PERSUASIVE CALLS FOR ARTSAKH INDEPENDENCE RECOGNITION

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"If you would persuade,
You must appeal to interest
rather than intellect."
– Benjamin Franklin

Research-based persuasive communication strategies in psychology are largely predicated on Aristotle's three popular concepts of Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. About 2,300 years ago, Aristotle stated in *"Rhetoric"* that to persuade a person to do something for us, we can use any one of the three appeal strategies or there combination. "Ethos" stands for the appeal to ethics. "Pathos" stands for appeal to emotions. "Logos" stands for appeal to reason.

Many communication experts of today consider Aristotle's three pillars of persuasion to be the most seminal work to have influenced the scientific communications field. Aristotle's outstanding work is as relevant today as it was in ancient Greece.

The need to get sovereign countries recognize the independence of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh Republic) cannot be overemphasized since Azerbaijani/Turkish genocidal duo are intent on swallowing the rest of Artsakh "step by step".

One of our most important defense strategies will be to work on getting countries in the West to accept Artsakh as a free, independent, and sovereign state for its ultimate survival in its present hostile environment. Recognition is in the hands of other states. What is the most effective way to appeal for help in recognizing Artsakh's independence?

Applying Aristotle's "ethos" means convincing our audience of our credibility or character. Before we can convince an audience to do something for us or to accept what we say, they have to accept us as a credible and trustworthy source.

We can build trust in a number of ways. Ethos can be promoted by choosing appropriate language and vocabulary by making ourselves look honest and by documenting the areas of our knowledge and experience.

Pathos (i.e., the appeal to emotions), refers to our effort to persuade our audience by appealing to their feelings. Our audience will be more receptive to being persuaded by someone with whom they can identify. The Greek word pathos refers both to "suffering" and "experience". So, pathos can be used to promote either positive or negative feelings. In using pathos, we need to make the audience feel an emotion in order to act.

Like ethos, pathos can be promoted by a variety of ways. Using simple and meaningful language, emotional tone of voice in oral or written format, pauses and emotional metaphors or stories are considered to be effective in persuading our audience. Research shows that pathos is most effective

when used in the introduction and conclusion of a letter or speech. The idea is to attract the attention in the beginning and to leave them with the conviction at the end and emotion is a useful tool for those purposes.

For example, you may cite how Azerbaijan launched an unprovoked sneak attack on Artsakh and began shelling and bombing civilian quarters and infrastructure with killer drones, phosphorus gas, loitering munitions, etc. all in contravention of international law. Thousands have become displaced (appeal to pathos).

Logos (i.e., the appeal to logic/reason), refers to the effort to convince our audience by using logic or reason. To promote logos, effective arguments should make use of testimonials, surveys and other supporting details to back up our claims and positions. In other words, in using logos, we have to document our point through storytelling, logical arguments, facts, recorded evidence, precedence, historical data, and literal analogies.

When logos is the persuasion's aim, we need material facts, stories and important information which matter to our audience. Try to avoid information overload taking place by overdoing with your facts and figures.

Over the years, research in persuasive communications has focused on the differential effectiveness (comparison) of the three appeals. Research shows that of the three appeals, logos is the most effective strategy to use for everything being equal. As for the ethos and pathos, both are equally effective. We should bear in mind that the speaker, audience, the situation decide as to which appeal to capitalize on for persuading our audience.

In addition to the three pillars of persuasion, there is the most powerful notion of "appealing to one's self-interest". Of course, this one s somewhat falls into the category of logos. If you need to turn to an ally or someone else for help, avoid reminding him of your past assistance and good deeds. He will find a way to ignore you. Instead, find something in your request or in your alliance with him that will benefit him, and emphasize it out of all proportion. He will respond enthusiastically when he sees something to be gained for himself.

When people choose between talk about the past and talk about the future, a pragmatic person will always opt for the future and forget the past. It is always best to speak pragmatically to a pragmatic person. And in the end, most people are, in fact, pragmatic--they will rarely act against their own self-interest.

