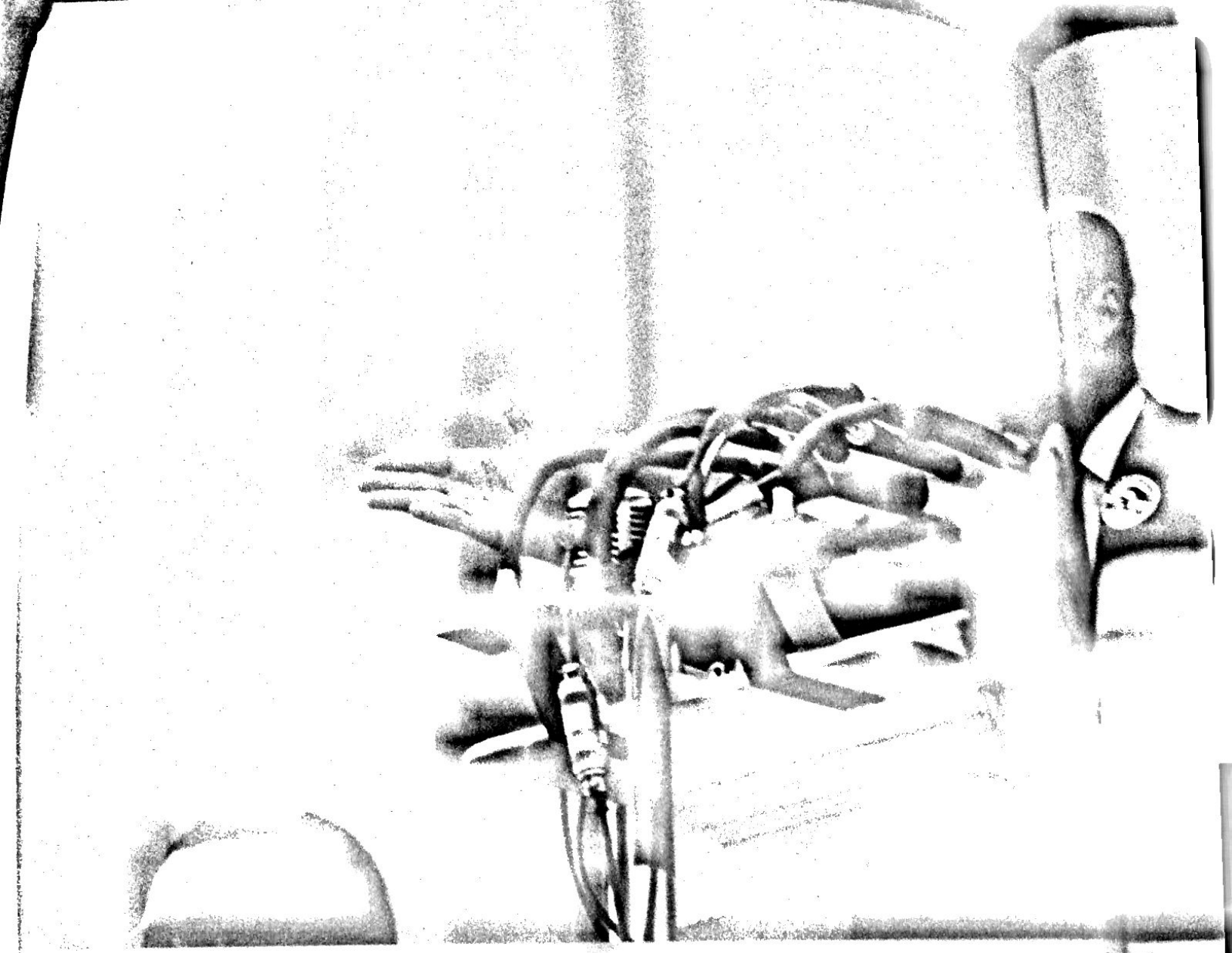

PERSUASIVE SPEAKING

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN TO:

- Describe the three types of persuasive speeches.
- Apply the most common patterns of organization for persuasive speeches.
- Understand the importance of the elaboration likelihood model (ELM).
- Identify three tips for giving effective persuasive speeches.
- Identify the principles for giving ethical persuasive speeches.

