

# The Three Ways to Persuade

More than 2,000 years ago, a Greek philosopher named **Aristotle** said that every persuasive speech uses three basic tools: **ethos**, **logos**, and **pathos**. These three words are still used today by speakers, advertisers, and business leaders. Let's look at each one.

## 1. Ethos — Trust the Speaker

**Ethos** means **credibility** — how much the audience trusts and respects the speaker. A speaker builds ethos in three ways:

- **Being competent:** They clearly know their topic. Good research and a well-organized speech make a speaker look like an expert.
- **Being trustworthy:** They tell the truth, don't try to trick the audience, and treat both sides of an argument fairly.
- **Being dynamic:** They speak with energy, confidence, and enthusiasm. Eye contact and a strong voice help a lot here.

**Simple example:** A doctor talking about health, or a company founder explaining their own product, already has some **ethos** before they even start speaking — because of *who they are*.

**Keywords:** credibility, trust, expertise

## 2. Logos — Trust the Facts

**Logos** means using **logic and reasoning**. A speaker appeals to logos by:

- Giving facts, statistics, and real examples.
- Explaining ideas step by step, so conclusions make sense.
- Using reliable sources (studies, experts, data).
- Addressing the *other side* of the argument and explaining why it's weaker — research shows this is actually **more** persuasive than only presenting one side.

**Simple example:** "This new type of solar panel reduces electricity costs by 30%, according to three independent studies."

**Keywords:** facts, statistics, logic, evidence

### 3. Pathos — Trust the Feeling

**Pathos** means appealing to **emotion**. A speaker uses pathos by:

- Using vivid, descriptive language that helps the audience *picture* something.
- Telling a personal story (their own, or someone else's).
- Using comparisons (metaphors, similes) and repetition.
- Using powerful images or video.

**Simple example:** "Imagine a child walking two hours every day just to find clean water." This sentence doesn't give a statistic — it makes you **feel** something.

**Keywords:** emotion, story, imagery

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### While/After You Read: Comprehension Activity

#### A. Match the keyword to the technique

| Keyword                                              | Technique |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. "According to three studies..."                   | a. Ethos  |
| 2. "As a nurse with 15 years of experience..."       | b. Logos  |
| 3. "Picture a family losing everything overnight..." | c. Pathos |

#### B. True or False?

1. Ethos is only about being famous.
2. Logos includes addressing the opposing argument, not just giving your own facts.
3. Pathos should be the **ONLY** technique in a strong speech.
4. A good speech usually combines all three techniques.

### C. Find Your Keyword

In pairs: one of you focuses on **ethos**, the other on **logos** or **pathos**. Explain your technique to your partner **in your own words**, using the keyword box above — no reading directly from the text.

### Source

Anonymous. (n.d.). *10.2: Persuasive speech strategies*. Social Sci LibreTexts.

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