It's true what they say, that words are the true weapons. Those who fight with steel are limited to the strength of their arm, the reach of their blade, and the timing of their strike; but those who fight with persuasion know no limits–not time, nor status, nor chance.

A.J. Darkholme

PERSUASION SKILLS

1- Introduction

Persuasion is communication with a purpose - to cause a person or group to adopt as their own a product, person, idea, entity, or point of view that the person would otherwise not support.
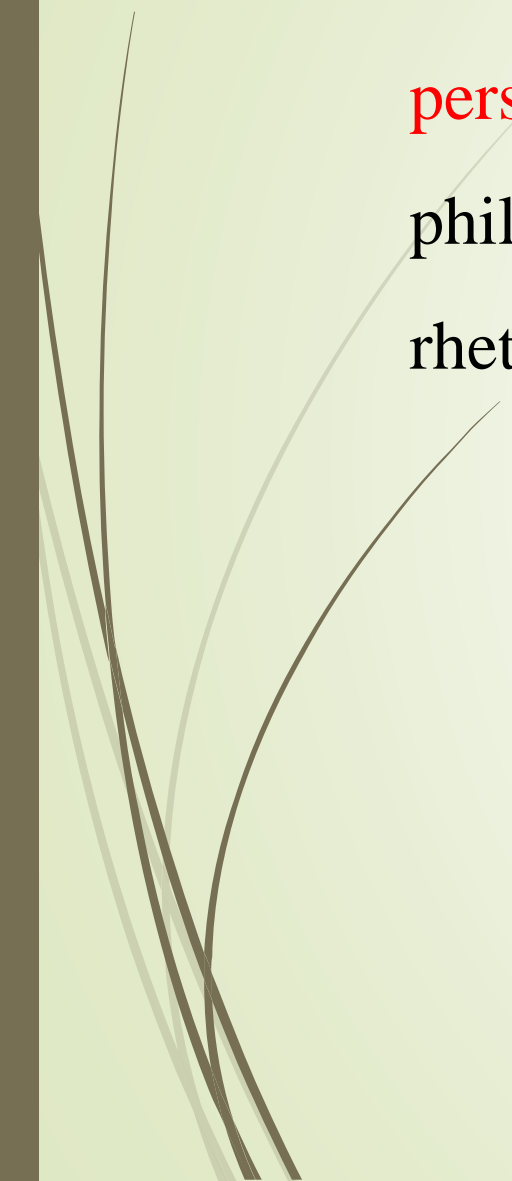
To be persuasive, you have to establish a common bond between yourself and the person you are trying to influence. This bond, often called "common ground" comes from shared experiences, understandings, cues, and meanings (Lucas, 2015).

What is the best way to succeed in persuading your audience?

There is no one "correct" answer, but many experts have studied persuasion and observed what works and what does not. The Greek philosopher *Aristotle* offers **Ethos**, **Logos**, and **Pathos** as forms of rhetorical proof.

2- Aristotle's Persuasive Strategies

Ethos
'Ethics'

Establishing personal credentials

Getting your audience to trust you

Pathos
'Pity'

Inspiring an emotional response

Getting your audience to feel

Logos
'Logic'

Arguing based on reason and facts

Getting your audience to think

Hyperbolit

2.1 Ethos

Ethos refers to the credibility of a speaker and includes three dimensions: competence, trustworthiness, and dynamism (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

1- Competence refers to the perception of a speaker's expertise in relation to the topic being discussed. Competent speakers must know the content of their speech and be able to effectively deliver that content.

2- Trustworthiness refers to the degree that listeners perceive a speaker to be presenting accurate, credible information in a non-manipulative way.

Trustworthiness

In terms of content

In terms of personality

❑ Trustworthy speakers consider the audience throughout the speech-making process, present information in a balanced way, do not coerce the audience, cite credible sources, and follow the general principles of communication ethics.

❑ Trustworthy speakers are also friendly and warm (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

City Temple Photoministry

3. **Dynamism** refers to the degree to which listeners perceive a speaker to be outgoing and animated (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003). Two components of dynamism are **charisma** and **energy**.

➢ **Charisma** refers to a mixture of abstract and concrete qualities that make a speaker attractive to an audience.

➢ **Energy:** Communicating enthusiasm for your topic and audience by presenting relevant content and using engaging delivery strategies such as vocal variety and eye contact can increase your dynamism.

2.2 Logos

Logos refers to the reasoning or logic of an argument. Speakers employ logos by explicitly presenting credible information as supporting material and verbally citing their sources during their speech (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

❑ Speakers can also appeal to logos by citing personal experiences (Cooper & Nothstine, 1996).

❑Speakers can also be more effective persuaders if they bring in and refute counterarguments (Stiff & Mongeau, 2003).

2.3 Pathos

Pathos refers to emotional appeals. Stirring emotions in an audience is a way to get them involved, and involvement can create more opportunities for persuasion and action.

❑The ability to use vocal variety, cadence, and repetition to rouse an audience's emotion is an example of emotional appeals. Think of how stirring Martin Luther King Jr.'s "*I Have a Dream*" speech was due to his ability to evoke the emotions of the audience. Dr. King used powerful and creative language in conjunction with his vocalics to deliver one of the most famous speeches in our history.

Aristotle's three rhetorical proofs — *ethos*, *logos*, and *pathos*—have been employed as persuasive strategies for thousands of years. However, his framework tends to view the audience as a passive receiver of rhetoric, with the speaker actively shaping the discourse.

In addition to making supportive arguments, how should a persuader deal with potential opposing arguments?

Handling counterarguments

Three broad **alternative ways** of action are available.

