

Westside Toastmasters is located in Los Angeles and Santa Monica, California

Chapter 14

The Rule of Balance -- Logical Mind vs. Emotional Heart

Overview

When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion, creatures bristling with prejudice and motivated by pride and vanity.

—DALE CARNEGIE

In persuasion, your message has to focus on emotions, all the while maintaining a balance between logic and feelings. Logic and emotion are the two elements that make for perfect persuasion. We can be persuasive using only logic or only emotion, but the effect will be short-term and unbalanced.

Emotions create movement and action. They generate energy during the presentation and get prospects to act on the proposal being presented. The challenge with relying exclusively on emotion to persuade your prospect is that after she has left the persuasive situation, her emotions fade, leaving her with nothing concrete to fall back on. Logic plays the role of creating a foundation for emotion. This balance between logic and emotion could be called the twin engines of persuasion and influence. Persuaders know that each audience and individual has a different balance between logic and emotion. Your analytical type personalities need more logic than emotion. Your amiable personalities require more emotion and less logic. Always remember, you have to have both elements present in your message, regardless of the personality types listening.

In most persuasive situations, people react based on emotions, then justify their actions with logic and fact. A message that is completely based on emotion will often set off alarm bells on the logical side. On the other hand, a logical message with no appeal to emotion doesn't create a strong enough response in the audience. An effective persuader will create a proper balance between logic and emotion in order to create the perfect persuasive message.

We are persuaded by reason, but we are moved by emotion. Several studies conclude that up to 90 percent of the decisions we make are based on emotion. We use logic to justify our actions to ourselves and to others. Take note that emotion will always win over logic and that imagination will always win over reality. Think about talking to children about their fear of the dark, or to someone about their phobia of snakes. You know it is useless to use logic to persuade them that their thoughts and actions don't make sense. They are still convinced that there is a problem.

This emotional pattern can also be seen in the way we buy and even in the way we convince ourselves of something. Our heads see the numbers and tell us to stick with a car that's more modestly priced, while our hearts see the gleaming sports car, telling us to go home with a Jaguar. Our heads tell us it's ridiculous to buy another pair of shoes since we already have fourteen pairs. We may even realize that no one is going to notice or care about the new shoes as much as we will. But our hearts win out, thinking of all the stunning new outfits these shoes will go with, and we go home with the new shoebox tucked under our arms. Our heads tell us not to believe everything we hear, that politicians are a bunch of liars, but our hearts are won over by their impassioned speeches.

Logic: What Stirs an Audience

Are we rational human beings? Do we follow all forms of logic? Do we only act if it feels right? Do we even want the facts all the time? Have you ever tried to persuade an emotional person with logic? We generally think we make decisions based on facts, but truly this is not the case. It has been found that when people agree with a particular message, they tend to perceive it as being more logical or rational. On the other hand, when people disagree with the message, they perceive it as an emotional plea.[1] The truth is that our decision-making process relies on a mixture between emotion and its partner, logic. However, we cannot rely entirely on emotion until our logical side has been engaged.

In one study, twenty-one students prepared speeches that were written from either a logical or an emotional standpoint. The speeches were presented, filmed, and then evaluated by other college students. Interestingly, there was no real consistency in the findings except that speeches bearing a message that the evaluator agreed with were rated as more rational (even if they were intended to be emotional), while those the evaluator did not agree with were considered to be more emotional (even though some of those were intended to be logical). It seemed that whether a speech was considered logical or emotional depended on the listener. Researchers also concluded that, as a general rule, people seem unable to consistently distinguish between logical and emotional appeals. [2]

The logical side of an argument appeals to our reason. Reasoning is the process of drawing a conclusion based on evidence. For an argument to be legitimate, it has to be true and valid, and logical reasoning must be used to back it up. Many persuaders and marketers use faulty forms of logic, leaving gaping holes that require the audience to make assumptions and fill in the blanks. These are called logical fallacies. A fallacy is, very generally, an error in reasoning. It differs from a factual error, which is simply being wrong about the facts. In other words, a fallacy is an "argument" in which the premises don't completely support the conclusion. In the next section, some of the most common logical fallacies are outlined.

[1]Arthur Lefford, "The Influence of Emotional Subject Matter on Logical Reading," *Journal of General Psychology* 34: 127–151.

