



## ARGUING CONSTRUCTIVELY

### **Instructor Guide**



West Virginia Department of Transportation  
Division of Highways  
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**Introduction** **Slide 1**

Welcome to the “Arguing Constructively to Win” workshop. Persuasion and arguing controversial issues can be very stimulating, challenging, and constructive once you get the hang of it. Because interest and enjoyment is so high in such situations, we could conclude that there are few more rewarding ways of interacting with people. Contrasted with these pleasant experiences are encounters which we would like to forget. All of us have probably participated in arguments which resulted in hurt feelings, anger, frustration, confusion, embarrassment, and even damaged or broken relationships. Such experiences may have led us to conclude that arguing is a destructive form of communication which should be avoided. Some people seem to go to almost any length to avoid a potential argument.

However, arguing is a critical skill that will help us be more successful in our jobs and personal lives, especially if we are supervisors. As supervisors, we must continually respond to controversial issues that are brought to us by our employees, bosses, and co-workers. The more critical the issue, the more important it is for us to be effective arguers.

**Workshop Objectives**

By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

- Define argumentativeness
- Explain the effects of verbal aggression
- Explain the benefits of effective argument
- Identify the five (5) components of effective argument
- Describe the four (4) approaches to dealing with controversy
- Explain the Inventional System
- Analyze your adversary
- Invent and present an argument
- Describe strategies for maintaining relationships after arguments

**Slide 1 What is Argument?**

Ask – “Why do we argue?”

List reasons on flip chart.

The issue is vital to our self-interest or in the best interests of another person

Intense curiosity

We want to solve a problem

To improve cooperation – who should do what?

Entertainment - Political issues or religion arguments can be more fun than games for amusement – if done the right way

If you're forced to play (argue), it's not as much fun.

We shouldn't always argue in social situations – Sometimes it's best to say nothing.

**ARGUING IS GOOD FOR YOU – UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS AND WHEN ARGUMENTS ARE CONDUCTED IN A CERTAIN MANNER.**

“So why would you want to do it better?”

Define Argumentativeness – “ a generally stable trait which predisposes the individual in communication situations to advocate positions on controversial issues and to attack verbally the positions which other people take on these issues.” ( underlying motivation to argue)

**Simply put – it's a CLAIM backed by REASON.**

What do you do when you recognize the potential for controversy in a situation? Do you nearly always engage in argumentative communication? If you do, you probably argue too much. Arguing requires restraint and moderation in order to realize maximum benefits. A person who is too willing to clash verbally with other people is usually perceived as quarrelsome, too aggressive, too combative, unaccommodating, or unfriendly.

At the other end, do you almost never speak up when you realize your position on an issue conflicts with the other guys'? If so, you are probably too compliant, too timid, and as a result you allow things to happen which sometimes are not in your best interests. Arguing enables you to exert some control over your life. Avoiding arguments tends to encourage others to have their way, and you are left with the unsettling feeling that they have taken advantage of your easygoing, agreeable manner.

A more desirable style is somewhere between the two. Controversy is seldom absent from our daily routines. Often, we can deal with the issue by informing the other person of our position. At other times, we can attempt persuasion but not push the interaction as far as an argument.

***Tell participants:*** “Each table group will be creating and presenting a short argument of your own choosing by the end of the training. As you progress on through the training, you should identify what subject they wish to argue to the group. You will only be presenting your arguments to the group at your table, not to the larger group.”

**Let's watch a video that will help... (play the Monty Python sketch “The Argument Clinic)**

**Slide 2 “Argument Clinic” video**

After the video is completed, debrief with discussion of their impressions of the video, then say “Now let’s take a brief look at another form of argument – persuasion.”

**Slide 3 Six Rules of Influence**

A professor named Robert Cialdini lived and worked with professionals by taking part-time jobs, fund-raising with groups, as a regular person, not as a scientist. He made a real connection between the theories he taught at school and the real-world jobs. He came up with these 6 cues of influence. They tend to be consistent by occupation, sex, region, personality, religion, education and ethnicity. They work!

