

Section C

Techniques of Irrelevance

1. Appearance

Game Book Definition

“The appearance of a thing (or person) is made the basis of our acceptance or rejection without any thought that this appearance may be a deceptive indicator of value.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“A special case of the fallacy of Appearance is the deceptiveness of numbers, i.e., they are not always what they look to be. Why is it that if someone has a property to sell and would like \$25,000 for it, he advertises at \$24,990? People who are in the market for a new home may have drawn the line at \$24,000. Seeing a figure of \$25,000, they do not give the advertisement a second look. But the \$24,990 is, at first glance, in the \$24,000 bracket. The seller is willing to give up \$10 in exchange for greater interest and more inquiries. Then there is the odd weight gimmick. In looking over the package, the customer sees that it contains ‘6 7/8 ounces’; too many customers think ‘half pound.’”

Expanded Definition

The appearance of a person or thing may produce either a positive or a negative conclusion.

Example of a positive conclusion from Appearance

- a. That girl exchange student from Denmark is really a sharp dresser. I’ll bet she’s smart, too.

Comment: Don’t you wish that all you had to do to be intelligent is to dress smart?

Example of a negative conclusion from Appearance

- b. How can you hire Clyde as a night watchman for our office building? Clyde looks as though he doesn’t own a comb and changes clothes once a week at most.

Comment: What difference does it make how a night watchman dresses or combs his hair? Presumably no one is around to see him anyway.

The appearance of a product or the person pushing the product or pictured in the ad may lure buyers into purchasing.

Examples of Appearance in ads

- c. A television ad for an accounting service showed a man in a gray business suit with a subdued, respectful tie. His hair was nicely styled.
- d. Car dealer’s ad: “Our new Buick Regal is really sharp! It has some sleek but elegant lines. You’ll particularly like the slant of the back window and the cut of the front fenders. Also, the color is our newest metallic combination. You can’t miss with this model.”

Comment: OK, it looks great, but how does it drive? What about cost? Gas mileage?

If the basic argument in an ad is that the product will *improve your appearance*, then the technique is Appeal to Practical Consequences in Section **D**.

Appearance differs from Manner in that Appearance involves making a snap judgment *based solely on a person's hair, makeup, dress, etc.* However, Manner involves observing the person's *behavior* for at least a brief period. Also, *Appearance applies to objects as well as to people whereas Manner refers only to people.*

Example of Appearance rather than Manner

- e. I watch the news on Channel 7. I can't stand the beady eyes of that newscaster on Channel 9.

Comment: No mention is made of the content of the news presented on either channel. The reason for preferring one station to the other is the way the newscaster's eyes look.

Example of Manner rather than Appearance

- f. I never watch the news on Channel 9. I can't stand the way the lead newscaster reads the news and speaks to her co-host.

Comment: The manner in which the lead newscaster reads the news and interacts with the co-host is made the basis of the preference. The content of the broadcast is not mentioned.

If appearance is important for a person in a certain job or role, the correct answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Appearance

- g. Whenever you go for a job interview, you should dress nicely and be courteous and respectful. That is good advice; you should act on it.

Comment: You want to make a good first impression. So this is sound thinking and neither Appearance nor Manner.

- h. Yes, I know that Madelyn is one of the hottest models around. But her hair is always wind-blown, her clothes are too flashy, and she has that come-on smile. We can't afford to have that look in our new ad campaign. Our customers are too conservative. I say that we select Wanda instead.

Comment: Examples like this should be confined to Junior/Senior divisions.

2. Manner

Game Book Definition

“A person’s manner of behavior is made the basis of our acceptance or rejection of [that person] without any thought that this manner may be a deceptive indicator of value.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

- “... the fallacy of Manner, unlike Appearance, is attributed only to persons. ...”
- “Persuasive manner is a matter of tone of voice, of how you carry yourself, etc.”
- “... we should not mistake the show of sincerity for proof of the truth or value of a proposal. Sincerity is one of the easiest virtues to imitate. ... A sincere and confident presentation of very foolish or dangerous proposals keeps the audience on its toes, but after all persuasive foolishness is still folly. ... Hitler and Stalin and other famous political leaders were both confident and sincere ...”

