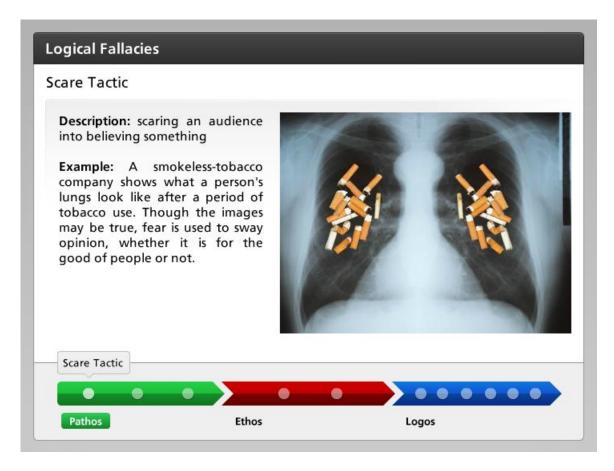
Introduction



Click the circles in the categories or the *NEXT* button to view descriptions and examples of each logical fallacy in greater detail.



Scare Tactic

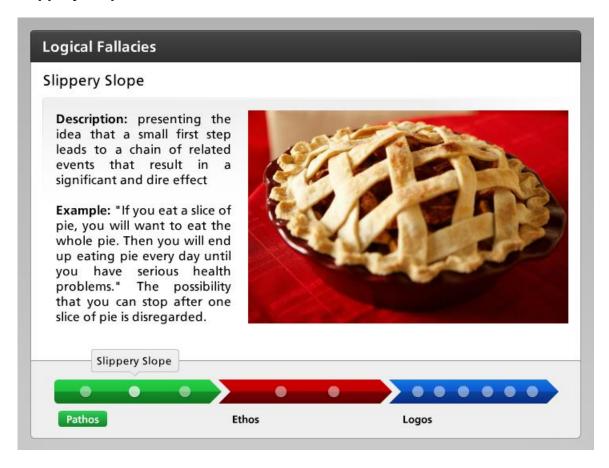


Description: scaring an audience into believing something

Example: A smokeless-tobacco company shows what a person's lungs look like after a period of tobacco use. Though the images may be true, fear is used to sway opinion, whether it is for the good of people or not.



Slippery Slope



Description: presenting the idea that a small first step leads to a chain of related events that result in a significant and dire effect

Example: "If you eat a slice of pie, you will want to eat the whole pie. Then you will end up eating pie every day until you have serious health problems." The possibility that you can stop after one slice of pie is disregarded.



Either/Or Choice

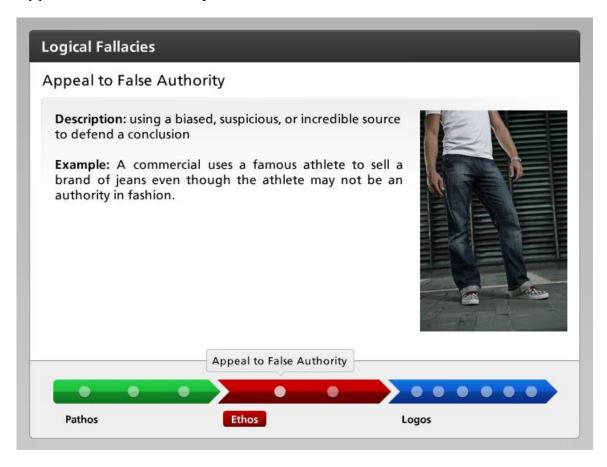


Description: presenting a limited range of choices

Example: A car company shows only two choices for a heavy-duty truck that will "do the job" and does not present another truck that is adequate yet more affordable as an option.



Appeal to False Authority



Description: using a biased, suspicious, or incredible source to defend a conclusion

Example: A commercial uses a famous athlete to sell a brand of jeans even though the athlete may not be an authority in fashion.



