

Supporting Your Ideas Notes

I. Speeches need strong supporting materials to bolster the speaker's point of view

A. A speech composed of unsupported assertions may leave an audience skeptical and unconvinced.

B. Specific and credible details are more convincing than are supported generalizations.

II. The use of supporting materials for a speech requires critical thinking

A. Choosing the supporting materials for a speech requires critical thinking.

1. Speakers must determine which ideas need to be supported given the audience, topic, and purpose.

2. Speakers must do research to find materials that will support their ideas clearly and creatively.

3. Speakers must evaluate their supporting materials to make sure they really do back up their ideas.

B. Assessing the quality of supporting materials in a speech requires critical thinking.

1. Speakers must make sure their supporting materials are credible.

2. Speakers must make sure their supporting materials are current.

3. Speakers must make sure their supporting materials are comprehensive.

III. Choosing support for the speech/your ideas.

- A. Examples – single occasion of an event.
- B. Statistics – compound examples.
- C. Testimony – “expert opinion” – Ex. Your roommate may be great, but is hardly qualified to comment on the use of lasers in surgical situations.
- D. Important to vary your use of support – too many stats or all examples will “bore” an audience. 3 ways to appeal.
 - 1. Logically – using stats, numbers, evidence and reasoning.
 - 2. Emotionally – real stories/examples that can make listeners feel sad, angry, guilty, afraid, proud...Can do that by:
 - a. Developing vivid examples.
 - b. Speak with sincerity and conviction.
 - 3. Ethical appeals can also be called credibility of a speaker – 2 major factors is an audience’s perception of how believable a speaker is.
 - a. Competence – how audience regards a speakers intelligence, expertise and knowledge.
 - b. Character – how audience regards a speaker’s sincerity, trustworthiness, and concern for the well being of an audience.

VI. Examples are the first major kind of supporting material

- A. Examples are an excellent way to get an audience involved with a speech.
 - 1. They provide concrete details that make ideas specific, personal, and lively.
 - 2. Researchers have found that examples have more impact on an audience’s beliefs than any other kind of supporting materials.

B. There are three types of examples-brief, extended, and hypothetical.

1. Brief examples are specific instances that a speaker refers to in passing.

a. They are often employed when a speaker wants to quickly illustrate a point.

b. They are sometimes used when a speaker is introducing a topic.

c. They are also effective when stacked up to reinforce a speaker's point.

2. Extended examples are no longer and more detailed than brief examples.

a. They are often called illustrations, narratives, or anecdotes.

b. Because they tell a story vividly and dramatically, they are an excellent way to pull listeners into a speech.

3. Hypothetical examples describe an imagery situation.

a. They are especially effective for relating a general principle directly to the audience.

b. Whenever a speaker uses a hypothetical example, it should be supplemented with statistics or testimony to show that the example could really occur.

C. There are several tips for using examples effectively.

1. A speaker should use examples to clarify ideas.

2. A speaker should use examples to reinforce ideas.

3. A speaker should use examples to personalize ideas.

V. Statistics are the second major kind of supporting material.

A. When used properly, statistics are an effective way to support a speaker's ideas.

1. Like brief examples, statistics can be cited in passing to clarify or strengthen a speaker's points.
2. Statistics can also be used in combination to show the magnitude or seriousness of an issue.

B. Because statistics can be easily manipulated and distorted, speakers should evaluate their statistics carefully.

1. Speakers need to make sure their statistics are representative of what they claim to measure.
2. Speakers need to understand the differences among basic statistical measures such as the mean, the median, and the mode.
3. Speakers need to determine whether their statistics come from reliable sources.

C. There are several tips for using statistics effectively.

1. Statistics should be used to quantify ideas.
2. Statistics should be used sparingly.
3. The source of statistics should be identified in the speech.
4. Statistics should be explained and made meaningful to the audience.
5. Complicated statistics should be rounded off.
6. Statistical trends should be clarified with visual aids.

VI. Testimony is the third basic kind of supporting material.

- A. Testimony can be highly effective when used in a speech.
 - 1. Listeners are often influenced by people who have special knowledge or experience on a topic.
 - 2. By quoting or paraphrasing such people, speakers can give their ideas greater strength and impact.
- B. There are two kinds of testimony-expert testimony and peer testimony.
 - 1. Expert testimony comes from people who are acknowledged authorities in their fields.
 - a. This type of testimony provides credibility when the speaker is not an expert on the speech topic.
 - b. Expert testimony is especially important when the topic is controversial or when the audience is skeptical about the speaker's point of view.
 - 2. Peer testimony comes from ordinary people who have firsthand experience with a topic.
 - a. This type of testimony gives a more personal viewpoint than can be gained by expert testimony.
 - b. It usually has much greater authenticity and emotional impact than does expert testimony.
- C. Testimony can be presented by quoting or by paraphrasing.
 - 1. One way to present testimony is by quoting word for word.
 - a. Quotations are most effective when they are brief.

- b. Quotations are most effective when they convey the speaker's meaning better than the speaker's own words.
 - 2. Another way to present testimony is by paraphrasing.
 - a. Paraphrasing is preferable when the wording of a quotation is obscure or awkward.
 - b. Paraphrasing is preferable when the quotation is longer than two or three sentences.
- D. There are several tips for using testimony effectively.
 - 1. Speakers should quote or paraphrase accurately.
 - 2. Speakers should use testimony from qualified sources.
 - 3. Speakers should use testimony from unbiased sources.
 - 4. Speakers should identify the people being quoted or paraphrased.

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