



Comm Skills Virtual Learning

Public Speaking
Ethics in Persuasion

May 18, 2020



Lesson: May 18, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will recognize that propaganda activates strong emotions, simplifies ideas, appeals to audience needs, and values, and targets opponents.

Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

Just as you hope others are attentive to your speech, it is important to know how to **listen ethically**—in effort to show respect to other speakers.

What does it mean to listen ethically?

Do you think you are a good listener? Why or why not?

Lesson/Activity

Jordan stood to give his presentation to the class. He knew he was knowledgeable about his chosen topic, the Chicago Bears football team, and had practiced for days, but public speaking always gave him anxiety. He asked for a show of hands during his attention getter, and only a few people acknowledged him. Jordan's anxiety worsened as he continued his speech. He noticed that many of his classmates were texting on their phones. Two girls on the right side were passing a note back and forth. When Jordan received his peer critique forms, most of his classmates simply said, "Good job" without giving any explanation. One of his classmates wrote, "Bears SUCK!"

Communicating is not a one-way street. Jordan's peers were not being ethical listeners. All individuals involved in the communication process have ethical responsibilities. An ethical communicator tries to understand and respect other communicators before evaluating and responding to their messages.

Lesson/Activity

The act of hearing is what our body does physically; our ear takes in sound waves. However, when we interpret (or make sense of) those sound waves, that's called **listening**. Think about the last time you gave a speech. How did the audience members act? Do you remember the people that seemed most attentive? Those audience members were displaying traits of ethical listening. An **ethical listener** is one who actively interprets shared material and analyzes the content and speaker's effectiveness. Good listeners try to display respect for the speaker. Communicating respect for the speaker occurs when the listener: a) prepares to listen and b) listens with his or her whole body.

Lesson/Activity

One way you can prepare yourself to listen is to get rid of distractions. If you've selected a seat near the radiator and find it hard to hear over the noise, you may want to move before the speaker begins. If you had a fight with your friend before work that morning, you may want to take a moment to collect your thoughts and put the argument out of your mind—so that you can prevent internal distraction during the staff meeting presentation. As a professional, you are aware of the types of things and behaviors that distract you from the speaker; it is your obligation to manage these distractions before the speaker begins.

Lesson/Activity

In order to ethically listen, it's also imperative to listen with more than just your ears—your critical mind should also be at work. Two other things you can do to prepare are to avoid prejudging the speaker and refrain from jumping to conclusions while the speaker is talking. Effective listening can only occur when we're actually attending to the message. Conversely, listening is interrupted when we're pre-judging the speaker, stereotyping the speaker, or making mental counterarguments to the speaker's claims. You have the right to disagree with a speaker's content, but wait until the speaker is finished and has presented his or her whole argument to draw such a conclusion.

Lesson/Activity

Ethical listening doesn't just take place inside the body. In order to show your attentiveness, it is necessary to consider how your body is listening. A listening posture enhances your ability to receive information and make sense of a message. An attentive listening posture includes sitting up and remaining alert, keeping eye contact with the speaker and his or her visual aid, removing distractions from your area, and taking notes when necessary. Also, if you're enjoying a particular speaker, it's helpful to provide positive nonverbal cues like head-nodding, occasional smiling, and eye-contact. These practices can aid you in successful, ethical listening. However, know that listening is sometimes only the first step in this process—many times listeners are asked to provide feedback

Practice

What is propaganda?

Watch this [video](#).

Next, [read](#) this curated list of definitions of propaganda. Record those that you think best match your understanding.

At the same [site](#), locate and identify the four common techniques used in propaganda. Then, make a list of where propaganda is found.

Finally, use the [Propaganda Techniques](#) button in the upper right to browse examples.

Additional Resources

[Advertising and Propaganda Techniques](#)

[Digital Literacy and Propaganda](#)

[What is Propaganda?](#)