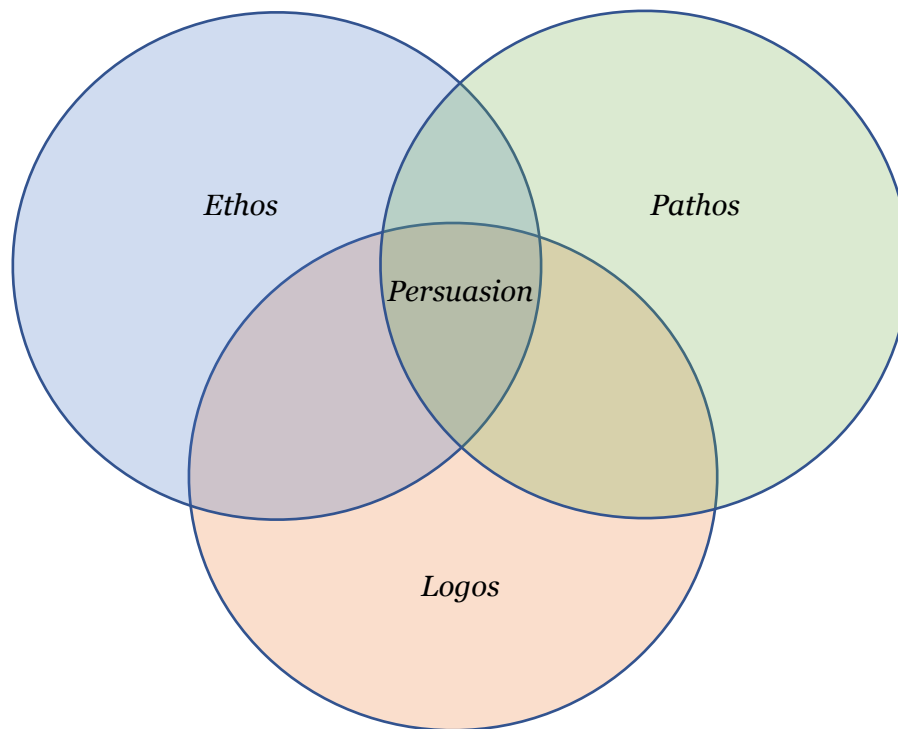


# Week 11: Presentation and Delivery

## Lecture 14: Ethos, Pathos and Logos

### *Aristotle's Three Elements of Persuasion*



After constructing arguments through research and preparation, debaters must *deliver* the arguments. A compelling presentation makes the content even more persuasive.

Aristotle's famous manuscript *Rhetoric* lays out the three foundational elements of persuasion.

“Of the modes of persuasion furnished by the spoken word there are three kinds. The first kind depends on the personal character of the speaker; the second on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind; the third on the proof, or apparent proof, provided by the words of the speech itself... Persuasion is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make us think him **credible**. Secondly, persuasion may come through the hearers, when the speech stirs their **emotions**... Thirdly, persuasion is effected through the speech itself when we have proved a truth or an apparent truth by means of the **persuasive arguments** suitable to the case in question.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle. *Rhetoric*. Translated by W. Rhys Roberts. Published online by *Biblioteca Online de Ciências da Comunicação*. Accessed Feb 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018. <http://www.bocc.ubi.pt/pag/Aristotle-rhetoric.pdf>

Note: Emphasis added for effect.

Aristotle's three elements of persuasion can be summarized as *Ethos* (credibility), *Pathos* (emotion) and *Logos* (logic and order). A gifted speaker will utilize all three elements in tandem. Debaters can easily see how missing even one element of the three would decrease persuasion:

1. A speaker presents with credibility and passion, but has disorganized or nonsensical arguments.
2. A speaker presents with credibility and logical arguments, but has the emotive capacity of a brick.
3. A speaker presents with passion and logic, but cites no sources and arrives out of dress code.

In each of the three scenarios, the missing element would inhibit a speaker's ability to connect and persuade.



Communication can be further broken down into **verbal** and **nonverbal components**. Each element of persuasion can be reinforced with verbal (e.g. tone, pitch, volume) and nonverbal (e.g. body language, appearance) skills. Debaters should therefore commit themselves to learning how to demonstrate all three elements of persuasion through both their verbal and nonverbal communication skills. Exhaustively laying out *every relevant skill* would be nearly impossible — debaters should instead use this curriculum as a launching pad to fully exploring the elements of persuasion.



## ETHOS

### Verbal skills

**1. Utilize appropriate vocabulary.** Debaters should focus on using proper academic terms, avoiding slang. For example, the average person does not know what “*mens rea*” means. But, if debaters are discussing a case involving changing *mens rea* standards in the criminal justice system, they should explain the term and then use it appropriately. As a note, debaters should avoid sounding like they are trying to use complicated words for the sake of complicated words. A good vocabulary increases credibility, but forcing in complicated words *decreases* credibility.

**2. Pronunciation and enunciation.** Debaters should know how to pronounce words correctly *and* enunciate them clearly. Pronunciation is the proper way of saying a word, while enunciation is the act of clearly saying the word. If a word is mispronounced or poorly enunciated, the debater will lose credibility.

