Persuade the Audience That Really Needs Persuading!

It's one thing to get in front of a friendly audience of people already inclined to agree with you. In that case, you can spend more time calling them to action rather than actually changing their minds. But how do you really convince people of something when they start out with beliefs that are quite antithetical to your argument? How do you (1) analyze and understand the core beliefs, values, and intuitions of the audience, (2) use emotional appeals ethically and intuitional appeal strategically, and (3) structure your speech logically?

1) Who is my audience? _____

What are their beliefs? _____

What are their values? _____

What intuitions and emotions inform their perspective of my topic? _____

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What do I want my audience to DO at the end of my speech? I will call them to _____

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2) What kind of emotional appeal can I make and how will that emotion be symbolized (images/narratives)? _____

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What common ground can I find? _____

What can I concede (if anything)? _____

Which appeals would speak to their elephant? _____

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3) Consider one of several ways of structuring your persuasive message:

1. 5-paragraph-style topical: intro, believe this, this, and this → now act!

2. 5-paragraph-style problem-solution: intro, here's the problem, here's the solution, here's what you should do today, clincher

3. Here's the problem, here's the real cause, here's the solution, here's what you should do today.

4. Nancy Duarte: what is → what could be → new bliss

5. Message Box (Escape from the Ivory Tower, p. 108)
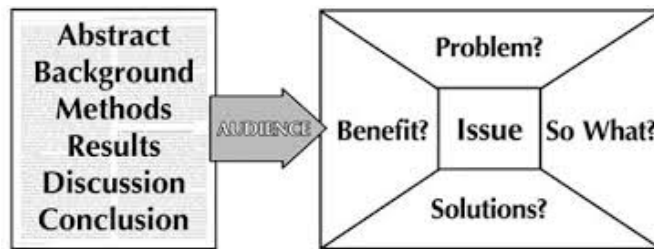
6. Monroe's Motivated Sequence: attention, need, satisfaction, visualization, action

7. Public Narrative Project: Story Self → Story Us → Story Now

Make some notes for YOUR persuasive presentation:

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