Expanded Definition

- As with Appearance, a person’s Manner may produce either a positive or a negative attitude toward the person.
- The definition says a “person’s manner of behavior” is the determining factor. So Manner *does not apply to an animal* like a dog or cat.
- We are impressed by the speaker’s sincerity and confidence. If he is so sure of his position, he must be right.

Example of a positive conclusion from Manner

- a. Melissa was bubbly and cool. She really handled those tough questions with confidence. She is a much better candidate for the job of warehouse stock clerk than Sally, who was nervous and jittery.

Comment: To conclude that Melissa is “bubbly and cool” and Sally is “nervous and jittery” requires observing their behavior for at least a short time. As a behind the scenes job, warehouse stock clerk doesn’t require interacting with the customers. So the descriptions of the two girls are irrelevant. If they were applying for a sales or public relations position, their manner would be important and No Technique would be the answer.

Example of a negative conclusion from Manner

- b. When will you come to realize that André cannot be hired as our new data entry clerk? He has a terrible lisp, and it is difficult to understand him when he speaks.

Comment: Why does a lisp prevent André from being excellent at data entry? He “speaks” through his keyboard.

As a follow-up to the examples above, *the example writer should make clear exactly what position is involved* so that players can make a correct decision about the relevance of the manner described.

Manner may determine a person’s preference in an election.

Example of Manner determining choice of a political candidate

- c. My friend was backstage before the presidential debate. He said Clinton was calm, cool, and collected but Dole was a nervous wreck. Clinton is obviously the better candidate.

Comment: How did the candidates do during the debate? And does debate performance, positive or negative, carry over to effectiveness in office?

An ad may brag that a product or service will *improve the customer's manner*. Such an example belongs in Section **D** where Appeal to Practical Consequences is the technique.

Manner differs from Appearance in that Manner requires observing the person's *behavior* for at least a brief period. On the other hand, Appearance involves a "first glance" judgment based solely on someone's dress, grooming, etc. See the examples **e**, **f**, and **g** on page **C-3**.

If a certain manner of moving, speaking, or acting is important for a person in a certain position, the correct response is No Technique.

Example of No Technique rather than Manner

- d. President of a company: "I chose Donna as our Public Relations Director. I was impressed with her poise and easy manner when interacting with the press."

Comment: The attributes cited are important for a Public Relations Director.

3. Degrees and Titles

Game Book Definition

“We buy or we believe out of respect for degrees or titles attached to the names of those who persuade us.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

- “The fallacy of Degrees may occur even though one possesses an earned degree. One may be talking out of his field.”
- “In America we grant no social titles of a hereditary nature comparable to the ‘Duke’ and ‘Duchess’ of Europe. We have an abundance of social titles nevertheless. Organizations ... offer titles to the deserving or fortunate: ‘Mr. President,’ ‘The Honorable,’ ‘Mayor,’ ‘His Honor, Judge,’ ‘Supreme Councilor,’ ‘Grand High Potentate.’ ... All such titles carry some prestige and can be readily abused.”

Expanded Definition

- “Degree” means a college degree but not an honorary degree.
- According to one dictionary, a *title* is “a formal appellation attached to the name of a person by virtue of office, rank, hereditary privilege, noble birth, or attainment or used as a mark of respect.”
- This technique applies when the person’s degree or title gives them no particular expertise with regard to the point being made or the product being sold.

Examples of Titles

<i>Office</i>	President, Senator, Governor, Chairperson, Judge
<i>Rank</i>	General, Captain
<i>Noble Birth</i>	King, Princess, Duchess, Lord
<i>Attainment</i>	Professor, Doctor, Harvard graduate, champion, pro football player, award winner, record setter, astronaut, sportscaster, physicist
<i>Respect</i>	Reverend, Coach

- *Descriptions based on opinion are not considered titles* in the sense of this technique. So the following do *not* constitute titles for Degrees and Titles.

Examples that are not true Titles

- star of a hit television series
- business leader
- basketball legend
- most feared slugger
- famous model
- comedian
- TV host (TV personality)

If descriptions like these are used, the answer should be Status.

- **Use of a degree or title in an advertisement is *never* No Technique. Even if a doctor is recommending a brand of aspirin – which is within her field of expertise – the goal is to sell a product.**

Examples of Degrees and Titles

- a. “I like the perfect fit, luxurious feel, and inner warmth of my Brady’s Leather Jacket,” says Laura Stern, President of the American Dog-Breeders Association.