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James P. Blair/National Geographic

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is known as one of the most effective persuasive speakers of the last century. What combination of factors do you think made him so successful at persuasive speaking?

It is impossible to convince tribal people to be part of wildlife conservation without first understanding and having empathy for their

Throughout history, people have given persuasive speeches in political arenas, courtrooms, workplaces, community settings, social gatherings, and classrooms. Today, just as our ancestors did, we use persuasive speech in the public dialogue to influence and alter the perspectives, the positions, and even the lives of others. When you understand the principles of persuasive speaking, you too can add your voice to the public dialogue as a persuasive speaker whether you decide to speak, are asked to speak, or are required to speak.

A **persuasive speech** is one *whose message attempts to change or reinforce an audience's thoughts, feelings, or actions.* When we speak to persuade, we ask an audience to think as we do about a topic, to adopt our position, or to support our actions and beliefs. In that sense, we act as advocates for a particular issue, belief, or course of action.

This chapter examines several aspects of speaking that are central to persuasion. You will explore the three major types of persuasive speeches, the organizational patterns best suited to persuasive speeches, some strategies for gaining audience support, and some of the common challenges and ethical considerations that persuasive speaking presents.

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whose message attempts to change
rce an audience's thoughts, feelings,
s.

Types of Persuasive Speeches

Attempts at persuasion generally address questions of fact, questions of value, or questions of policy. Each category concerns a different type of change sought from an audience. Knowing which type of change you want to request from your audience helps you develop a listenable message for them.

Questions of Fact

f fact
t addresses whether something
rue or not.

When we want to persuade an audience about debatable points, we are speaking about questions of fact. A **question of fact** addresses *whether something is verifiably true or not.* For example, we can determine with certainty who won last summer's Boston marathon by consulting a yearbook or looking up marathon records online, and so the facts concerning this topic are not open to debate. But we cannot absolutely determine the training schedule that will produce the fastest marathon runners in the future. Any claim to such knowledge is speculative and therefore open to dispute. An audience, however, can be persuaded to accept one

opinion or another about the best training method by a speaker's use of arguments, evidence, and reasoning.

Our understanding of many topics today derives from theories that have not yet been conclusively proven. Whether it is the reason dinosaurs became extinct, the original purpose of Stonehenge, the techniques used to construct the Egyptian pyramids, the way to end hunger and poverty, or the most effective methods to improve student reading skills, the facts about these issues are not absolute and leave room for competing theories. Therefore, they make excellent topics for speeches in which you try to persuade audiences that you have the correct answers.

Questions of Value

When we want to persuade an audience about what is good or bad, right or wrong, we are speaking about questions of value. A **question of value** *addresses the merit or morality of an object, action, or belief.* Is it right to continue offshore drilling or to support nuclear power, even though both present risks to the environment and to humans? Is it moral to punish certain crimes with death? Is it ethical to require all children to say the pledge of allegiance in school or to pause for a moment of prayer? These

question of value
question that addresses the merit or morality of an object, action, or belief.

Questions of value are often complex yet very important to discuss. Here a woman is speaking as part of a British May Day demonstration against the government's spending cuts.

are questions of value, as are debates over what constitutes "good" and "bad" art, music, poetry, and theater.

When you attempt to persuade your audiences about questions of value, you move from asserting that something is true or false to advocating that one thing is better or worse than another. Questions of value cannot be answered simply by analyzing facts. Rather, they are grounded in what people believe is right, good, appropriate, worthy, and ethically sound. Thus, it can be difficult to persuade audiences about questions of value. This is because when we speak on questions of value, we must *justify* our claims. We must provide suitable reasons for accepting a particular action or view. When we justify a claim, we set *standards*, and we argue that our view satisfies certain principles or values generally regarded as correct and valid by most people. So when we try to persuade an audience that drilling for oil is worth the risk to the environment, we justify that claim by arguing that the oil from offshore drilling meets a certain standard of necessity that warrants risks to the environment. Or when we attempt to persuade our audience that it is moral to punish certain crimes with death, we try to justify our claim on the basis of a particular standard: that certain actions fall into a specific category that warrants this kind of punishment.

