

Write Script for a Persuasive Talk

Goal: The pedagogical goal is to give you the opportunity to pull together all the elements taught this quarter about persuasion into an effective, short persuasive talk.

Task: Choose a topic below; write the script for short presentation that should take 5 minutes to read out loud (800-900 words). Assume you are speaking to an audience with a third undecided, a third pro, a third con. Your goal is to win over enough undecideds to get a majority.

Deliverable. Typed script of the talk. It should clearly define the frame and the “crux argument” before you begin your text, so I know what your rhetorical objectives are. Text of talk should follow in full-block format.

Due: In class 14.

Here are the topics. Select one:

1. Persuade the group to donate money to a charitable organization of your choice. Assume that another charitable group will be making its pitch after yours and that you have to anticipate its argument. The audience has to choose between you to make a \$10,000 grant.
2. Convince a group of 21 elderly people at a senior housing complex like Merrill Gardens that they need adopt a specific exercise program. If at least 11 don't sign up, they can't pay for the instructor.
3. Persuade those at a town council meeting that they need to support the building of a recreation center rather than a juvenile detention center to reduce gang violence.
4. You're testifying before a Senate Committee taking testimony about gun control. The issues on the table are whether to ban assault rifles and to require background checks at gun shows. Pick one and take either side.
5. Persuade a group of art (or science, or engineering) majors to take Strategic Communications next quarter. Some other course would also work.
6. You're testifying before the Seattle City Council about passing a \$200 million bond issue that will be part of a financial package that will build an NBA quality arena. Persuade the councilors sitting on the fence to support or reject this tax.
7. Persuade the Securities and Exchange Commission that it should focus on punishing individual managers who have committed crimes rather than levying fines against the companies where the managers work.

8. You're testifying before the Washington State Senate about passing an \$8 billion dollar tax break for Boeing if they build their next airplane in Washington State. Persuade the senators that this is a good or bad deal for the citizens of Washington State.
9. If you have another topic you'd like to use instead of these, talk to me or email me to get a green light to do it.

Midterm Rubric—100 points total

Content

Resistance Frame: Characterize the frame that is the chief reason for the audience not complying with your request.

Counterframe: Characterize the primary motivator that you will use to overcome your audience's resistance.

Arrangement: I want you to label each part of your text so that I know when you're doing Narration, when Division, etc.

Opening: Ethos—build credibility and a sense of connection and trust

Body: Narration has a pathos focus, but Division and Proof are more logos centered. Prolepsis? It depends.

- Narration: establish the motivating problem.
- Division: solution options—solutions conceptually framed.
- Proof: prove why your solution is best (primary & secondary benefits)
- Prolepsis: anticipate and refute your opponents' arguments.

Close: Pathos/Synthesis

Clarity/Correctness

Sentence Style

- decorum: tone, mood, appropriate pathos/ethos
- vividness/concreteness: examples, stories
- ornament: figures of speech, metaphors, humor

Correctness

- proper language: usage, mechanics, clarity, fluency