliance on Mental Illness. Untreated mental illnesses

Class Activity

Students often have difficulty applying to their own speeches the notion of persuasion as a mental dialogue between speaker and listener. You can help them with the following activity: Divide the class into groups. Give each group a topic for a persuasive speech on a controversial subject. Have each group identify three or four major objections to a speech in support of its topic. Then instruct each group to construct answers to the objections. Have the groups share their objections and answers with the class. Use the results to underscore the importance of keeping one's listeners in mind while preparing a persuasive speech and of using evidence to answer their questions and objections.

cost the United States almost \$200 billion a year in lost productivity. Adults living with serious, but treatable, mental illness die an average of 25 years earlier than the rest of the population. And veterans who experience mental health issues are committing suicide at alarming rates—an average of 22 every single day of the year.

“I didn’t know that,” you say to yourself. “Is there anything else?”

Class Activity

For an activity that helps students understand how to balance different kinds of appeals in creating persuasive arguments, see Virgil R. Miller, “Show and Tell Persuasion,” in *Selections from the Communication Teacher, 2002–2005*, pp. 59–60, on the Instructor’s Resource CD-ROM that accompanies *The Art of Public Speaking*.

One last point. *Time* magazine reports that more and more children are not getting the mental-health care they need. There are currently 7,500 psychiatrists serving children and adolescents. To meet demand, however, we need more than 20,000 psychiatrists. On top of everything else, we are putting our children at risk.

Now are you convinced? Chances are you will at least think about the lack of mental-health care as a serious problem. You may even decide that increasing funding for mental-health services would be a good investment of tax dollars. If so, you will have changed your mind in part because the speaker supported each of her claims with evidence.

TIPS FOR USING EVIDENCE

Any of the supporting materials discussed in Chapter 8—examples, statistics, testimony—can work as evidence in a persuasive speech. As we saw in that chapter, there are guidelines for using each kind of supporting material regardless of the kind of speech you are giving. Here we look at four special tips for using evidence in a persuasive speech.

Use Specific Evidence

No matter what kind of evidence you employ—statistics, examples, or testimony—it will be more persuasive if you state it in specific rather than general terms.⁵ In the speech about mental illness, for example, the speaker did not say, “Lack of adequate mental-health care costs the U.S. economy lots of money.” That would have left the audience wondering how much “lots” amounts to. By saying, “untreated mental illnesses cost the United States almost \$200 billion a year in lost productivity,” the speaker made her point much more persuasively. She also enhanced her credibility by showing that she had a firm grasp of the facts.

Use Novel Evidence

Evidence is more likely to be persuasive if it is new to the audience.⁶ You will gain little by citing facts and figures that are already well known to your listeners. If they have not persuaded your listeners already, they will not do so now. You must go beyond what the audience already knows and present striking new evidence that will get them to say, “Hmmm, I didn’t know *that*. Maybe I should rethink the issue.” Finding such evidence usually requires hard digging and resourceful research, but the rewards are worth the effort.

Use Evidence from Credible Sources

Listeners find evidence from competent, credible sources more persuasive than evidence from less qualified sources.⁷ Above all, listeners are suspicious of evidence from sources that appear to be biased or self-interested. In assessing

Cross-Reference

See Chapter 8 for full discussion of supporting materials.



Persuasive speeches need strong evidence to convince skeptical listeners. Research shows that evidence will be most convincing when it is stated in specific rather than general terms.

the current state of airline safety, for example, they are more likely to be persuaded by testimony from impartial aviation experts than from the president of American Airlines. If you wish to be persuasive, rely on evidence from objective, nonpartisan sources.

Make Clear the Point of Your Evidence

When speaking to persuade, you use evidence to prove a point. Yet you would be surprised how many novice speakers present their evidence without making clear the point it is supposed to prove. A number of studies have shown that you cannot count on listeners to draw, on their own, the conclusion you want them to reach.⁸ When using evidence, be sure listeners understand the point you are trying to make.

Notice, for example, how the speaker in Video 17.3 in the online Media Library for this chapter drives home the point of his evidence about the rate of motorcycle fatalities in comparison to automobile fatalities:

According to the Governors Highway Safety Association, last year there were more than 5,000 motorcycle deaths in the United States. That's a jump of 9 percent from the previous year. If 5,000 people dead doesn't sound like a lot, consider this: Over the past 15 years, motorcycle deaths have doubled, while automobile deaths have dropped by 23 percent. Here in Wisconsin alone, 114 people died last year. That's a 34 percent increase from the year before.

Clearly, we can do more to solve the problem. Here in Wisconsin, there's an easy solution: We can save lives simply by requiring that all motorcyclists wear a helmet.

Evidence is one element of what Aristotle referred to as *logos*—the logical appeal of a speaker. The other major element of *logos* is reasoning, which works in combination with evidence to help make a speaker's claims persuasive.

connect

View this excerpt from "Saving Lives with Motorcycle Helmets" in the online Media Library for this chapter (Video 17.3).

logos

The name used by Aristotle for the logical appeal of a speaker. The two major elements of *logos* are evidence and reasoning.



checklist

Evidence

YES	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. Are all my major claims supported by evidence?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Do I use sufficient evidence to convince my audience of my claims?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Is my evidence stated in specific rather than general terms?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Do I use evidence that is new to my audience?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Is my evidence from credible, unbiased sources?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6. Do I identify the sources of my evidence?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7. Is my evidence clearly linked to each point that it is meant to prove?
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8. Do I provide evidence to answer possible objections the audience may have to my position?

Reasoning

The story is told about Hack Wilson, a hard-hitting outfielder for the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team in the 1930s.⁹ Wilson was a great player, but he had a fondness for the good life. His drinking exploits were legendary. He was known to spend the entire night on the town, stagger into the team's hotel at the break of dawn, grab a couple hours sleep, and get to the ballpark just in time for the afternoon game.

