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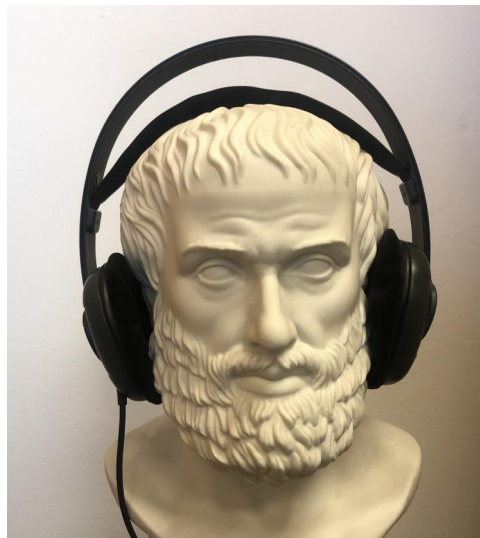
## Aristotle's Lost Appeals

He had way more than three; here are another five...

**A**ristotle is a famous guy. He was a philosopher, writer and good at posing for statues. He is, to us, a leading light with his Three Appeals of Logos, Ethos and Pathos, and we even have a bust of him in our office to remind us of this. We have written here several times about the enduring high value of these three appeals in acts of persuasion, and we started to write about others in 2019. Here is a more elaborated review.

A wordier definition, would be: *'a time when conditions are right for the accomplishment of a crucial action: the opportune and decisive moment'*.<sup>1</sup> Surely, getting this right has a great effect on the level of persuasiveness, and yet how much do we think about that before embarking on a major project? I think we all do this a bit, but even since choosing to write about this one, we have sharpened our timing.

Is it because of the 'Magic of Threes' that his other appeals have been almost forgotten? Maybe they just aren't as good? No, the review of them below tells us they are just as valid and just as helpful in building a compelling case, so we commend them to you.



GPB's statue of Aristotle, posing with headphones on (GPB, 2021).

**Kairos**  
Put most simply Kairos translates from Ancient Greek as 'the right time' or 'good timing', for example when to give a presentation or to do something. If you've ever climbed Everest (yes, a few of our clients actually have!), decided when a 'push on' should happen in a rowing race (I have), or had the response *'not now, I'm busy'* or *'we just don't have the budget/time/capacity for that'* then you'll be familiar with this one. But I hope you'll also have experienced the opposite *'Ah, I'm glad you called, there's something I'd like your help with'*.

### Nomos/ Nomoi

Put most simply, Nomos translates as a Law, Convention, Conduct or Custom, which was distinguished in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC from Physis, which meant the Law of Nature<sup>2</sup>. Nomoi is the plural. Simple customs include shaking hands when we meet new business counterparts (OK, not for the last year), greetings on emails and letters such as Hi/Hello and Yours/ Best wishes, and saying your name when you

call someone (even though these days your name would be stored on many of the other mobile phones you call).

So, what sorts of conventions and customs do we humans have that might affect persuasiveness? One that has always struck me as odd is that of hiring firms *before* experiencing any of their work, using other factors like *'Do I know you'*, creds and reputation (think of the Big 4 accounting firms and Magic Circle law firms) in our selection processes

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### In this edition:

#### Aristotle's Lost Appeals

By Ewan Pearson

Ewan reviews five of Aristotle's 'lost' appeals and highlights how they play a part in day-to-day acts of persuasion.

#### Intercultural lessons on vocal pitch

By Richard Keith

Richard talks about the importance of pitch patterns when speaking Japanese, and compares this with English.

#### Respond well to questions - but how long have you got?

By Desmond Harney

Des discusses the importance of answering questions well and provides tips on how to do so effectively.

#### Plausibility, credibility and our emotions

By Lynda Russell-Whitaker

Lynda considers plausibility and credibility, looking at the impact that they can have on an audiences' emotions and perception of the speaker.

## Aristotle's Lost Appeals (cont...)

instead. This disadvantages smaller firms or those less well known. Here's a couple of other unhelpful conventional thoughts: *'Men are stronger'* and *'Women multi-task better'*. Some other conventions are well described these days by subconscious biases such as Affinity, Confirmation and Attribution bias<sup>3</sup>. Our advice would be to beware of convention!

### Telos<sup>4</sup>

Put most simply, Telos translates as Purpose, Intention, Final Aim or Result.

It's the second thing we ask our clients to consider when building a compelling case. FYI, the first thing is to think about your audience. "Why are you doing this, and what purpose do you serve?" are profound questions, and when we ask

them, they trigger a really good discussion that seems to catch people out, and yet always changes a presentation for the better, as it gives everything a clear focus and body of argument. It is very good at helping us to move from Features to Benefits, as Telos describes what something does for the user, not what it is: A knife *cuts things*<sup>5</sup>. So, our advice would be to define your Telos early on, then keep applying it to bring your benefits out.

### Oikos

Put most simply, Oikos translates in a business sense as Team, although it originally meant Family or Household, being the main unit of Ancient Greek society. Every Team needs a Leader, and others as Members. The *sharing of the persuasion* between these parties is often poorly done, with the Team Leader doing too much of the talking. We heard about a PR pitch recently where that was the #1 reason why they lost a pitch.

### Mythos

Put most simply, Mythos translates as Myth, but it also means Belief and Story, whether true or not. It includes anecdotes, which are really just short stories. In Ancient Greek society, people acquired knowledge by analysis (Logos) and hearing stories (Mythos)<sup>6</sup>, and not only do we still do so, but it turns out from a bunch of recent scientific research that we humans actually prefer hearing stories over facts (who knew!?), finding them a much more engaging and thus

memorable way to learn. If that act is learning why a provider should win a piece of work, then stories matter. Our advice is to include anecdotes or stories in your acts of persuasion, even though they will take a bit of extra time. Have you ever heard the one about....?



Eight of Aristotle's Appeals (GPB, 2021).

For the sake of space, I'll stop the appeals there, but there are others that Aristotle reviewed. Take **Hamartia** (a character flaw) for example...

By Ewan Pearson

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