Comment: She knows a great deal about dogs. But why does that make her an expert on jackets?

- b. Dr. Maria Morgan is the chairperson of the prestigious Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Her views tonight on the necessity of man’s flight to Mars will be intriguing. You do not want to miss it, at only \$30 admission.

Comment: The topic of her talk is *close* to her field in the Senate because it involves a government program. However, it does not pertain to foreign relations. Therefore, her position on the Foreign Relations Committee does not make her an expert on space flight. Nor does calling her “Doctor” shed any light on why anyone should spend \$30 to hear her speech.

- c. My economics professor said, “Bank of America stocks are going to be a good investment and I’m going to buy some.” That was good enough for me. I bought some, too.

Comment: This one is a close call. However, it cannot be presumed that someone with expertise in economic theory knows how to invest in the stock market. If an experienced investment counselor made the recommendation, the answer would be No Technique.

Both Degrees and Titles and Status utilize outsiders to legitimize a product or proposal. However, Degrees and Titles cites a person’s degree or title to identify them as someone with supposed authority because the listener may not otherwise know who they are. On the other hand, a Status example uses a famous person who “needs no introduction” or cites a well-respected institution or organization. However, *if a title is given, answer Degrees and Titles even if the person might be famous enough that the title is not necessary for most people.*

Example of Degrees and Titles instead of Status

- d. Ad: “Shaquille O’Neal, 13-time All NBA Center, drinks Gatorade. Shouldn’t you?”

Comment: Shaq is given a title of attainment. This ends any debate about whether he is famous enough that he doesn’t require a title to identify him.

Examples of Status instead of Degrees and Titles

- e. Ad: “Shaquille O’Neal drinks Gatorade. Shouldn’t you?”.

Comment: This ad assumes Shaq is so widely known and respected that no title is needed.

- f. Ad: “The new Nissan Altima. Voted Car of the Year by *Automotive Magazine*.”

Comment: “Car of the Year” is a title. However, as defined for the technique Degrees and Titles, *a title applies only to a person*. Instead, this example us-

es the prestige (status) of an award from a respected trade journal to recommend the product.

If a person's degree or title is applicable to the topic, the answer is No Technique. However, the connection of the degree or title to the topic should be clear.

Example of No Technique rather than Degrees and Titles

- g.** I would like to introduce our Environmental Pollution speaker, Mr. Roger Rogue. He is a member of the President's Committee on Pollution Control and is former Director of the State Wildlife Association.

Comment: A member of the Committee on Pollution Control can be presumed to be qualified to speak about Environmental Pollution.

- h.** After the Surgeon General of the United States said that smoking is harmful to your health, I quit smoking right away.

Comment: The Surgeon General's announcement reflects the results of government and private studies of the effects of smoking. Therefore, you *should* take it seriously when making a decision whether to smoke.

Example of Degrees and Titles rather than No Technique

- i.** News release from Nutrisystem: "Dr. Richard Heck, 2010 Chemistry Nobel Prize Winner, is representing Nutrisystem in their next advertising campaign."

Comment: Nutrisystem involves vitamins and nutrition which fall under the general heading of chemistry. But, with no explanation of what Dr. Heck's Nobel Prize research involved, his expertise is questionable. In other words, *the benefit of the doubt concerning the applicability of the degree or title lands on the side of skepticism*. Also, someone might argue that the news release just reports a fact and therefore is not propaganda. But the news release comes from the *company* and is intended to promote the product.

4. Numbers

Game Book Definition

“We buy or believe because of the large numbers associated with the product or proposition.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“The fallacy of Numbers can take the form of a reference to age. ‘Our firm has been in business 100 years.’ *If a firm is 100 years old, we can hardly object to that fact being mentioned in advertising. But the customer should think twice before buying on that basis alone. Even though the firm is that old, it may be about to collapse.*”

Expanded Definition

The question is whether any numbers quoted compel the conclusion being drawn.

Examples of Numbers

- a. We must withdraw from Iraq. Last week alone, 3,617 casualties among U.S. forces were reported.

Comment: The number of casualties is alarming. However, many other factors must be considered when deciding on a major policy change.

- b. Ad: “Use Galma-Mudd, the face cream preferred by eight out of ten women in the Cleveland area.”

Comment: This is similar to Join the Bandwagon Appeal (Section D). Just because 80% of women in the area buy the product, that doesn’t make it best for *you*.