This greatly distressed Max Carey, Wilson's manager. At the next team meeting, Carey spent much time explaining the evils of drink. To prove his point, he stood beside a table on which he had placed two glasses and a plate of live angleworms. One glass was filled with water, the other with gin—Wilson's favorite beverage. With a flourish Carey dropped a worm into the glass of water. It wriggled happily. Next Carey plunged the same worm into the gin. It promptly stiffened and expired.

A murmur ran through the room, and some players were obviously impressed. But not Wilson. He didn't even seem interested. Carey waited a little, hoping for some delayed reaction from his wayward slugger. When none came, he prodded, "Do you follow my reasoning, Wilson?"

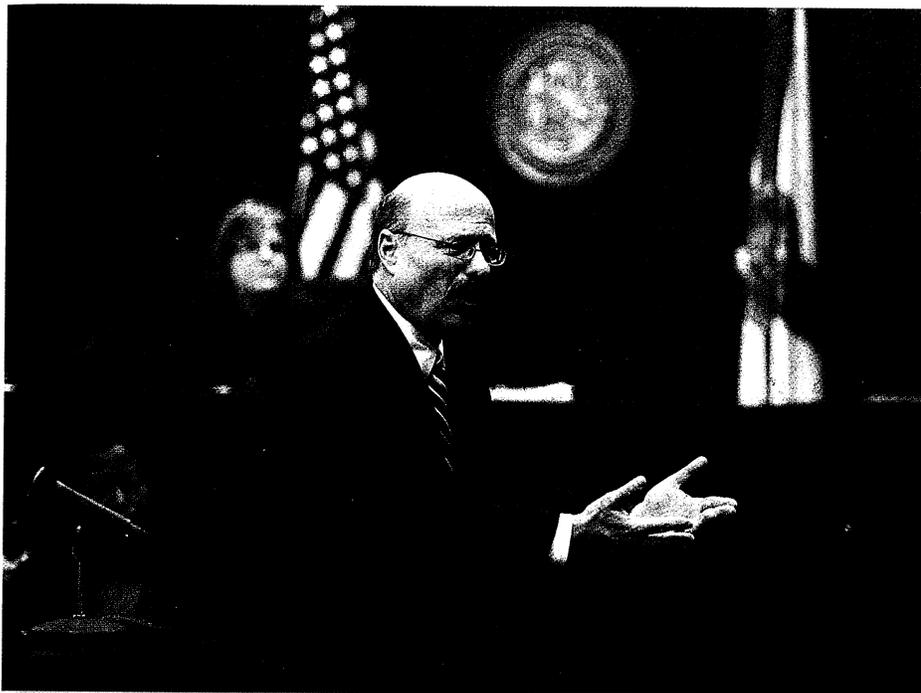
"Sure, skipper," answered Wilson. "It proves that if you drink gin, you'll never get worms!"

And what does this story prove? No matter how strong your evidence, you will not be persuasive unless listeners grasp your reasoning.

Reasoning is the process of drawing a conclusion based on evidence. Sometimes we reason well—as when we conclude that ice particles forming

Related Reading

Noah J. Goldstein, Steve J. Martin, and Robert B. Cialdini, *Yes! 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive* (New York: Free Press, 2008). Firmly grounded in social scientific persuasion research, this book is highly readable and provides a multitude of examples for class discussion.



Reasoning is an important part of persuasive speaking. In a legal trial, for example, neither the prosecution nor the defense is likely to sway the jury unless their reasoning is clear and convincing.

on the trees may mean the roads will be slippery. Other times we reason less effectively—as when we conclude that spilling salt will bring bad luck. Most superstitions are actually no more than instances of faulty reasoning.

Reasoning in public speaking is an extension of reasoning in other aspects of life. As a public speaker, you have two major concerns with respect to reasoning. First, you must make sure your own reasoning is sound. Second, you must try to get listeners to agree with your reasoning. Let us look, then, at four basic methods of reasoning and how to use them in your speeches.

REASONING FROM SPECIFIC INSTANCES

When you reason from specific instances, you progress from a number of particular facts to a general conclusion.¹⁰ For example:

Fact 1: My physical education course last term was easy.

Fact 2: My roommate's physical education course was easy.

Fact 3: My brother's physical education course was easy.

Conclusion: Physical education courses are easy.

As this example suggests, we use reasoning from specific instances daily, although we probably don't realize it. Think for a moment of all the general conclusions that arise in conversation: Politicians are corrupt. Professors are bookish. Dorm food is awful. Where do such conclusions come from? They come from observing particular politicians, professors, dormitories, and so on.

The same thing happens in public speaking. The speaker who concludes that unethical banking practices are common in the United States because several major banks have been guilty of fraud in recent years is reasoning

reasoning

The process of drawing a conclusion on the basis of evidence.

reasoning from specific instances

Reasoning that moves from particular facts to a general conclusion.

Related Reading

Nancy M. Cavender and Howard Kahane, *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric: The Use of Reason in Everyday Life*, 12th ed. (Boston, MA: Wadsworth, 2012). Cavender and Kahane provide many examples of reasoning—some of them quite entertaining—that can be used for class discussion.

reasoning from principle

Reasoning that moves from a general principle to a specific conclusion.

from specific instances. So is the speaker who argues that anti-Semitism is increasing on college campuses because there have been a number of attacks on Jewish students and symbols at schools across the nation.

Such conclusions are never foolproof. No matter how many specific instances you give (and you can give only a few in a speech), it is always possible that an exception exists. Throughout the ages people observed countless white swans in Europe without seeing any of a different color. It seemed an undeniable fact that all swans were white. Then, in the 19th century, black swans were discovered in Australia!¹¹

When you reason from specific instances, beware of jumping to conclusions on the basis of insufficient evidence. Make sure your sample of specific instances is large enough to justify your conclusion.

