

COM 181
Reference Sheet: SUPPORTING MATERIALS

A speaker's use of supporting materials can make the difference between a good speech and a bad speech. Effective supporting materials add credibility to a speaker's ideas, making them clear, meaningful and understandable. The audience, topic and specific purpose will dictate appropriate supporting materials.

Kinds of support include:

EXAMPLES
STATISTICS
TESTIMONY
ANALOGY

I. EXAMPLES

A. FACTUAL EXAMPLE

1. also called illustration, narrative or anecdote
2. use to clarify, reinforce and/or personalize ideas
3. can be brief or extended
4. human interest examples can be very effective in appropriate instances
5. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

B. HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLE

1. uses an imaginary situation to illustrate what might or could happen if a situation really occurred
2. use to clarify, reinforce and/or personalize ideas
3. can be brief or extended
4. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

II. STATISTICS

- A. use of numbers, dates, etc., to support a point
- B. use to clarify or strengthen points
- C. use statistics ethically, sparingly and appropriately
- D. consider using visual aids to help audience comprehension of statistics
- E. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

III. TESTIMONY

A. EXPERT TESTIMONY

1. use of opinions of acknowledged authorities
2. lends credibility to speaker's original ideas
3. CAUTION: quote or paraphrase accurately; cite source
4. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

B. PEER TESTIMONY

1. use of opinions of ordinary people who have actual experience or knowledge of topic
2. CAUTION: quote or paraphrase accurately; cite source
3. CAUTION: using someone else's ideas or words without citing that person or source is plagiarism
4. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

IV. ANALOGY

- A. use of comparison of two things which are not exactly alike but which have certain characteristics in common
- B. be sure elements of comparison have meaning for audience
- C. STUDENT EXAMPLE:

Reference:

Lucas, Stephen E., The Art of Public Speaking, Fifth Edition. New York: McGraw Hill, Inc., 1995.