Questions of Policy

question of policy
question that addresses the best course of action or solution to a problem.

When we want to persuade an audience about the best way to act or solve a problem, we are speaking about questions of policy. A **question of policy** *addresses the best course of action or solution to a problem.* What form of support should employers provide for veterans with disabilities? How should the federal government implement mandatory drug testing? How many credits for graduation should the university require? At what age should people be allowed to legally drink alcoholic beverages? Each of these questions focuses on an issue that cannot be resolved solely by answering a question of absolute fact or debating the morality of an issue.

Although questions of policy might address the facts about the contributions veterans make in the workplace or the morality of mandatory drug testing, they go beyond these questions to offer solutions and plans of action. In sum, speeches about questions of policy present audience members with a specific solution or plan to a problem and try to persuade them that the solution or plan will eliminate the problem satisfactorily.

Because each type of persuasive speech—questions of fact, value, or policy—focuses on different issues and

PRACTICING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Select a Persuasive Speech Type

As a class, brainstorm as many different persuasive speech topics as you can. Next, group the topics according to the three types of persuasive speeches you have just read about. Some might fit into more than one group, depending on how you phrase your thesis statement for a particular topic. Discuss which of these topics you find most interesting and why. Save this list for the next Practicing Human Communication activity.

Organization of Speeches on Questions of Fact

Speeches on questions of fact can be organized chronologically, spatially, and topically. To help you decide which organizational pattern is best, ask yourself the following questions: can you achieve your goals best by describing the issue as it developed over time, by describing a spatial arrangement, or by covering distinct topics?

Thomas used the spatial pattern to organize his speech about the lack of sufficient lighting at night on the college campus. He traced the layout of the campus from its center to its perimeter to make the case that it is not adequately lit for safety.

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that the lighting on campus is not adequate.

Thesis statement: From the library to the farthest parking lot, the lighting on campus is not adequate to ensure safety after dark.

Main points:

I. Lighting near the center of the campus casts many shadows in which someone can hide.

II. Around the perimeter of this center, the lighting is spaced too far apart to offer adequate protection.

III. The lighting in the parking lots that border the campus should be much brighter than it currently is.

This spatial pattern of organization helped Thomas highlight the key spots on his campus where lighting was inadequate.

Organization of Speeches on Questions of Value

Like speeches on questions of fact, speeches on questions of value can be organized chronologically, spatially, or topically. In the following example, Eiji used the chronological pattern to develop her speech about the value of encouraging girls to participate in the sciences.

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that encouraging girls to participate in the sciences is of value to us all.

Thesis statement: Throughout history, when women have been encouraged to participate in the traditionally male-dominated world of science, they have made significant contributions that have benefited all of us.

Main points:

I. In the late 1700s, Caroline Lucretia Hershel's father and brother encouraged her interest in astronomy, and she developed the modern mathematical approach to astronomy.

II. In the late 1800s, with the support of her husband and colleagues, botanist Elizabeth Knight Britton built impressive botanical collections and is said to be the first person to suggest the establishment of the New York Botanical Gardens.

III. In the early 1900s, Maria Goeppert-Mayer was encouraged by her university professors to pursue her interest in science, which led to her winning the 1963 Nobel Prize in physics for her groundbreaking work in modeling the nuclei of atoms.

When we give persuasive speeches on questions of fact or value, we may ask our audience to change their view or agree on what is right or wrong, but we do not ask them to do anything. Therefore, the chronological, spatial, and topical patterns work well for these types of speeches. However, for persuasive speeches about questions of policy, we also ask our audience to agree on what must be done to solve a problem. Thus, we must rely on different types of organizational patterns.

