

**Gordon Institute  
of Business Science**  
University of Pretoria

**Rhetoric and Social Influence:  
A Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science,  
University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Business Administration.

**9<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

## ABSTRACT

The ability to effectively persuade in the context of the highly competitive, fast-paced, but tight global economy is arguably an elixir to organisational growth in these challenging times. Sustainable growth is dependant not only on carving out a distinctive value proposition, but also on convincing the market of the merits thereof in order to remain competitive. The need for this research originated from the gap in literature on the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments, and their effectiveness as mechanisms for organisational growth. Rhetoric and social influence are complex phenomena, and their impact as persuasive instruments incompletely understood. By better understanding their interconnectedness, the researcher hoped to appreciate how executives could possibly leverage them, from an organisational perspective, as instruments of growth.

A hypothetical framework was generated based on the themes that emerged from the literature review. The framework was sense tested through in-depth interviews with executives and the subsequent data analysis process, with the aim of validating its rationale and a number of assumptions made in its creation. Interviews were conducted with fourteen research respondents from a cross-section of industries, comprising of eight executives in the listed corporate environment as well as six owners of private entities. The stated objective of the research was to debunk growth strategy in the context of the arduous current economic environment, and to explore executives' experiences and perspectives of growth strategy. The underlying objective of the research was to investigate executives' instinctive use of rhetoric and social influence as persuasive instruments, as observed in the description of their growth strategies. Research respondents were only made aware of the underlying research objective after interview completion, so as to ensure the integrity of the data.

Through their narratives, research respondents enabled triangulation of the various phenomena investigated. A refined model, dubbed the 'contemporary model of persuasive instruments' emerged from the findings of the research. It presented a conceptualised framework of the combinations of rhetoric and social influence which were observed in the interviews with executives. The research contributed toward the facilitation of a better understanding of the interplay of persuasive instruments in practice, which provided valuable insight on how to utilise these to the benefit of business. The model, whilst only conceptual in nature, requires more rigorous strength testing through the collection of quantitative data to further validate the findings.

## KEY WORDS

Growth Strategy

Persuasion

Rhetoric

Influence

Interconnectedness

## DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own original work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Andrew Michael Wray

09 November 2015

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To the unsung heroes of the MBA programme – the MBA spouses and families, and in particular my darling wife Sarah – for the sacrifices which you made, and the unwavering support through a challenging and solitary time. Thank you for all of the patience, and for the space and time required to make work of the MBA programme.

To my supervisor Dr. Gavin Price - for your support, and sense of humour in allowing me to pursue a research topic “off of the beaten track”. It was a great privilege to work with you, and I greatly appreciated your guidance, insight and interest in my topic.

To all of the professionals that participated in my research - Thank you for your enthusiasm, openness, and willingness to share your perspectives with me, and apologies again, for not divulging the true research intent upfront.

To my study group, who made this such an incredibly fulfilling experience – I hope these new found friendships last a lifetime.

To Amy, Hayley and Tracey – the collective ‘voice of reason’. Thank you for your friendship, encouragement and guidance through the chaos of this research.

To Tamara, for the painstaking task of transcribing the interviews – your assistance within a very tight deadline, and your meticulous attention to detail is greatly appreciated.

## DEDICATION

For Justin

A split second in time is all it took for you to change my universe, my entire outlook on life. You will never know what you meant to me. You will forever have a place in my heart. You are sorely missed.

What a guy, what a guy, what a guy...

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

### 1.1 Description of the Problem and Background

A central theme and persistent challenge for business today; given the highly competitive, fast-paced, but tight global economy; is to craft a value proposition that adequately distinguishes an organisation from its industry peers, and allows for sustained growth and profitability. This value creation, coupled with the capacity to effectively convince the market of its merits, will set apart organisations that will grow and prosper from those that will fall by the wayside.

The tumultuous general market conditions in the aftermath of the global economic crisis, circa 2007/2008, and the ongoing ramifications it has had on business are still being hard felt. The enduring drive towards longevity and sustainability of business has required a shift in traditional mind-set towards creating value and translating that value into a model for organisational growth. Unlocking value requires a determined commercial acumen by leaders in appropriately positioning their organisations in the marketplace. It further requires a clear understanding and succinct focus on their respective product markets, their general market orientation, and indeed their desired growth strategy (Pleshko & Heiens, 2008).

The challenge for business lies not only in carving out a distinctive and competitive value proposition that allows for value creation for a broad spectrum of stakeholders on a sustainable basis, but also in convincing the market of its merits; and then to remind them, and to remind them again. Core to achieving this in a commercial context is one's ability to persuade – a personal mastery of the *often* elusive science of persuasion (Roberts, 2011).

Given the current economic environment, the effective deployment of persuasion in an organisational context is arguably an elixir to successful growth. The use of persuasive instruments is key to unlocking potential value in this challenging market climate (Cialdini, 2001) - albeit landing that next big contract, securing a large order, or closing that game-changing deal - few of these feats are achieved in the absence of persuasion.

A deeper understanding of the dynamics of persuasion, the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments, and their effectiveness as instruments for organisational growth was therefore sought by the researcher in conducting this research project.

The *Ansoff Growth Matrix*, a classic contribution to the body of knowledge in product-market growth theory (Ansoff, 1958) has provided a solid contextual basis for organisational growth strategy and has been widely applauded by academia and business alike for its strategic relevance (Taylor, 2012). The on-going pursuit of sustainable growth in business requires a succinct understanding of product-market growth strategy, as explored by Pleshko and Heiens (2008). Growth strategy, in the context of the difficult current economic environment, formed the stated objective of this research project and the foundation upon which the in-depth interviews were conducted; reinforced by the various product-market alternatives presented in the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff 1958). As such, this classic contribution to the literature on growth strategy is unpacked, albeit only as a contextual framework for the research project.

The body of knowledge vis-à-vis persuasion is well developed in academic literature; however, despite the vast taxonomy of literature available, the topic is largely misconstrued in practice. Stone (1997, p.305) contested that ‘of all the means of coordinating and controlling human behaviour, none is more pervasive, more complicated, or less well understood than persuasion’.

Aristotle, one of the earliest theorists on persuasion, affirmed that ‘Rhetorical study, in its strict sense, is concerned with the modes of persuasion’ (Roberts, 2011, p.3). Rhetoric is described by Higgins and Walker (2012) as being distinguished by a focus on persuasion. Lowenhaupt (2014, p.449) described rhetoric as both ‘constitutive of and constituted in the practice of persuasion’. The researcher submits that classical Aristotelian rhetoric, as a root theory and principal basis of the science of persuasion (Roberts, 2011) can assist one in unpacking the strategic imperative of persuasion as an instrument of organisational growth. Botha (2012) asserts that Aristotelian rhetoric remains relevant to this day. It too, has far-reaching implications for persuasion in a commercial setting.

Aristotle identifies three fundamental tenets of rhetoric - They are: ‘the appeal linked to credibility or integrity (Ethos)’, ‘the appeal linked to logic or reason (Logos)’, and ‘the appeal linked to the emotions (Pathos)’ (Botha, 2012, p.23). Brennan and Merkyll-Davies (2014) suggest that through the use of these rhetorical appeals, a speaker attempts to persuade listeners that their claims are valid and legitimate. These tenets of rhetoric; as postulated by Aristotle (Roberts, 2011); are commonly deployed in the narratives of persuaders, albeit often subconsciously, as instruments of persuasion.

As such, Aristotle's rhetorical tenets (Roberts, 2011) were the first set of persuasive instruments investigated for the purpose of this research project.

Atkinson (2012) contests that achieving business results is often dependent on one's ability to influence people. Cialdini (2001), similarly to many other social scientists, has focused his energy on how it is that individuals influence the attitudes and actions of others. He identified a number of tools of influence, namely: reciprocity, scarcity, authority, consistency, liking and social validation. The researcher asserts that these social influence devices; as popularised by Cialdini (2001); are widely utilised by persuaders as means of persuasion.

As such, Cialdini's social influence devices (Cialdini, 2001) were the second set of persuasive instruments investigated for the purpose of this research project.

In light of the background and context described, this research project examined the rhetoric of Aristotle as a principal basis for persuasion (Roberts, 2011). It unpacked persuasion as a seminal tool in organisational growth strategy, underpinned by rhetorical tenets and social influence devices as two interconnected instruments of persuasion; and how it is that these persuasive instruments can be utilised by practitioners and executives in achieving market growth and sustainability as organisational imperatives.