1. **Comparison:** *Tupperware, Mary Kay parties / laugh tracks on TV, influence of mass behavior that allows a person to be mugged in full view of a crowd and no one helps the victim because no one wants to break out of the crowd*
2. **Liking:** *attractive models in ads, friendly greetings of telemarketers*
3. **Authority:** *Dr. Marcus Welby – aspirin ad that used Robert Young to sell the product as Dr. Welby*
4. **Reciprocity:** *“Free” gifts from non-profits*
5. **Commitment/Consistency:** *“I’m sure you’ll sell lots of those Nitros, but what I want to look at is a 4-door Jeep Wrangler.”*
6. **Scarcity:** *Home Shopping Network ; Cabbage Patch dolls; real estate agents*

**Slide 4 What Does A Good Argument Look Like?**

1. Shows what position we hold
2. Allows others to present their point of view
3. Helps us reach and understand new views
4. Does not “stomp” on people

This is what your argument should “look” like. The last thing you should do is attack the person. It’s OK to attack his facts, evidence, etc., but you never attack him personally.

**Slide 5 Why should we learn to argue?**

Actual argument involves presenting and defending a position on a controversial issue and attacking the positions others take. There are no attacks on others personally to hurt them or to make them question their self-worth. This is the shift from constructive to destructive argument.

Why is it important to learn to argue?

It’s an effective tool for dealing with controversies in our lives – when we realize that our positions on an issue are not compatible with someone else’s.

Examples: what to have for breakfast

Play golf or clean house?

What to watch on TV

We can use the informative approach – you want to the other guy to have information about your position on the issue and to use it as he sees fit

Persuasive approach – we explain our position on the issue and the reasons for the position to influence the other guy to agree

Argumentative approach – we use the informative and persuasive aspects; we each attack the other's position in order to establish the superiority of our own position.

Arguing enables us to exert some control over our lives. Avoiding them tends to encourage others to have their way and we might feel taken advantage of.

In between these two extremes is the most desirable style. We can use informative and persuasive styles instead of arguing.

### Benefits of Arguing

1. Stimulates curiosity
2. Increases learning
3. Reduces ego-centric thinking
4. Improves social-perspective taking
5. Stimulates creativity
6. Enhances quality of decision-making

We're seen as more...

1. Dynamic
2. Expert
3. Interested
4. Skillful as arguers

Review the benefits and offer examples. Then state, "We're seen as more Dynamic...Expert...Interested...and more skillful as arguers when we improve our skills."

### Slide 7 Logos

Logos is about facts, numbers, and information. These can be very convincing. An example might be, "A Snickers bar has 280 calories and 30 grams of sugar. That's not very healthy."

### Slide 8 Pathos

Pathos is an appeal to emotions. Getting people to feel happy, sad, or angry can help your argument. An example might be: Your donation might just get this puppy off of the street and into a good home. This should never take the place of good, solid logic, evidence, reasoning, data, etc.

### Slide 9 Ethos

If people believe and trust in you, you're more likely to persuade them.

Slides 10-11 Delivery

We often assume that people with poor delivery also do not know what they are talking about. Thus a poor delivery leads many receivers to doubt the source's competence and character. Think about your average workday. Consider how often you are talking to people, particularly how often you are explaining, illustrating, lecturing, demonstrating, and providing information through the use of both verbal and nonverbal messages. You use communication A LOT.

How many workshops have you taken that explored the dimensions of effective delivery? Certainly you've had opportunities to have experts observe your communication and received feedback from them. Have you ever videotaped your communication, then critically reviewed it yourself?

Of course you haven't.

Effective communication delivery is critical to successful work, yet most people are not properly prepared. Let's briefly look at how important delivery is.

Delivery – the physical production of our messages – HOW you say it, not WHAT you say.

Delivery...