Also make sure the instances you present are fair, unbiased, and representative. (Are three physical education courses *enough* to conclude that physical education courses in general are easy? Are the three courses *typical* of most physical education courses?)

Finally, reinforce your argument with statistics or testimony. Because you can never give enough specific instances in a speech to make your conclusion irrefutable, you should supplement them with testimony or statistics demonstrating that the instances are representative.

REASONING FROM PRINCIPLE

Reasoning from principle is the opposite of reasoning from specific instances. It moves from the general to the specific.¹² When you reason from principle, you progress from a general principle to a specific conclusion. We are all familiar with this kind of reasoning from statements such as the following:

1. All people are mortal.
2. Socrates is a person.
3. Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

This is a classic example of reasoning from principle. You begin with a general statement (“All people are mortal”), move to a minor premise (“Socrates is a person”), and end with a specific conclusion (“Socrates is mortal”).

Speakers often use reasoning from principle when trying to persuade an audience. One of the clearest examples from American history is Susan B. Anthony’s famous speech “Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote?” Delivered on numerous occasions in 1872 and 1873, at a time when women were legally barred from voting, Anthony’s speech reasoned along the following lines:

1. The United States Constitution guarantees all U.S. citizens the right to vote.
2. Women are U.S. citizens.
3. Therefore, the United States Constitution guarantees women the right to vote.

This argument progresses from a general principle (“The United States Constitution guarantees all U.S. citizens the right to vote”) through a minor premise (“Women are U.S. citizens”) to a conclusion (“Therefore, the United States Constitution guarantees women the right to vote”).

When you use reasoning from principle in a speech, pay special attention to your general principle. Will listeners accept it without evidence? If not, give evidence to support it before moving to your minor premise. You may also

need to support your minor premise with evidence. When both the general principle and the minor premise are soundly based, your audience will be much more likely to accept your conclusion.

CAUSAL REASONING

There is a patch of ice on the sidewalk. You slip, fall, and break your arm. You reason as follows: “*Because* that patch of ice was there, I fell and broke my arm.” This is an example of causal reasoning, in which someone tries to establish the relationship between causes and effects.

As with reasoning from specific instances, we use causal reasoning daily. Something happens and we ask what caused it to happen. We want to know the causes of chronic fatigue syndrome, of the football team’s latest defeat, of our roommate’s peculiar habits. We also wonder about effects. We speculate about the consequences of chronic fatigue syndrome, of the star quarterback’s leg injury, of telling our roommate that a change is needed.

As any scientist (or detective) will tell you, causal reasoning can be tricky. The relationship between causes and effects is not always clear. For example, the fact that one event happens after another does not mean that the first is the cause of the second. The closeness in time of the two events may be entirely coincidental. If a black cat crosses your path and five minutes later you fall and break your arm, you needn’t blame your accident on the poor cat.

You also need to beware of assuming that events have only one cause. In fact, most events have several causes. What causes the economy to boom or bust? Interest rates? Gas prices? Tax policy? Labor costs? Consumer confidence? World affairs? *All* these factors—and others—affect the economy. When you use causal reasoning, be wary of the temptation to attribute complex events to single causes.

ANALOGICAL REASONING

When arguing from analogy, a speaker compares two similar cases and infers that what is true for one case is also true for the other: For example:

If you’re good at tennis, you will probably be good at Ping-Pong.

Although playing Ping-Pong is not exactly the same as playing tennis, the two are close enough that the speaker is on firm ground in concluding that being skilled at one increases the odds of being skilled at the other.

Analogical reasoning is used frequently in persuasive speeches—especially when the speaker is dealing with a question of policy. When arguing for a new policy, you should find out whether it has been tried elsewhere. You may be able to claim that your policy will work because it has worked in like circumstances. Here is how one speaker used reasoning from analogy to support his claim that controlling handguns will reduce violent crime in the United States:

Will my policy work? The experience of foreign countries suggests it will. In England, guns are tightly regulated; even the police are unarmed, and the murder rate is trivial by American standards. Japan has even fewer guns than England, and its crime rate is lower than England’s. On the basis of these comparisons, we can conclude that restricting the ownership of guns will reduce crime and murder rates in America.

causal reasoning

Reasoning that seeks to establish the relationship between causes and effects.

analogical reasoning

Reasoning in which a speaker compares two similar cases and infers that what is true for the first case is also true for the second.

By the same token, if you argue against a change in policy, you should check whether the proposed policy—or something like it—has been implemented elsewhere. Here, too, you may be able to support your case by reasoning from analogy—as did one speaker who opposed gun control:

Advocates of gun control point to foreign countries such as England and Japan to prove their case. But the key to low personal violence in these and other countries is the peaceful character of the people, not gun control laws. Switzerland, for example, has a militia system; more than 1 million automatic rifles and military pistols are sitting at this moment in Swiss homes. Yet Switzerland's murder rate is only 8 percent of ours. In other words, cultural factors are more important than gun control when it comes to violent crime.

As these examples illustrate, argument from analogy can be used on both sides of an issue. You are more likely to persuade your audience if the analogy shows a truly parallel situation.

FALLACIES

fallacy

An error in reasoning.

A fallacy is an error in reasoning. As a speaker, you need to avoid fallacies in your speeches. As a listener, you need to be alert to fallacies in the speeches you hear.

Logicians have identified more than 125 different fallacies. Here we look at 10 that you should guard against.

Hasty Generalization

hasty generalization

A fallacy in which a speaker jumps to a general conclusion on the basis of insufficient evidence.

Hasty generalization is the most common fallacy in reasoning from specific instances. It occurs when a speaker jumps to a conclusion on the basis of too few cases or on the basis of atypical cases. For example:

Throughout American history, military leaders have always made excellent presidents. Look at the examples of George Washington, Andrew Jackson, and Dwight Eisenhower.