Common Logical Fallacies

1. **Faulty Cause:** assumes that because one thing follows another, the second thing was definitively caused by the first — also known as the post hoc, ergo propter hoc fallacy. Example: Shawn broke his mother's mirror, and sure enough, he was in a car wreck the next week.
2. **Sweeping Generalization:** assumes that what is true in most cases must be true in all cases. Example: We can't hire this candidate because he's an ex-felon, and studies show that most ex-felons experience relapses.
3. **Hasty Generalization:** assumes that a small piece of information is soundly representative of the whole situation. Example: I don't like Thai food at all. The food I tried at this one Thai restaurant just was terrible and I was sick for days.
4. **Faulty Analogy:** assumes that if two things are alike in some ways, they must be alike in all ways. Example: Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera dress the same and sing the same type of music, so they must have very similar personalities.
5. **Faulty Sign:** assumes that one event is a reliable predictor of another. Example: That guy is wearing a big Starter jacket, has a tattoo, and wears baggy pants. He's probably a gang member.
6. **Tautology:** defines an argument in a manner that makes it impossible to disprove. Example: You are a disagreeable person and, if you disagree with me, it will just prove even more how disagreeable you are.
7. **Appeal to Authority:** justifies an argument by citing a famous or popular person who also supports the argument. Example: Those shoes are great for Michael Jordan, so they'll be great for me.
8. **Slippery Slope:** assumes that a particular step invariably leads to similar steps, culminating with a negative outcome. Example: If I let one student hand in their paper late, then I'll have to let others hand theirs in late, too, and before you know it, everyone will be begging for an extension.
9. **Red Herring:** attempts to divert attention away from the real issue. Example: When accused by his wife of cheating at cards, Frank says, "Nothing I do ever pleases you. I spent a whole week cleaning out the garage, and then all you did was complain about how I'd reorganized it."

10. **Appeal to Ignorance:** uses a person's inability to disprove a claim as proof that the claim is right. Example: We know there are people living on other planets in other galaxies because no one can prove that there are not.

Evidence and Logic

Reasoning is a powerful tool for the mind, but strong, concrete evidence should be the cornerstone of a logical speech. Evidence not only makes an argument ring true in persuasive situations, but it also substantially enhances your credibility. **There are four major types of evidence:** testimony, statistics, analogies, and examples. You will strengthen your position when you use elements of all four forms, rather than depending on only one. When you provide proof in this manner, you remove doubts that may linger in your audience's mind.

Testimony

Your audience wants to know what the experts say about you or your topic. Testimony is the judgment or opinions of others considered experts in the particular field or area of interest. A testimony can be a quote, an interview, or an endorsement from a credible person. It can be implied with someone's presence (attending your event), picture (on your product), or signature (on your product).

Statistics

Statistics are numerical proofs of your claims. For example, "this demographic uses . . ." or "four out of five dentists recommend. . . ." Using graphs and charts makes statistics more memorable and leaves a greater impression on the listener.

Some people are suspicious of statistical proof, so make sure your statistics are credible and sound. Know where you got them and who did the research. People know you can arrange statistics to say just about anything. Use statistics sparingly and only in conjunction with other forms of evidence. Besides, a roll of statistics can be very boring.

Analogies

Analogies have a great impact in the mind of the receiver. They enable you to make your points quickly and easily in a way that prospects will understand immediately. ("Installing our new home security system is like having a police officer standing guard on your front porch twenty-four hours a day.") Analogies allow you to present a new and foreign idea and compare it with something similar that your prospects can relate to in their own lives. Analogies can also give us a new perspective on an old concept.

Examples

Examples can really make your evidence come alive. We love to relate to examples that bridge the gap between logic and our personal lives. Your prospects understand examples at a deeper level because they are based on common experiences and interpretations of meaning. Examples can be real or hypothetical and can include quotations, personal accounts, physical evidence, empirical studies, or published reports.

Compelling Evidence

As you prepare your message, understand that we humans aren't capable of absorbing all of the information you can gather. We are hit with data all day long and most of the time we don't absorb it. In fact, we are very selective in what we allow ourselves to retain. When we hit information overload, we turn our minds off and retain nothing.

A study on comprehension of television messages produced very revealing results. After watching commercials and other forms of messages, an amazing 97 percent of viewers misunderstood some part of every message they saw. On average, viewers misunderstood about 30 percent of the overall content they viewed.[3] Information is just poured out too fast. The evidence that you choose must be selective, precise, and powerful. You can't afford to bombard your audience with too much information.

When creating the logical side of your message, you have to understand the concept of the number seven. This is also known as channel capacity, which is the amount of room in our brains capable of storing various kinds of information. George Miller, professor of psychology at Princeton University, wrote, "There seems to be some limitation built into us either by learning or by the design of our nervous systems, a limit that keeps our channel capacities in this general range." [4] There is only so much room in your prospect's brain to absorb logical numbers and information. This is why phone numbers only have seven digits.