Influences our mental state

Affects Receiver comprehension of information

Influences our credibility

Slide 12 Constructive Argument

We have two sides to argument – constructive and destructive. All of our arguments should be constructive, stimulating, positive experiences. You can learn how to argue constructively and control arguments so that they don't become destructive. On a daily basis, we realize that positions on an issue between us and another person are incompatible. It can be as simple as differing with your spouse over where to eat out.

Slide 13 Facets of Constructive Argument

We have two forms of communication traits that affect our ability to argue effectively:

**Assertiveness:** When we stand up for ourselves and don't let others take advantage of us, without taking advantage of others ourselves.

**Argumentativeness:** When we have the ability to recognize controversial issues in communication situations, to present and defend positions on those issues, and to attack the other guy's positions

Let's see now how argumentative you really are by taking a self-assessment of your

**Activity: complete the Argumentativeness Scale.**

**ARGUMENTATIVENESS SCALE\***

The argumentativeness scale is designed to measure the degree to which an individual presents and defends positions on controversial issues while simultaneously attacking the positions which other people take on issues. This concept is similar to that of tolerance for disagreement. People with a high tolerance for disagreement are likely to be more argumentative than those people who are low in tolerance for disagreement.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

This questionnaire contains statements about arguing controversial issues. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the statement

- 1 – almost never true
- 2 – rarely true
- 3 – occasionally true
- 4 – often true
- 5 – almost always true

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Arguing over controversial issues improves my intelligence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I enjoy avoiding arguments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Once I finish an argument I promise myself that I will not get into another.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I have a pleasant, good feeling when I win a point in an argument.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When I finish arguing with someone I feel nervous and upset.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I enjoy defending my point of view on an issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I do not like to miss the opportunity to argue a controversial issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I prefer being with people who rarely disagree with me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I feel refreshed and satisfied after an argument on a controversial issue.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I have the ability to do well in an argument.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. I try to avoid getting into arguments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I feel excitement when I expect that a conversation I am in is leading to an argument.

**ARGUMENTATIVENESS SCORING**

- 1. Add scores on items: 2, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20
- 2. Add 60 to the sum obtained in step one (1).
- 3. Add scores on items: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 19
- 4. To compute your argumentativeness score, subtract the total obtained in step 3 from the total obtained in step 2.

**INTERPRETATION:**

- 73-100 = High in Argumentativeness
- 56-72 = Moderate in Argumentativeness
- 20-55 = Low in Argumentativeness

\*From: Infante, D.A. & Rancer, A.S. (1982). A conceptualization and measure of argumentativeness. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 46, 72-80.

**Debrief:** Do you agree with the level to which you like to argue? Shall we argue a bit about that?

Slide 14 Facets of Destructive Argument

Verbal Aggressiveness: When we attack the self-confidence, character, and/or intelligence of another person in addition to, or instead of, their position on an issue.

Hostility: When we use messages to express irritability, negativity, resentment, and suspicion an attitude, a dislike of a particular person, object, or issue, accompanied by a desire to see this target injured or even destroyed.

Slide 15 Verbal Aggression

What does verbal aggression sound look like? What does verbal aggression sound look like? Can you think of any times when you heard or observed verbal aggression at work? What effects do you think it has on us at work?

**Complete Activity – Verbal Aggressiveness scale** Complete the scale and debrief by discussing results.

**VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS SCALE \***

This survey is concerned with how we try to get people to comply with our wishes. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally when you try to influence other persons. Use the following scale:

- 1 – almost never true
- 2 – rarely true
- 3 – occasionally true
- 4 – often true
- 5 – almost always true

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individual's intelligence when I attack their ideas.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. When individuals are very stubborn, I use insults to soften the stubbornness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I try very hard to avoid having other people feel bad about themselves when I try to influence them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. When people refuse to do a task I know is important, without good reason, I tell them they are unreasonable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. When others do things I regard as stupid, I try to be extremely gentle with them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. If individuals I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. When people behave in ways that are in very poor taste, I insult them in order to shock them into proper behavior.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When people simply will not budge on a matter of importance I lose my temper and say rather strong things to them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. When people criticize my shortcomings, I take it in good humor and do not try to get back at them.

