

testing supporting material

The appropriate selection of supporting material requires the speaker to test each piece of information contained in the speech. To facilitate the process, several criteria are provided below. Before presenting your speech, test your supporting material for appropriateness.

General evaluation criteria

- ✓ Are enough types of supporting materials used?
- ✓ Are there significant exceptions to the supporting material used?
- ✓ Is the supporting material used true or logical?
- ✓ Is the source of the materials reliable?
- ✓ Is the material correctly quoted?

Comparisons

- ✓ Do the two entities being compared actually have any similarities?
- ✓ Are the similarities significant?
- ✓ Do important differences exist?

Explanations

- ✓ Is the explanation clearly phrased?
- ✓ Is the explanation used in conjunction with other forms of support?
- ✓ Is the explanation long enough to present the idea, yet short enough to hold attention?

Descriptions

- ✓ Does the description create an image?
- ✓ Can the audience visualize the person, place or thing?

Specific instances

- ✓ Are the instances fairly chosen?
- ✓ Are the instances recent?

Illustrations

- ✓ Are the illustrations representative?
- ✓ Is the illustration clearly related to the idea being presented?
- ✓ Is it a fair example?
- ✓ Is the illustration vivid and impressive in detail?

Statistics

- ✓ Are the statistics representative?
- ✓ Are the statistics recent?
- ✓ Do the statistics measure what they appear to measure?
- ✓ Are the statistical units properly defined?

Testimony or quotations

- ✓ Is the testimony from someone qualified to discuss the subject?
- ✓ Is the testimony from an unbiased source?
- ✓ Is it supported by other testimony and data?
- ✓ Is the testimony from a source acceptable to the audience?

Testing the sources of evidence is the source...

- ✓ Clearly identified?
- ✓ Reliable?
- ✓ Unbiased?
- ✓ Honest?
- ✓ Recent?