Washington, Jackson, and Eisenhower are widely regarded as outstanding chief executives, but are these examples enough to conclude that military leaders *always* make excellent presidents? In fact, they are not. James Buchanan and Ulysses S. Grant were both highly decorated military leaders during the 19th century, but they are usually rated among the nation's worst presidents. An accurate statement would be:

Throughout American history, military leaders have sometimes made excellent presidents—as with Washington, Jackson, and Eisenhower.

This statement is factually correct and avoids the fallacy of hasty generalization.

false cause

A fallacy in which a speaker mistakenly assumes that because one event follows another, the first event is the cause of the second.

False Cause

The fallacy of false cause is often known by its Latin name, *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, which means “after this, therefore because of this.” In other words, the fact that one event occurs after another does not mean that the first is the cause of the second. The closeness in time of the two events may be entirely coincidental—as in this case:



In addition to using evidence to support their ideas, effective persuasive speakers rely on research to help them avoid fallacies that may undermine their credibility and persuasiveness.

When a team from the NFC wins the Super Bowl, economic growth during the next year is stronger than when a team from the AFC wins the Super Bowl. Therefore, if we want economic growth, we should root for a team from the NFC to win this year's Super Bowl.

There may be a slight correlation between economic growth and which conference wins the Super Bowl, but there is no *causal* connection between the two events. Whether the American economy rises or falls is not dependent on the outcome of the Super Bowl.

Invalid Analogy

As we saw on 343–344, when reasoning from analogy, a speaker concludes that what is true in one case is also true in another. An invalid analogy occurs when the two cases being compared are not essentially alike. For example:

Employees are like nails. Just as nails must be hit on the head to get them to work, so must employees.

This statement is obviously fallacious. No one in his or her right mind can seriously think that employees, which are human beings, can be compared with inanimate objects such as nails.

But what about the following statement:

In Great Britain, the general election campaign for prime minister lasts less than three weeks. Surely we can do the same with the U.S. presidential election.

At first glance, this analogy may seem perfectly sound. But are the British and American political systems enough alike to warrant the conclusion? Not really. The United States is much larger than Great Britain and its party system operates much differently. As a result, the factors that allow Great Britain

invalid analogy

An analogy in which the two cases being compared are not essentially alike.

to conduct campaigns for prime minister in less than three weeks are not present in the United States. The analogy is not valid.

As this example suggests, determining whether an analogy is valid or invalid is not always easy, but doing so is important for speakers and listeners alike.

Bandwagon

bandwagon

A fallacy which assumes that because something is popular, it is therefore good, correct, or desirable.

How often have you heard someone say, "It's a great idea—everyone agrees with it"? This is a classic example of the bandwagon fallacy, which assumes that because something is popular, it is therefore good, correct, or desirable.

Much advertising is based on the bandwagon fallacy. The fact that more people use Tylenol than Advil does not prove that Tylenol is a better painkiller. Tylenol's popularity could be due to clever marketing. The question of which product does a better job reducing pain is a medical issue that has nothing to do with popularity.

The bandwagon fallacy is also evident in political speeches. Consider the following statement:

The governor must be correct in his approach to social policy; after all, the polls show that 60 percent of the people support him.

This statement is fallacious because popular opinion cannot be taken as proof that an idea is right or wrong. Remember, "everyone" used to believe that the world is flat and that space flight is impossible.

Red Herring

red herring

A fallacy that introduces an irrelevant issue to divert attention from the subject under discussion.

The name of this fallacy comes from an old trick used by farmers in England to keep fox hunters and their hounds from galloping through the crops. By dragging a smoked herring with a strong odor along the edge of their fields, the farmers could throw the dogs off track by destroying the scent of the fox.

A speaker who uses a red herring introduces an irrelevant issue in order to divert attention from the subject under discussion. For instance:

How dare my opponents accuse me of political corruption at a time when we are working to improve the quality of life for all people in the United States.

What does the speaker's concern about the quality of life in the United States have to do with whether he or she is guilty of political corruption? Nothing! It is a red herring used to divert attention away from the real issue.

Ad Hominem

ad hominem

A fallacy that attacks the person rather than dealing with the real issue in dispute.

Latin for "against the man," *ad hominem* refers to the fallacy of attacking the person rather than dealing with the real issue in dispute. For instance:

The head of the commerce commission has a number of interesting economic proposals, but let's not forget that she comes from a very wealthy family.

By impugning the commissioner's family background rather than dealing with the substance of her economic proposals, the speaker is engaging in an *ad hominem* attack.

Sometimes, of course, a person's character or integrity can be a legitimate issue—as in the case of a police chief who violates the law or a corporate

re not
lid or
isten-

president who swindles stockholders. In such cases, a speaker might well raise questions about the person without being guilty of the *ad hominem* fallacy.

Either-Or

Sometimes referred to as a false dilemma, the either-or fallacy forces listeners to choose between two alternatives when more than two alternatives exist. For example:

The government must either raise taxes or eliminate services for the poor.

This statement oversimplifies a complex issue by reducing it to a simple either-or choice. Is it true that the *only* choices are to raise taxes or to eliminate services for the poor? A careful listener might ask, "What about cutting the administrative cost of government or eliminating pork-barrel projects instead?"

You will be more persuasive as a speaker and more perceptive as a listener if you are alert to the either-or fallacy.

Slippery Slope

The slippery slope fallacy takes its name from the image of a boulder rolling uncontrollably down a steep hill. Once the boulder gets started, it can't be stopped until it reaches the bottom.

A speaker who commits the slippery slope fallacy assumes that taking a first step will lead inevitably to a second step and so on down the slope to disaster—as in the following example:

Now that the TSA is allowed to use full body scanners and invasive pat-downs before letting us through security, it's only a matter of time before they strip-search every man, woman, and child who wants to fly on a plane.

If a speaker claims that taking a first step will lead inevitably to a series of disastrous later steps, he or she needs to provide evidence or reasoning to support the claim. To assume that all the later steps will occur without proving that they will is to commit the slippery slope fallacy.