Organization of Speeches on Questions of Policy

Persuasive speeches about questions of policy usually require organizational patterns that clearly define a problem and then offer a well-developed solution. Determining the best pattern for your speech depends on the kind of change you are hoping to get from your audience: *immediate action or passive agreement.* The differences between the two are simple, yet the effects they have on a speech are significant.

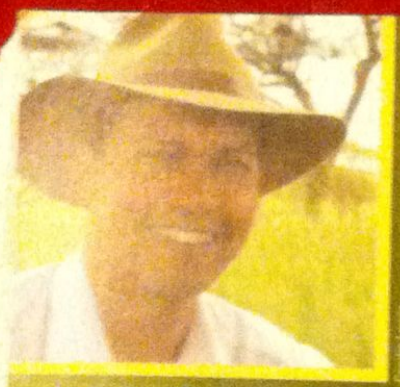
When you attempt to gain **immediate action**, *your goal is to encourage an audience to engage in a specific behavior or take a specific action.* You want to move beyond simply asking your audience to alter a belief. When you seek immediate action, you want to be as specific as possible in stating what you want your audience to do. You need a clear **call to action**, *an explicit request that an audience engage in some clearly stated behavior.* For example, rather than asking audience members to simply agree with you that the lighting on campus is inadequate, you ask them to contact the school administration and urge its staff to provide the funds needed to improve campus lighting in next year's budget.

In contrast, when you want to gain **passive agreement**, *your goal is to ask audience members to adopt a new position without asking them to act in support of that position.* When you seek passive agreement, you still advocate a solution to a problem, but you do not call your audience to action. Instead, you simply encourage listeners to adopt a new position or perspective. Consider the differences between requesting immediate action and passive agreement in the following specific purpose statements.

immediate action
when the speaker's goal is to encourage an audience to engage in a specific behavior or take a specific action

call to action
an explicit request that an audience engage in some clearly stated behavior

passive agreement
when the speaker's goal is to ask audience members to adopt a new position without asking them to act in support of that position



Courtesy Jenny

Dino Martins. Emerging Explorer and Entomologist: Working Behind the Scenes with Insects

Dino Martins is a Kenyan entomologist who loves insects. His passion is studying threatened insect habitats in East Africa. Martins explains that two foods we love, chocolate and coffee, are among the hundreds of foods that are made possible by pollinating insects. Martins explains, "Every single person on our planet has a diet that includes food made possible by pollinating insects. When this connection is threatened, all of humanity is threatened." He continues, "Insects are the invisible, behind-the-scenes workers that keep the planet going." However, many people do not realize that deforestation, charcoal burning, and high pesticide use threaten the insects that are responsible for pollinating the crops needed to feed entire nations. Africa is especially vulnerable because some of the last remaining African violets and other wildflower species on which bees depend are fighting for survival as the forest shrinks. Martins claims, "If these species vanish, so could the bees, and ultimately acres of crops would be negatively affected." Unfortunately, farmers sometimes see carpenter bees as the enemy or farm in ways that negatively impact wild pollinators. Martins helps educate farmers to recognize and protect the major pollinators in their areas. He says, "Farmers look at the big scary carpenter bees swarming around their trees and rush to kill them. . . . They need more bees, not fewer." Therefore, Martins tries to convince farmers that leaving a space for nature and pollinating insects is necessary for productive agriculture. This task is not always easy. Martins relies on persuasive arguments to convince farmers to save a space to protect pollinators. He knows that he must demonstrate new farming practices and prove these techniques work. "When others see the proof, they all want to try it." However, it is not only farmers that are the solution to saving pollinating insects. Martin encourages everyone to "look at your next plate of food and ask where it came from, how it got to you. Every time you eat you can choose to support farming that's shown to be good, rather than abusive, to nature and people. You vote with your wallet, your feet, and your mouth" (Martins, 2012).