- \_\_\_\_\_11. When individuals insult me, I get a lot of pleasure out of really telling them off.
- \_\_\_\_\_12. When I dislike individuals greatly, I try not to show it in what I say or how I say it.
- \_\_\_\_\_13. I like poking fun at people who do things which are very stupid in order to stimulate their intelligence.
- \_\_\_\_\_14. When I attack a person's ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.
- \_\_\_\_\_15. When I try to influence people, I make a great effort not to offend them.
- \_\_\_\_\_16. When people do things which are mean or cruel, I attack their character in order to help correct their behavior.
- \_\_\_\_\_17. I refuse to participate in arguments when they involve personal attacks.
- \_\_\_\_\_18. When nothing seems to work in trying to influence others, I yell and scream in order to get some movement from them.
- \_\_\_\_\_19. When I am not able to refute others' positions, I try to make them feel defensive in order to weaken their positions.
- \_\_\_\_\_20. When an argument shifts to personal attacks, I try very hard to change the subject.

**VERBAL AGGRESSIVENESS SCORING**

1. Add your scores on items: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19
  2. Add your scores on items: 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 20
  3. Subtract the sum obtained in step two (2) from 60
  4. To compute your verbal aggressiveness score, add the total obtained in step 1 to the result obtained in step 3
- INTERPRETATION:
- |          |   |                                   |
|----------|---|-----------------------------------|
| 59 – 100 | = | High in Verbal Aggressiveness     |
| 39 – 58  | = | Moderate in Verbal Aggressiveness |
| 20 – 38  | = | Low in Verbal Aggressiveness      |

**From: Infante, D.A., & Wigley, C.J., (1986). Verbal aggressiveness: An interpersonal model and measure. *Communication Monographs*, 53, 61-69.**

**Slide 16 Effects of Verbal Aggression**

These are the effects of verbal aggression. What we do know is that most of us learn to use verbal aggression from our families or friends. Many times we use it when we run out of argument and become frustrated if we think the other guy is going to “win.” If we improve our ability to argue, we are less likely to use verbal aggression.

**Slide 17 Strategies for Controlling Verbal Aggression**

One of the simplest things we can do to control verbal aggression in others is simply leave. Another way to get the message across is to show the difference between argument and VA. It is really hard to justify using verbal aggression, so bringing it to his attention might make him stop. Sometimes an appeal to rationality might work and lastly, be sure that you don't fall for it and start being verbally aggressive yourself. Take the high road and don't fall for it.

**Slide 18 The Inventional System of Arguing**

The system is simply a process by which we can invent our argument and present it logically and persuasively. This system is based on two concepts...

1. Showing there is a need to change the status quo
2. Showing that your proposal will satisfy the need

**Slide 19 Here's how we do it...**

Peanut Butter Soda Crackers

Major issues: PBSC

Sub Issues:

Problem:

1. What are the signs of the problem?
2. What is the specific harm?
3. How widespread is the harm?

Blame:

1. What causes the problem?
2. Is the present system at fault?
3. Should the present system be changed?

Solution:

1. What are the possible solutions?
2. Which solution best solves the problem?

Consequences:

1. What good outcomes will result from the solution?
2. What bad outcomes will result from the solution?

This system will enable you to have something relevant, and hopefully, intelligent to say on most of the topics you ever encounter. The 4 major issues and their sub-issues are general and can be applied to any topic or proposal.

These questions focus around the idea of problem-solution. Also, if you're able to answer all of these questions for a given proposal which is argued, you can have some confidence that you have reasonably covered the topic. A good system of analysis reduces the chances that you will miss something of importance.

**Slide 20 How the system works for you...**

Review the items on the slide and say, "In answering these questions, we analyze what the person says to determine which of the four major issues he ignored. We also look to see if he said enough about the issues. Then we decide if we agree with what he said for each issue.

If he ignores certain points, you can argue that he has the obligation to establish those points. For example, if a person advocates legalizing casino gambling and emphasizes the good consequences, you could press him on the Problem and Blame by saying, "What's wrong with the way things are now? Who is being harmed by current gambling policies? Just how great is the harm?"

