

Persuasive Techniques

Persuasion Technique #1 - Emotional Appeal

Example of an Emotional Appeal

Thousands of species are at the mercy of our selfishness and disregard for the environment they need to survive.

Conservation scientists seek to find a way to Prevent the loss of ecosystems.

Emotions a writer can appeal to include

- Fears – Ex. Do you want to graduate after 7 years of school with a \$40,000 school loan debt?
- Desire to seem intelligent
- Need to protect your family
- Desire to fit in, to be accepted, to be loved
- Desire to be an individual - to not be like everyone else
- Desire to follow a respected tradition
- Desire to be wealthy or save money
- Desire to be healthy
- Desire to protect animals and the environment
- Pride in our country

Persuasive Technique #2 - Strawman Attack

Explanation of Technique of Attack

Express the opposing view in an inaccurate way, i.e. so that it sounds **foolish, dangerous, uncaring** or **deceitful**.

Then attack it

Name comes from the idea that you are not attacking the real opponent but the false one (the strawman) you have created.



Effigy -
a roughly made model of a particular person, made in order to be damaged or destroyed as a protest or expression of anger

Example of an Attack

Football? Sure, you can get three concussions and scramble your brains before you tear your ACL and need major surgery, and then not get a college scholarship and not be able to go to college because you have lousy short term memory and depression.

Or you can swim. It's your choice.

Warning: Can offend or alienate audience if overdone.

A Warning

This is considered a ***logical fallacy*** (like “falsity”).

Example -

- Senator Smith says that the nation should not add to the defense budget.
- Senator Jones says that he cannot believe that Senator Smith wants to leave the nation defenseless.

Be ready for such attacks.

Be ready to make own argument clear without referring to the the false view too much.

Persuasive Technique #3 - Air and Refute

Air and Refute Objections - Explanation

When arguing a point, acknowledge a key attacking the opposition uses against you and then explain why it is invalid.

Take the opportunity to overcome what others see as a weakness in your position.

Air and Refute Objections - Example

I know many think cheerleading is not a sport. But the girls practice longer and harder than most other teams and are incredibly strong and fit. The cheerleaders have also had more state championships in cheerleading than any other sport

Persuasive Technique #4 - The Weakest Link

State the weakest idea of your
opponent and then knock it down.

The idea is like the
domino effect, knock the
one down and the whole
argument will fall.



Weakest Link

Your opponent has several arguments.

If you can disprove one of their arguments, you can make their whole position seem weak.

Rather than attack your opponent's strongest argument, go for a weak one that is easier to attack.

Distract your audience away from considering the strong arguments against you.



Strawman - Example

President Obama started his presidency right as Wall Street collapsed. He used a strawman argument to address the complaint that he wasn't focusing enough on the economy.

"I know some folks . . . on Wall Street are saying we should just focus on their problems. It would be nice if I could just pick and choose what problems to face and when to face them.

So I could say, well, no, I don't want to deal with the war in Afghanistan right now; I'd prefer not having to deal with climate change right now.

And if you could just hold on, even though you don't have health care, just please wait, because I have other things to do."

Persuasive Technique #5 - The Bandwagon

The Bandwagon - Explanation

The name of this technique comes from the old phrase "jumping on the bandwagon," which means to join the group that is doing something.

Something is said to be right, the best, or desirable because it is popular.

or

Not doing something popular will mean being left out of a desired group.

The argument create the fear of missing out on something good or being left out

The Bandwagon - Example

8 out of 10 class valedictorians enter a career based on math and sciences.

Persuasive Technique #6 - Inclusive and Exclusive Language

Inclusive and Exclusive Language- Example

People like
you and me don't want
to see this happen.

Inclusive and Exclusive Language- Explanation

Inclusive language such as
“we,” “our,” and “us,
And exclusive language such as
“Them”
can persuade by including the reader
or by creating a sense of solidarity
or a sense of responsibility.

Examples of Inclusive and Exclusive Language

We believe in caring for the environment, so
we drive electric cars.

We support the Constitution of the United
States, but those who support gun control
don't value the freedoms our forefathers
fought so hard to win.