Rhetorical Outline For Reports

This handout will help you use both Bitzer’s *Rhetorical Situation* and Aristotle’s *Modes of Appeal* to plan and craft your message. It will follow the same process that we highlight in the text. Remember that rhetoric allows us to craft messages that will be more persuasive to our audience. Your responses in this document should always help you move towards that goal.

**Your Topic**

Write your report topic in the square below.

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What change do you want your audience to make by the end of your written report or oral presentation?

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**The Rhetorical Situation (Bitzer)**

You cannot craft your message if you do not know who the message is for in the first place. We start with Bitzer because his work helps us assess the situation.

Rhetorical Exigence

What is the problem that your message will solve?

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What relational issues will be involved with convincing your audience?

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Rhetorical Audience

Who is your audience for this report? Are they open to being persuaded on your topic?

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How can you audience make the needed change that you are proposing?

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Constraints

How much background information does the audience need?

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How long is the report or presentation expected to be?

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Where are credible sources of evidence available?

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What are design conventions (i.e. rules) for the style of report?

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**The Modes of Appeal (Aristotle)**

The Modes of Appeal are all about crafting a persuasive message. This means assessing your credibility as a speaker (ethos), the needs of your audience (pathos), and the available evidence for your argument (logos). Altogether, the Modes of Appeal will help you build a message that shows the credibility of both yourself as a speaker and your message to the audience.

Ethos (your credibility as a speaker)

How will your topic show awareness of the needs of the audience?

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How will you meet the conventions of the report?

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What will you do to ensure the presented information is fair and complete?

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Pathos (the needs and values of your audience)

How will you ensure you use quality research? How will you convey this to the audience?

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How will you design the report so it is easy for the audience to understand?

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List at least three credible sources that you will use for your report.

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Logos (the available evidence)

How will you ensure the research you are doing is quality? What steps will you take to ensure you are not presenting an inferior or lackluster product?

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How will you organize your report so it is logical and easy to follow?

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How will you position your argument so that you recognize the audience’s concerns?

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