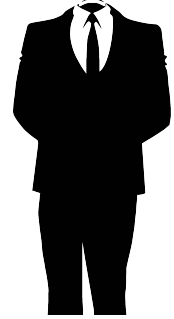
### Nonverbal skills

**1. Provide varied support.** Debaters who make unfounded or unsupported claims will quickly lose credibility. But, debaters should also take care to avoid over reliance on a single type of support. For example, a debater who only utilizes statistics may appear cold and as if they



view the world as a dataset. In contrast, when a debater relies on a plethora of types of support, they present themselves as well-researched and well-rounded.

**2. Dress appropriately.** Debaters should stay within dress code and focus on clothes that *enhance* their professionalism instead of distracting the audience. Loud ties, garish colors, jangly jewelry, and failure to uphold basic conventions of fashion will decrease credibility.



**3. Posture.** Slouching, nervously swaying side to side, or twitching communicates nervousness instead of confidence. Stand straight with feet shoulder width apart and relax your shoulders to maintain a professional but relaxed posture.

## PATHOS

### Verbal skills

**1. Varying volume.** Debaters should speak at different volumes as appropriate throughout their speech. Lowering volume can really emphasize a point. Even when volume drops, however, anyone in the room should be able to hear and understand the debater's words. Raising volume can make the audience sit up and pay attention. Even when volume rises, however, the audience should not feel shouted at. Finding a balance between the two extremes is an art that debaters must master through practice.

**2. Varying vocal patterns:** Vocal patterns develop by pausing and/or modulating tone and pace for the same parts of different sentences. Even though the content of the sentences is different, the pattern of delivery is the same. Debaters should intentionally break up vocal patterns if they sound canned or redundant. If every sentence sounds the same, the audience will quickly lose interest.



### Nonverbal skills

**1. Facial expressions.** The face is a book of emotion. If a debater's face is blank, the audience reads boredom or lack of conviction. Debaters should use their face to reflect happiness (smile), seriousness (frown the brow), and any appropriate emotion for the subject being discussed.

**2. Hand gestures.** The hands of a debater should not be limp and lifeless. Debaters can easily infuse passion by putting a small amount of tension in their wrist and/or fingers. The tension makes hand gestures more demonstrative and authoritative, thus communicating engagement to the audience.

**3. Stories.** Virtually everyone loves a story. When debaters connect a story to the claims in their arguments, they tap into the audience's empathy, which creates an emotional response to the speech. While reliance on anecdotes alone is poor support, sprinkling in anecdotes to illustrate concepts can build *powerful* emotional connections between the audience and the arguments.



# LOGOS

## Verbal skills

**1. Word economy.** The audience is listening to a roughly 1.5 hour debate round. Typically, the more efficiently a debater can communicate an argument, the easier the audience will understand the argument. Keep it simple! Avoid talking in circles and get to the point.

## Nonverbal skills

**1. Organization.** Flowing arguments and responding to them sequentially communicates organization to the audience. If a debater tracks each argument and communicates well-organized responses, the audience will note the debater's impressive organization skills.

**2. Structure of arguments.** Utilizing four-point refutation to create consistent refutation will communicate the logical nature of your position. However, if the analysis provides insufficient support or the impact is not a reasonable extrapolation from the argument, the argument will still fail to communicate logical reasoning to the audience. The organized shell is only as strong as the content.

## Nonverbal communication and behavior in rounds

As soon as the judge enters the room, debaters are being observed. Thus, persuasion starts when the judge is present, *not* when the 1AC begins. Below are some helpful observations to guide decorum before, during, and after the round.

### Before the round

1. Arrive before the judge and set up neatly. The judge should walk into the room and see an organized table of debaters ready to begin. If the judge enters the room before debaters, they should set up quickly, quietly, and neatly. An organized debater communicates ethos and logos. A disorganized debater immediately loses credibility.



2. Debaters should avoid goofing off or unprofessional conversations in front of the judge. Suspend frivolous discussions while the judge is present. A professional debater communicates ethos.



3. Debaters should introduce themselves to the judge. Walk up to the judge, make eye contact, and give the judge a firm handshake. This moment of physical interaction communicates ethos and pathos, both humanizing the debater *and* instilling confidence with a firm handshake and eye contact.

### During the round

1. Communicate quietly. If debaters need to talk to their partner or opponents, they should either whisper quietly or pass notes. If a debater is speaking, whispers should not be loud enough to interrupt or distract the speaker at the podium and passing notes should not be visually distracting to the audience.



2. Moderate reactions at the table. Visible outrage and shock at opponent's arguments communicate immaturity to the audience, which decreases ethos. Be professional at all times.

### **After the round**

1. Thank the judge for their time, make eye contact, and shake the judge's hand. This has the same effect as the initial introduction to the judge.
2. Quietly and neatly pack up. Do not goof off or break professionalism — the final impression for the judge should preserve your credibility, not infer that the round was just an act.
3. **DO NOT** discuss the round while the judge is in the room. Debaters who critique an opponent openly in front of the judge can appear arrogant. Debaters who disparage themselves can destroy their own credibility for the judge. Wait until the judge has departed to discuss the round in order to protect your ethos.

## Lecture 14 Notes

### Ethos

Meaning:

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### Verbal

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### Nonverbal

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### Pathos

Meaning:

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### Verbal

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**Nonverbal**

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**Logos**

**Meaning:**

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**Verbal**

1.

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**Nonverbal**

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## **Nonverbal communication and behavior in rounds**

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**3.**

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### **During**

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### **After**

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