**Definition**

**A persuasive speech** is a [specific](https://www.boundless.com/communications/definition/specific/) type of speech in which the speaker has a goal of convincing the audience to accept his or her point of view. The speech is arranged in such a way as to hopefully cause the audience to accept all or part of the expressed view. Though the overarching goal of a persuasive speech is to convince the audience to accept a perspective, not all audiences can be convinced by a single speech and not all perspectives can persuade the audience. Persuasive speeches can be designed to convince, incite action, or enhance belief by the audience.

**Components of a Persuasive Speech**

Persuasive speeches are composed of both logical and emotional appeals.

1. Logic appeals are arguments that present a set of information and show why a conclusion must rationally be true. For example, arguments heard in court are logical arguments.
2. Emotional appeals are appeals that seek to make the audience feel a certain way so that they will accept a conclusion. Negative political ads, for example, often incorporate emotional appeals by juxtaposing an opponent with a negative emotion such as fear.

**Types of Persuasive Speeches**

1. **Convincing speeches** aim to get the audience to **change their mind** to accept the view put forth in the speech.
   1. A convincing speech is designed to cause the audience to internalize and believe a viewpoint that they did not previously hold.
   2. In a sense, a convincing argument changes the audience's mind.
2. **Actuation speeches** seek to incite a **certain action** in the audience.
   1. An actuation speech has a slightly different goal. An actuation speech is designed to cause the audience to do something, to take some action.
   2. This type of speech is particularly useful if the audience already shares some or all of your view.
      1. For example, at the end of presidential campaigns, candidates begin to focus on convincing their supporters to actually vote. They are seeking to actuate the action of voting through their speeches.
3. **Stimulation speeches** are designed to get an **audience to believe** more enthusiastically in a view.
   1. Persuasive speeches can also be used to enhance how fervently the audience believes in an idea.
   2. In this instance, the speaker understands that the audience already believes in the viewpoint, but not to the degree that he or she would like. As a result, the speaker tries to stimulate the audience, making them more enthusiastic about the view.
      1. For example, religious services often utilize stimulation. They are not trying to convince those of another religion to switch religions necessarily; there is an [understanding](https://www.boundless.com/communications/definition/understanding/) that the congregation already accepts part or all of the religion. Instead, they are trying to enhance the degree of belief.

**ETHOS – PATHOS – LOGOS**

The goal of persuasive speaking to persuade your audience that your ideas are valid, or more valid than someone else's ideas. The **Greek philosopher Aristotle** divided the means of persuasion, appeals, into three categories--**Ethos, Pathos, Logos.**

**Ethos (Credibility),** or **ethical appeal**, means convincing by the character of the author. We tend to believe people whom we respect. One of the central problems of argumentation is to project an impression to the reader that you are someone worth listening to, in other words making yourself as author into an authority on the subject of the paper, as well as someone who is likable and worthy of respect.

**Ethos (Greek for 'character')** refers to the trustworthiness or credibility of the writer or speaker. Ethos is often conveyed through tone and style of the message and through the way the writer or speaker refers to differing views. It can also be affected by the writer's reputation as it exists independently from the message--his or her expertise in the field, his or her previous record or integrity, and so forth. The impact of ethos is often called the argument's 'ethical appeal' or the 'appeal from credibility.'

**Pathos (Emotional)** means persuading by appealing to the reader's emotions. We can look at texts ranging from classic essays to contemporary advertisements to see how pathos, emotional appeals, are used to persuade. Language choice affects the audience's emotional response, and emotional appeal can effectively be used to enhance an argument.

**Pathos (Greek for 'suffering' or 'experience')** is often associated with emotional appeal. But a better equivalent might be 'appeal to the audience's sympathies and imagination.' An appeal to pathos causes an audience not just to respond emotionally but to identify with the writer's point of view--to feel what the writer feels. In this sense, pathos evokes a meaning implicit in the verb 'to suffer'--to feel pain imaginatively.... Perhaps the most common way of conveying a pathetic appeal is through narrative or story, which can turn the abstractions of logic into something palpable and present. The values, beliefs, and understandings of the writer are implicit in the story and conveyed imaginatively to the reader. Pathos thus refers to both the emotional and the imaginative impact of the message on an audience, the power with which the writer's message moves the audience to decision or action.

**Logos** **(Logical)** means persuading by the use of reasoning.

**Logos (Greek for 'word')** refers to the internal consistency of the message--the clarity of the claim, the logic of its reasons, and the effectiveness of its supporting evidence. The impact of logos on an audience is sometimes called the argument's logical appeal.