Appeal to Tradition

Appeal to tradition is fallacious when it assumes that something old is *automatically* better than something new. For example:

I don't see any reason to abolish the electoral college. It has been around since the adoption of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, and we should keep it as long as the United States continues to exist.

There are good arguments on both sides of the debate over abolishing the electoral college. However, to conclude that the electoral college should be kept forever solely because it has always been a part of the U.S. Constitution commits the fallacy of appeal to tradition.

Just because a practice, an institution, or an idea is old does not automatically make it better. Its value should be based on its contributions to society, not on its age. If tradition were the sole measure of value, we would still have slavery, women would not be able to vote, and people would undergo surgery without anesthesia.

either-or

A fallacy that forces listeners to choose between two alternatives when more than two alternatives exist.

slippery slope

A fallacy which assumes that taking a first step will lead to subsequent steps that cannot be prevented.

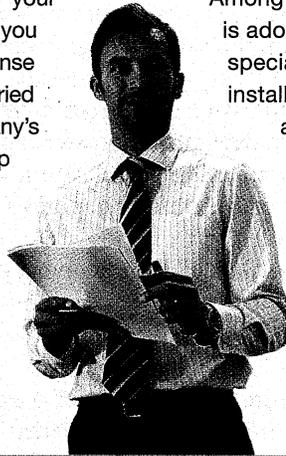
appeal to tradition

A fallacy which assumes that something old is automatically better than something new.

Using public speaking in your CAREER

As the service manager for a local home improvement company, you have been pleased to see your company expand its size and scope, but you don't want that growth to come at the expense of customer service. In particular, you're worried about losing touch with one of the company's key demographics—women, who make up 55 percent of your customer base. To prevent this from happening, you have developed a plan for a range of personalized services targeted at women, including one-on-one teaching of do-it-yourself skills and free in-home consultations.

When you present your plan at a meeting of the company's management



team, you listen as one executive argues in opposition. Among his points are the following: (1) If your plan is adopted, customers will expect more and more special services and eventually will demand free installation of flooring and carpeting; (2) Because a majority of the management team opposes your plan, it must not be a good idea; (3) One of your competitors tried a customer service plan specifically for women, but it did not succeed; therefore, your plan is doomed to failure.

In your response to the executive, you will point out the fallacy in each of his points. What are those fallacies?

Appeal to Novelty

appeal to novelty

A fallacy which assumes that something new is automatically better than something old.

The fallacy of appeal to novelty is the opposite of appeal to tradition. Appeal to novelty assumes that because something is new, it is therefore superior to something that is older. For example:

Our church should adopt the 2011 New International Version of the Bible because it is 400 years newer than the King James Version.

Class Activity

Lead a class discussion on the Using Public Speaking in Your Career scenario above. This scenario illustrates how the reasoning skills discussed in this chapter are applicable to speech situations students will face long after they leave college. For discussion of this activity, see the *Instructor's Manual*, pp. 244–245.

The fact that the New International Version of the Bible is newer than the King James Version (completed in 1611), does not *automatically* make it better. There are many reasons why a church might prefer the New International Version, but the speaker should *explain* those reasons, rather than assuming that one version is better than another simply because it is new.

Advertisers often commit the fallacy of appeal to novelty. They tout their latest products as “new and improved,” yet we know from experience that new does not always mean improved. As always, we need to look carefully at the claim and make sure it is based on sound reasoning.¹³

Appealing to Emotions

Effective persuasion often requires emotional appeal. As the Roman rhetorician Quintilian stated, “It is feeling and force of imagination that make us eloquent.”¹⁴ By adding “feeling” and the “force of imagination” to your logical arguments, you can become a more compelling persuasive speaker.

WHAT ARE EMOTIONAL APPEALS?

Emotional appeals—what Aristotle referred to as *pathos*—are intended to make listeners feel sad, angry, guilty, afraid, happy, proud, sympathetic, reverent, or the like. These are often appropriate reactions when the question is one of value or policy. As George Campbell wrote in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, “When persuasion is the end, passion also must be engaged.”¹⁵

Below is a list of some of the emotions evoked most often by public speakers. Following each emotion are a few examples of subjects that might stir that emotion:

- *Fear*—of serious illness, of natural disasters, of sexual assault, of personal rejection, of economic hardship.
- *Compassion*—for war refugees, for battered women, for neglected animals, for starving children, for victims of AIDS.
- *Pride*—in one’s country, in one’s family, in one’s school, in one’s ethnic heritage, in one’s personal accomplishments.
- *Anger*—at terrorists and their supporters, at business leaders who act unethically, at members of Congress who abuse the public trust, at landlords who exploit student tenants, at vandals and thieves.
- *Guilt*—about not helping people less fortunate than ourselves, about not considering the rights of others, about not doing one’s best.
- *Reverence*—for an admired person, for traditions and institutions, for one’s deity.

There are many other emotions and many other subjects that might stir them. However, this brief sample should give you an idea of the kinds of emotional appeals you might use to enhance the message of your persuasive speech.

pathos

The name used by Aristotle for what modern students of communication refer to as emotional appeal.

Class Activity

As a homework assignment, have each student find examples of three of the fallacies discussed in this chapter. Students can find the examples in speeches, magazine or newspaper articles, editorials, blogs, print advertisements, or television commercials. During the next class period, ask students to share their examples with the class.



Emotional appeals often make a persuasive speech more compelling. Such appeals should always be used ethically and should not be substituted for facts and logic.

GENERATING EMOTIONAL APPEAL

Use Emotional Language

As we saw in Chapter 12, one way to generate emotional appeal is to use emotion-laden words. Here, for instance, is part of the conclusion from a student speech about the challenges and rewards of working as a volunteer with Teach for America:

Video Resource

The DVD of student speeches that accompanies *The Art of Public Speaking* includes seven full persuasive speeches for analysis and discussion. All seven are also available in the online Media Library for this chapter.