## **1.2 Research Scope**

The research project has the underlying goal of better understanding the role of persuasion as a possible elixir to organisational growth in a commercial context. The scope of this research project was to extensively review academic literature in the areas of persuasion, rhetoric, social influence and growth theory; and thereafter to test Aristotle's rhetorical tenets (Roberts, 2011) in conjunction with Cialdini's social influence devices (Cialdini, 2001) in practice, as instruments of persuasion. The existing literature on each of the phenomena identified for exploration in this research project are extensive, however the interconnectedness between these phenomena are not particularly well documented.

The stated objective of the research was to debunk growth strategy in the context of the arduous current economic environment, and to explore executives' experiences and perspectives of growth strategy.

The underlying objective of the research was to investigate executives' instinctive use of rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion, as observed in the description of their growth strategies. In light of these objectives, the research project investigated the varying proportions of emphasis of Aristotle's rhetorical tenets (Roberts, 2011), the varying proportions of emphasis of Cialdini's social influence devices (Cialdini, 2001) as well as the interconnectedness (or interplay) thereof observed in the narratives of executives.

Whilst the researcher posits that both are valuable contributors to broader growth strategy in their own right, a gap was identified in the existing literature regarding the interconnectedness of these two sets of persuasive instruments in practice.

Given the lack of prior research into the interconnectedness of the various phenomena under investigation, the researcher thought it timely and appropriate to conduct an academic study of this nature and to explore the implications, if any, of the interplay of these persuasive instruments.

### **1.3 Research Motivation**

The stimulus for this research project stemmed from the researcher's personal curiosity of the role of persuasion in a commercial context; and specifically in that of sales, business development, commercial management and general management.

The intention of the researcher in undertaking this research project was to generate new insights in the science of persuasion, and to produce a wealth of data that would be useful to executives in an organisational context in understanding possible connections that may prevail in the various phenomena investigated, and the possible implications thereof for business.

### **1.4 Research Problem**

The interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence on a given 'persuader-listener' interface represents a gap in the literature which the researcher sought to fill with this research project. The main deliverables of the research were, therefore, as follows:

- i. Present the *Ansoff Growth Matrix* as a contextual basis for research;
- ii. Analyse the dynamics of persuasion as a point of departure in the investigation;

- iii. Revisit classic Aristotelian rhetoric as a principal basis of persuasion, and Aristotle's three tenets (*Ethos-Logos-Pathos*) as instruments of persuasion;
- iv. Juxtapose social influence devices as possible supporting instruments of persuasion in growth strategy;
- v. Test the interconnectedness of the instruments of persuasion in a modern commercial context.

A further goal of the research was the supposition of a model of persuasion, which is firmly grounded on robust foundational theory. To this end, a hypothetical framework was postulated in Chapter 2 based on the three themes that emerged from the literature review. The various phenomena explored were juxtaposed in the combinations of prevalence expected in practice based on the literature reviewed - this became the principal basis for the research design, outlined in Chapter 4. The framework was sense tested through the in-depth interviews and data analysis process, with the aim of validating a number of assumptions made in the creation thereof.

A refined model, dubbed the 'contemporary model of persuasive instruments' emerged from the findings of the research. It presents a conceptualised framework of the combinations of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed in the various in-depth interviews. The research contributed toward the facilitation of a better understanding of the interplay of persuasive instruments in practice, which provides valuable insight to executives on how to utilise these to the benefit of their organisations.

Through this methodology, the researcher sought to demystify the notion of persuasion as a device for practitioners and business executives alike in achieving organisational growth. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this research report is centred around these research objectives, and on the interconnectedness of the phenomena identified for exploration. By better understanding their interconnectedness, the researcher hoped to appreciate how executives could possibly leverage these persuasive instruments, from an organisational perspective, as tools for achieving growth.

With the research problem and objectives identified in this section of the research report as the backdrop, Chapter 2, delves into the literature review of the various themes for investigation, and Chapter 3 elucidates the research questions which formed the basis of the research project.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This literature review encompassed three distinct bodies of work as outlined in Chapter 1 of this research report. The theory base for the research project included both classic and contemporary literature in the realm of growth theory, persuasion, rhetoric, and social influence.

Firstly, as a contextual basis for the research project, growth strategy and the classic contribution of Ansoff (1958) was reviewed – this became the foundational basis, and stated objective for the in-depth interviews conducted with executives. Secondly, as a fundamental underpinning and academic basis for the research, the broad phenomenon of persuasion was reviewed, with specific focus on the rhetoric of Aristotle (Roberts, 2011), and specifically Aristotle's three fundamental tenets of rhetoric, as introduced in Chapter 1. Thirdly, the work of Cialdini (2001) on social influence as an instrument of persuasion was reviewed. The chapter culminates with the hypothetical framework, which was developed by the researcher based on the perceived interconnectedness of the theme's that emerged from the literature review.

Each body of literature was reviewed expansively, with a view to provide the researcher with enough information to be able to confidently conduct the in-depth, face-to-face interviews with executives in various roles in industry. These interviews had the underlying objective of testing in practice the prevalence of the themes which emanated from the literature review, as well as the viability of the hypothetical framework developed.

In the section hereafter, the researcher examined growth strategy as the contextual basis for the research, before focus was turned to the principles of rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion in growth strategy.

### **2.2 Growth Strategy – A Contextual Framework**

Ansoff (1958, p.393) defined a product-market growth strategy as 'a joint statement of a product line and the corresponding set of missions which products are designed to fulfil'. He defined a product mission as the 'description of the job which the product is intended to perform'. These two definitions, and the various product-market growth strategy alternatives which emanate from his classic work, provided the researcher with a sound foundational basis for this research project.



Pleshko and Heiens (2008) assert that the relationship between growth on an individual firm level and product-market growth strategy remain obscure. Whilst it is not the intention of the researcher to debunk the product-market growth strategy alternatives, the researcher acknowledges the contribution by Pleshko and Heiens (2008), and in particular their cognisance of innovation, and the redefinition of markets in which multiple combinations of product-market variables are likely at play.

The researcher posits that in the context of the research project, the elegance and parsimony of the classic Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) made it an appropriate contextual basis for the research project. Despite the theory being over 50-years old, Richardson and Evans (2007:1) described the Ansoff Growth Matrix as being a valuable analytical tool to help inform strategic direction.

The Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958), incorporating the four product-market growth strategy alternatives, is outlined hereafter in Figure 1:

**Figure 1: Ansoff’s Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958)**

Product-Market Growth Matrix		Focus of Market Growth	
		Existing Customers	New Customers
Focus of Product Growth	Existing Products	Market Penetration	Market Development
	New Products	Product Development	Diversification

For the purposes of the research, the researcher utilised the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) as the basis for the in-depth interviews conducted with executives. To this end, Ansoff’s four product-market growth strategy alternatives; Market Penetration, Market Development, Product Development and Diversification; formed the strategy alternatives for the purpose of the analysis.

These strategy alternatives were utilised in identifying inter-group and intra-group dynamics between research respondents who associated with the various growth strategy alternatives, as is further investigated in Chapter 5. The dynamics of each growth strategy alternative is explored hereafter.

### **2.2.1 Market Penetration**

The first of Ansoff's four growth strategy alternatives (Ansoff, 1958) is market penetration – it is the strategy of increasing a company's share of the total available market with its existing product offering (Ansoff, 1958; Richardson & Evans, 2007). The goal of market penetration as a growth strategy, as described by Richardson & Evans, (2007) is to increase sales by increasing volumes sold to existing customers, or finding new customers.

A market penetration strategy leverages the existing core competencies of a business and its established value chain in order to sell more product to an existing customer base (Taylor, 2012). This involves persuading existing customers of the business to use more of its product, persuading non-users to use the product, or persuading users of a competing product to switch (Richardson & Evans, 2007).

### **2.2.2 Market Development**

The second of Ansoff's four growth strategy alternatives (Ansoff, 1958) is market development – it is the strategy of finding new market segments for its current product offering (Ansoff, 1958; Richardson & Evans, 2007). Taylor (2012) described market development as a hybrid growth strategy in which the needs of new customers are met in the same manner that the needs of existing were met, utilising existing core competencies.

The goal of market development as a growth strategy, as described by Richardson & Evans, (2007), is to increase sales by adapting the existing product line to new markets. Richardson and Evans (2007) explain that successful execution of this strategy rests upon the identification of genuine, sustainable new market segments.

### **2.2.3 Product Development**

The third of Ansoff's four growth strategy alternatives (Ansoff, 1958) is product development – it is a strategy focused on the development of entirely new products, or the evolution of existing products, to sell into existing markets (Ansoff, 1958; Richardson & Evans, 2007).

Taylor (2012) described product development as a hybrid growth strategy which is less likely to use existing competitive advantage, and rather creates a completely new set of core competencies.