Often Numbers is used in favor of one political candidate over another or to justify a governmental policy.

Example of Numbers in politics

- c. From a speech by a candidate running against the current governor: “My opponent has raised taxes \$750 million. In our already crippled oil and gas industry, he added a 10% leasing fee and raised taxes on natural gas 43%.”

Comment: The numbers quoted seem to paint a bad picture of the incumbent. However, are they accurate? Did a financial crisis in the state make higher taxes necessary?

In some cases, the speaker cites a small number to justify a conclusion.

Example of Numbers with a negative conclusion

- d. Only 3% of TV viewers watch that program each week. How can you possibly like it?

Comment: A large percentage (97%) does *not* watch the program. However, the show may provide quality entertainment for the small minority who enjoy it.

Numbers may be used as part of Technical Jargon. However, if one or more large numbers have more impact than the technical terms, the answer is Numbers.

Example of Numbers rather than Technical Jargon

- e. Ad: “We sold over 1,000,000 tubes of Beam toothpaste last year because we added a new ingredient, GK7.”

Comment: “GK7” is a technical term that means nothing to the average consumer. However, the ad is primarily bragging about the 1,000,000 tubes that were sold whether GK7 was the reason or not. *Examples combining two techniques with almost equal impact like this should be confined to Junior/Senior or – better yet – not used.*

Technical Jargon may involve numbers. However, if the numbers are not used to impress people in themselves but rather are part of the jargon, the answer is Technical Jargon.

Example of Technical Jargon rather than Numbers

- f. Ad: “The new Peach Computer has 128 meg of RAM, a CPU that operates at 4 gigahertz, a CRT monitor with 1000 lines of raster scan per second, and a disk drive with a density of 1024 bytes per sector.”

Comment: Many numbers litter this ad. However, they are part of the technical language and have little impact on their own. A computer illiterate person doesn’t know whether 4 gigahertz is fast or not.

If a number justifies the conclusion being drawn, then the answer is No Technique. Also answer No Technique if numbers are part of facts being quoted with no conclusion being drawn from them.

Examples of No Technique rather than Numbers

- g. Well, 68% of the townspeople approved it. That means the new bridge will be built.
- h. A score of 1000 on the College Board exams is considered minimum for applications to Morrow University. You scored 1004; so you may apply.
- i. On December 3, 1984, more than 40 tons of deadly chemical gas leaked from a Union Carbide factory in Bhopal, India. More than half a million people were exposed to the gas, and 20,000 have died as a result of their chemical exposure thus far. The site has never been cleaned up and, years later, it continues to poison the residents of Bhopal.

5. Status

Game Book Definition

“Persons or objects for which we have a strong sentiment of respect and esteem – or which at least possess some degree of fame or prestige – are introduced into the argument as endorsing that which we are asked to buy or believe.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

- “The use of Status may on occasion have a negative emphasis. The fact that some prestigious person is *against* some product or idea is offered as evidence. Where the person’s prestige is relevant to the matter, as the prestige of a noted biologist on some biological question, the appeal to status might seem to be unexceptionable. Far too often, however, ... leading scientists have lent their prestige to squelching new ideas that seemed to threaten the scientific establishment of the day.”
- “Under the heading of Status we will subsume pseudo-reputation. The speaker of the evening is billed as “World Famous ... Psychologist, Author, Lecturer, World Traveler.”

Expanded Definition

- Often a person is presented as “someone who needs no introduction.” Some people are so famous among the target audience that you don’t need to explain who they are; for example, sports stars, “hot” actors and actresses, and – to children – Ronald McDonald or certain cartoon characters. Use of such a person to sell a product or push a cause without identifying the person with a title constitutes the Status technique. (See page **C-4** for the definition of “title” for the Propaganda game.)
- Unlike Degrees and Titles, Status also applies to “objects,” which means institutions or organizations that command respect. This includes respected publications as well as professional associations.
- The theory behind the Status technique is: X is an important or well-known person. X wouldn’t be well known unless he were better or more knowledgeable than us. Therefore, he knows what he’s talking about and we should believe him.
- We are encouraged to transfer our approval of the person to the idea or product he is endorsing.

Examples of Status involving well-known persons

- a. Ad for milk by the National Dairy Association: “LeBron James drinks milk. So should you.”