If he doesn't say enough on the issue, you could challenge him like this: "You said our current gambling policy is deficient because it encourages organized crime. Are you saying everyone in WV is becoming a member of organized crime, or are you saying one person is, or something in between? I think you need to clarify that conclusion." Usually you can come up with an argument when you realize the person didn't say enough on the issue.

For the third point, you determine whether you agree with what he said for the issues. Where you disagree will be the basis for the direct clash with your opponent. For the previous two

points, the arguments were indirect; they were challenges for him to say more. Now a more direct clash involves questioning his particular evidence and/or reasoning. If he states that casino gambling will benefit education greatly in terms of increased revenues, you might say, "The past performance of casino gambling in improving educational finances has not been especially good. The educational systems of NJ and Nevada did not change much due to gambling revenues." Having actual data to refute this would be very helpful. This more direct opposition is the exciting part of arguing. Being prepared with logic, data, and evidence is very important to your success.

***Activity: Argument Editorial Activity. Have participants at each table read one of the editorial handouts. Each participant at that table will receive a copy to read on his/her own. After they have read the editorial, they are to turn to page seven (7) of their handouts and complete the activity which relates to their editorial.***

***Debrief:*** Explain to participants that reading editorials and analyzing them will help them increase their abilities to present and defend their own arguments with others.

## Slide 21 Presenting and Defending Your Position

To present an argument, you should use these four steps:

1. State what you are claiming – very simply when you state what you are claiming, it is assumed that you are prepared to support your claim and also that you are willing to defend it. If not, then there is no argument, just an emotional expression or self-disclosure of beliefs.
2. Present the evidence for your claim - Here you present the evidence for your claim. Evidence is the substance which bears on your claim. Examples are statistics or testimony. When you have more than one example you can summarize and characterize the data. You will then be using statistics - a very powerful type of evidence used to support claims. Averages, medians, group comparisons, etc. are all statistical tools which can be used to advantage. Testimony involves quoting a source who has said something relevant to your claim. Be sure to consider the credibility of your testimony source. Sometimes celebrities who are passionate about an issue will make statements and present evidence or testimony supporting their arguments. Just because the celebrity is passionate about the issue does not particularly make him or her a credible source of testimony. Sometimes these individuals have actually taken the time to get a deeper understanding of the issue and therefore may be more credible.

In formal debate there is a good deal of opportunity to gather evidence – the research phase. The first time you argue a proposition you must get by with the evidence you already possess. However, developing a desire to be informed creates information-seeking habits which make it likely you almost always have at least some relevant information.

3. Present reasons for your claim – these represent our attempts to convince others that our claim is justified by our evidence. This is a particularly important part of presenting an argument. We have three ways to do this: motivational, authoritative, and expected

relationships. If it's motivational, we base it on the other person's values, needs, and attitudes. If it's authoritative, we base it on the credibility of the source of our evidence. When you know the source of your evidence, and you think that it would help acceptance of your claim, mention that the credibility of the source leaves little room for doubting your evidence. Lastly, we argue that we have come to expect certain things and that our evidence-claim combination represents such a relationship. Example: "Russia will probably violate a proposed nuclear arms reduction agreement with the US.," and base the claim on the evidence that "Russia has violated 50 of 52 previous international agreements." Your reasoning is that past violations are indicators of future violations.

4. Summarize to show what you've established – this is especially necessary when your argument is not brief. It will provide the listener with an additional opportunity to understand the implications of what you are saying. Sometimes the mere repetition of the material increases the chance of acceptance.

**Activity: Position Statements. Review the worksheet on page eight (8). Ask participants to consider what they are going to present in their argument and to begin by writing in their topic, viewpoint on the topic, and some examples on page nine (9) of their handouts.**

#### Slide 22 Defending Your Position

Rebuttal is the part of the arguing process where you attempt to rebuild your position...it is also the point at which most people lose their arguments due to lack of planning and skill.