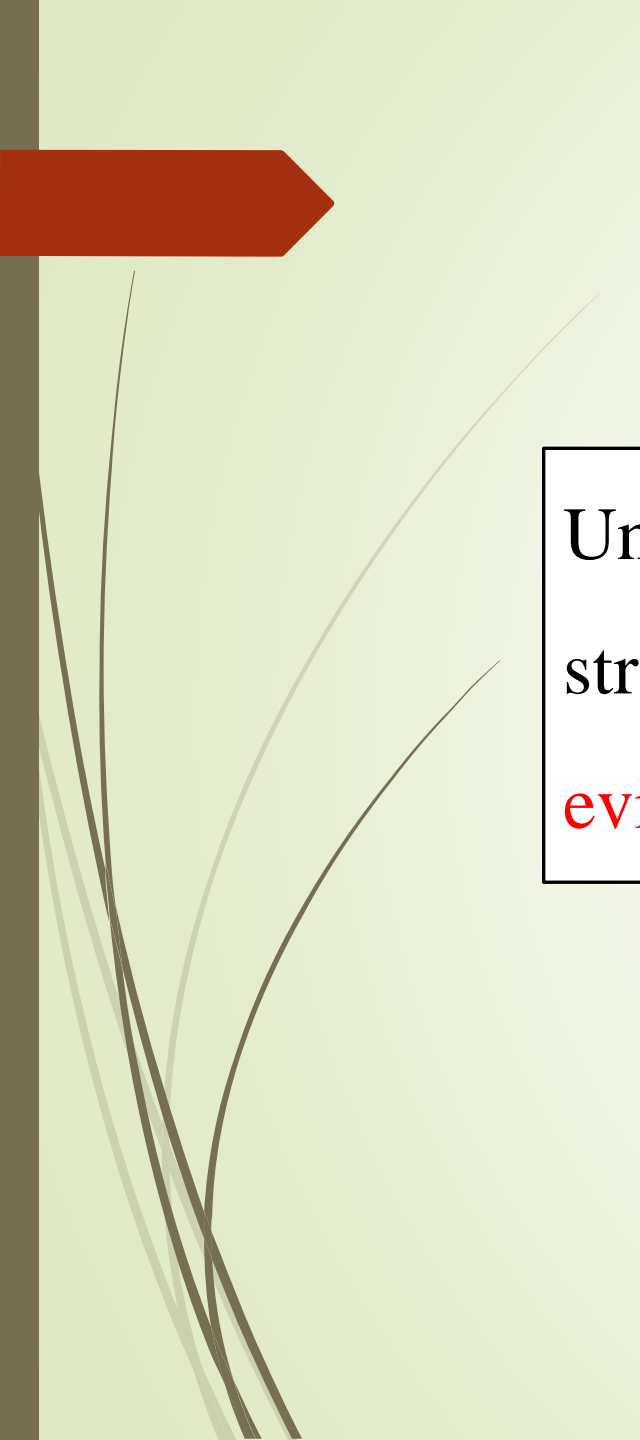| **1- A "one-sided" message**	**2- A "refutational two-sided" message**	**3- A "non-refutational two-sided" message**
It is to *ignore* the opposing arguments and so present only supporting arguments.	It is to *present* supporting arguments and also attempt to *refute* the opposing arguments.	It is to *present* supportive arguments and *mention* the opposing arguments, but *without trying to undermine* the opposing considerations.

Which way of handling counterarguments is significantly more persuasive?

Persuaders are well-advised to meet counterarguments head-on by attempting to refute them (a refutational two-sided message) rather than ignoring them (a one-sided message) or – even worse – mentioning them without undermining them (a non-refutational two-sided message) (Eisend, 2006; O'Keefe, 1999.)

Unlike Aristotle's rhetorical proofs, recent persuasive strategies have been identified based on theories and evidence related to human psychology.

3. Influencing Perceived Behaviour

Perceived behavior is a central element in persuasion, as it shapes how individuals interpret and respond to persuasive messages.

3. Influencing Perceived Behaviour

❑ Even if people have positive attitudes, **positive** descriptive norms (*The perception of what other people are doing*), and **positive** injunctive norms (*The person's perception of whether other people think he or she should perform the behaviour*) concerning the advocated action, they still might not undertake that behaviour.

❑A person might have a **positive attitude** towards exercising regularly ("I think exercising regularly would be a good thing").

❑**A positive** *descriptive norm* ("I know lots of other people do exercise").

❑And **a positive** *injunctive norm* ("Most people who are important to me think I should exercise regularly").

❑But *negative perceived behavioural ability* ("I don't have the time, and the health club is too far away").

So the person doesn't even form the intention to exercise regularly.

3.1 Strategies for enhancing perceived behaviour

3.1.1 Removing barriers to compliance

Skillful persuaders make it *easy for people to do what they want*. (Sharpe, Moloney, Sutherland, & Judd, 2017).

3.1.2-Rehearsal of the behaviour

Practice at accomplishing the behaviour will presumably enhance perceived self-efficacy (the underlying reasoning being something like "*I've done it before, so I can do it again*").

3.1.3 Modelling

Audiences can be given examples of other people (models) performing the behaviour successfully. Such modelling can enhance self-efficacy (*"if they can do it, so can I"*).

3.1.4 Receiving encouragement from others

A persuader who indicates confidence in the receiver's behavioural abilities can sometimes thereby increase the receiver's perceived self-efficacy. (Anderson, 2009).

3.1.5 Converting Intentions into Action

One of the challenges a persuader may face is that of getting people to convert their intentions into behaviour.

1- Prompts

2-Explicit planning

3-Inducing hypocrisy or guilt