Spend the time necessary to fully research the types of evidence you want to use to strengthen your arguments. You already know that using the right evidence from the right sources greatly increases the credibility of your message. However, the opposite is also true; poor or irrelevant evidence undermines the credibility of your message. When compiling evidence, consider the following:

1. Use evidence supported by an independent expert rather than facts presented alone.
2. Statistical evidence will be more persuasive when paired with individual case studies.
3. Document the sources of all testimonials.
4. Use new information. Updated data with new facts or research is often more convincing than old data.

5. Use evidence consistent with your audience's beliefs. It will be more persuasive because they'll evaluate everything from their own perspectives and attitudes.
6. Build credibility by also acknowledging and even including the other side of the argument. A two-way discussion will bear far more weight than a one-sided lecture.[5]

Evidence works best when it is suited to the audience and their experience. Consider the following presentation points:[6]

1. Referring to evidence as fact increases its weight.
2. Evidence that is verifiable will always be more persuasive.
3. Evidence that is specific will always be more persuasive.
4. Unbiased testimony is more persuasive than a biased one.
5. Personal experience is more persuasive than not having any personal experience.
6. Presenters who have not yet established their credibility will benefit more from the use of evidence than those with established credibility.
7. Evidence is especially important when the audience is unfamiliar with the topic.
8. Factual evidence is particularly persuasive when the audience consists of highly intelligent people.
9. Evidence is more persuasive when you provide not only the sources, but also their qualifications.
10. Evidence is more persuasive when you confirm an audience's beliefs.

[3]Gerard Tellis, *Advertising and Sales Promotion Strategy* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley), p. 138.

[4]George Miller, "The Magical Number of Seven," *Psychological Review* 63, 2.

[5]Charles Larson, *Persuasion* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth), pp. 222– 225.

[6]J. C. McCroskey, "A Summary of Experimental Research on the Effects of Evidence in Persuasive Communication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 55: 169–176.

Emotion: Winning People's Hearts

Whereas logic is the language of the conscious mind, emotion is the language of the unconscious mind. We know that emotions are reactions to perceived and imagined stimuli, not based on logic, but on one's own personal experiences. Emotions often outweigh our logic. Imagine placing a plank of wood on the ground and walking its length a few times. Easy enough, right? But suppose you placed it a hundred feet in the air between two buildings. You know you can walk that plank — you just did it over and over again. Yet now, emotions and fears outweigh logic. Your "what-ifs" and your imagination supersede the concrete knowledge of your ability to walk the plank.

In his book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman asserts that understanding emotions is more pertinent to leading a successful life than having a high intelligence. Often people of high IQ struggle at work because of their weaknesses in fundamental human relation skills. Goleman calls this skill "emotional intelligence." He emphasizes that emotional intelligence largely determines our success in relationships, work, and even physical wellness. Emotional intelligence "is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions." [7] Emotional intelligence includes emotional management, personal motivation, empathy, self-awareness, and social skills.

When you are persuading someone, emotions provide the springboard for a successful execution of your argument. In fact, I would even say emotions are the energy and very fuel of the persuasion process. Without tapping into your audience's emotions, there is no strength or energy in your message. Emotion is a power you can harness and use in practically every aspect of persuasion. Remember, logic is important, but emotion helps you catapult an otherwise dull or flat exchange to the next level.

Consider the following advantages of emotion over logic:

1. Arousing the emotions of your audience engages your listeners and distracts them from your intention to influence and persuade.
2. Emotion requires less effort than logic. Logic solicits cognitive effort, whereas emotion is automatic.
3. Presentations aimed at engaging the audience's emotions are usually more interesting than logical ones.
4. Emotion-based arguments are often easier to recall than logic-based arguments.
5. Emotion almost always leads more quickly to change than logic does. [8]

You must know when to create positive or negative emotions and when to dispel negative emotions.

You have to find ways to tap into your prospects' emotions, such as hope, love, pride, gratitude, and excitement. If you can do this, you can inspire anyone. Decide ahead of time what emotional climate you want to create, capture those emotions within yourself, and you'll be surprised how you can transfer those emotions to your audience.

[7]P. Salovey and J. D. Mayer, "Emotional Intelligence: Imagination, Cognition, and Personality," reprinted in *Human Emotions*, J. M. Jenkins, K. Oatley, and N. L. Stein, editors (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers), pp. 313–319.

[8]Tellis, *Advertising and Sales Promotion Strategy*, pp. 160–161.