Ad Hominem

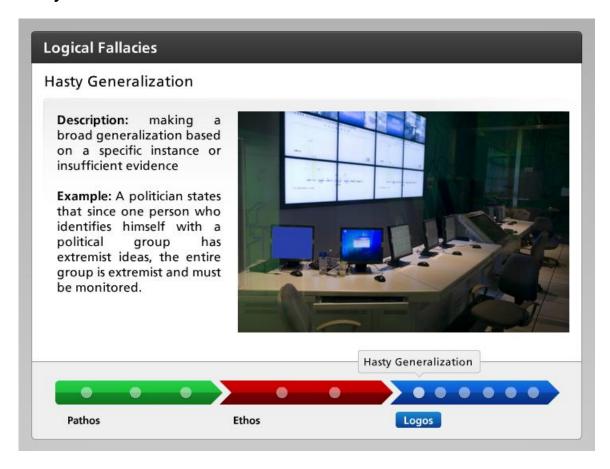


Description: attacking an opponent's character or traits rather than his or her argument

Example: A politician says, "Only an idiot would argue for pursuing a peaceful solution to this conflict."



Hasty Generalization

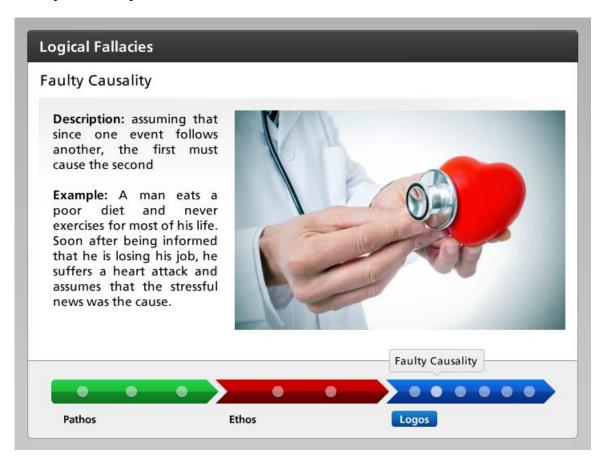


Description: making a broad generalization based on a specific instance or insufficient evidence

Example: A politician states that since one person who identifies himself with a political group has extremist ideas, the entire group is extremist and must be monitored.



Faulty Causality



Description: assuming that since one event follows another, the first must cause the second

Example: A man eats a poor diet and never exercises for most of his life. Soon after being informed that he is losing his job, he suffers a heart attack and assumes that the stressful news was the cause.



Begging the Question



Description: basing a conclusion on an assumption; the statement could be possible, but sufficient proof is not given

Example: Drinking coffee helps you study because students drink a lot of coffee when they study (because they assume that drinking coffee helps you study).



Straw Man

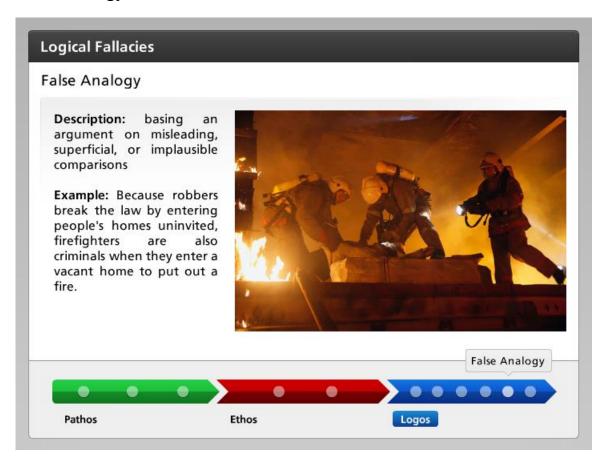


Description: misrepresenting an opponent's position and then attacking the distorted version of the position

Example: When a politician advocates limiting access to guns, his opponent accuses him of trying to abolish the Constitution.



False Analogy



Description: basing an argument on misleading, superficial, or implausible comparisons

Example: Because robbers break the law by entering people's homes uninvited, firefighters are also criminals when they enter a vacant home to put out a fire.



Red Herring



Description: deliberately misleading an audience by diverting attention from the real issue

Example: In a political debate, the moderator asks a candidate, "Did you vote to raise taxes on small-business owners while you were in the Senate?" The candidate responds, "But don't we want our children to have the best food available?"

