

Political Propaganda Techniques

Emotional Appeal: Whether this is a use of fear, guilt or nostalgia, this propaganda technique manipulates emotions so that the viewer will connect them with *ending* a negative emotion, or with *prolonging* a positive emotion.

Mudslinging: Personal attacks and negative comments or symbols about one's opponents are used to create doubt, dislike, or even hatred in the viewer.

Card stacking: This technique displays the *best* features of a candidate or product, but it usually does so by not telling the whole truth or by omitting certain inconvenient facts. This is especially effective when citing a candidate's virtuous qualities and qualifications.

Testimonial: An authority figure endorses the person or product to influence the audience's opinion. This technique is often seen through a celebrity endorsement, in which a famous person lends their name in the hope that the audience will associate the product with the person in a positive way.

Glittering generalities: This technique uses ideas, ideals, and images to create an emotional response in the audience such as "red, white and blue," "freedom," "honor," "sacrifice," "forefathers" in the hopes that the emotions will be associated with the speaker or product.

Purr words: Close to glittering generalities, these words are also chosen to induce emotions in the audience, but on the level of satisfying certain needs or wishes, such as "juicy, delicious" or "whiter, brighter, cleaner."

Bandwagon: If everyone is doing this, buying this, believing this... why not you? The need to be part of the group and not be left out is key to this technique.

Snob Appeal: The opposite of bandwagon, this appeals to the elitist either through wealth or level of intelligence. It suggests that only someone with enough money or enough smarts can afford the product or understand the message.

Plain Folks: At odds with the snob appeal, this one uses spokespeople who look like us and make us feel that the product or person has something in common with us. Candidates are seen doing everyday activities such as going to fairs or eating fast food while dressed in casual attire to help us connect with them.

Transfer: This technique uses a favorable symbol or image in the hopes that it will be connected to the candidate or product. Other images may be a beach or activity that will link the product to a positive memory or desire.

Humor: This technique can be used quite effectively in campaigns. Critical or negative remarks about the other person can seem less vindictive if done in a humorous manner. Humor can take the edge off of the remark to avoid seeming petty or mean.

Slogans/Jingles: These can be effective both for products "I am stuck on band-aids..." or politicians "I like Ike" when it comes to getting people to remember your name or product.

Repetition: While this form of propaganda might seem annoying, simply *repeating* an idea, word, or phrase can help it stick in the audience's mind and make the candidate and her message much more memorable.