The goal of product development as a growth strategy, as described by Richardson & Evans, (2007), is to retain the present market whilst developing product characteristics that will increase the performance of the product in the current market. This could be achieved through product enhancements, product extensions, and innovation (Richardson & Evans, 2007).

#### **2.2.4 Diversification**

The last of Ansoff's four growth strategy alternatives (Ansoff, 1958) is quite distinctive from the others. Diversification is generally a growth strategy which is a 'simultaneous departure from the present product line and the present market structure' (Ansoff, 1958, p.394).

Taylor (2012) contests that diversification is the riskiest of all of the generic growth strategies, involving the creation of an entirely new value chain. Richardson and Evans (2007) argue that diversification should be built upon the existing core competencies of a business, whilst Taylor (2012) states contrarily that diversification is a complete departure from existing core competencies.

Ansoff's Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) is described by Richardson and Evans (2007) as a useful tool in which to contextualise strategic alternatives to growth. The researcher acknowledges that it only provides a broad context for growth strategy, but ignores contextual intricacies. Richardson and Evans (2007), nonetheless, describe it as being practical and unique as a framework for assessing growth strategy. On this basis, the researcher considered it an appropriate foundation upon which to base the conversations with executives in meeting the underlying research objectives.

The next section of the literature review explored the dynamics of persuasion as the departure point in appreciating the literary foundation of the research project, before focus turned to rhetoric and social influence, the two core theorems underlying the research project.

### **2.3 Persuasion – The Science of Influence**

“Wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric. And wherever there is meaning, there is persuasion” (Burke, 1969, p. 72).

Persuasion is described by Duska (2014, p.125) as a 'sort of demonstration', and 'a truncated form of enthymeme'.

He describes enthymeme as the ‘substance of persuasion’, where the underlying premise of an argument is implicitly not stated (Duska, 2014, p.125). In so saying, enthymeme is deployed through persuaders use of their narratives in convincing a listener to accept their particular view. Higgins and Walker (2012, p.195) supported this notion, suggesting that ‘persuasion influences social actors to accept particular discourses’ - they argue that persuasive strategies play a role in influencing the thoughts, feelings and actions of social ‘actors’.

Mehan (1983) emphasised the importance of language, and linguistic processes in persuasion, and in decision-making on a cognitive level in an organisational context. Emrich, Brower, Feldman, and Garland (2001, p.553) described how leaders use their words ‘to induce widespread commitment to their visions’. They make the case for verbal skills and charisma in achieving this end.

The language of persuasion is at the heart of this research – One of the oldest theorists on persuasion, Aristotle, affirms that ‘rhetorical study, in its strict sense, is concerned with the modes of persuasion’ (Roberts, 2011, p.3). Rhetoric is described by Higgins and Walker (2012) as being distinguished by a focus on persuasion.

Greene (2013, p.1414) suggests that, for Aristotle, persuasion rests upon three interrelated elements – ‘the speaker’s success at demonstrating his reputation and integrity’, ‘the quality of the inductive and deductive reasoning present in the argumentation’, and ‘the speaker’s skill at arousing the emotions of his audience in favor of his position and against the position of his opponent’. He explained that this was reflected in the manner in which the words of the persuader are spoken, and whether the content of the narrative was ‘spoken in such a way as to make the speaker worthy of credence’ as opposed to reliance on ‘preexistent reputational markers, such as wealth or status’ (Greene, 2013, p.1414). Greene goes on to explain that ‘a speaker must appear to have practical wisdom, virtue, and good will, thereby establishing a measure of ethical authority’.

This notion shares an intricate connection with the Aristotle’s rhetorical tenets of Ethos-Logos-Pathos, as introduced in Chapter 1 of this research report. As a root theory in the science of persuasion, the pertinence of Aristotelian rhetoric and the three tenets of rhetoric (Roberts, 2011) are explored hereafter in understanding its on-going pertinence in modern times, as well as its role as an instrument of persuasion.

## 2.4 Rhetoric – A Principle Basis of Persuasion

As proposed by the researcher in Chapter 1 of this research report, Aristotelian rhetoric; as a root theory in the science of persuasion; may assist one in unpacking the strategic imperative of persuasion as an instrument of organisational growth. This section of the research report examines rhetoric as a basis for persuasion, before the three tenets of rhetoric, namely Ethos-Logos-Pathos, are presented and explored hereafter.

Rhetoric is defined by Aristotle as ‘the art of persuasion’ (Roberts, 2011). Roberts (2011, p.5) describes rhetoric as ‘the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion’ - He expands upon this by describing rhetoric as ‘the power of observing the means of persuasion on almost any subject presented to us’ (Roberts, 2011, p.5). Rhetoric is defined by Corbett and Connors (1999) as the linguistic features of persuasion. It rests upon the shared experience and language which is utilised in a given persuader-listener interface. Braet (1992) argues that rhetoric plays to the inherent prejudices or emotions of the listener or audience. She makes the case for the personal characteristics of the persuader influencing the persuasion context.

Higgins and Walker (2012) theorised that rhetoric had its origins in the times of the Ancient Greeks, where it was instrumental in politics, philosophy and education systems. The roots of modern rhetoric were explored by Botha (2012), who emphasised the on-going relevance of Aristotle’s classic text, ‘Rhetoric’, which is dated circa 350 BC. She describes the text, which is still used widely even today, as a key resource in rhetorical studies.

Brennan and Meryl-Davies (2014, p.607) describe rhetoric as ‘a powerful means of manufacturing consent by using dominant discourses’. They emphasise the need to convince stakeholders of a particular viewpoint, or the ‘legitimacy of a particular course of action’, with the underlying goal of persuading organisational audiences.

Carton, Murphy and Clark (2014) suggest that rhetoric is the key mechanism through which leaders influence followers to act, through a shared sense of purpose. They go on to add that it is ‘the rare leader who successfully establishes it’ (Carton et al., 2014, p.1566).

Contemporary theorists have expanded upon this traditional understanding of rhetoric resting upon the instrumental use of language as a persuasive mechanism (Brown, Ainsworth, & Grant, 2012). Higgins and Walker (2012) explore rhetoric as persuasion that is a deliberate, inevitable part of daily interaction. Duska (2014) describes it as a mechanism of gaining truth whereby the persuader paints a general sketch for the listener, who is encouraged to see as the persuader sees.

Palmer, Simmons and Mason (2015) unpack the notion of rhetorical strategy, also calling it persuasive language. They suggest that it is a deliberate use of persuasive language which is deployed with the objective of legitimising a firm's strategy. Whilst Palmer et al. (2015) only explored this in the context of marketing strategy, the researcher posits that the same would apply to growth strategy, or indeed strategy in general.

Lowenhaupt (2014, p.449) explains that rhetoric is both 'constitutive of and constituted in the practice of persuasion'. She identifies both the role of linguistics, and sociolinguistics in rhetoric – the role of the words a persuader uses, and the effects these words have on society. This dynamic, called rhetorical analysis, provides a methodology to 'unpack the language of persuasion' (Lowenhaupt, 2014, p.449). Castelló and Lozano (2011, p. 14) conversely argue that rhetoric extends beyond the study of superficial elements of a communication style, but rather is an 'interest-laden discourse and seeks to identify genres or recurrent patterns of interest, goals and shared assumptions'.

The identification of genre's, recurrent patterns of interests, goals and shared assumptions were key to the narrative analysis employed by the researcher in conducting this research project. This is discussed extensively in the latter part of Chapter 2. This section of the research report set out to explore rhetoric as a principal basis of persuasion. In the light of this research report, it is important to consider both the context, or rhetorical situation, as well as the rhetorical appeals which are utilised by a persuader in fully appreciating their value as persuasive instruments.

- **The Rhetorical Situation**

Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014) call the social context in which an interface occurs the rhetorical situation. They unpack three interrelated elements of the rhetorical situation, namely: the speaker, the audience, and the purpose of the communication.

Rhetoric rests upon both shared experience and language (Duska, 2014), which speaks to the these elements of the rhetorical situation – the interface between speaker and listener, and the language used by both to convey their message. Braet (1992) supports this notion of the rhetorical situation, stating that ‘Aristotle constantly uses the communication triangle: speaker-audience-subject’ (Braet, 1992, p.310).

The notion of a rhetorical situation was central to the research, as the research methodology employed; explored further in Chapter 4; was built around the context and the observation of the speakers’ narrative’s in describing their growth strategy.

The limitations identified by the researcher regarding the rhetorical situation are further explored in Chapter 4.