Types of Emotions: Emotional Mastery

Over the centuries, philosophers have tried to categorize the very many complex emotions of humanity — no easy task. Aristotle came up with fourteen emotions:

- Anger
- Patience
- Friendship
- Enmity
- Fear
- Confidence
- Shame
- Shamelessness
- Emulation
- Contempt
- Kindness
- Pity
- Indignation

- Envy

Other philosophers argued that emotions are largely influenced by one's time period and culture. We will focus on a few major, elemental emotions, both positive and negative. In the persuasive process, you want to control negative emotions while constructing positive emotions. You don't want your message to end with negative feelings.

Worry

When your prospect is worried or preoccupied with something occurring now or that is about to happen in the future, your ability to persuade declines. Worry is feeling anxious, uneasy, or concerned about something that may or will happen, or has already happened. I have heard worry referred to as "negative goal setting." Anxiety creates tension — a fear that occupies our thoughts, which if encouraged will grow and continue to dominate our thoughts.

You can combat worry in your prospects by modifying their anxiety into thoughts of reality. Bring them back to reality by having them realize we can't change many things in life. Stress that most of the things we worry about are those very things we can't change and which won't likely ever happen in the first place. Help your prospects replace their negative mental images with positive ones.

Fear

Fear is anxiety or tension caused by danger, apprehension, harm, pain, or destruction. The possibility of harm can be real or imagined. Fear motivates and moves us away from unpleasant circumstances or potential destruction. Fear persuades us to do many things we might not otherwise do. Out of fear we buy life insurance, air bags, home alarms, and guns.

Fear does not work in every circumstance, however; if we were solely motivated by fear, we would never speed or start smoking. The proper dose of fear is essential in persuasion. If the dose is too small, it will not stimulate action. If the fear is too large, it will trigger resistance and acceptance will decrease.[9] For fear to stick and create action and persuasion, it must include the following steps:

1. The image of fear must be unpleasant, such as threat of pain, destruction, or grief.
2. It must be imminent. Your prospects must feel not only that the fearful event is likely to happen, but also that they could be victimized by its occurrence. They must feel vulnerable.
3. You must provide a solution to the fear. Give your prospects a recommended action to suspend or eliminate the fear.
4. Your prospects must believe they are capable of doing what is asked of them and that doing so will work for them.

Anger

Anger is a secondary emotion. A prospect's anger is usually an indicator that something else is askew and/or that he needs and wants attention. You can assist in diminishing his anger by determining the key issue he is upset about. It is also often effective to ask for his help, opinions, or advice. This will usually diffuse his anger or even change his attitude and demeanor completely. In some circumstances, you may want to use anger to make a certain point or to evoke a certain reaction.

Sympathy and Compassion

You can generate action for your cause by creating sympathy for it. When we see others victimized by misfortune that was beyond their control, we feel more sympathetic toward them and more motivated to help them. You've probably seen this technique used by marketers when they show you pictures of starving children, battered women, abandoned animals, and disabled adults.

Jealousy

Jealousy is the pain caused by seeing others' good fortune, not because we want what they have, but because we resent them for having it. The cause of jealousy is the false perception that one's worth lies in the possession of those goods.

Shame

Shame is pain and disrespect felt in connection to regrettable behaviors, experiences, or events. It often involves disgrace or loss of respect for oneself because we feel we have fallen in the eyes of our family, friends, or loved ones. We feel shame because of our vices, our abuses, or any of our perceived failures.

Pity

Pity is empathy we feel toward someone who has been unjustly trespassed against. We often feel pity for others due to death, injury, sickness, calamity, natural disaster, accidents, and so on. We can feel pity for people who are close to us as well as toward people we don't know at all.

Your Emotional Radar

When using emotions in persuasion, remember to pay attention to the circumstances that surround your presentation. Aristotle highlighted three aspects you should consider:

1. The nature of the actual experience (funeral, party, sporting event, fundraiser, or business meeting)

2. Those toward whom the message will be directed (blue or white collar, male or female, religion, race, common interests, or hobbies)

3. The likely emotion that will be created in participants (what is going to happen?)

[9]L. Janis and S. Feshbach, "Effects of Fear-Arousing Communications," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* (1953): 78–92.

Tip the Scale

As a Persuader you know how to use the dual engine of Balance. This dual engine allows you to fly straight and true in any persuasive situation; become a student of both logic and emotion and develop the ability to articulate logic that rings true to your audience; and learn how to use your human emotion radar. It will help you determine important aspects of your audience, such as what your prospects are feeling, what emotions they are trying to hide, and how you can use each of these emotions in the persuasive process. As a Master Persuader you know what emotion to use, when to use it, how to trigger specific emotions, and how to balance the audience's emotion with logic. Engineer your persuasive message with Balance.

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