

Persuasive Techniques

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

Persuasion Techniques: methods to influence others' opinions or actions

Emotional appeals: messages that create strong feelings such as pity or fear

Ex. appeals to fear, appeals to pity, appeals to vanity

Appeals by association: message that links an idea or project to a positive image or person, or idea

Ex: bandwagon, testimonial, appeals to authority, snob appeal, plain folks

Loaded Language: words that manipulate with strongly positive (purr words), strongly negative (snarl words), or extremely vague words (weasel words)

HERE'S HOW

Step 1: Recognize persuasive messages. They appear in speeches and ads.

Step 2: Identify emotional appeals. These can disguise poor reasoning.

EXAMPLE Exercise robs you of fluid and minerals! Protect yourself with AquaGo.

Step 3: Identify appeals by association. These play on a wish to belong to a positive image. The message may be delivered as a **testimonial**.

EXAMPLE

- **Bandwagon:** lose weight on the diet everybody's trying.
- **Appeals to Authority:** You know me as a star, but I'm asking for help.
- **Plain Folks:** I'm voting 'yes!' It is good for working folks like us.
- **Snob Appeal:** Head and shoulders above the rest? Try SkyHi Soda

Step 4: Identify loaded language. Words that manipulate may be extremely positive (purr words), extremely negative (snarl words), or extremely vague (weasel words).

EXAMPLE

- **Purr Words:** The rich crust brims with fresh berries.
- **Snarl Words:** Our worthless competitor stumbled badly.
- **Weasel Words:** FonCord charges practically All cell phones

Step 5: Evaluate the message. Think about the writer's purpose, perspective, and bias. Ask yourself: Are claims supported by logic and facts? Do loaded words send a deceptive message? Are expert opinions truly authoritative or reliable?