

What Aristotle and Joshua Bell can Teach Us about Persuasion – Connor Neill

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Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2dEuMFR8kw&feature=youtu.be>

Full Lesson: <https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-aristotle-and-joshua-bell-can-teach-us-about-persuasion-conor-neill>

00:00 [Introductory Music with opening animation]

00:14 [Music Fades] **CONNOR NEILL:** Ninth January two thousand and seven: Joshua Bell, one of the greatest violinists in the world, played to a packed audience at Boston State Symphony Hall of a thousand people, where most seats went for more than a hundred dollars. He was used to full, sell-out shows. He was at the peak of his abilities and fame.

00:39 Three days later, [Sound of Passing Subway Car] Joshua Bell played to an audience of nobody. Well maybe, six people paused for a moment, and one child stopped for a while – looking as if he understood something special was happening.

00:58 Joshua said of the experience: <Connor Neill speaking as Joshua Bell> “It was a strange feeling that people were actually...ignoring me.” [Sound of scribbling with writing animation] Joshua Bell was playing violin in a [Sound of Passing Subway Car] Subway Station.

01:15 <Connor Neill speaking as Joshua Bell> “At a music hall, I’ll get upset if someone coughs or someone’s cellphone goes off, but here my expectations quickly diminished. I was oddly grateful when somebody threw in a dollar.”

01:29 [Transition Sound with Money Animation] What changed? Same music, on the same violin, played with the same passion, and by the same man. Why did people listen and then not listen?

01:45 [Scribbling sound with Writing Animation] Aristotle would be able to explain. What does it take to persuade people? Two thousand three hundred years ago, Aristotle wrote the single most important work on persuasion.

01:58 Rhetoric: The Three Means of Persuasion – Logos, Ethos, and Pathos. Logos is that the idea makes sense from the audience’s point of view. This is usually different from the speaker’s point of view, so work needs to be done to make the idea relevant to the worldview – the pains and the challenges of the listeners. A good argument is like good music: good music follows some rules of composition, good arguments follow some rules of logic – it makes sense to the audience.

02:36 Ethos is Reputation: What are you known for? Credibility: Do you look and act professional? Trustworthy: Are your motives clear? Do you show the listener that you care about them as much as yourself? Authority is confidence plus a concise message and clear, strong voice.

02:58 Pathos is the Emotional Connection. Stories are an effective human tool for creating an emotional connection. There are moments where the audience is not ready to hear the message. A speaker must create the right emotional environment for their message.

03:15 What changed? Why did people travel for miles to hear him play one night, and not even pause for a moment to listen the next morning? The answer is that Ethos and Pathos were missing.

03:28 Ethos: The fact that the great concert hall hosts Joshua's concert transfers its trust to Joshua – we trust the institution, we now trust Joshua. The Subway does not have our trust for musical talent – we do not expect to find great art, great music, or great ideas, so it confers not trust to Joshua.

03:52 Pathos: the concert hall is designed for an emotional bond between an audience and an artist – the Subway platform is not. The hustle and movement and [Emphasis] stress is just not conducive to the emotional connection needed between performer and listener.

04:09 Logos, Ethos, Pathos: The idea is [Emphasis] nothing without the rest. This is what Joshua Bell learnt on that cold, January day in two thousand and seven. If you have a great idea, how do you build credibility and emotional connection?

04:29 [Closing Music begins with transition into credits.]

04:36 [Closing Music Fades.]

04:39 [Video Ends.]