Comment: Even if Kobe were identified as “basketball great” or some other designation that represents the sponsor’s opinion (as opposed to a title like “three-time Most Valuable Player”), the answer would still be Status, not Degrees and Titles, because he possesses “some degree of fame or prestige.”

- b. We're sure lucky. Tomorrow the greatest figure skater in the nation is coming here to talk about safe driving.

Comment: "Greatest figure skater in the nation" is not a true title because it is a matter of opinion. Instead, the designation is intended to make the listener respect the person enough to come to the talk. However, what does figure skating have to do with safe driving?

Example of Status involving an institution or organization

- c. Ad: "Wayland's Best Eggs were recently judged 'America's Best Tasting Egg' by the Professional Chefs of the American Culinary Institute. Look for the Wayland stamp on every egg."

Comment: "America's Best Tasting Egg" is a title but not the title of a person as defined for Degrees and Titles. However, the award was conferred by a (presumably) well-respected professional organization. Even so, the fact that the culinary "experts" liked these eggs best doesn't mean you will or that you can afford them.

- d. Ad: "Laboratory tests at a leading medical institution confirm that Alleve relieves headaches better than any other brand."

Comment: This is an example of a "vague" appeal to authority. The "leading medical institution" is not named but still used as part of the Status technique.

Who is famous changes continually, especially with young people. Michael Jordan and Tom Cruise are not as hot as they once were; now it's basketball superstar LeBron James, quarterback Tom Brady, or actress Jennifer Lawrence. *In general, if no title or other identification is included in the example, assume the person has sufficient fame without it and answer Status.*

To avoid confusion, *no made-up names will be used in Status examples.* While it is impossible to predict whether or not a celebrity's name will be recognized by all players in a Propaganda tournament, **players may assume that any person cited is real and well-known** in politics, sports, the media, or some other field.

If a person promotes something in their field of expertise, the answer is still Status unless there is evidence that the person tried it himself or helped design or test it. In other words, **the benefit of the doubt goes to Status, not No Technique.**

Example of Status that cites a person within their area of expertise

- e. Listing on EBay: "Lightweight boxing gloves for your son, endorsed by legendary boxer Joe Frazier, a quality item."

Comment: We have no indication that Joe had anything to do with designing or testing the gloves.

Status can be used in a reverse manner. That is, an infamous person's preference is cited as a reason for *not* liking something.

Example of reverse Status

- f. How can you like any piece by Wagner? Why, he was Hitler's favorite composer.

If the person's experience in their chosen field is relevant to what they are speaking about, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Status

- g. Item in the athletic department's newsletter: "The featured speaker at next week's Sports Banquet will be football legend Bruce Smith."

Comment: The speaker's background makes him an appropriate choice for the audience.

- h. After a Federal government study said that smoking is harmful to your health, I quit smoking right away.

Comment: Compare this example with example **h** on page **C-8**. There the title "Surgeon General" is used. Here the status of a "Federal government study" is applied. In both cases, the answer is No Technique because the person or institution cited does not have expertise concerning the harmful effects of smoking.

6. Repetition

Game Book Definition

“We buy or believe because we have heard or seen the idea or product name so often.”

Expanded Definition

- How often does a word or phrase have to be used to qualify as Repetition?
Three times is sufficient provided no other technique of this section prevails.
- **Alliteration is considered Repetition if it involves at least three words.**
- The “idea” that is repeated could be the company telephone number, the fact that you will save money, an adjective like “free” or “big” (or synonyms for them), and any other word or phrase intended to capture your attention.
- If you say something often enough, people will eventually believe you.

Example of Repetition of the company or product name

- a. Wool carpet has everything that a carpet should have. Wool has a natural bounce in every fiber. Wool carpet has lasting beauty. Wool carpet has lasting color. Wool carpet resists flame. Wool carpet cleans easily. The answer is WOOL.

Comment: Although no specific product is mentioned, the ad hammers home the advantages of wool to make you more likely to buy a product made of wool the next time you shop.