The promise of America sparkles in the eyes of every child. Their dreams are the glittering dreams of America. When those dreams are dashed, when innocent hopes are betrayed, so are the dreams and hopes of the entire nation. It is our duty—to me, it is a sacred duty—to give all children the chance to learn and grow, to share equally in the American dream of freedom, justice, and opportunity.

The underlined words and phrases have strong emotional power, and in this case they produced the desired effect. Be aware, however, that packing too many emotionally charged words into one part of a speech can call attention to the emotional language itself and undermine its impact. The emotion rests in your audience, not in your words. Even the coldest facts can touch off an emotional response if they strike the right chords in a listener.

Develop Vivid Examples

Often a better approach than relying on emotionally charged language is to let emotional appeal grow naturally out of the content of your speech. The most effective way to do this is with vivid, richly textured examples that pull listeners into the speech.

Here is how one speaker used a vivid example for emotional appeal. She was speaking about the malaria epidemic in Africa. Here is what she might have said, stripping the content of emotional appeal:

Malaria is one of the biggest problems facing Africa. Many die from it every day. If the rest of the world doesn't help, the malaria epidemic will only get worse.

connect™

View this excerpt from "The Tragedy of Malaria" in the online Media Library for this chapter (Video 17.4).

What she actually said went something like this:

Nathan was only five years old when the fever struck him. At first, no one knew what was wrong. No one knew that parasites inside his body had infected his red blood cells. No one knew those cells were clumping together, choking the flow of blood through his body and damaging his vital organs. No one knew his kidneys would soon fail and seizures would begin. No one knew he would wind up in a coma.

The parasites in Nathan's body came from a mosquito bite, a bite that gave him malaria. And Nathan is not alone. The World Health Organization tells us the horrible truth: In Africa, a child dies from malaria every 30 seconds.

People who listen to a speech like that will not soon forget it. They may well be moved to action—as the speaker intends. The first speech, however, is not nearly as compelling. Listeners may well nod their heads, think to themselves "good idea"—and then forget about it. The story of Nathan and his tragic fate gives the second speech emotional impact and brings it home to listeners in personal terms.

Speak with Sincerity and Conviction

Ronald Reagan was one of the most effective speakers in U.S. history. Even people who disagreed with his political views often found him irresistible. Why? Partly because he seemed to speak with great sincerity and conviction.

What was true for Reagan is true for you as well. The strongest source of emotional power is your conviction and sincerity. All your emotion-laden words and examples are but empty trappings unless *you* feel the emotion yourself. And if you do, your emotion will communicate itself to the audience through everything you say and do—not only through your words, but also through your tone of voice, rate of speech, gestures, and facial expressions.

ETHICS AND EMOTIONAL APPEAL

Much has been written about the ethics of emotional appeal in speechmaking. Some people have taken the extreme position that ethical speakers should avoid emotional appeal entirely. To support this view, they point to speakers who have used emotional appeal to fan the flames of hatred, bigotry, and fanaticism.

There is no question that emotional appeals can be abused by unscrupulous speakers for detestable causes. But emotional appeals can also be wielded by honorable speakers for noble causes—by Winston Churchill to rouse the world against Adolf Hitler and the forces of Nazism, by Martin Luther King to call for racial justice. Few people would question the ethics of emotional appeal in these instances.

Nor is it always possible to draw a sharp line between reason and emotional appeal. Think back to the story of Nathan, the five-year-old boy who was infected with malaria. The story certainly has strong emotional appeal. But is there anything unreasonable about it? Or is it irrational for listeners to respond to it by donating to anti-malarial causes? By the same token, is it illogical to be compassionate for victims of natural disasters? Angered by corporate wrongdoing? Fearful about cutbacks in student aid? Reason and emotion often work hand in hand.

Related Reading

Jay Heinrich, *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007). Filled with examples that range from antiquity to the present, this informed and witty book offers many insights about persuasion and the art of rhetoric in general.



Emotional language and vivid examples can help generate emotional appeal, but neither will be effective unless the speaker talks with genuine sincerity and conviction.

One key to using emotional appeal ethically is to make sure it is appropriate to the speech topic. If you want to move listeners to act on a question of policy, emotional appeals are not only legitimate but perhaps necessary. If you want listeners to do something as a result of your speech, you will probably need to appeal to their hearts as well as to their heads.

Cross-Reference

Refer students to Chapter 2 for full discussion of ethics in public speaking.

On the other hand, emotional appeals are usually inappropriate in a persuasive speech on a question of fact. Here you should deal only in specific information and logic. Suppose someone charges your state governor with illegal campaign activities. If you respond by saying "I'm sure the charge is false because I have always admired the governor," or "I'm sure the charge is true because I have always disliked the governor," then you are guilty of applying emotional criteria to a purely factual question.

Even when trying to move listeners to action, you should never substitute emotional appeals for evidence and reasoning. You should *always* build your persuasive speech on a firm foundation of facts and logic. This is important not just for ethical reasons, but for practical ones as well. Unless you prove your case, careful listeners will not be stirred by your emotional appeals. You need to build a good case based on reason *and* kindle the emotions of your audience.¹⁶

When you use emotional appeal, keep in mind the guidelines for ethical speechmaking discussed in Chapter 2. Make sure your goals are ethically sound, that you are honest in what you say, and that you avoid name-calling and other forms of abusive language. In using emotional appeal, as in other respects, your classroom speeches will offer a good testing ground for questions of ethical responsibility.

Sample Speech with Commentary

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View "The Living-Wage Solution" in the online Media Library for this chapter (Video 17.5).

The following persuasive speech on a question of policy is organized in problem-solution order. As you read the speech, notice how it employs the methods of persuasion discussed in this chapter. Pay special attention to the speaker's evidence, which she uses not only to establish the existence of a serious problem but also to explain her plan and to document its practicality.

