



Language

I. Clarity

Abstractions

Using abstractions:

- 1 Get the balance right.
- 2 Be aware of the difference between them and their concrete referents.
- 3 How does this affect their reliability?
- 4 Ask yourself, 'What do these words stand for?' and 'What is their objective meaning?'
- 5 Try not to view them as something in their own right.

Loaded language – 5 strategies

- 1 Separate the ideas from the language.
- 2 Translate into neutral terms.
- 3 Reverse the description.
- 4 Do an adjective audit.
- 5 Analyse the word.

Begging the question

Common notions

- 'Everyone knows that...'
- 'It's common knowledge that...'
- 'It's all too clear that...'
- 'It's obvious that...'

Moral words

- Goodwill
- Honesty
- Generosity
- Promise
- Murder

Verbal propositions

All those propositions that are tautologous: true by virtue of the meaning of the words used in them. Words like:

- Too much/few/many/etc.
- Insufficient/Excessive/Inadequate/etc.
- Infrequent/Uncommon/Unusual/etc.
- Huge/Enormous/Vast/etc.

Vague definitions

All those propositions that contain adjectives about which we can argue, 'It all depends upon what you mean by X.'



- Real
- True
- Sound (except in the strictly logical sense)
- Good
- Bad
- Honest

2. Consistency

- 1 The fallacy of equivocation
- 2 The fallacies of division and composition