



Persuasive Appeals

The persuasive appeals are ethos, pathos, and logos. This tip sheet will help you identify these appeals in others' arguments and help you use them to build your own arguments.

Ethos

Ethos, or the ethical appeal, is the appeal to your character. Communicators must persuade the audience they can be trusted by showing that they have:

- Good sense—they have a good understanding of the topic they are arguing about,
- Good will—they are on the audience's side,
- Good character—they are a good person.

Examples of ethical appeals: *As a professor of economics at Princeton, I say we need tax reform.* (good sense)
My tax plan would help you all save money. (good will)
I give money to charity every year. With my tax plan, I could donate even more. (good character)

Pathos

Pathos, or the pathetic appeal, is the appeal to the audience's emotions or state of mind, such as fear, anger, sadness, or excitement. Examples of pathetic appeals:

Examples of pathetic appeals: *Without your donation, people will go hungry.* (sympathy)
We've had enough of this corrupt administration! (anger)
Don't you want your children to be safe? (fear)

Logos

Logos, or the logical appeal, is the appeal to the audience's sense of sound reasoning. Logos is commonly associated with the use of statistics and facts; however, logos includes any argument that attempts to draw a conclusion from premises. Logical appeals are often built on examples.

Examples of logical appeals: *We should not let a demagogue hold office. Last year, when we elected a demagogue, he tried to declare himself dictator.*

Students like class activities involving social media. In a poll, 95% of students said they enjoyed Dr. Brown's blog assignment.

Many scholars acknowledge the income cap. For instance, economist Paul Krugman states that "the country has returned to Gilded Age levels of inequality."