1. Summarize your original argument
2. Review your opponent's refutation
3. Present and support your refutations to the attack
4. Summarize your defense, emphasizing the validity of your original position

#### Slide 23 Presenting and Defending Your Refutation

Refutation is the part of an argument in which a speaker or writer counters opposing points of view. Your 3<sup>rd</sup> step is your actual defense...

1. Attack his evidence or lack of it
2. Attack his reasoning
3. Present additional evidence to support your points
4. Present further reasoning
5. Issue a counterattack

#### Slide 24 Attacking Their Positions

Summarize the argument to be refuted

Give an overview of your objections

Attack the evidence/reasoning

Summarize your refutation & explain how it weakens your opponent's position

**Slide 25 Importance of Evidence**

- Is your evidence recent enough?
- Was enough evidence presented?
- Was the evidence from a reliable source?
- Is the evidence consistent with known facts?
- Can the evidence be interpreted in other ways?
- Is the evidence directly related to the claim?

Discuss evidence in more detail and get some examples from the group. They now need to look at their arguments they will be presenting and think of some supporting evidence to add to their arguments.

**Slide 26 Attacking Reasoning**

- Were any important assumptions unproved?
- Were there inconsistencies in reasoning?
- Were arguments about the cause valid?
- Were comparisons based on things that are not equal?
- Was reasoning from signs valid?
- Were emotional appeals used instead of reasoning?
- Did you relate the refutation to the other person's position?

Emotional appeals are used sometimes when we want to appeal to their emotions, but have run out of logic, reasoning, and evidence, statistics, etc. A really good argument relies more on logic than emotion. Emotion can be used when trying to persuade others, not in presenting a good solid argument.

**Slide 27 Analyzing Your Adversary**

When we want to present an important argument to another person, it is really helpful to try to figure out ahead of time what we think he will accept and what he will likely reject, based on previous interaction with him and knowledge of his attitudes and beliefs. This is why it can be really helpful the better we know the other guy.

An example might be a request for travel to a training conference you want to attend. If your boss is very supportive of training, then that's a start. Where the training is will influence the decision – is it far away requiring extra time to get there and back and how much does it cost? Can you find one which is closer and requires less travel time and less cost? If the argument issue is one that you know is very important to the other guy, you should be aware that if there is a slight chance that there will be ego involvement, you should be careful.

**Slide 28 Latitudes of Acceptance and Rejection**

Given a range of possible positions about given subject, people may have a range of opinions, but will have an anchor position. As this is often tied to people's sense of identity, it is seldom possible to change it.

The **latitude of acceptance** are those positions which are acceptable. The **latitude of non-commitment** are those positions which are neither accepted nor rejected. The **latitude of rejection** are positions which will be actively opposed.

Find the other person's preferred position and aim not to stray out of his latitude of acceptance and certainly not into his latitude of rejection. Also avoid denting his ego.

The latitude of acceptance is defined as those positions on an issue that the individual finds most acceptable, plus other positions also acceptable to him (zones of positions we accept). The latitude of Non-Commitment is the zone of positions we neither accept nor reject. The latitude of rejection consists of those positions on the same issue that he finds most objectionable, plus other objectionable positions on the issue (zones of positions we reject).

When we receive persuasive information we locate it on our categories of judgment and determine which latitude it belongs in. Judgment is crucial to persuasion. The implication is that someone is easier to influence with a larger latitude of acceptance than a larger latitude of rejection. The odds are that you will express a position that the receiver can live with.

Our ego-involvement affects the size of the latitudes. It defines who we are and addresses critical aspects of ourselves. How much ego involvement is there in your opponent on your issue? When we are ego-involved, our latitudes of rejection become much larger and consequently, latitudes of acceptance and non-commitment get smaller. Our "anchor" position is the one position in our latitude of acceptance that we find most acceptable. If the new information comes close to our "anchor" position, we are more likely to accept and assimilate it. If the info falls outside the latitudes of acceptance, we will push the new info farther away and make it seem worse than it really is.