- **Aristotle’s Tenets of Rhetoric**

The literature reviewed on rhetoric differentiates between three interrelated tenets of rhetoric, or ‘rhetorical appeals’. Botha (2012, p.23) identifies these appeals as: ‘the appeal linked to credibility or integrity (Ethos)’; ‘the appeal linked to logic or reason (Logos)’; and ‘the appeal linked to the emotions (Pathos)’. Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014) suggest that through the use of these appeals, a speaker attempts to persuade listeners that their claims are valid and legitimate.

Botha (2012) expands upon these three interrelated elements which were described by Aristotle in his seminal work as ‘modes of persuasion’ as the fundamental tenets of rhetoric, interpreting them as: The personal character of the speaker/writer; the disposition, or the audience’s frame of mind; and the purpose of communication, or proof provided in the narrative.

Aristotle’s three rhetorical tenets form the fundamental underpinning of the research, which sought to explore their effectiveness as persuasive instruments in practice. Braet (1992) suggests that the persuasive power of most arguments are derived from a fusion of Ethos, Logos and Pathos. Each of Aristotle’s tenets of rhetoric (Roberts, 2011) are explored hereafter.

#### **2.4.1 *Ethos - The Appeal Linked to Credibility or Integrity***

‘Ethos’ is described by Botha (2012, p.59) as a persuasive appeal related to the personal character of the persuader.

Braet (1992), similarly, explores the credibility of the persuader based on their strength of character or personality – she suggests that Ethos requires that the speaker's credibility be established. Lowenhaupt (2014) described Ethos as an ethical appeal by a speaker validated through the claim that their ethical stance is in alignment with the listeners' moral code. She describes how persuaders tend to thread ethical appeals throughout their argument in order to establish legitimacy.

Greene (2013) suggests that for Aristotle, Ethos rests upon the speaker's ability to validate his reputation and integrity. He posits that the speaker establishes the required level of ethical authority through their perceived wisdom, virtue, and goodwill. Similarly, Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014, p.608) describe Ethos as 'a mechanism used to persuade audiences by either appealing to the authority of the speaker, the authority of another social actor (i.e. an expert, an independent authority or a person of high social or moral standing in the community), or the authority of the law'.

Ethos is criticised by Corbett and Connors (1999) as being a vulnerable form of argument in the absence of credibility and legitimacy, which are key to its success. They go on to describe Ethos as 'a special overt attempt to establish credit with the audience' (Corbett & Connors, 1999, p. 73).

For the purposes of the research, Ethos is simply taken to mean any appeal to the credibility or integrity of the speaker which emanated from the narratives of research respondents.

#### **2.4.2 Logos - The Appeal Linked to Logic or Reason**

'Logos' was described by Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) as an argument which is based on sound logic - they frame Logos as a 'rational appeal' which is grounded on logic and reason as means to persuade. Braet (1992, p.307) describes Logos as enthymematical argumentation relative to the issue of the case', and considers Logos in the context of matter and function as an appeal to the intellect of the audience. Brown et al. (2012) associated Logos with the desire in the audience for efficient, and effective action.

Botha (2012, p. 59) describes Logos as being the 'the most basic element of persuasive argument'. She stresses the importance of the distinction between 'inherent truth' and 'constructed content' of an argument, noting that the former is not related to Logos.



Greene (2013) suggests that, for Aristotle, Logos was a function of the quality of reasoning in an argument, albeit inductive or deductive. Logos is described by Leith (2011) as 'sounding reasonable' – he describes it as 'the stuff of your argument, the way one point proceeds to another as if to show that the conclusion to which you are aiming is not only the right one, but so necessary and reasonable as to be more or less the only one' (Leith, 2011, p. 57). He unpacks an effective argument as being one which the listeners believe they have worked out for themselves (Leith, 2011).

Logos, as a persuasive instrument, typically involves making a case for benefits and features (Braet, 1992). Brennan and Merky-Davies (2014, p.608) explained how Logos appeals attempt to convince audiences through the use of 'facts and figures to back up a particular claim. It involves the use of discourse from the domains of science, technology, bureaucracy, law and business to persuade audiences of the validity and legitimacy of the claim'.

For the purposes of the research, Logos is simply taken to mean any appeal to the logic or rationality of the listener, which emanated from the narratives of research respondents.

### **2.4.3 Pathos - The Appeal Linked to Emotion**

'Pathos' is described by Brennan and Merky-Davies (2014) as an instrument which evokes an emotional response from the audience, or listener. They describe it as a means of influencing audience attitudes. Greene (2013) suggests that for Aristotle, Pathos was dependent on a speaker's ability to arouse emotion, and to use this to sway the audience to accept their position, or to reject that of the speaker's opponent. Braet (1992) suggests that influence in the use of Pathos stems from the effect of the audience's emotions, or 'pathe', on their judgment.

Botha (2012, p.59) states that Pathos is simply a persuasive appeal that is related to 'the manner in which something is said'. Corbett and Connors (1999) describe Pathos as a complex form of rhetoric, requiring an indirect appeal to the imagination of the listener in order to evoke emotion.

Lowenhaupt (2014) suggest that Pathos, or the use of figurative language and metaphor is an effective means of persuasion, especially when they play into the value system of an audience. She explains that their successful use will be dependent on the context and nature of the appeal.

Leith (2011) describes Pathos as an appeal to the emotions which entices listeners. He describes it as a 'shared emotion' between persuader and listener. Greene (2013: 1414) unpacks the classic Aristotelean definition of Pathos, arguing that it does not distinguish emotions from other mental models that influence decision making. Emrich et al. (2001) suggest that in the absence of a deeper level of emotional appeal, a speaker's message may well be heard and comprehended, but followers' will be less likely to act upon it. He suggests that the use of words that evoke emotion and imagery are typically associated with the people and stimuli from our past (Emrich et al., 2001).

For the purposes of the research, Pathos is simply taken to mean any appeal to the emotion of the listener which emanated from the narratives of research respondents.

In this section of the literature review, the researcher set out to unpack Aristotle's rhetorical tenets (Ethos-Logos-Pathos) as instruments of persuasion. The researcher asserts that the rhetoric of Aristotle is ever-relevant in this modern era, and that the Ethos-Logos-Pathos trio remain foundational underpinnings of effective persuasion.

The underlying goal of this research is to explore the interconnectedness of rhetoric with social influence, the second set of persuasive instruments being explored hereafter. This next section of the literature review introduces the social influence devices popularised by Cialdini (2001) as instruments of persuasion, before focus turns to the interconnectedness between the various phenomena.

## **2.5 Social Influence – Mechanisms of Persuasion**

The notion of social influence has received a great deal of focus from academics as social tools in an organisational context (Aguinis, Neslar, Hosonda, & Tedeschi, 1994). Atkinson (2012) contests that achieving the business results sought is often dependent on one's ability to influence people. He argues that this 'interpersonal skill' is becoming more and more valued in organisations. He makes the case for the development of a 'repertoire of persuasion strategies' (Atkinson, 2012, p.29).

A vast taxonomy of theories on social influence exists, however for the purposes of this research project, the researcher focused on the social influence theory as proposed by Cialdini (2001), who describes devices of social influence as effective tools of persuasion.

Cialdini's work, like that of many other social scientists, has focused on how it is individuals influence others attitudes and actions (Cialdini, 2001).

Cialdini (2001) unpacks the history of social influence theory, and the study thereof, and the half-century evolution it has endured from its early beginnings in the persuasive programs of World War II. Cialdini describes his principal focus area, 'the conformance with a request', as resulting from six basic tendencies of human behaviour (Cialdini. 2001, p.76). These devices of social influence include reciprocity, scarcity, authority, consistency, liking and social validation.

The researcher contests that a better understanding of the role and prevalence of social influence devices, as persuasive instruments, is required in unpacking the broad objectives of this research project. In this light, the social influence devices as postulated by (Cialdini, 2015) are presented as instruments of persuasion.

### **2.5.1 Reciprocity**

Goldstein, Griskevicius and Cialdini (2011) described reciprocity as an influence strategy in which reciprocal benefit is sought by providing direct benefit to target individuals, which in turn elicits a sense of indebtedness in the target. Clark and Kemp (2008) explain that the use of reciprocation as a rule is built on the sense of indebtedness, and the obligation to return the goodwill provided by another. Cialdini and Rhoads (2001) described Reciprocity as a societal norm which obligates people to 'return in kind' what benefit they have received from others. Goldstein et al. (2011) extends this definition to include the repayment for gifts, favours and services which have been performed. Cialdini et al. (2001) go on to describe the desire to return perceived debts as running deep, regardless of the targets 'objectivity'.

