

Leadership communication presentation

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Leadership Communication Presentation Leadership Communication Presentation The straw man fallacy may be defined as “ a type of fallacy reasoning wherein one misrepresents the argument of an opponent and thereby easily defeats the weakened version and claims victory over the original, stronger argument” (Aikin & Casey, 2011, p. 87). The straw man fallacy is not only used in political debates; it is also used in some decision-making processes of organizations. An example of this is when a company is deciding how to cut costs and one manager says that one way of cutting costs is to reduce the fringe benefits of the employees. To counter this argument, another manager may say, “ Removing all our fringe benefits would result in low morale for the employees.” Obviously, the second manager was using the straw man fallacy by restating what the other manager said, and saying “ removing all our fringe benefits” when the first manager actually said a reduction in the fringe benefits. These conversations are typical in organizations especially when meetings are held to find solutions for problems that confront the company.

There are several ways to overcome or prevent a straw man fallacy in an organization. First, in making vital decisions for the company, it is better to put the arguments for each position or alternative in writing; rather than having a face-to-face debate with the proponents of different sides. In this way, the possibility of misinterpretation and misrepresentation is eliminated. Another way to prevent a straw man fallacy is to show proofs, data or statistics in presenting alternative solutions to organizational problems. If these information are presented, it would be hard to refute by just a straw man fallacy. Lastly, it is suggested that to overcome a straw man fallacy, those involved in making major decisions for the firm should be well-

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informed. According to Talisse and Aikin, the success of the straw man fallacy depends on the ignorance of the audience; thus, if the people responsible for decision-making are well-informed of the various positions, then they can have an intelligent and reasoned discourse without being swayed by fallacies (2006).

References

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- Talisse, R., & Aikin, S. F. (2006, August 1). Two forms of the straw man. *Argumentation*, 20(3), 345-352.