#### Slide 29 Creating Your Argument – Skills Practice

Here is the time that the groups write up their arguments based on all of the steps they have covered today.

They may use the following documents in their handouts to help them organize their arguments:

"Argument Prompts" Page 10

"Document Analysis for Argument, etc." Page 11

"Argument Map Worksheet" Page 12

"Argument Presentation Rubric" Page 13

FYI re: Document analysis worksheet on p. 14 of Participant Guide: Propaganda is a form of communication aimed towards influencing the attitude of a population toward some cause or position.

Propaganda is information that is not impartial and used primarily to influence an audience and further an agenda, often by presenting facts selectively (thus possibly lying by omission) to encourage a particular synthesis, or using loaded messages to produce an emotional rather than rational response to the information presented. Propaganda can be used as a form of ideological or commercial warfare.

## *Final Activity*

Present an informal argument within your small group at your table. A pair can argue a proposition; the remainder can serve as observers and give an assessment. The entire group should discuss the argument in terms of its strengths and weaknesses. Make a candid assessment of the outcome in terms of who won and why using the Argument Presentation Rubric.

Please be careful in your choice of topics. The following topics should **not** be selected, due to their likelihood of having high levels of ego-involvement:

- Political differences (conservative vs. liberal)
- Religion
- Any topic that includes sex or gender issues

Please select from the following topics:

- Academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism)
- Conserving the environment
- Dieting
- Epidemics
- Euthanasia
- Fat tax on food
- Government bans on certain foods for health promotion
- Federal deficit
- Foreign oil dependence
- Free speech
- Gambling/ lotteries
- Human cloning
- Legal system
- Living wills
- Social media
- Media violence
- National drinking age
- Polygamy
- Property rights
- Space exploration
- Surrogate motherhood
- Victims' rights
- Cameras in courtrooms
- Campaign financing
- Drugs and sports

### Slide 30 10 Rules of Persuasion

1. No laws – persuasion is always difficult, unpredictable, and changeable – but there are guiding principles, proven proverbs, and hard-earned nuggets of experience that tend to work when properly applied
2. This is the closest to a Persuasion Law – no one cares what you think or want to do in persuasion – we care about what they think, feel, and behave

3. Change involves risk and we tend to resist it – we must be very careful with persuasion – is the change you’re trying to effect a good thing?
4. Local means everything that is going on in your persuasive situation – depends on you & your goals at the moment; the other guy’s goals; the nature of the relationship between you and the other guy; and other stuff that’s going on at the time – variables could be moods, mental states, physical condition, or motivation
5. When you try to persuade somebody, it’s kind of like poking a bear – what might happen? Persuasion is “poking” the other guy to make him move in another direction. If he resists, you’ve failed twice – in your immediate persuasion and future efforts to persuade him
6. Know your persuasion goal and have a plan to reach that goal
7. Sincere communicators are lousy persuaders – they tell you what most moves THEM, not what moves YOU – you need to be calm, controlled, and flexible
8. Effective persuasion is like judo – you want to let the other guy do as much of the work as possible, and then you figure out the move you can make to change his direction
9. If you use persuasion and power in combination, you’ll get more success than if you used only one. Power is fast and simple, but persuasion is trickier, more unpredictable, and uncontrollable. You don’t use power very often – the more you use it, the less effective it becomes.
10. Persuasion is a skill, so if you don’t use it, your skills will deteriorate – you must work on it regularly. Over-reliance on power changes how your opponent perceives you and what they expect from you – they’ll start looking for the “catch”

**Slide 31 How To Argue and Win Every Time**

Gerry Spence is a well-known lawyer and writer. Lawyers are taught to argue – it’s the essence of their presentation to the jury and court. Their arguments are best when they present evidence, logic, data, statistics, and reasoning. Without these things, they have to resort to emotional appeals, which are very chancy.

What do you think of his statements here?

**Slide 32 What type of persuasion will you use?**

Ask: So What type of persuasion are you going to use?

Torture or coercion?

Begging?

Or solid and logical argument?