CourseMate Connection: Go to cengagebrain.com to access your *CourseMate* for *Invitation to Human Communication* to view a video of a persuasive speech about his work with insects.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPEAKS

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WHAT DO YOU THINK

EXPLORER

Courtesy of Aziz Abu Sarah

Aziz Abu Sarah
Emerging Explorer and Cultural Educator

Tell us about a persuasive speech you gave and how you used evidence fairly and ethically without compromising the power of persuasion. Was the speech about a statement of "fact" that you questioned, proved, or disproved; a speech based on a question of value(s); or an issue of policy?

I always start with the personal level; then I move to a value that people agree on. The main thing is to understand who you're speaking to and to understand your crowd and what statistics and what facts would speak to them. In every situation, it's not always useful to just recount multiple facts. I try to show many studies to prove a point. And even if you are successful, sometimes facts alone don't always move people and their ideals. There are also values. Let me give you an example. If I'm speaking to a religious Jewish group, what I try to do is to understand that their values have a lot to do with the Torah and their Holy Bible. So I try to relate to that as much as possible. I try to use stories from the Torah as much as possible. I will share with them the story of the burning tree, for example, one of the things that I happen to know, and I'll share the scripture that they relate to. Then the fact becomes related to their value. That's my strategy for connecting these two—fact and value—together.

Immediate Action

To persuade my audience to vote against placing vending machines in our public schools.

To persuade my audience to adopt my aerobics training program.

Passive Agreement

To persuade my audience that open space in a city benefits that city and its residents by making it more attractive and livable.

To persuade my audience that childhood obesity is a serious problem.

Notice how the requests for immediate action focus on asking an audience to do something specific, whereas the requests for passive agreement simply ask an audience to alter a belief. We now look at some organizational patterns that will help you meet your speech goals whether you request immediate action or passive agreement.

problem–solution organization pattern of organization that focuses on persuading an audience that a specific problem exists and can be solved or minimized by a specific solution.

Problem–Solution Organization

Speeches that follow a **problem–solution organization** *focus on persuading an audience that a specific problem exists and can be solved or minimized by a specific solution.* These types of persuasive speeches are generally organized into two main points. The first point specifies

a problem, and the second proposes a solution to that problem. In the problem component of your speech, you must define a problem clearly, and the problem must be relevant to your audience. In the solution component, you must offer a solution that really does help solve the problem and that an audience can reasonably support and implement.

Consider the following example of a problem–solution speech given by Sheri. Notice how she used her thesis statement to state a problem clearly and then how she communicated that problem to her audience in her first main points. Also notice how she related the problem to her audience directly and personally.

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that although light pollution is a problem that increasingly affects us every day, we can implement simple solutions to reduce the effects of this pollution.

Thesis statement: Light pollution disrupts ground-based astronomy, is a costly energy waste, and affects our health and safety, but there are simple solutions to the problem of light pollution.

Main points:

I. Light pollution poses three significant problems.
   A. In cities, light pollution causes urban sky glow, which disrupts ground-based telescopes.
   B. Light pollution represents an extreme waste of energy, and that waste is costly to all of us.
   C. Light pollution causes mild to severe medical conditions and so is unsafe for our communities.

II. The problem of light pollution can be alleviated in two ways.
   A. Light pollution can be controlled through government regulations, such as light codes, which are similar to noise codes.
   B. Light pollution can be reduced through personal actions, such as using less unnecessary light and purchasing equipment that reduces light directed toward the sky.

Notice how Sheri's first main point clearly defines the specific problems created by light pollution and how her second main point offers reasonable solutions. Also note that she requests both passive agreement and immediate action. She asks for passive agreement when she states that supporting government regulations is a good idea, and she asks for immediate action when she suggests her audience modify the lights in their homes.

Because problem–solution speeches pose a problem while simultaneously offering a solution, they are excellent vehicles for persuading an audience to support a cause or take an action.

