

PROJECTING A POSITIVE LEADERSHIP ETHOES

- Leadership communication at all levels and across the spiral (see p. 8 at bottom) depends on the ability to project a positive image, more specifically a positive ethos
- What do you understand under the following terms:
- “image” (often associated with superficiality – what an audience thinks of leader based on mostly superficial perceptions)
- “ethos” (refers to qualities of greater depth and substance – ties more directly to leader’s character – which audience judges according to culture in which leader are communicating)
- “charisma” (someone who has the ability to persuade others and connect with an audience – resembles ethos in its effect on an audience – but differs in that it suggests exuding a power over others based more on emotion than reason).

DEFINING ETHOS

- Original definitions of ethos can be traced back to writings of Greek philosopher, Aristotle, who identified three types of persuasive appeals:

Logos

Pathos

Ethos

Logos - an appeal based on the logic of an argument

Pathos - an appeal based on the use of emotions

Ethos – an appeal based on the perceived character of sender of the message:

Is the person trustworthy, confident, believable, knowledgeable, and a man or woman of integrity?

- If the audience does not believe the speaker or writer, logic or emotion will have little persuasive force.
- Aristotle states that ethos is the most important persuasive device and most critical ingredient in the rhetorical situation: The “character of the speaker may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses.”
- This implies that orator must make argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief and also his character must look right and he must put hearers in correct frame of mind.
- An effective speaker can inspire confidence in his own character and induce belief and acceptance in the audience.

CONNECTING ETHOS TO AUDIENCE MOTIVATION

- Importance of understanding audience cannot be overemphasised
- Audience’s receptivity to leader, their ethos and message can assist or be a barrier to how they receive the message intended

What makes an audience attend to a message?

Understanding what motivates others to listen and to act