Examples of Repetition of words or phrases other than a product or brand name

- b. Have you been waiting for the right opportunity to own a Cadillac?
Besides our low, everyday prices we offer:
FREE LOAN CAR – while yours is in the shop
FREE VALET PARKING – to save valuable time
FREE COURTESY CAR – to home or work
Come to Spencer Cadillac, at Fifth and Madison.
- c. TV ad: “Don’t talk to me about paint unless you talk about the best. Don’t talk to me about quality unless you talk about the best. Don’t talk to me about cost unless you talk about the best. That’s why I buy only the best, Benjamin Smith paint.”
- d. **Coach to her team before the big game: “Ladies, remember: Poise, Pride, and Performance. Go get ‘em!”**

Repetition examples don’t have to be ads. A speaker can use Repetition to drive home a point.

Examples of Repetition not involving ads

- e. And what represents the honor that is this nation? Our flag! What did five boys risk life and limb to lift over Iwo Jima? Our flag! What did Francis Scott Key see above Fort McHenry? Our flag! Sousa’s greatest march proclaimed

the glory of – our flag! What should every American with red, white, and blue in their veins fight to protect now that liberals are assaulting it? Our flag!

Comment: This starts out like a patriotic speech in which techniques may legitimately be used. However, the reference to liberals assaulting the flag lowers this to political rhetoric.

- f. Stephen arguing on the phone with Jessica: “Why don’t you ask Rhett? After all, isn’t Rhett your favorite? And didn’t you want Rhett to go instead of me? And hasn’t Rhett been the boy of your dreams all along. Well, I just hope you and Rhett are happy because you deserve each other.”

Comment: You’ve made your point, Stephen. You really don’t like Rhett!

Suppose a number is repeated. Neither Repetition nor Numbers automatically takes precedence (unless the number is repeated only once). If the repeated number is meant to impress the listener as a large number, then Numbers is the primary technique with Repetition reinforcing its clout. However, if the number is just a telephone number, the number of an amendment or candidate on the ballot, or the channel number or radio frequency, Repetition is the prevailing technique.

Example of Repetition rather than Numbers

- g. From a television ad: “7 is a lucky number. Amendment 7 would prevent the state legislature from raising your taxes without your approval. Amendment 7 would freeze your property tax at its present level. Amendment 7 would give control of our government back to the people. Vote *for* amendment 7.”

Comment: The number is repeated to imprint on listeners’ brains which amendment to vote for. The ad does not try to impress with a large number.

Example of Numbers rather than Repetition

- h. Television ad: “Last week 70% of the viewers nationwide watched the debut of ABC’s new series, ‘Sam and Gloria.’ Tune in Monday at 9 pm to find out why 70% of the audience fell in love with ‘Sam and Gloria.’”

Comment: The number is included only twice. So Repetition does not apply.

Suppose the name of a celebrity endorser is repeated. In this case, the repetition probably reinforces the effect of Status. However, the two techniques are so intertwined that *examples combining Status and Repetition should not be used*.

Example of Status and Repetition that should not be used

- i. Ad featuring football and baseball star Bo Jackson: “Bo knows football; Bo knows baseball; and Bo knows shoes. Wear Nikes, like Bo.”

Suppose a technical term is repeated. In this case, the repetition enhances the impact of the Technical Jargon.

Example of Technical Jargon rather than Repetition

- j. Ad: “Only Kelly Shoes are made from the exciting new material Corfam. Corfam shoes – only from Kelly.”

Comment: The primary appeal is “We’re the only ones using Corfam.” Since the material’s name is used only twice, Repetition, by the agreement stated on the previous page, does not apply. *Examples like this should be Junior/Senior only.*

As a follow-up to the previous example, *statements or ads that include a technical term three or more times should not be used since they intertwine two techniques of this section.*

Suppose repetition is part of a slogan. Then Repetition prevails because its purpose is to get you to remember the company or product name that is part of the slogan.

Example of Repetition rather than Slogans

k. Ad: “No other salt salts quite like Salty Salt salts.”

Comment: The repetition of “salt” makes it more likely the listener will remember the company name. The slogan would be bland without the repetition. So Repetition is the technique with more impact.

Repetition may not be intended to sell something, influence your vote, or persuade you in any way but rather aims at helping you remember important information. For example, a teacher may state several times during a class that there will be a test tomorrow. Or a public service announcement reminds viewers about an important deadline by repeating a date. Examples like these will not be used in competition. That is, *there will be no examples that seem like Repetition but are actually No Technique.*

7. Slogans

Game Book Definition

“A slogan is a short, meaningful, catchy phrase or sentence intended for general consumption and designed to terminate thought and promote action in favor of the slogan maker. However true the slogan may be, if your action is merely a favorable response to the slogan, the technique is successful.”

