UNDERSTANDING PERSUASIVE MESSAGES

Chapter in Review

LO1 What is the nature of persuasion?
Persuasion is the process of influencing people's attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors, and persuasive speaking is doing so in a public speech. Persuasive messages differ from informative messages in that the primary goal is to seek agreement and sometimes to incite action. Because the goals of persuasion are loftier and the potential implications more acute than informing, both senders and receivers of persuasive messages must pay special attention to the ethical principles of communication when creating and interpreting them.

LO2 How do people process persuasive messages?
The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) describes how audiences process persuasive messages. Understanding this model helps us focus on how to use logos, ethos, and pathos appeals as we construct and deliver persuasive speeches, as well as when we evaluate the worth of the persuasive messages we encounter in our daily lives.

LO3 What is the role of logos in persuasion?
Logos is the means of persuasion devoted to appeals to logic and reasoning. You reason with your audience by making an argument that draws inferences from factual information to support a conclusion. You can reason inductively or deductively by addressing three basic elements of an argument. These are the claim, the support, and the warrant. Four common types of arguments used in persuasive messages are sign, example, analogy, and causation. When creating persuasive messages, it is important to avoid reasoning fallacies, and, when interpreting persuasive messages, it is important to discern them. Some common fallacies are hasty generalization, false cause, either-or, straw man, and ad hominem. Because you will rely on evidence to support your reasons, you must make sure it comes from a well-respected source, is still valid, is relevant to the argument, and is likely to persuade your audience.

LO4 What is the role of ethos in persuasion?
Ethos is the means of persuasion devoted to conveying good character, competence, and credibility. You convey good character by demonstrating goodwill. Your goal is to encourage your audience to believe you understand them, empathize with them, and are responsive to them. You convey competence and credibility by explaining your competence, establishing common ground, using evidence from respected sources, and being nonverbally and vocally expressive in your delivery.

LO5 What is the role of pathos in persuasion?
Pathos is the means of persuasion devoted to emotional appeals. You can appeal to negative emotions such as fear, guilt, shame, anger, and sadness. Or you can appeal to positive emotions such as happiness and joy, pride, relief, hope, and compassion. Some guidelines you can follow to appeal to emotions include telling vivid stories, using startling statistics, incorporating listener relevance links, using striking presentation aids and provocative language, and being vocally and visually expressive when delivering your message.

Chapter Quiz

True/False
1. One way to make an argument in a persuasive speech is to support a claim by linking it to a comparable example.
2. Listeners are more likely to use the central route of processing when they feel that the information in a speech is important to them.
3. A person who is able to see the world through someone else's eyes has empathy.
4. A speaker commits the straw man fallacy when he or she presents a generalization that is not supported with evidence.
5. The two types of reasoning are inductive reasoning and conductive reasoning.
argue from causation to cite events that have occurred that result in the claim

hasty generalization
a fallacy that presents a generalization that is either not supported with evidence or is supported with only one weak example

false cause
a fallacy that occurs when the alleged cause fails to be related to, or to produce, the effect

either-or
a fallacy that argues there are only two alternatives when, in fact, others exist

straw man
a fallacy that occurs when a speaker weakens the opposing position by misrepresenting it in some way and then attacks that weaker position

ad hominem
a fallacy that occurs when a speaker attacks or praises a person making an argument rather than addressing the argument itself

goodwill
a perception the audience forms of a speaker who they believe understands them, empathizes with them, and is responsive to them

empathy
the ability to see the world through the eyes of someone else

responsive
when speakers show that they care about the audience by acknowledging feedback, especially subtle negative cues

terminal credibility
perception of a speaker’s expertise at the end of the speech

initial credibility
perception of a speaker’s expertise at the beginning of the speech

derived credibility
strategies employed throughout the speech that signal a speaker’s expertise

emotions
the buildup of action-specific energy

negative emotions
disquieting feelings that people experience

fear
perceiving no control over a situation that threatens us

guilt
that feeling when we personally violate a moral, ethical, or religious code that we hold dear

shame
the feeling when we have violated a moral code and it is revealed to someone we think highly of

anger
the feeling when we are faced with an obstacle in the way of something we want

sadness
the feeling when we fail to achieve a goal or experience a loss or separation

positive emotions
feelings that people enjoy experiencing

happiness or joy
the buildup of positive energy we experience when we accomplish something, when we have a satisfying interaction or relationship, or when we see or possess objects that appeal to us

pride
the feeling of self-satisfaction and increased self-esteem as the result of an accomplishment

relief
the feeling when a threatening situation has been alleviated

hope
emotional energy that stems from believing something desirable is likely to happen

compassion
feeling of selfless concern for the suffering of another

Multiple Choice

6. ELM stands for:
   a. Estimated Linkage Model
   b. Elaboration Likelihood Model
   c. Exhibition Landscape Model
   d. Elaborate Listener Model
   e. Extended Localization Model

7. During his speech on Internet privacy, Alan argues that Mark Zuckerberg, the CEO of Facebook, should be ignored as an authority since he never finished college.
   This is an example of which fallacy?
   a. Hasty generalization
   b. Ad hominem
   c. Straw man
   d. Either-or
   e. False cause

8. A speaker who is appealing to the audience’s emotions is using which means of persuasion?
   a. Ethos
   b. Kairos
   c. Pathos
   d. Logos
   e. Cosmos

9. ______ refers to the evidence that a speaker offers as the grounds for accepting the conclusion.
   a. Claim
   b. Warrant
   c. Support
   d. Argument
   e. Criteria

10. When a speaker is describing the suffering of someone, he or she is trying to arouse the audience’s:
    a. relief
    b. hope
    c. joy
    d. pride
    e. compassion

Answers:

1. T;
2. T;
3. T;
4. F;
5. F;
6. b;
7. b;
8. c;
9. c;
10. e

Speech Snippets

Creating an Argument Using Toulmin’s Model

Nathan wanted his listeners to agree that people should get six to seven hours of sleep at night. So he developed this argument:

Want listeners to agree that we should get six to seven hours of sleep at night.
Sleep produces melatonin, which can prevent cancer.
Sleep reduces stress.
Sleep improves mental alertness and memory.
(I believe these benefits are major reasons to agree that we should strive for at least six hours of sleep at night.)

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