Goldstein et al. (2011) suggest that recipients tend to feel the need to return resources of a similar value to that which they received although the resources tend to be fungible, meaning that whilst similar in value, they needn't be the same. He goes on to explain how through the exposure, customers actually become indebted through the 'code of reciprocity'. They go as far as to suggest that reciprocity has become a norm, and a central driver in an organisational context – They describe this norm as playing an integral role in balancing resources in the control of the organisation, and resources sought by the organisation, ultimately leading to cooperation and performance. They suggest that the reciprocity norm gives confidence in a benefactor, that the recipient of a given benefit will return the favour at some point in the future (Goldstein et al., 2011). Clark and Kemp (2008) suggests that the obligation to return the favour can manifest both through affective commitment (emotional bonds and relationship value) and through cooperation to achieve mutual goals.

They unpack this dynamic further, exploring the alignment of goals between benefactor and recipient, and the value it can create in an organisational context. Conversely, they identify the risk of reciprocity triggering unfair exchanges (i.e. a smaller favour yielding a more significant return). Cialdini (2001) explains that reciprocity also applies to concessions which parties make to one another.

In examining reciprocity as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of concession, reciprocal benefit, or indebtedness as persuasive instruments in practice.

### **2.5.2 Scarcity**

Cialdini (2001) debunks scarcity from the perspective of psychological reactance theory, suggesting that the response to loss of freedoms is a heightened desire to have them more than before. Clark and Kemp (2008) explain that less available options are generally perceived to be of higher quality than those options that are readily available, simply by virtue of the fact that they are scarce. They suggest that newly scarce items are even more enticing to individuals, and hence have impact on behavior – and more so when one competes for the scarcity.

Cialdini and Rhoads (2001, p.10) explain that ‘items and opportunities become more attractive as they become less available’. This aptly describes the notion of scarcity. They go on to explore the view that this principal of scarcity holds true, regardless of the intrinsic desirability of the item or opportunity in and of itself - the fact that it is scarce, inherently makes it desirable. They extend this discussion to the ‘loss of an established freedom’ – the desire to have something increase when the freedom to have it is limited or constrained. This desire is amplified when there is competition with others for the item or opportunity which is scarce.

Clark and Kemp (2008) further unpack scarcity from a power and dependence perspective, suggesting that in the lack of viable alternatives, dependence on a relationship partner increases. They suggest that this notion extends from partner selection to partner retention, on the basis that if alternatives are scarce, or if the benefit derived from the partner are considered better than the alternatives, the connection with the partner will be maintained. In examining scarcity as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of availability, desirability, established freedom, limitation or constrain as persuasive instruments in practice.

### **2.5.3 Authority**

Clark and Kemp (2008) make the assertion that one will generally comply with the request of a figure of authority as a consequence of societies teachings that obedience is the acceptable behavior. They suggest that authority is represented through titles, appearance and possessions.

Cialdini and Rhoads (2001) suggest that legitimate authorities are particularly influential, regardless of how it is that they acquired their position, albeit through training, talent or experience. They suggest that the credibility and trustworthiness of the authority is key to their success, resulting in compliance with their requests, almost automatically. Clark and Kemp (2008) add that obedience of legitimate authorities are as a result of perceived levels of knowledge, wisdom or power.

In examining authority as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of credibility, influence, legitimacy, trustworthiness, power and wisdom as persuasive instruments in practice.

### **2.5.4 Consistency**

Clark and Kemp (2008, p.46) describe consistency as 'a culturally valued practice of standing by (in word and deed) a previous statement or action in an effort to exhibit stability in one's thoughts and actions'. They add that when commitments are 'active, public, require effort, and are viewed as internally motivated', the persuasive value of the commitments is most effective. Cialdini and Rhoads (2001) suggest that a great deal of influence stems from drawing connections between pre-existing commitments. They explain how salient commitments prompt future action which is consistent with prior commitments, attitudes, and actions. Cialdini (2001) argues that consistency in behavior and statements is compelled by human nature.

In examining Consistency as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of consistency in behavior, consistency in statements, and stability of thought or action as persuasive instruments in practice.

### **2.5.5 Liking**

Cialdini (2001) explains how affinity, rapport and affection describe a feeling of connection between people which is largely encompassed in the notion of 'liking'.

Cialdini and Rhoads (2001, p.12) unpack the notion of liking, and suggest that individuals are 'prone to like those who display certain congenial characteristics' and that people are more likely to submit to those who they like – these congenial factors include physical attractiveness, cooperation and collaboration, and similarity. Clark and Kemp (2008, p.46) reinforce these factors, and add the dimensions of praise, repeated cooperative contact, and association.

In examining Liking as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of liking, and the collaboration, cooperation and association that derives thereof as persuasive instruments in practice.

### **2.5.6 Social Validation**

Cialdini (2001, p.78) explains that 'social validation takes advantage of peer pressure to drive human behaviour'. He describes the human tendency to perceive something as being more correct because many individuals have decided in its favour. Cialdini and Rhoads (2001, p.13) suggest that people use the actions of others as a means to validate their own actions. They suggest that the notion of social validation stimulates action on the basis that others have already done the same.

In examining Social Validation as a social influence device in practice, the researcher sought to observe the use of testimony and social cues as persuasive instruments in practice.

In this section of the literature review, the researcher set out to unpack Cialdini's social influence devices as instruments of persuasion (Cialdini, 2001). The section hereafter consolidates the theory base reviewed into a fundamental research rationale, before the areas of likely interconnectedness between the phenomena are discussed.

An initial hypothetical framework, based on the 'topics' which emanated from the review of literature, as well as on this likely interconnectedness of persuasive phenomena, is presented to the reader, thereafter. This framework became the basis for the in-depth interviews with executives, as will be unpacked further hereafter.

## **2.6 Fundamental Research Rationale**

Leith (2011) posits that, based on the writings of Aristotle, arguments are generally constructed from accepted premises. He describes forms of argument which have become so familiar that they easily go unnoticed.

Aristotle described these as ‘Topics of argument’ (Leith, 2011, P.64). He explains this notion as follows:

“If something is possible for a genus, then it’s possible for a species: that is, if something is true for insects, it’s true of ants. If something can be stated of one thing, then the opposite can be stated of its opposite: if war is an ail evil, then it follows that peace is a good. If something has happened, then so must its antecedent have done: if a man has forgotten something, it follows that he knew it in the first place” (Leith, 2011, p.63).

A ‘Topic’ for Aristotle, therefore, is essentially the general form of an argument - topics can relate to ‘types of things, to causality, to comparisons of scale and so on and so forth’ (Leith, 2011, p.63).

Castelló and Lozano (2011, p.14) described rhetoric as ‘interest-laden’, and dependent on ‘recurrent patterns of interest, goals and shared assumptions’, as was explored earlier in this research report. Palmer et al. (2015, p.388) unpacked the notion of institutional vocabulary, or clusters of identifying words to ‘confer ideas, aims, interests, claims, discipline, arrangements, and alternatives’ as rhetorical strategies. This notion is not dissimilar from Aristotle’s ‘topics’ as a form of argument. Institutional vocabulary was expected to emerge from research respondents’ narratives as a means to persuade the listener, in this case, the researcher himself. The researcher further postulates that the same can be said of Cialdini’s topics of social influence (Cialdini, 2001), and that overlap likely occurs between topics of rhetoric and topics of social influence – the area of interconnectedness investigated in this research project.

To this end, and based on the description in the literature by academics in the field of persuasion, the researcher developed a simple rationale in unpacking the likely associations between rhetorical tenets and influence devices – that was, to identify areas of likely interconnectedness based on the literature review, and to translate them into a hypothetical framework which could be tested in practice.

## **2.7 Interconnectedness of Persuasive Instruments**

The literature reviewed on Aristotle’s tenets of rhetoric (Roberts, 2011) and Cialdini’s social influence devices (Cialdini, 2001), presented in the preceding section, became the initial impetus for the hypothetical framework which is introduced later in this chapter.

As a first step, based on the description in the literature by academics, areas of overlap were identified by the researcher around the two phenomena. The areas of interconnectedness between the various phenomena which were anticipated to emerge from the interviews with executives are explored hereafter.

### **2.7.1 Reciprocity (Pathos-Logos)**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed and the topics of ‘reciprocity’ identified in theory, the researcher makes the assertion that ‘reciprocity’ is likely to have a dominant commonality with both the Pathos and Ethos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Pathos tenet, as ‘reciprocity’ is built on a sense of indebtedness and the desire to return the goodwill provided by another (Clark & Kemp, 2008) as well as the societal norm to repay in kind (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001). These represent relational notions of Pathos which speak to affective commitment, emotional bonds and relationship value (Goldstein et al., 2011).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Logos tenet, in so far as ‘reciprocity’ is described as a balancing of resources which leads to cooperation and performance (Goldstein et al., 2011), notions which speak to the Logos appeals to reason (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) and benefit (Braet, 1992).