From *Thinking Straighter*

“There are times ... when the slogan is legitimately employed. After a proposition has been soundly established or a course of action agreed upon, a brief phrase used as a short summary is excellent as a memory device ... Thus the speaker can summarize his speech and bring it to a focus by concluding with the slogan, ‘America must become the arsenal of democracy.’ ... A slogan or motto thus can sometimes be used as a terse and striking expression of a noble ideal, a spiritual truth, a great achievement or obligation.”

Expanded Definition

Slogans are usually short. However, they may be part of a longer ad.

Short Slogan Examples

- a. Winky’s makes you happy to be hungry.
- b. Ad: “Cottman’s Transmissions. Expect the best. You deserve it.”

Examples of Slogans as part of a longer ad

- c. Ad: “Open your mind to the world. Select Netscape software for complete and total access to the entire World Wide Web.”

Comment: In this example, the slogan appears first.

- d. Ad in a computer magazine: “Let the PC world come to you. Copy and paste. Drag and drop. Switch between Mac and Windows applications easily. The new, faster Virtual PC for Mac Version 7 lets you run PC programs on your Mac. Microsoft. Your potential. Our passion.”

Comment: This ad places the slogan last where the listener is most likely to remember it: “Microsoft. Your potential. Our passion.” This is similar to Sophistical Formula except that the speaker closes with a slogan rather than a proverb.

Slogans may be part of a political commercial or speech.

Example of a political Slogans

- e. Political candidate: “We must have equal rights for *all* Americans, not affirmative action for a few.”

An ad may refer to a person of distinction before or after the slogan. However, the answer is usually Slogans, not Status.

Example with a Slogan along with a personal reference

- f. Ad: “Stephanie Kleck is a chemist and an inventor of the world’s strongest fiber. How did she do it? She works for Dupont. Better Things for Better Living.”

Comment: Stephanie’s invention of the world’s strongest fiber has not made her famous. So this is not Status. Also notice that the slogan is saved for last for maximum effectiveness.

Slogans resembles Sophistical Formula in that both use a catchy phrase or saying. However, Slogans are original whereas Sophistical Formulas have been around awhile.

Example of Slogans rather than Sophistical Formula

- g. Vote for Peter Pilson, Progress for the 21st century.

Example of Sophistical Formula rather than Slogans

- h. I know that when Wal-Mart comes to our town, they will drive other companies out of business. But you know what they say: You can’t stop progress.

The quotation from *Thinking Straighter* on the previous page states that a slogan is appropriate if it summarizes an agreed-upon course of action or a “noble ideal, a spiritual truth, a great achievement or obligation.”

Example of No Technique rather than Slogans

- i. After a patriotic speech urging everyone to do his duty, the president concludes with the statement, “We must fight to make the world safe for democracy.”

8. Technical Jargon

Game Book Definition

“The technique of technical jargon is the use of technical language or unfamiliar words, whether contained in the dictionary or freshly coined, for the purpose of impressing people.”

Expanded Definition

- “Jargon” refers to the terminology of a specialized field.
- In this technique, unfamiliar words whose meanings are too technical to be understood by the average person are included to impress us.
- If the audience is knowledgeable about the technical subject being discussed, then no Propaganda technique is involved.

Examples of Technical Jargon in ads

- a. Ad: “This new dress from Janis Kaye’s Originals contains a new fabric, dureneum, which keeps the cloth from shrinking and resists dirt completely.”

Comment: Who knows the chemical formula for dureneum? However, it sure sounds impressive.

- b. Golf club ad: “You can’t argue with physics. The new Jumbo driver puts more of the critical mass in the club head, which boosts the momentum at impact. The results are indisputable.”

Comment: While the language of this ad is not as technical as many others, it still tries to impress with its physics references.

The use of Technical Jargon is not confined to ads.

Examples of Technical Jargon apart from ads

- c. From a Commerce Department memorandum issued to the general public: “Although standard econometric techniques are not satisfactory for estimating a regional econometric policy model, an operational heuristic method can be used for making causal inferences of the impact of public works upon small economies.”

Comment: The key phrase is “issued to the general public.” If the target audience were economists, this would be No Technique.

