

Rogerian Argument

Before you know how to write a Rogerian argument, you should first know what a Rogerian argument is. A Rogerian argument is also called the "common ground" argument because this method requires you to identify the ideas, beliefs and arguments you and your opposition share in common. The assumption is that you and your opposition share common ideas, beliefs and arguments. The task is to identify these commonalities and use them to further argue.

Rogerian arguments are often used in persuasive writing. One advantage of using Rogerian argumentation is that the writer or speaker gains the attention of the audience and prevents them from immediately arguing in opposition. The effect is that you'll be more likely to persuade your listeners or readers.

Here is a process by which you can write the introduction using the Rogerian argument model:

1. Introduce the problem and show why you and your intended audience are affected by the problem.
2. Lay down the common beliefs, ideas and arguments between you and your listeners (if you are speaking) or readers (if you are writing a persuasive paper).
3. Reveal the position that you are holding without saying that your position is better than the opposing belief.
4. Show instances where and when your position is valid and how your position differs from the opposing belief.
5. State your thesis.

Rogerian Argument Example (corresponding to the outline above using the topic cigarette smoking)

1. Smoking cigarettes can cause lung problems. Both first-hand and second-hand smokers are affected by cigarette smoke.
2. Scientific findings and researches show that the chemicals in cigarettes, apart from the smoke, can lead to health problems such as lung cancer.
3. Smoking cigarettes should be banned in public places.
4. In public places, more people, both young and old, can be exposed to the smoke from cigarettes. My position differs from those who might say that smoking altogether should not be banned because my position is that smoking should only be banned in public places. This does not include smoking in private places, like homes.
5. Smoking in public places should be banned because it poses health risks to individuals who are non-smokers and who do not want to inhale the fumes from cigarettes. The risks are doubled for those who already have lung ailments.