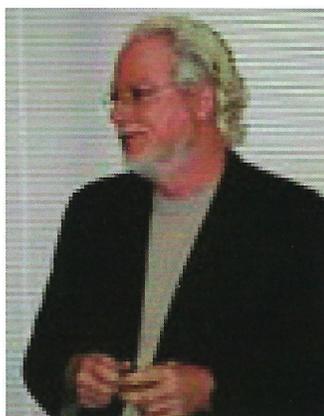


I always found Aristotle's book "On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civil Discourse" to be a very helpful guide. Aristotle argued that whenever we wish to persuade others to act or learn, we can draw on some combination of three sources of influence, referenced in the title of this article.

Let's teach bridge learners this cardinal bridge principle: If you are in the "balancing" position in the auction, try to keep your opponents from playing partscore contracts at the two level in a major-suit fit.



bridge player who has written more than 70 bridge books. Klinger wrote: Do not allow your opponents to play a suit partscore at the two level unless you have [both] length and strength in their suit and think you can set your opponents. If the opponents hold a primary trump fit (they bid and supported a suit) it is almost always wrong [for you] to pass it out at the two level.

Concrete bridge boards/Pathos

Finally, perhaps nothing is more persuasive to bridge learners than concrete "real deal" bridge examples.

Bridge Logic/Logos

Readers of the ABTA Journal are doubtless all familiar with the Law of Total Tricks (LOTT) popularized by Larry Cohen in his 1992 book, "To Bid or Not to Bid: The LAW of Total Tricks," which won an ABTA Outstanding Bridge Book Award. Similar precepts were taught by Marty Bergen in his 1996 book, "Points Schmoints!," which also won an ABTA Outstanding Bridge Book Award.

We must teach our students the LOTT and we must teach them how to apply the law during their bridge bidding. For example, when the auction proceeds:

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
	Pass	1♠	Pass
2♠	Pass	Pass	?

South, sitting in the "balancing" position, must give serious consideration about allowing E-W to play 2♠.

E-W have shown a combined ~23 HCPs and eight or more spades. The law says that E-W are going to make their contract and earn a positive bridge score pretty much all day, unless perhaps the spades split 5-0.

What students should be taught is they need to look for a way to force the opponents to bid higher and possibly overextend themselves! We must teach bridge learners about the possibilities of "reciprocal fits." Students should be taught that when the opponents have found an eight-card or longer fit, it is extremely probable that your partnership also holds an eight-card fit in another suit!

Bridge Authorities/Ethos

When we are teaching bridge to newer players, we can quote authoritative bridge champions and authors to emphasize the principles we are trying to teach. For example, Ron Klinger is an Australian contract

Dlr: West	♠ K Q 6 5	
	♥ J 3 2	
	♦ J 10 7 3	
	♣ A 6	
	♠ J 3 2	♠ A 10 9 8
	♥ 10 8 7	♥ A K 9 5 4
	♦ A 8	♦ 6 2
	♣ Q J 8 5 4	♣ 10 5
	♠ 7 4	
	♥ Q 6	
	♦ K Q 9 5 4	
	♣ K 7 3 2	

<i>West</i>	<i>North</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>
Pass	Pass	1♥	Pass
2♥	Pass	Pass	?

South can bid 2NT as takeout for the minors.

Logos, ethos and pathos are all important tools in the bridge teacher's teaching toolbox. But perhaps Aristotle left out another important teaching tool: humor. Bridge teachers need to understand and empathically respond to the reality that some newer bridge learners are quite terrified about learning to play bridge. Humor can help learners deal with their natural anxieties. No one enjoys doing something – supposedly for fun – when that activity produces anxiety.

Bridge instruction is more effective when we persuade our bridge students that what we are teaching is important to know. We must be concrete and direct when making these persuasive appeals. Logic, emotion and the pathos of real examples are all important tools in the bridge instructor's toolbox.

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