- d. One neighbor to another: “You should get the Fabulay Carpet for your house because it has the new TUFFO which gives it extra strength.”

Unless the example states otherwise, assume an ad is aimed at the general public.

Example of Technical Jargon in a general ad

- e. Ad: “Intel’s newest Ethernet adapter for use with multi-station equipment takes network response to an even faster level. To learn more, visit us in cyberspace at our state-of-the-art website.”

Comment: Without an indication that the ad appeared in a computer magazine, this is Technical Jargon.

An example is No Technique rather than Technical Jargon if the technical language is appropriate for the intended audience.

Examples of No Technique rather than Technical Jargon

- f. Fellow members of the American Mathematical Society, I heartily endorse Professor Hill's proposition of introducing limiting processes in calculus by using the Lipschitz condition rather than the traditional notions of delta and epsilon neighborhoods.
- g. Ad in a photography magazine: "Kodak EasyShare DX6490 zoom digital camera. It's the first camera to unite a professional-quality Variogon 10X optical zoom lens with the exclusive Kodak color science image processing chip, for the finest details and richest, most accurate colors."

Comment: The readers of a photography magazine presumably understand this jargon.

9. Sophistical Formula

Game Book Definition

“To shut off or close the argument a popular maxim or old saying is quoted. But every controversial situation must be settled in its own terms, and not on the merits (if any) of some proverb.”

Expanded Definition

An old saying cannot carry the day by itself. It must be backed up with solid reasoning.

Most Sophistical Formula examples do not involve ads.

Examples of Sophistical Formula not in ads

- a. Let’s not give up. True, we have tried everything. We have telephoned; we have knocked on his door; we have written to him. And we have not yet received a cent from him. But “where there’s a will, there’s a way.”

Comment: Other than quoting the proverb, the speaker gives no reason why further efforts should be made.

- b. Terry’s father was skeptical when Terry quit his job after 15 years to pursue a career in Real Estate sales. His father warned Terry: “Be careful. ‘Look before you leap.’”

Comment: Father’s advice might be good in a general way. However, he gives no *specific* pitfalls to avoid. He lumps them all into a saying.

Occasionally an ad quotes a proverb.

Example of Sophistical Formula in an ad

- c. An MCI ad: “You have had the same tired phone service for 55 years from AT&T. Isn’t it about time for a fresher approach. ‘Nothing ventured; nothing gained.’”

Comment: Is there any reason to change phone services other than satisfying a proverb? Better price or service maybe?

Sometimes a Sophistical Formula is part of a dialog.

Examples of Sophistical Formula in dialogs

- d. Sandy: “Oh, gosh! Here comes Mr. S. I suppose he’ll be bringing more bad news.”

Judy: “Why do you say that?”

Sandy: “Because he never seems to have anything good to say and you know as well as I do, ‘It’s an ill wind that blows no good!’”

- e. “Will you kids get out of my kitchen! ‘Too many cooks spoil the broth.’”
“But, Mother, you’ve always said, ‘Many hands make light work.’”

Comment: Dueling proverbs!

A problem with Sophistical Formula is that *players, particularly younger ones, may not recognize a statement as a maxim*. It helps if the example uses phrases like “as I always say,” “they say,” “you know,” or “after all.”

Sophistical Formula Example with a “tip off” phrase

- f. Professor: “You ought to study so you can learn at least a little about this course.”
Student: “I can’t give the time to this course to learn as much as I would like, so I think I will not study at all. After all, ‘a little learning is a dangerous thing.’”

Like Slogans, Sophistical Formula summarizes an argument in a catchy phrase. However, it differs from Slogans in that Slogans are original. See the examples on page **C-18**.

If the advice is sound, and a saying is applied appropriately, the answer is No Technique.

Examples of No Technique rather than Sophistical Formula

- g. There is an old saying: “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” In the investment business, those are wise words. I know that buying Argentinean stocks seems attractive right now because there is a good chance they will go up. But they are volatile and could go down too. I recommend that you keep 50% of your money in U.S. Treasury bonds.
Comment: The speaker gives good reasons for diversity in stock purchases. The proverb is supported by logic. *Examples like this and the one below should be limited to Junior/Senior.*
- h. Take care of yourself before you get sick. Make sure that you drink plenty of water, exercise regularly, take daily vitamins, including C, and get enough sleep. These steps will help you stay well. “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”