

Arrangement, Style, and Delivery*

In this chapter, we explore three aspects of rhetoric important to argumentation and debate: arrangement, style, and delivery. Presenting arguments persuasively is essential in convincing a judge or audience. Arrangement, style, and delivery are important to such efforts. Arrangement is the manner in which you organize your arguments. Style is concerned with the linguistic devices; delivery is the verbal and nonverbal manner in which you present your arguments. You must understand all three if you are to succeed in debate.

ARRANGEMENT OF ARGUMENTS

Arrangement, or organization, is an important element of any debate. Typically, you as debater would organize your speech strategically, beginning with an overview of how you will proceed so that the audience has a clear understanding of your intent. For example, “First, I will offer my own arguments before moving on to my opponent’s case, and I will offer three contentions in support of this resolution.” You then present your arguments, placing the strongest arguments first for both perceptual and practical (lack of time) reasons. As the debate develops, summarize and create a clear focus for the audience (e.g., “At this juncture, the main point that we are disagreeing about is the meaning of the words ‘official language’”). This process not only makes arguments clearer but also involves the audience and establishes a sense of order in the debate.

You can arrange your arguments in a variety of ways. Below, we discuss five of the most important.

ARRANGING BY TOPIC

Perhaps the most obvious way to arrange a speech or argument is by topic. You can use five different approaches:

1. Organize by definition. Take a key term or phrase and formulate your speech entirely around how the word or phrase is defined. For instance, a discussion about environmental pollution may hinge on the definition of *environmental*.

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