### **2.7.2 Scarcity (Pathos-Logos)**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed, and the topics of ‘scarcity’ identified in the literature, the researcher makes the assertion that ‘scarcity’ is likely to have a dominant commonality with both the Pathos and Logos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Pathos tenet, as ‘scarcity’ is built on the concepts of intrinsic desirability, and the loss of established freedom (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001), both emotional notions of Pathos which speak to a psychological effect on behavior (Cialdini, 2001).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Logos tenet, in so far as scarcity is distinguished in matter and function (Braet, 1992), rational Logos notions requiring due consideration of the benefits, features, availability and desirability of that which is constrained (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014; Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001).



### **2.7.3 Authority (Ethos-Logos)**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed, and the topics of ‘authority’ identified in the literature, the researcher makes the assertion that ‘authority’ is likely to have a dominant commonality with both the Ethos and Logos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Ethos tenet, as ‘authority’ is based on the personal nature of a persuader and their behavior, credibility and trustworthiness (Clark & Kemp, 2008; Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001), character notions which speak to the Ethos notions of credibility, legitimacy and moral standing of the speaker (Botha, 2012; Corbett & Connors, 1999; Brennan & Merkyl-Davies (2014).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Logos tenet, in so far as ‘authority’ is based on the reasonableness of a persuader (Leith, 2011) and their capacity for rational Logos appeal (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) - a function of the knowledge, power and wisdom of the individual (Clark & Kemp, 2008).

### **2.7.4 Consistency (Ethos-Logos)**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed, and the topics of ‘consistency’ identified in the literature, the researcher made the assertion that ‘consistency’ is likely to have a dominant commonality with both the Ethos and Logos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Ethos tenet as ‘consistency’ is based on the stability of thought or action (Clark & Kemp, 2008) as well as consistency in behaviour and statements (Cialdini & Roberts (2011) – these are both character notions which speak to the Ethos notions of credibility, legitimacy and moral standing of the speaker (Botha, 2012; Corbett & Connors, 1999; Brennan & Merkyl-Davies (2014).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Logos tenet, in so far as ‘consistency’ is based on the idea that public commitments direct future action (Cialdini, 2001) - a Logos notion of reasoning (Braet, 1992).

### **2.7.5 Liking (Pathos-Ethos)**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed, and the topics of ‘liking’ identified in the literature, the researcher made the assertion that ‘liking’ is likely to have dominant commonality with both the Pathos and Ethos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Pathos tenet as ‘liking’ in so far as it is built on a feeling of connection between people (Cialdini, 2001), and association, cooperation and collaboration (Clark & Kemp, 2008; Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001) - emotional notions which speak to the Pathos notion of affective commitment, personal bonds and relationship value (Goldstein et al., 2011).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Ethos tenet, in so far as ‘liking’ is a function of social standing (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014) and rests upon an alignment of ethics and moral code between collaborators (Lowenhaupt, 2014), both Ethos notions enshrined in strength of character (Botha, 2012).

### **2.7.6 Social Validation (Pathos-Ethos):**

Based on the broad array of literature reviewed, and the topics of ‘social validation’ identified in theory, the researcher made the assertion that ‘social validation’ is likely to have a dominant commonality with both the Pathos and Ethos tenets of rhetoric.

The researcher anticipates dominant commonality with the Pathos tenet in so far as ‘social validation’ is a function of testimony and ethical authority and is often associated with peer pressure, an emotional Pathos notion (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014).

The researcher further anticipates dominant commonality with the Ethos tenet, in so far as it is built on social cues which prevail in association, cooperation and collaboration within a societal ecosystem (Cialdini, 2001), based on the Ethos notions of character (Botha, 2012) and an alignment of ethics (Lowenhaupt, 2014).

Given this discussion, and specifically Aristotle’s use of ‘topics’ in rhetoric, the researcher sought to employ a similar fundamental logic in creating a hypothetical framework for the purposes of this research project – that, was to observe in research respondent narratives’ the subtle nuances of both rhetoric and social influence which would allow for their categorisation as either tenets of rhetoric, or as social influence devices, or both. This hypothetical framework is presented in the section hereafter.

## **2.8 Hypothetical Framework**

Based on the literature reviewed, and the areas of interconnectedness identified in the preceding section, the researcher postulated an initial hypothetical framework of the interconnectedness of the various persuasive instruments.

Table 1, hereafter, is the initial hypothetical framework which outlines the anticipated combinations of persuasive instruments (rhetorical tenets and social influence devices) that the researcher expects to emanate from the study given this initial review of the literature in this sphere.

**Table 1: Initial Hypothetical Framework of Persuasion Instruments**

	Persuasive Instruments	
	Rhetorical Tenets	Anticipated Social Influence Device topics (Code Families)
1	Ethos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authority (<i>Behaviour, Credibility, Trustworthiness</i>);</li> <li>- Consistency (<i>Behaviour</i>);</li> <li>- Liking (<i>Cooperation, Similarity</i>);</li> <li>- Social Validation (<i>Social Cues</i>);</li> </ul>
2	Pathos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reciprocity (<i>Return of Goodwill, Return in Kind</i>);</li> <li>- Liking (<i>Association, Attractiveness, Collaboration, Praise</i>);</li> <li>- Scarcity (<i>Psychological Reactance, Desire, Loss of Freedom</i>);</li> <li>- Social Validation (<i>Testimony</i>);</li> </ul>
3	Logos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authority (<i>Title, Appearance, Possession</i>);</li> <li>- Consistency (<i>Performance</i>);</li> <li>- Reciprocity (<i>Future Repayment</i>);</li> <li>- Scarcity (<i>Availability, Exclusivity, Limitedness, Uniqueness</i>);</li> </ul>

The various phenomena were juxtaposed in the combinations of prevalence expected in practice based on the literature reviewed for this research project. The initial hypothetical framework did not, however, consider the occurrence of social influence devices within multiple rhetorical tenets, as explored in the preceding section.

Rhetoric rests upon both shared experience and language between multiple parties to the persuader-listener interface (Duska, 2014), as was explored in Chapter 2.

Botha (2012) describes the three fundamental tenets of rhetoric, which Aristotle described in his seminal work as 'modes of persuasion', as:

- The personal character of the speaker;
- The disposition, or frame of mind of the audience;
- The proof provided in the words of the speech.

The researcher contests that Aristotle's persuasive appeals are not likely to be observed in isolation in a given persuader-listener interface. Given this notion, as well as the perceived areas of interconnectedness as explored in the preceding section, the researcher therefore postulated an adjusted hypothetical framework of the various persuasive instruments.

Table 2, hereafter, is the adjusted hypothetical framework which takes into account the potential overlap of multiple rhetorical tenets and dominant social influence devices.

**Table 2: Adjusted Hypothetical Framework of Persuasion Instruments**

Combination Appeals	Persuasive Instruments	
	Rhetorical Tenets	Social Influence Devices
1	Ethos-Logos	<i>Authority</i> <i>Consistency</i>
2	Ethos-Pathos	<i>Liking</i> <i>Social Validation</i>
3	Pathos-Logos	<i>Reciprocity</i> <i>Scarcity</i>
4	Ethos-Logos-Pathos	<i>Some combination of dominant social influence devices to be determined</i>

The adjusted hypothetical framework was created to illustrate the likely combinations of dominant social influence devices that could conceivably be observed within multiple rhetorical appeals (i.e. *Ethos-Logos*; *Ethos-Pathos*; *Pathos-Logos*; and *Ethos-Logos-Pathos* Appeals).

The four combinations of appeals presented were purely based on the occurrence of 'topics' of overlap between the rhetorical tenets, and social influence devices, as emanated from the review of literature.

The researcher expected that *Pathos* and *Ethos* appeals were likely to be observed independently of each other, however that *Logos* appeals normally emanate by virtue of a persuasive context, and occur in combination with one, or both of the other rhetorical appeals.

The researcher further assumed that some combination of dominant social influence devices will be prevalent in the Ethos-Logos-Pathos combination appeal, however did not have a pre-supposition of what the dominant social influence would be, although it was deemed unlikely by the researcher that all of the social influence devices would be dominant.

## **2.9 Conclusion**

This literature review introduced and explored the literature which underpins the various phenomena under investigation in this research project. Growth Strategy, and the Ansoff Growth Matrix was introduced as a contextual basis for research. Rhetoric and social influence were unpacked and discussed as persuasive instruments to growth strategy. A gap in the literature relating to the interconnectedness of these persuasive instruments was identified, and by better understanding them, the researcher hoped to appreciate how executives could possibly leverage these persuasive instruments, from an organisational perspective, as mechanisms for growth.