In addition, the speech shows how visual aids can be used in a persuasive presentation to help an audience keep track of complex data and arguments. You can view it in the online Media Library for this chapter.

The Living-Wage Solution

COMMENTARY

The speaker opens with an extended example that gains attention and draws the audience into the speech.

SPEECH

José Morales was sleeping on cardboard boxes in a garage in Compton, California. Before the sun came up, he would walk to a nearby bus stop, where he would ride the bus for two hours to Los Angeles International Airport, where he worked as a janitor. On two occasions, he was mugged while waiting for the bus. Working 40 hours a week for minimum wage, this was the best he could do.

The speaker completes her opening story and identifies the topic of her speech.

In this paragraph, the speaker defines the living wage and contrasts it with the minimum wage. As you can see on the video, she uses PowerPoint to help clarify her points.

Here the speaker establishes her credibility by noting that her conclusions are supported by “numerous economists and public-policy researchers.”

The speaker ends her introduction with a concise statement of her central idea and a preview of the main points she will discuss in the body.

This speech is organized in problem-solution order. Here the speaker starts the problem main point by documenting the number of working poor in the United States. She cites a combination of statistics and uses PowerPoint to help listeners follow along as she moves from figure to figure.

The speaker explains why the current minimum wage is inadequate to keep a family above the poverty line.

Pointing to the ineptitude of Congress helps the audience understand why the minimum wage lags behind the cost of living.

But then José’s situation improved drastically. As Robert Pollin, an economist at the University of Massachusetts, reports, José received health insurance and a 36 percent raise. He had enough money to rent his own apartment and to buy a car. It all happened because José started to receive the living wage.

What is the living wage, you ask? Well, it’s not the same as the minimum wage. The minimum wage is set by Congress and is the same in every part of the country. The living wage goes beyond the minimum wage. As the *Wall Street Journal* reported in August 2013, the living wage is tied to the local cost of living and can vary from location to location. Its purpose is to help workers and their families meet the most basic standard of living, even when that standard of living is higher than the minimum wage.

I first heard about the living wage last semester in my econ class. After researching it for this speech, I’ve come to the same conclusion as numerous economists and public-policy researchers. The living wage can help the working poor without adversely affecting businesses or the health of the economy.

That’s why we need to pass federal legislation mandating a living wage—a wage that can help people secure the basic necessities of life. So let’s first look at the difficulties faced by the working poor, and then we’ll look at the living-wage solution.

Poverty remains a significant problem in the United States in part because wages have not kept up with the cost of living. According to a recent study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, more than 46 million Americans live in poverty. Of these 46 million, 10 million are referred to as the “working poor”: people who are employed at least 27 weeks a year and who are still stuck in poverty. Of these 10 million people, half—5 million—are employed full time. They work 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, but they still can’t make ends meet.

How can that be? It happens in part because of the federal minimum wage. Since 2009, the minimum wage has been \$7.25 an hour. If you calculate that, someone working full time would earn just over \$15,000 a year. For an individual, that’s just above the poverty line. The problem comes when there are two-, three-, or four-person households—as with a single mother trying to squeak by. It’s almost impossible to raise a family on \$15,000 a year.

Another problem is that the federal minimum wage doesn’t change until Congress changes it—and we all know how long it can take for Congress to do anything. In fact, it took Congress more than 10 years to raise the minimum wage from its previous \$5.25 to its current rate of \$7.25. As a result, millions of workers were still earning in 2008 what they had earned in 1998.

The speaker ends her first main point with expert testimony that sums up the problem and emphasizes the need for action.

A question leads into the solution main point, in which the speaker lays out a plan, shows its practicality, and responds to potential objections.

The speaker provides background on living wage plans in the United States. Such plans, she notes, currently cover only 1 percent of workers—which is why a national living wage law is needed to cover everyone who works full time.

The speaker's plan consists of two parts. Here she discusses the living-wage calculator.

The speaker does an excellent job of explaining complex ideas clearly and concisely. Once again, she uses visual aids to highlight key points.

The second part of the speaker's plan ties the living wage to the cost of living.

As you can see from the video, the speaker communicates with excellent vocal variety and strong eye contact.

Responding to potential objections, which the speaker does in this and the following paragraph, is a crucial part of persuasive speaking. Like the rest of the speech, this section is crisply organized and uses signposts to help the audience keep track of the speaker's ideas.

The result was “a lost decade for wage growth,” according to *The State of Working America*, published in 2012 by Cornell University Press. The same book predicts another lost decade if we don't take action soon.

So what can we do? How can we help make sure that people who work full time earn enough money to lift themselves and their families above the poverty level? One way is to implement a federally mandated living wage.

The first city in America to institute a living wage was Baltimore, in 1994. Since then, the living-wage movement has spread to more than 140 jurisdictions. However, as David Neumark, Matthew Thompson, and Leslie Koyle reported in a 2012 issue of the *Journal of Labor Policy*, most living-wage laws cover only people who work for companies with government contracts. At best only 1 percent of workers in a city receive the living wage. It's time to cover everyone who works full time—and to do so with a national living-wage law.

Here's how such a law would work. First, we would calculate the living wage for every county in the United States. To do that, we'd use the living-wage calculator created by Amy Glasmeier, a professor of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT.

Based on this calculator, the living wage in Chicago, my hometown, for this year would be \$10.48 per hour. In Dallas, it would be \$9.29. In New York, it would be \$12.75. As you can see, there is large variation in the cost of living across different parts of the country. A national living wage would account for these variations.

Second, we would tie the living wage to the Consumer Price Index. The Consumer Price Index tracks the price of goods and services in different parts of the country. As the Consumer Price Index increases, the living wage would increase at the same rate.

In Chicago, the Consumer Price Index rose by 2 percent last year. The living wage in that city would then go from \$10.48 an hour to \$10.69 an hour. And it would cover everyone who works full time, whether they work for the government or in the private sector. In this way, we can ensure that wages for everyone keep up with the cost of living.

