

## **CSC: CoR: Chapter 7: Making Good Arguments**

The 10 salient sentence strings presented below are lifted from the chapter as is, without modification (except, perhaps, for a bit of punctuation here or there). They are presented in order of appearance in the chapter.

### **Ten Salient Sentence Strings**

1. In a research argument, you make a *claim*, back it with reasons supported by *evidence*, *acknowledge*, and *respond* to others views, and sometimes explain your *principles* of reasoning. There's nothing arcane about these things: you do them in every conversation that inquires thoughtfully into an unsettled issue.
2. The second kind of support is the evidence on which you base your reasons. We've said that reasons can be supported by still more reasons, but these chains don't go on forever. Eventually you have to show some data. That's your evidence. This distinction between reasons and evidence can seem just a matter of semantics and in some contexts the words do seem interchangeable.
3. Careful readers will question *every* part of your argument, so you must anticipate as many of their questions as you can, and then acknowledge and respond to the most important ones.
4. Readers might accept the *truth* of that reason but question its relevance to the claim, asking: *What do higher health costs have to do with hard freezes? I don't see the connection.* To answer, you must offer a general principle that justifies relating your particular reason to your particular claim.
5. But for logic to work, readers must agree with four things. Two are easy to understand:
  - a. The warrant is true or reasonable: fewer hard freezes in fact mean higher medical costs.
  - b. The reason is true or reasonable: hard freezes in fact are moving north.

The next two are more difficult:

- c. The specific circumstance in the reason qualifies as a plausible instance of the general circumstance in the warrant.
  - d. The specific consequences in the claim qualifies as a plausible instance of the general consequence in the warrant.
6. Experienced researchers usually state them on only two occasions: when they think readers in their fields might ask how a reason is relevant to a claim or when they are explaining their fields' ways of reasoning to general readers.
7. We almost always support a claim with two or more reasons, each of which must be supported by its own additional reasons and evidence and perhaps justified by its own warrant.
8. Since readers think of many alternatives and objections to any complex argument, careful researchers typically have to respond to a number of them.
9. Of course she was not: she was going through the painful transition mist of us experience when we try to write about matters we do not entirely understand for an audience we

understand even less. She was relieved to find that the better she understood the law, the better she wrote about it.

10. By “thickening” up your argument in this way, you earn the confidence of your readers, building up what is traditionally called your *ethos*: the character you project in your argument.