CourseMate Connection: Go to cengagebrain.com to access your CourseMate for *Invitation to Human Communication* to view video of persuasive speeches that urge immediate action from an audience.

Problem–Cause–Solution Organization

problem–cause–solution organization
pattern of organization that focuses on identifying a specific problem, the causes of that problem, and a solution to the problem.

The problem–cause–solution pattern of organization is a slight variation of the problem–solution pattern. Speeches that follow a **problem–cause–solution organization** *focus on identifying a specific problem, the causes of that problem, and a solution to the problem.* This type of speech is especially effective when you think you will be more persuasive if you explain how a problem came about. Explaining the causes of a problem can help your audience better see the merits of a proposed solution. Describing causes also allows you to explain how an audience came to believe what they do and to clarify any misconceptions they may have about a topic. In either case, you are sometimes more persuasive if you provide an audience with more information about a problem.

Problem–cause–solution speeches generally have three main points. The first identifies a clear and relevant problem, the second identifies the relevant causes of that problem, and the third details a clear and appropriate solution to the problem. The next example illustrates this pattern of organization.

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that the problems caused by feeding big-game wildlife can be easily solved.

Thesis statement: The problems of wildlife overpopulation, the spread of disease, and other negative consequences caused by feeding big-game wildlife can be solved by keeping food away from wild animals.

Main points:

I. In many areas where people and big-game wildlife live near each other, there is overpopulation in certain species, outbreaks of disease, and a decrease in our acceptance of hunters and hunting.

II. These problems are caused by well-meaning people leaving food out for wildlife in the winter and by campers who are not careful about keeping their food and food smells away from wild animals.

III. These problems can be solved by simply not feeding wildlife; by protecting our food, washing our dishes, and washing our faces and hands when camping; and by putting our garbage in sealed containers.

Notice how Brandi was able to make a stronger case for her solution by identifying the specific causes of wildlife overpopulation, the spread of disease, and other wildlife-related problems. Once her listeners knew the reasons for the problems, they could see the merits of a solution that might have seemed too simple to be effective.

Problem–cause–solution organizational patterns are useful when you think that providing information about the cause of a problem will help persuade audience members to change their views or beliefs.

Causal Organization

When *a problem is based on a cause-and-effect relationship*, a **causal organization** will work well to persuade an audience. There are two possible ways to arrange a speech using a causal pattern: moving from cause to effect or from effect to cause. For example, Eli wanted to discuss the effects of reintroducing wolves in several western states. He first described the process of reintroducing the wolves (cause) and then focused on the decline in wildlife population (effect).

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that the reintroduction of the gray wolf has significantly decreased the elk population in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming.

Thesis statement: Since the reintroduction of wolves in Western regions, the elk population has declined dramatically, and farmers' cattle, sheep, and dogs have been killed.

Main points:

I. In 1995, gray wolves were reintroduced to Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding states of Montana and Idaho.

II. Since the reintroduction of wolves in Western regions, the elk population has declined dramatically, forcing some regions to ban elk hunting.

III. Other animals, including cattle, sheep, and dogs, have also been affected by the reintroduction of wolves.

A cause-to-effect pattern worked well for Eli's topic because it emphasized that the wolves were the main reason for the decline in elk populations. In contrast, Rupa chose to arrange her speech using a contrasting pattern of organization: effect to cause. She wanted to make her point by first capturing her audience's attention with a real story of five girls who died in a car accident (effect) and then explaining the events leading to the horrific accident (cause).

Specific purpose: To persuade my audience that texting while driving can lead to fatal accidents.

Thesis statement: When drivers text while driving, they are putting their lives, and their passengers' lives, in danger.

Main points:

I. In 2007, five high school graduates from Rochester, New York, died when their vehicle swerved into oncoming traffic and hit a tractor trailer.

II. Authorities believe the driver became distracted while she was sending text messages, which caused the head-on collision.

