CHAPTER 14: PERSUASIVE SPEAKING

Audience Attitude toward Your Persuasive Topic

Attitude: A general or enduring positive or negative feeling about some person, object, or issue.

Eg: “I think physical fitness is important” < an opinion that reflects a favorable attitude about physical fitness.

- Begin your persuasive speech preparation by understanding the attitudes your audience is likely to have about your topic.
- Given that initial attitude, you can develop a speech goal designed to influence your audience’s attitudes in the way you would like.
- In general, when your target audience is in favor, seek action. When your target audience has no opinion, seek agreement. When your target audience is opposed to your position, seek incremental change.

Seek incremental change, trying to move them only a small degree in your direction, hoping for further movement later.

For example: If you are determine that your audience would likely oppose your goal:

I want to convince my audience that foundation students should be allowed to bring their own transport

Rephrase to:

I want to convince my audience that foundation students who could afford having their won transport should be allowed to bring their cars as their fellow degree students.
NO OPINION

- When your target audience is neutral, you can be straightforward with reasons to support your goal.
- However you may want to consider if your audience are uninformed, impartial, or apathetic
  - Uninformed: do not know enough about the topic. You will need to provide the basic arguments and information that they require to become informed with well supported good information
  - Impartial: has some information about your topic but do not understand it. In this case, they are likely to listen objectively and accept sound reasoning if you can demonstrate the superiority of your position to others.
  - Apathetic: no opinion because not interested, unconcerned or indifferent about your topic
- To convince this audience, you will need to provide strong listener relevance links and use evidence that is meaningful and interesting

IN FAVOUR

- When your target audience is only mildly in favor of your proposal, your task is to reinforce and strengthen their beliefs. An audience whose attitude supports your topic will still benefit from a logical explanation of the reasons for doing
- So, for example, if the topic is "foundation students should be allowed to bring their own transport ", audience poll shows that most audience members strongly favor the idea, then your goal might be "I want my audience to write to their university management to express their support for foundation students' transportation in campus "
Identifying your proposition

In a persuasive speech, you state you specific goal as a proposition.

Proposition: a declarative sentence that clearly indicates the position you will advocate.

For example, “I want to convince my audience that smoking causes cancer” is a proposition. What audience will know: the speaker will present arguments, reasons, and evidence to prove the validity of the proposition.

A proposition of fact:

- Statement designed to convince your audience.
- It takes a position on something that is generally not known but that
- Can be argued for as true.
- Concern the past, present, or future.
- Although propositions of fact may or may not be true—both positions are arguable—so they are stated as true.
- For example, whether or not Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone when he killed President Kennedy is debatable. So you could argue a proposition of fact concerning this fact in two ways: “Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman who shot President John F. Kennedy” or “Lee Harvey Oswald was part of a larger conspiracy to shoot President John F. Kennedy.”

A proposition of value:

- A statement designed to convince your audience that something is good, bad, desirable, undesirable, fair, unfair, moral, immoral, sound, unsound, beneficial, harmful, important, or unimportant.
- You can convince your audience that something has more value than something else, or you can convince your audience that something meets valued standards.
- For example, “I want my audience to believe that multilingual education is beneficial to children” requires you to prove that children who receive multilingual education gain specific educational rewards that we, as a society, value.

A proposition of policy:

- A statement designed to convince your audience that a particular rule, plan, or course of action should be taken.
- Implore listeners using words such as “should/shouldn’t,” or “must/must not.”
- For example, “I want my audience to believe that a public speaking course should be required for all students at this university,” is propositions of policy.
Examples of persuasive speech propositions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Propositions of Fact</th>
<th>Propositions of Value</th>
<th>Propositions of Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi was the father of passive resistance.</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi was a moral leader.</td>
<td>Mahatma Gandhi should be given a special award for his views on passive resistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical advertising to consumers increases prescription drug prices.</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical advertising of new prescription drugs on TV is better than marketing new drugs directly to doctors.</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical companies should be required to refrain from advertising prescription drugs on TV.</td>
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Organizational Frameworks for Persuasive Speeches

Comparative advantages:

- Shows that one of two or more alternatives (which may include the status quo) is best.
- You show that the advantages of your alternative outweigh the disadvantages and that its advantages surpass the advantages of the other options
- Example:

  A comparative advantages approach to a school tax proposition would look like this:

  **Proposition:** *I want my audience to believe that passing the school tax levy is better than not passing it.* (compares the value of change to the status quo)

  I. *Income from a tax levy will enable schools to reintroduce important programs that had to be cut.* (Advantage 1)

  II. *Income from a tax levy will enable schools to avoid a tentative strike by teachers who are underpaid.* (Advantage 2)

  III. *Income from a tax levy will enable us to retain local control of our schools, which will be lost to the state if additional local funding is not provided.* (Advantage 3)

Criteria satisfaction:

- An indirect organization that seeks audience agreement on criteria that should be considered when evaluating a particular proposition and then shows how the proposition satisfies those criteria.
useful when your audience is opposed to your proposition because it approaches the proposition indirectly by first focusing on criteria that the audience may agree with before introducing the specific proposition.

A criteria satisfaction organization for the school tax proposition would look like this:

**Proposition**: I want my audience to believe that passing a school tax levy is a Good way to fund our schools.

I. We all can agree that a good school funding method must meet three criteria:
   a) A good funding method results in the reestablishment of programs that have been dropped for monetary reasons.
   b) A good funding method results in fair pay for teachers.
   c) A good funding method generates enough income to maintain local control, avoiding state intervention.

