

Using Persuasive Language

COMM 390 - Bowker

Key Concepts

- Direct v. Indirect
- Emotion v. Logic
- AIDA – Create: Attention, Interest, Desire, Action
- Establish your credibility
- Be ethical
- Create a connection between what the audience needs and what you are offering – focus on the benefits



The same guidelines apply whether you are writing or presenting.



Read the chapter in your text titled “Persuasive Messages.”



Purpose & Audience



Direct or Indirect?

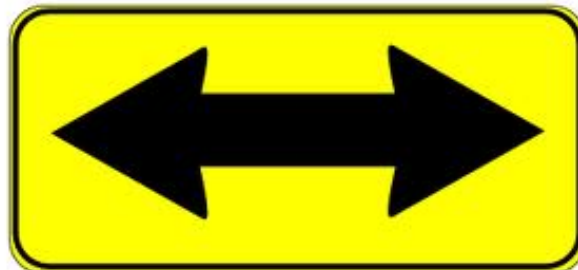
▶ Direct

- ▶ Be very clear, there should be no misunderstanding.
- ▶ Start with the key message or action.
- ▶ Use when your audience is friendly and receptive.

▶ Indirect

- ▶ Lead your reader to make the conclusion you want them to make.
- ▶ Start with the benefits.
- ▶ Use when your audience might be reluctant to accept your message.

Text page 156.



Emotion or Logic?



Answer on Connect: List 3 instances each where only emotion or logic is an appropriate argument.

Read the Text page 157.

AIDA

- ▶ Attention
- ▶ Interest
- ▶ Desire
- ▶ Action



Text page 158.



Shamwow

- ▶ Watch this Shamwow infomercial and notice how he creates:
 - ▶ Attention
 - ▶ Interest
 - ▶ Desire
 - ▶ And offers a call to action



http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwRISkyV_B8



Establish Credibility

You want to be:

- Reliable
- Believable
- Trustworthy
- Confident
- Authentic



Text page 155.

For more on credibility from Mind Tools:

<http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/establishing-credibility.htm#np>

Be ethical

- ▶ Persuade without manipulating
- ▶ Honest persuasion leaves your audience free to decide even if you encourage them in a certain direction
- ▶ Acknowledge the counter-argument either directly or indirectly
 - ▶ Otherwise you look like you have something to hide.



Tell the Whole Story

- ▶ “As any science journalist knows, it’s much easier to tell a compelling story if you’re willing to cherry-pick the findings that the idea you’re writing about, ignore the ones that contradict or undermine it....
 - ▶ Alex Hutchinson, G&M, Aug. 3, 2013



Key Messages

- ▶ Be clear about the top 1-3 messages you want your reader to take away.



Proposals (e.g. a business plan)

Demonstrate that you offer :

1. A strong match for the audiences' wants and needs.
2. A sound investment.
3. A solution better than all others.
4. An ability to deliver.



Be specific

- ▶ Help the audience to feel like they can really imagine what you are describing:
 - ▶ Our target market...
 - ▶ Our target market of young urban professionals who have not yet bought a house, but are planning to....



Answer on Connect: Describe the target market for a business school. You will use this to deliver a sales message to prospective students and their parents.



Lead to the Conclusion

- ▶ Help your reader reach a logical conclusion by leading the way:
 - ▶ Remove the obstacles
 - ▶ Address the obvious concerns
 - ▶ Fill the gaps
 - ▶ Lay a logical path and help the reader follow it step by step



Complete and Specific

- ▶ Know your product
- ▶ Know your audience
- ▶ Features – focus on the product
- ▶ Benefits – focus on the user



Answer on Connect: Watch the Steve Jobs launch of the original iPad and write down how he has done each of these things. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5F3EB5UT6KI>



Call to Action

- ▶ At the end of your proposal provide a clear “Call to Action.”
 - ▶ This tells you audience what you want them to do. For example:
 - ▶ “Call now for your free one time offer.”
 - ▶ “Visit our showroom on Robson Street for a chance to use our product.”
 - ▶ “After you’ve had a chance to consider this, let’s have a meeting to discuss it in more detail. How is Wednesday next week?”



The Closing

- ▶ Emphasizes the Main Points
- ▶ Summarizes the Benefits
- ▶ Reinforces the Structure
- ▶ Brings Action Items Together



Consider a closing paragraph for the launch of the iPad using these guidelines.



In Closing:

- ▶ **Make your persuasive claims:**
 - ▶ complete and specific,
 - ▶ confident and positive.



Practice Question - Answer on Connect

Write an introduction and a closing for the promotion of your business school for prospective students and their parents. Include a clear call to action. Ensure your tone and language is appropriate for the audience and the occasion.

Remember AIDA!



Review

- ▶ **Consider**
 - ▶ Tone
 - ▶ Ethics and honesty
 - ▶ Confidence
 - ▶ Clarity of message
 - ▶ Complete and specific message
 - ▶ Closing



End

