

Tests of Evidence

- **Standardized Evaluation Tool**
 - Material includes major and minor themes from various sources found in **Communications Theory**
 - Evidence must be proven – tested – prior to use
 - Tested evidence provides added credibility for the speaker as well as the conclusions made by the speaker
 - Arguments made from sound evidence advance the public good

Tests of Evidence

- **There are 5.5 Tests of Evidence**
 - Recency
 - Relevance
 - Accessibility
 - Adequacy
 - Consistency
 - Internal
 - External **

Tests of Evidence

- **Recency**
 - **Test: Is the information the “most” current available?**
 - Yes/No – If No, why not?
 - Reasonable person standard: with the past year unless there exists a legitimate obstacle
 - Exempting historical artifacts, materials used in support of advocacy must be recent

Tests of Evidence

- **Relevance**
 - **Test: Is the information associated with the topic?**
 - Demonstrate the value of the information to the purpose of the speech
 - Ensure your audience understands the linkage
 - Materials used support of advocacy must be relevant

Tests of Evidence

- **Accessibility**
 - **Test: Is the information accessible?**
 - Credible sources must be chosen
 - Sourcing must be neutral or balanced
 - Reasonable conclusions from source/s
 - Materials used in support of advocacy must be readily available

Tests of Evidence

- **Adequacy**
 - **Test: Is there sufficient evidence to support claims and conclusions?**
 - Demonstrate comprehensiveness of analyses, assessments, and studies
 - Describe how (and why) data points are representative of the larger universe – explain why your evidence is “enough” to prove the case
 - Materials used in support of advocacy must be adequate to the burdens of circumstance

Tests of Evidence

- **Consistency**
 - **Two-step test**
 - **Test I: Is your evidence internally consistent?**
 - Why? (Hint: Internal consistency required for “true” evidence standard)
 - **Test II: Is your evidence consistent externally (with preexisting knowledge)**
 - Why? (Hint: Assertions can be externally inconsistent – sometimes truth changes – but must PROVE how/why)

Tests of Evidence

- **Consistency**
 - Materials used in support of advocacy must always be internally consistent (your evidence must be congruent)
 - Materials used in support of advocacy may be inconsistent with external knowledge – provided your argument is the result of valid form and sound evidence
 - Scholarship is advanced through inconsistencies, but be certain you are absolutely secure in your reasoning

Tests of Evidence

- **Questions?**