The literature review culminated with an introduction to the hypothetical framework, which included the likely combinations of persuasive instruments that the researcher expected to emanate from the in-depth interviews, given the initial review of literature in this sphere. The hypothetical framework consolidated the anticipated interconnectedness of Aristotle's tenets of rhetoric, and Cialdini's Social Influence Devices based on the literature explored in the preceding sections of this research report. This hypothetical framework formed the basis of the research questions as outlined in Chapter 3 hereafter, and the research methodology and coding employed in Chapter 4 of this research project.

The rationale behind the development of the hypothetical framework was to provide a basis for the in-depth interviews which was firmly grounded on robust foundational theory.

The research methodology, as explored in Chapter 4 of this research report, was designed around the testing of the hypothetical framework in practice, in meeting the underlying objectives of this research project.

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### 3.1 Introduction to the Research Questions

This chapter of the research report augments the underlying research objective of demystifying persuasion, and understanding the interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion, by addressing three principal research questions.

The research questions were compiled on the back of the problem statement as elucidated in Chapter 1, and the theoretical concepts which emerged from Chapter 2. Fundamentally, the researcher sought to observe in the narrative's of executives' their instinctive use of persuasive instruments in the description of their growth strategy, and the proportion of emphasis in their narratives of rhetorical tenets (Ethos-Logos-Pathos) and social influence devices in practice.

Four research questions were developed in order to better understand the prevalence of principal constructs for exploration in practice, and to observe whether they support the literature and the hypothetical model developed for the purposes of the research report, which were presented in Chapter 2 of this research report.

### 3.2 Research Question One

**Which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

This research question sought to observe through the narrative of the research respondents' which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify their growth strategy, as a contextual basis for the research, and a basis for the analysis of research questions two, three, and four which follow.

As discussed in preceding chapters, the Ansoff product-market growth strategy matrix was used as a contextual basis for in-depth interviews with executives, and was the stated purpose for the research that was divulged to research respondents - the precise purpose within the context of the stated purpose was not divulged to research respondents upfront, but rather only once the data was collected.

### 3.3 Research Question Two

**What is the proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

This research question sought to observe in the narratives of the research respondents' their natural use of rhetorical tenets (*Ethos-Logos-Pathos*) in the description of their growth strategy, and the proportion of emphasis thereof.

Whilst it was indeed possible that a single dominant rhetoric could emerge, based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this research report, the researcher anticipated multiple tenets of rhetoric to emerge in varying degrees of emphasis between research respondents.

### 3.4 Research Question Three

**What are the combinations of dominant social influence devices observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

This research question sought to observe in the narratives of the research respondents' their natural use of social influence devices in the description of their growth strategy, and the dominant combinations thereof.

Again, based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of this research report, the researcher anticipated multiple social influence devices to emerge in varying degrees of dominance between research respondents.

### 3.5 Research Question Four

**What is the interconnectedness of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Lastly, the results of research question two and three will be juxtaposed in order to establish what combinations of rhetoric and social influence were deployed by executives, and whether this supports the hypothetical framework postulated in Chapter 2.

The next chapter focuses on the research methodology deployed, before focus turns to the data analysis and discussion in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 thereafter.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the research methodology which was employed in this research project. The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 was applied in the creation of a hypothetical framework depicting the perceived interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence as persuasive instruments. This hypothetical framework was tested and refined using in-depth interviews with executives from a cross-section of industries.

Based on research respondents' instinctive use of rhetoric and social influence in their narratives, an updated and refined post-hoc framework emerged from the research. This framework, which is presented in Chapter 6, resulted from the qualitative analysis of the data gathered in the interview process as described in this chapter of the research report.

### **4.2 Research Method and Design**

The methodology applied in this research project was qualitative in nature and exploratory in design. Saunders and Lewis (2012, p.110) describe exploratory research as 'an effective mechanism for discovering new insights, new questions, and assessing a topic in a new light'. They propose that exploratory research is about information discovery on a topic. An exploratory approach is typically employed in cases where the research problem requires clarity, or a phenomenon is new – these characteristics were met with the current research, and are supported by the research methodology and data analysis approach used in undertaking this research project.

The exploratory approach deployed for the research project was conducting exhaustive, one-on-one, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with industry experts in their respective fields. This methodological approach had the goal of exploring and understanding possible connections between the various phenomena investigated, identifying whether in fact the anticipated interconnectedness in the various phenomena investigated prevailed in practice, and further to test the robustness of the hypothetical framework proposed in Chapter 2 of this research report.

The precise research purpose within the context of the stated purpose was not divulged to research respondents upfront, but rather only once the data was collected.



The primary reason behind the use of some duplicity was to encourage frank, honest and open conversation around the topics of interest, without revealing the underlying goal of the research to the respondents – should the precise research purpose have been explained to the research respondents, it may have inadvertently affected the responses in a way which may have invalidated the data.

Candidates participated in what they were lead to believe was a research project investigating growth strategy within their business, and their approach to overcoming the current tumultuous business climate through their growth strategy. The true intent was to observe in the research respondents' narratives their instinctive use of rhetoric and social influence in the description of their growth strategies.

The research sought to observe how research respondents employed rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion, and whether or not some form of connection between the phenomena prevailed in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategies. The underlying research intent was, however, mentioned to the research respondents at the end of the interview, and the intricacies explained in a follow-up debriefing session which followed the data analysis process.

This approach was deployed with the hope that a level of honesty and pragmatism would be volunteered that may have been evaded had research respondents understood the true intent of the study. The interviews were conducted in such a way that the conversation naturally allowed for insight into the area of the underlying research intent, without research respondents realising.

The nature of the research problem, given the underlying research intention of identifying new connections in existing information and phenomena, made this approach appropriate to the research project.

### **4.3 Population**

Saunders and Lewis (2012) defined a population as all members belonging to a group. The population of interest identified for the purpose of the research project was industry role-players in areas such as sales, business development, commercial management and general management.

Candidates for the research project were senior managers who:

- Hold (or have held) a leadership position within their organisation (not limited to executive management or ownership roles);
- Have (or have had) decision making capacity in the context of sales, business development, commercial management or general management;
- Have (or have had) active involvement in persuasive pursuits within their particular area of expertise (i.e. commercial negotiations, contracting, sales, and etcetera).

The population of interest was not limited to specific industries, with the objective of obtaining an appropriate breadth of insight for the analysis, from role-players in various business environments and backgrounds.

#### **4.4 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for the research project was the interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion as observed in the description of research respondents' growth strategies.

#### **4.5 Sampling Method**

Access to the entire population of interest for the purpose of the proposed research project was not reasonably practicable; therefore, the researcher utilised a purposive sampling technique for the research project. Purposive sampling is described by Saunders and Lewis (2012, p.138) as 'a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher's judgement is used to select the sample based on a range of possible reasons and premises'. They go on to suggest that logical generalisations and useful insights can be drawn from the approach (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

Due to the qualitative approach pursued in the research project, this technique was employed with the intention of reaching an appropriate candidate base, as a function of their experience and skill in the sales, business development, commercial management or general management spheres.

Some isolated snowball sampling was also applied, where research respondents were asked to nominate additional candidates that they thought could provide valuable further insight into the topic of interest. Saunders and Lewis (2012) describe snowball sampling as a method of sampling where sample members nominate subsequent sample members who they believe have shared similar experiences.

Given the qualitative nature of the proposed research project and the small sample size, coupled to the issue of access to key role-players within the target population, these sampling approaches were considered appropriate for the research.

#### **4.6 Sample**

A total of twenty-two senior executives from across a range of industries were initially identified for interview through the purposive and snowball sampling techniques deployed. Interview candidates were specialists in their respective fields, at a strategic level (Chief Executive Officers, Managing Directors, Commercial Directors, Heads of Business Development, Owners, Managers and etcetera.).

Of the executives initially identified, fourteen of the executives approached agreed to be interviewed, and made up the final sample for the purposes of the research project. The sample comprised of eight executives in a listed corporate environment, and six owners of successful smaller entities. Six executives could not be reached for interview despite numerous means of communication being deployed, as well as the effect of gatekeepers who restricted both telephonic and e-mail communications to the targeted interview candidates. One executive was prepared to be interviewed however the interview itself failed. One executive refused interview outright.

In the case of the failed interview, the executive in question was prepared to meet, and accommodated the interview, however his employment situation had changed dramatically just days before the interview, and on that basis the interview was abandoned, and the time used for a more relaxed, general discussion with the executive.