In one of my previous articles titled "Insights Into the Recognition of Artsakh's Independence," I stated that the United States has no official policy on what is required for recognition, according to its State Department. Instead, the decisions to recognize a state are made by the president. Then the president decides whether to establish diplomatic relations with the state based on U.S. national interests.

Therefore, when we approach President Joseph Biden, for example, and ask for recognition, we must not forget to explain how Artsakh's independence will be good for "America" (e.g., a new market, an ally in the south Caucuses, US will be hailed as a true democracy that upholds self-determination on account of his sound decision to recognize Artsakh, etc.). We have to offer a benefit for the exchange. Eloquence, the art or power of speaking or writing with force and conviction in a way to persuade genuinely, is always appreciated.

Based on scientific research findings, when asking for help, appeal to people's self-interest, never to their mercy or gratitude alone. In asking for help do not dwell on the past such as when you mention Armenia was first to have accepted Christianity as the state religion or the tragedy of the Armenian Genocide. People do not want to be distressed with sad stories, but when you mention the benefits for him for doing something, he or she would perk up his or her ears and begin earnestly to listen to you.

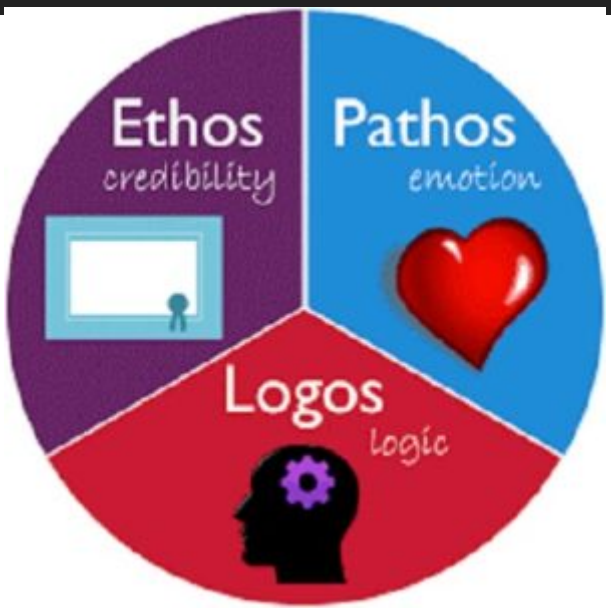
Self-interest is a compelling reason for people to respond positively to propositions of mutual interest. So, always think of reciprocity when you want someone to do something for you unless you are dealing with a close family member or a bosom friend.

For maximum effect, remember the following sequence: In the beginning, after establishing your credibility as a trustworthy character to make your readers/listeners relate to you (ethos), use logos (logic) to argue and build your points, but never to forget the inclusion of the idea of self-interest. Finally, finish up with pathos (the emotional appeal) as readers or listeners will act based on their emotions and act in the way you want them to behave to achieve your goal.

Please do not forget the age-old wisdom: Self-interest, not self- sacrifice, even not of rousing of sympathy would have the power of persuasion alone to get someone to do an important favor for you by exposing himself to the likelihood of criticisms or retaliation from your opponent or adversary.

We have to rise out of the ashes of the September 27, 2020 calamity and realize that the worse could have happened if the entire territory of Artsakh were gone out of our hands and were populated by the Azerbaijanis. Like Nakhitechvan, regaining Artsakh would have been next to impossible for being devoid of its indigenous people.

Ideas have changed the world; ideas can also advance the Armenian nation. We should regroup, unite, and be prepared for the future onslaughts by “Turkobian” and its powerful allies for the probability of war is blowing in the wind and that we are left alone to defend against the cruel and brutal enemy. Undoubtedly, there is power in numbers, and that unity is the key to an optimistic future for the Armenian nation. So, let us send out our persuasive letters to our representatives to be instrumental in the recognition of the independence of the Republic of Artsakh.



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