As you might expect, there is opposition to instituting a living-wage policy. Those who oppose the living wage offer two main arguments. First, they argue that the living wage would be too costly for businesses. But that's not what Jeff Thompson and Jeff Chapman, researchers at the Economic Policy Institute, found. After surveying existing living-wage laws, they found that the increased cost of wages is offset by higher productivity and lower employee turnover. Happier workers mean stronger businesses.

Here, as elsewhere, the speaker supports her argument with expert testimony. Notice how clearly she identifies her source and states his qualifications. This is a fine example of how to work oral citations into a speech.

The speaker signals the beginning of her conclusion and restates her central idea.

Returning to the example cited in the introduction gives the speech a sense of psychological unity. The quotation from José Morales adds emotional appeal and leads into the strong closing line.

The second argument of critics is that the living wage will lead to fewer jobs. But again the research doesn't bear this out. A 2011 study in *Economic Development Quarterly* by T. William Lester, a professor at the University of North Carolina, found that living-wage laws do not have a large negative impact on employment. In a 2012 study, Lester, who specializes in labor economics, found that living-wage laws can actually "create jobs of higher quality." In addition to being good for workers, a living-wage law can benefit businesses and the economy in general.

In conclusion, the time has come to pay American workers a wage that will keep up with the cost of living. We need a federally mandated living wage. In a time of massive corporate profits and skyrocketing executive pay, those at the bottom of society deserve to advance along with those at the top.

Those like José Morales, who I mentioned at the start of my speech, deserve a better future. "Everyone thinks that working here at the airport we must earn a lot of money," Morales says. "It's not true, but at least now with the living wage we can hold our heads up high." And that's something everyone working a full-time job should be able to say.

Summary

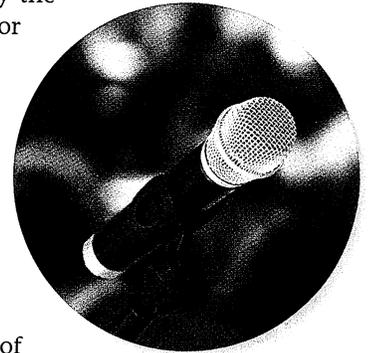
Listeners accept a speaker's ideas for one or more of four reasons—because they perceive the speaker as having high credibility, because they are won over by the speaker's evidence, because they are convinced by the speaker's reasoning, or because they are moved by the speaker's emotional appeals.

Credibility is affected by many factors, but the two most important are competence and character. The more favorably listeners view a speaker's competence and character, the more likely they are to accept her or his ideas. Although credibility is partly a matter of reputation, you can enhance your credibility during a speech by establishing common ground with your listeners, by letting them know why you are qualified to speak on the topic, and by presenting your ideas fluently and expressively.

If you hope to be persuasive, you must also support your views with evidence—examples, statistics, and testimony. Regardless of what kind of evidence you use, it will be more persuasive if it is new to the audience, stated in specific rather than general terms, and from credible sources. Your evidence will also be more persuasive if you state explicitly the point it is supposed to prove.

No matter how strong your evidence, you will not be persuasive unless listeners agree with your reasoning. In reasoning from specific instances, you move from a number of particular facts to a general conclusion. Reasoning from principle is the reverse—you move from a general principle to a particular conclusion. When you use causal reasoning, you try to establish a relationship between causes and effects. In analogical reasoning, you compare two cases and infer that what is true for one is also true for the other.

Whatever kind of reasoning you use, avoid fallacies such as hasty generalization, false cause, invalid analogy, appeal to tradition, and appeal to novelty. You should also be on guard against the red herring, slippery slope, bandwagon, *ad hominem*, and either-or fallacies.



Finally, you can persuade your listeners by appealing to their emotions. One way to generate emotional appeal is by using emotion-laden language. Another is to develop vivid, richly textured examples. Neither, however, will be effective unless you feel the emotion yourself and communicate it by speaking with sincerity and conviction.

As with other methods of persuasion, your use of emotional appeal should be guided by a firm ethical rudder. Although emotional appeals are usually inappropriate in speeches on questions of fact, they are legitimate—and often necessary—in speeches that seek immediate action on questions of policy. Even when trying to move listeners to action, however, you should never substitute emotional appeals for evidence and reasoning.

Key Terms

ethos (332)	fallacy (344)
credibility (333)	hasty generalization (344)
initial credibility (333)	false cause (344)
derived credibility (333)	invalid analogy (345)
terminal credibility (333)	bandwagon (346)
creating common ground (335)	red herring (346)
evidence (336)	<i>ad hominem</i> (346)
logos (339)	either-or (347)
reasoning (341)	slippery slope (347)
reasoning from specific instances (341)	appeal to tradition (347)
reasoning from principle (342)	appeal to novelty (348)
causal reasoning (343)	pathos (349)
analogical reasoning (343)	

Review Questions

After reading this chapter, you should be able to answer the following questions:

1. What is credibility? What two factors exert the most influence on an audience's perception of a speaker's credibility?
2. What are the differences among initial credibility, derived credibility, and terminal credibility?
3. What are three ways you can enhance your credibility during your speeches?
4. What is evidence? Why do persuasive speakers need to use evidence?
5. What are four tips for using evidence effectively in a persuasive speech?
6. What is reasoning from specific instances? Why is it important to supplement reasoning from specific instances with testimony or statistics?
7. What is reasoning from principle? How is it different from reasoning from specific instances?
8. What is causal reasoning? Why is the relationship between causes and effects not always clear?
9. What is analogical reasoning? Why is analogical reasoning frequently used in persuasive speeches on questions of policy?
10. What are the ten logical fallacies discussed in this chapter?
11. What is the role of emotional appeal in persuasive speaking? Identify three methods you can use to generate emotional appeal in your speeches.

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For further review, go to the LearnSmart study module for this chapter.