II. Passage of a local school tax levy is a good way to fund our schools.
   a. A local levy will allow us to fund important programs again.
   b. A local levy will allow us to give teachers a raise.
   c. A local levy will generate enough income to maintain local control and avoid state intervention.

**Refutative**

- Helps you organize your main points to persuade by both challenging the opposing arguments and bolstering your own.
- This framework is particularly useful when the target audience opposes your position.
- A refutative organization for the school tax proposition might look like this:

  **Proposition**: I want my audience to agree that a school tax levy is the best way to fund our schools.

  I. *Opponents of the tax levy argue that the tax increase will fall only on property owners.*
     a) Landlords will recoup property taxes in the form of higher rents.
     b) Thus, all people will be affected.

  II. *Opponents of the tax levy argue that there are fewer students in the*
school district, so schools should be able to function on the same amount of revenue.

a) Although there are fewer pupils, costs continue to rise.
   1. Salary cost increases
   2. Energy cost increases
   3. Maintenance cost increases
   4. Unfunded federal and state government mandates add to costs

b) Although there are fewer pupils, there are many aging school buildings that need replacing or retrofitting for this computer age.

III. Opponents of the tax levy argue that parents should be responsible for the excessive cost of educating their children.

a) Historically, our nation flourished under a publicly funded educational system.

b) Parents today are already paying more than our parents did.
   1. Activity fees
   2. Lab fees
   3. Book fees
   4. Transportation fees

c) Of school-age children today in this district, 42 percent live in families that are below the poverty line and have limited resources.

Statement of reasons

- Form of persuasive organization used for confirming propositions of fact in which you present your best-supported reasons in a meaningful order.
- For a speech with three reasons or more, place the strongest reason last because this is the reason you believe the audience will find most persuasive. You will often place the second strongest reason first because you want to start with a significant point.

Proposition: I want my audience to believe that passing the proposed school tax levy is necessary.

1. The income will enable the schools to restore vital programs. (second strongest)
II. The income will enable the schools to give teachers the raises they need to keep up with the cost of living.

III. The income will allow the community to maintain local control and will save the district from state intervention. (strongest)

Problem solution

- Explains the nature of a problem and proposes a solution. A problem-solution pattern can be used with any persuasive speech, but it is particularly useful when listeners may be unaware of the problem or how they personally can work toward a solution.
- To convince the audience that there is a problem, you will need to explore the breadth and depth of the issue, as well as provide listener relevance links.
- Problem-solution organization for a speech on reducing gun violence might look like this:

  I. Gun-related violence is a serious problem that affects us all. (statement of the problem)

  A. Gun-related violence occurs in urban, suburban, and rural communities and across the country. (breadth)

     1. Most recent law enforcement statistics on gun-related violence in the United States.

     2. Most recent law enforcement statistics on gun violence in Arizona.

     3. An example of gun violence right here in Tempe. (listener relevance link)

  B. The consequences of gun violence include injury, disability, and death. (depth)

     1. Statistics on gun-related injuries.

     2. Story of gun-related disability in a person like the audience members.


     4. Story of local family who died in gun-related murder-suicide.
II. Our state legislatures and the U.S. Congress should pass measures to reduce gun violence. (solution)

A. Tighten gun ownership requirements.
   1. Require background checks at all sales points.
      a. Both public and private sales.
      b. Checks for both criminal background and evidence of mental illness.
   2. Require “proof of competence” testing for gun licensure like vehicle licensure.
      a. Evidence of gun safety procedure knowledge.
      b. Evidence of marksmanship.
   3. Require periodic relicensing of both guns and owners.

B. Increase criminal penalties associated with violation of gun laws.

III. You should e-mail, write, or call your state and national representatives to urge them to support measures to reduce gun violence. (call to action)

   A. Bills currently pending in the state legislature.
   B. Bills currently pending in Congress.

Problem cause solution

- Similar to problem-solution but differs from it by adding a main point that reveals the causes of the problem and then proposes a solution designed to alleviate those causes. This pattern is particularly useful for addressing seemingly intractable problems that have been dealt with unsuccessfully in the past as a result of treating symptoms rather than underlying causes.
- A problem-cause-solution speech:

  I. Solid waste disposal is a problem. (problem)
     A. Landfills are overflowing.
     B. Recycling, while growing, is not widespread in our community.

  II. Causes for recycling resistance. (causes)
     A. Confusion about proper recycling procedures.
     B. Lack of recycling containers.
     C. Infrequent recycling pickups.
D. Inconvenience.

III. Solutions to overcome recycling resistance. (solutions)

A. Promotional mailers and periodic reminders mailed to each residence to clarify and reinforce local recycling procedures and to communicate changes in local recycling programs.

B. Grade-appropriate educational material used in local classrooms.

C. Free recycling containers delivered to each residential address with additional containers available at convenient locations.

D. Increased frequency of pickups planned for and implemented as recycling becomes more pervasive.

E. No need to sort recyclables in the home.

IV. Audience actions. (call to action)

A. Call your local waste management agency and inquire about recycling policies and procedures.

B. Procure appropriate recycling containers for use in your home.
   1. Curbside containers.
   2. Containers for in-home use.

C. Educate all family members on proper recycling techniques.

D. Contact local school board members and urge recycling curriculum for your local school district.

Ethical Guidelines for Persuasive Speeches

Ethical persuasive speeches aim to:

I. improve the well-being of the audience by advocating the honest belief of the speaker.
II. provide choices.
III. use representative supporting information
IV. use emotional appeals to engage the audience in the rational thought process.
V. honestly present the speaker’s credibility.