In this speaking situation, Rupa's audience were members of the western New York community and had heard about the accident (the effect) weeks before learning of the cause. Rupa believed that reminding the audience members of the deadly outcome of the accident before revealing its cause would help persuade them that texting while driving is a serious issue.

rrative organization
anizational pattern that uses one or more ries to construct an argument.

Narrative Organization

Speeches can also be organized using a **narrative organizational** pattern, or *one or more stories to construct an argument.* Depending on the topic, a speaker may share an extended narrative to help personalize an argument that may seem difficult for some audience members to fully comprehend. In the example that follows, Razz implemented this strategy in his speech on the problem of children being abducted and forced to work as child soldiers in countries such as Sierra Leone in western Africa. Razz wanted to share Ishmael Beah's story as an extended narrative to reveal the thoughts, reactions, and experiences of one boy's journey from abduction to rehabilitation.

Specific purpose: To convince my audience that rehabilitation programs work to change child soldiers' lives for the better.

Thesis statement: Ishmael Beah is a former child soldier from Sierra Leone in western Africa, and his story teaches us that rehabilitation programs can work to give child soldiers a new life.

Main points:

I. Ishmael Beah was a young boy when his village was attacked and burned, forcing him and several other children to wander from place to place to survive.

II. At the age of twelve, Beah was captured by the Revolutionary United Front and forced to become a child soldier.

III. Beah was rescued by UNICEF, was given counseling and rehabilitation services, and received the opportunity to start a new life in the United States.

mael Beah speaks to students at Mont-ir Kimberley Academy in Montclair, w Jersey. Beah has written about being rced to serve as a child soldier in his tive Sierra Leone. He is the author of Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy ldier.

By using Beah's story to personalize the problem of child soldiers, Razz made his topic more accessible for his audience. This strategy

helped him convince his audience that rehabilitation programs sponsored by UNICEF can work to provide these young children with a better life.

Comparative Advantages Organization

When your audience agrees with you about a problem but feels the solution is up for debate, a comparative advantages speech is often an excellent choice. Speeches that follow a **comparative advantages organization** illustrate *the advantages of one solution over others.* In this type of speech, use each main point to explain why your solution is preferable to other possible solutions. If you must criticize alternative solutions to strengthen your explanations, then simply explain why the alternatives will not work, taking care not to degrade or belittle them.

comparative advantages organization
an organizational pattern in which the speaker illustrates the advantages of one solution over others

Consider Angela's situation. Her co-workers and bosses already knew a problem existed: sales were down, and they were beginning to lose what had once been faithful customers. Therefore, Angela chose to give a comparative advantages speech so she could focus on illustrating the strengths of her proposed training program.

Specific purpose: To persuade my co-workers that my new training program will increase our sales and enhance our public profile.

Thesis statement: My proposed training program—which includes a longer initial training period, a more detailed assessment and understanding of the strengths of our products, and a stronger mentoring component than our current program—will turn our sales around.

Main points:

I. A longer initial training program will give our staff more time than our current program allows to develop a working knowledge and appreciation of the company and its mission.

II. A more detailed knowledge of our products and their value will enable our staff to work with our clientele more expertly than our current training allows.

III. A stronger mentoring program will improve the communication style of our new sales staff and help them respond to unfamiliar situations more effectively than our current mentoring program does.

Angela did not spend time outlining the problem because her audience already knew the training program needed improvement. Instead, she compared the advantages of her program to the weaknesses of the

company's current program. She was careful to avoid criticizing the current program too heavily because her boss had been instrumental in bringing that model to the company. Rather, she simply said, "Our current program no longer is meeting our needs. If we make these changes, we'll be back on top."

Monroe's Motivated Sequence

roe's motivated sequence
y-step process used to persuade
ces by gaining attention, demonstrat-
eed, satisfying that need, visualizing
ial results, and calling for action.

