Checklist for Your Persuasive Talk

**What’s the crux?**

Are you clear where your energy center is. It can either be centered in the problem or need the audience has or in your excitement about the solution you have for it—or a combination of both. But the key is that it’s not abstract. You feel a kind of energy or enthusiasm when you think about it that translates into your writing.

One way to get some clarity about your crux is to think about it in Pathos Frames:

1. Need for security and physical well being
2. Need for belonging and identity
3. Need for freedom and autonomy
4. Need for a better, more fulfilling future

In BCMU for Artists the energy center lies in the need the artist audience has to develop a successful career. I would focus on 3 and 4 from the list above. And then put it into a succinct punchline. If you want to have a successful career as an artist you need to know how to build a network of connections. It’s not about making money; it’s about making connections and building awareness about your work.

**What are the audience’s resistance frames?**

Think about all the reasons that your audience is resistant to you and your message. These are usually ethos and pathos resistance frames.

Ethos: What credibility do you have? Why should we listen to you or trust you?

Pathos: I don’t want to do it. I’m not motivated. I’ve got better things to do. This isn’t a serious problem, etc.

For BCMU for Artists, the Ethos resistance frame is why should I listen to a business school student? What does he know about art or a career in art? The Pathos resistance frame is rooted in worries about selling out and becoming someone who cares about making money rather than making art.

**What are the counterframes?**

The ethos counterframe is to establish credibility in a related field as a musical ‘artist’ and performer who has a lot of experience making connections with the people who are essential for the advancement of his career success.

The pathos counterframe is to focus on the development of communications skills as not about selling out but about creating awareness of the audience’s work by making connections with the people who are essential for the advancement of his careers.

**Is the structure of your script following the Ciceronian arrangement, and does each section achieve its goal.**

Opening: Ethos dominant. Creates a receptive space. Goal is to make the audience trust and like you.

Narration: Pathos—Establish Motivating Problem. It’s about increasing the heat of a problem—usually anxiety or the fear of losing something—so that the audience is aware of a need to change.

Division: Logos—Establish your solution concept.

Proof: Logos—Prove that it will work. Primary Benefit? Secondary benefits? Give the audience enough details and information that your solution will appear to offer a compelling solution for the problem established in narration.

Prolepsis or Refutation: Logos/Pathos—crash any resistance frame you think might be lingering. Anticipate and neutralize objections or doubts.

Close: Pathos—Get the audience excited about the possibility of following through with your solution. Use ‘*enargeia’* or visualization if appropriate. Get them emotionally engaged, and use number 4 here if possible.

**Are you making your ideas pop?**

Do you look for the opportunity to use sticky ideas, particularly simplicity, unexpectedness, concreteness, and story? Are you looking for opportunities to use figures of speech?