

**Emotional Appeal** – This is when a writer or speaker attempts to persuade an audience to act or agree with his or her views by appealing to the audience’s emotions. Although frequently abused, the emotional appeal is a legitimate aspect of rhetorical argument, for a speaker wants her or his audience to care about the issues being addressed. The most effective way for an ethical writer to use emotional appeal is to use vivid and concrete but accurate illustrations, examples, and details in arguments. Good writers use emotional appeals along with appeals to reason, supporting facts, and concrete proof. A speech that only uses appeals to emotion is usually weak or faulty since facts are not used to support the speaker’s claims.

For example, A “Save the Children” ad might emphasize a small child, so malnourished that his bones are clearly visible under his skin, sitting huddled in the open air, weak, in a fetal position. A vulture might be sitting in the background. The text would be designed to have the maximum emotional effect for one thing: to motivate the reader to act — to make an act of charity.

**Appeal to Authority** – This is when a writer or speaker cites an authority or expert on a particular subject to support a point. Such an appeal is inappropriate if the authority is not qualified to have an expert opinion on the subject

For example, a writer might refer to an ancient Greek philosopher, or Roman leader. She might refer to a well-respected popular figure. A life insurance ad might use a distinguished CEO as a spokesperson or as an example of a person who bought the policy.

**Appeal to Reason** – the writer or speaker tries to convince the audience using facts, scientific research, statistics or common sense. Such an appeal is inappropriate if the evidence is not reliable, if proof surrogate is used, or if the appeal to common sense is overly relied upon.

For example, a toothpaste ad might mention a scientific study which demonstrates that the toothpaste featured in the ad produces the desired results. Or a phone company might try to appeal to common sense by stating that if the other phone company offers the same service but for a higher fee, a sane person would obviously choose the less expensive service.