



The Rhetorical Triangle

Balancing Ethos, Pathos, and Logos



Aristotle introduced the Rhetorical Triangle in his work *Rhetoric*. The Rhetorical Triangle consists of three appeals, or means of persuasion.

- **Ethos** refers to the character of the speaker. Can the audience trust the speaker? Does the speaker have good character, good sense and good will towards the audience?
- **Pathos** refers to the appeal to the emotions and imagination. It is the speaker's ability to connect with an audience.
- **Logos** refers to the logic and reasoning of the argument.

Ideally, the **appeals** are balanced in a speech. One appeal may be used more heavily, depending on the purpose of the speech and the intended audience.