Monroe's motivated sequence is an organizational pattern that helps you address an audience's motives and how those motives could translate into action. Developed in 1935 by Alan Monroe, **Monroe's motivated sequence** is a *step-by-step process used to persuade audiences by gaining attention, demonstrating a need, satisfying that need, visualizing beneficial results and calling for action.* Monroe maintained that this pattern satisfies an audience's desire for order and helps a speaker focus on what motivates an audience to action. Monroe's motivated sequence organizes the entire speech, not just the body, and takes listeners through a step-by-step process of identifying a problem and resolving to help solve that problem (Gronbeck, McKerrow, Ehninger, & Monroe, 1990).

1. **Attention.** In this step, you catch audience members' interest so they take notice of an issue. Your goal is to motivate the audience members to listen and see the personal connection they have to a topic. Using statistics or a story can accomplish this task. For example, Sierra began her speech by telling a story to capture her audience's attention. She began, "I was only ten years old when I found my mother sitting on her bed crying. Not knowing how to react, I sat down beside her and grabbed her hand. When I asked her what was wrong, she replied, 'I am sick and hope that I can hold your hand for many, many more years.' I soon learned my mother had breast cancer and that she would not be able to hold my hand much longer."
2. **Need.** In this step, you identify the need for a change—that is, the problem can be solved. You define the problem and how it directly or indirectly affects the audience. Your goal is to encourage your audience to become invested in the problem, feel affected by it, and want to find a solution. Sierra began the need section by proving the severity of the problem. She stated, "The latest study on breast cancer indicates that one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime! That means two of you in this room will be directly affected, and almost everyone else will likely know someone affected by breast cancer."
3. **Satisfaction.** In this step, you define what the specific solution is and why it solves the problem. In doing so, you show audience members how their "need" is "satisfied." Sierra argued in her speech that the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation was making important strides in finding a cure for breast cancer and needed more national, state, and local funding to support its research efforts.

4. **Visualization.** In this step, you describe the benefits that will result from the audience's need being satisfied. You can describe what life will be like once the solution is in place, or you can remind the audience what it would be like if the solution were not implemented. Either way, you help audience members visualize how the solution will benefit them. Sierra achieved the visualization step by asking her audience to imagine life without the fear of breast cancer. She described, "Imagine one day you're standing in your bedroom and your daughter walks in and takes your hand. Now imagine being able to tell her that you want to be able to hold her hand for many years in the future, and this time, you can. Reducing the rates of breast cancer will ensure longer, healthier lives for women."

5. **Action.** In this final step, you outline exactly what the audience should do. This is your call to action, the plea for the audience to take immediate action or make a personal commitment to support the changes you are advocating. Sierra asked her class to join her for a breast cancer walk being held in the community. She concluded, "This Saturday at 9 A.M., a walk to raise money for breast cancer research will take place right here on campus. I ask that you join me in this fight and join me on the walk."

PRACTICING HUMAN COMMUNICATION

Select an Organizational Pattern for Your Persuasive Speech

Return to the list of possible persuasive speech topics that you prepared for the Practicing Human Communication earlier in the chapter, select a single topic and determine whether you want to work on a question of fact, value, or policy. See if you can create a rough thesis statement and main points for a persuasive speech on this topic using one of the organizational patterns you have just read about. Select the pattern that would best help you persuade your audience to take action or modify its thinking about a topic. As you discuss your organizational pattern, consider how you might also incorporate the tips for giving effective persuasive speeches in the next section.

Connecting with Your Audience

Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) **elaboration likelihood model (ELM)** explains that *receivers process persuasive messages in either a central processing* or a *peripheral processing* route, depending on how motivated the audience is to think critically about a message. The more a speaker encourages listeners to become consciously engaged to think about a persuasive message, the more likely they are processing information in the central route. This means listeners are evaluating the overall quality of the argument, evidence and supporting material included, and any call for action presented in the speech. In this situation, listeners may research additional information on the topic after they listen to the speech because they want more details before deciding if they will support the speaker's argument.

When listeners lack motivation to think critically about a topic, they move toward using the peripheral route. In this situation, listeners

elaboration likelihood model (ELM) model that explains an audience's motivation for processing persuasive messages in either a central processing or a peripheral processing route.