The research candidate who refused interview, did so on the basis that corporate protocol in the blue-chip listed business in which he worked would not allow him to participate in the study. He welcomed a general discussion on his thoughts on the subject matter of interest, but only on the basis that none of the material be used for the purposes of the research project. This meeting indeed took place, and all of the insights have expressly been excluded from this research report.

The final sample of fourteen interview candidates, hereafter called the research respondents, met with the researcher in a venue of their preference, in a one-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interview on the stated purpose of the research. A list of research respondents' industries and designations is provided in Chapter 5.

## **4.7 Data Collection Methodology**

Primary data was generated through in-depth interviews with executives across a cross-section of industries in the population of interest. In deploying this approach, a richness of data was attained that possibly would not have through the deployment of alternative data generating approaches. During the data collection process, research respondents agreed to being recorded and all interviews were thereafter recorded with a Dictaphone. Following the interviews, the recordings were transcribed prior to the qualitative analysis of the data.

### **4.7.1 Pre-Test**

A pre-test was conducted in order for the researcher to be sure that the methodology applied would allow for adequate insight into the underlying area of interest. This pre-test took the form of all other interviews, with a candidate who fitted the profile of the sample, but in a highly niche micro enterprise. The pre-test satisfied the researcher that through discussing their growth strategy, the respondent revealed their inherent use of rhetoric and social influence by attempting to persuade the researcher of the merits of the growth strategy employed. The data collected in the pre-test was not transcribed, and has expressly been excluded from the data analysis.

### **4.7.2 Interview Process**

The research methodology employed required that research respondents' volunteered the topics of interest in the in-depth interview without being directly prompted for them. For the sake of ensuring integrity of data, and on the basis that insight into the underlying area of research interest was sought on a voluntary basis, interviews were conducted in an open-ended format where the stated context of the discussion was sketched for the interview candidate, and thereafter the conversation was allowed to take which ever direction the research respondent took it in.

Saunders and Lewis (2012) describe open-ended questions as a data collection tool that allows for open conversation between researcher and participant on the topic of interest. To this end, the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) was introduced to research respondents as a seminal academic contribution to growth theory. Respondents were then asked whether the model resonated with their experience in practice, and if they could identify with any of the growth strategy alternatives which are proposed in the model.

Growth Strategy, and the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) was the only constant between interviews, which were otherwise allowed the freedom to move in whichever direction the research respondents took the conversation.

The research questions, as elucidated in Chapter 3, were addressed through the use of open-ended questions to stimulate conversation with research respondents. The richness of data sought was achieved by encouraging the research respondents to delve into a theme once it had been volunteered by them. If, for example, a topic was fleetingly introduced by a respondent in the discussion, the researcher would immediately further probe into the topic and the respondents reasons for tabling it, whilst still trying to not appear convoluted. This often confused respondents, who very often didn't understand the pertinence of discussing these softer issues, however mostly respondents were prepared to unpack these issues when probed.

The intent of the researcher in the interview process was to create an environment where the research respondent, through the use of their narrative, could inadvertently give insight into their inherent persuasive pre-disposition. The use of narrative, by implication, became the central focus of the data collection and analysis, and indeed the principal mechanism of persuasion observed, although some other mechanisms did manifest. For the purposes of the analysis, the respondents' description of their growth strategy was used as the basis for the sorting of data, regardless of whether the researcher agreed or disagreed that they had appropriately identified their strategy. A number of growth strategies described by the respondents were muddled, where a respondent identified a strategy as one thing, but described it as another. This is unpacked further in the discussion of research findings in Chapter 6.

#### **4.7.3 Interview Constraints**

The researcher made a concerted effort to not solicit the underlying themes of interest from the respondents, but rather to make use of probing questions when a theme of interest was tabled by the respondent themselves. This is to say that the themes of interest were dissected, but only once a respondent had raised the theme in the discussion themselves. Many of the interview respondents', whilst fitting the purposive sampling criterion utilised, were specialised in their fields and naturally lead the conversation into highly technical details of their businesses. In these cases, the researcher had to make an attempt to bring the conversation back on course, and did so by asking the respondents to re-visit a theme of interest raised previously.

In all but one of the interviews, the researcher felt that the richness sought was ultimately achieved. The exception to this was a retired executive from a technical background whose primary interest lay in discussing technical intricacies of his career, and the project which represented the pinnacle of his career. This particular interview was, however, coded appropriately and analysed, despite the narrowness of themes which emerged.

#### **4.8 Coding**

A combination of deductive and inductive coding was undertaken by the researcher in the data analysis process. Saunders and Lewis (2012) explain that it is often beneficial to make use of both approaches within the same research. Three levels of coding of research respondents' narrative's were deployed in the data analysis process. The first two levels comprised deductive coding, and the third comprised inductive, free coding of subcategories, considered in the light of the initial deductive coding themes (Maxwell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

The first level deductive coding for the purposes of the data analysis comprised coding of both the tenets of rhetoric, as well as the social influence devices observed in the narratives of research respondents'. The second level of deductive coding was conducted based on the topics which emerged from the literature review which fitted the first level coding families identified. This involved a rigorous process of identifying themes which fitted, in some cases loosely, into the underlying phenomena of the research and the framework postulated in Chapter 2 of the research report. These first and second level coding topics are presented in the codebook, created by the researcher to articulate a common understanding of the topics for analysis, in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 of this research report.

A third level of inductive, free coding was carried out with the intention of identifying the total body of themes which prevailed in the data, so as not to overlook themes of interest which did not specifically fit within the coding topics included in the codebook (Maxwell, 1998; Strauss and Corbin, 1998). The implication of this third level of coding is that topics were not all analysed if not significant by way of frequency. The researchers use of both deductive and inductive coding was deemed appropriate in order to allow for the study of the form and content of persuasive instruments which were present in the narrative's of research respondents'. An iterative data analysis process ensured that all themes were appropriately coded and measured. A wealth of data beyond the scope of analysis was generated.

## **4.9 Data Analysis**

Clark (2006) compares data analysis in qualitative research to a metamorphosis – she describes it as an iterative analytical process which happens concurrently to the process of data collection. Weiss (2004) suggests that in the case of qualitative research, data analysis requires the sorting and integration of interview data. For the purposes of this research project, integration and analysis of interview data was carried out within the Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis suite. In this vein, once transcriptions had been captured, the data were sorted, labelled and fed into Atlas.ti qualitative analysis software suite.

The approach to data analysis deployed in this research project was a combination of narrative analysis, content analysis, and constant comparative analysis. The sorted and coded data were analysed utilising a combination of constant comparative analysis, and content analysis methods (Clark, 2006). Castelló and Lozano (2011) describes narrative analysis as one of a number of methods to understand organizational phenomena through the focus on forms of communication. The narrative analysis in this case of this research project focused on research respondents spoken words, and their instinctive use of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices in the description of their growth strategies. Content analysis involved a meticulous process of reviewing transcripts, coding transcripts, and then re-reviewing transcripts in light of the full body of codes generated. Constant comparative analysis involved comparing and contrasting the data between research respondents, through an iterative process of going backwards and forwards between the theories and concepts introduced in Chapter 2 of the research report and the data itself (Brennan & Merckyl-Davies, 2014).

Clark (2006) unpacks the dynamics of qualitative analysis, and suggests that unlike quantitative research which needs only convince the reader that certain procedures and protocol have been followed, qualitative research needs to make intuitive sense. She goes on to explain that no perfect method of performing qualitative analysis exists. She identified the inherent risk of researcher bias to this dynamic (Clark, 2006).

## **4.10 Data Reliability and Validity**

Data reliability is a function of the consistency of both data collection methods and data analysis procedures (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). In order to ensure the reliability of data through the data collection methodology, a common thread resonated through all of the interviews, in the form of the stated purpose of the research.

In-depth probing type questions were asked in order to unpack themes of interest, and the researcher was aware of subjectivity and the risk of leading research respondents toward topics of underlying interest. Data validity is the trustworthiness of research findings, and the effectiveness of data collection methods in measuring what they were intended to measure (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Data analysis procedures were applied consistently to the research data, and a meticulous process towards data sorting into the various themes under investigation applied and a reputable qualitative analysis tool, Atlas.ti, deployed in the data analysis.

#### **4.11 Research Limitations**

A number of research limitations are identified hereafter, which are expanded upon in Chapter 7 in light of the research findings as presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the research project report.

##### ***4.11.1 Access to Key Role-Players***

An obvious initial challenge to the research project was the issue of access to key role-players in the industry, and availability to meet, given executive's tight schedules. Of the 25 executives approached for interview, only 14 were prepared to avail themselves for the interview, for a number of reasons.

##### ***4.11.2 Extrapolation of Findings***

The dynamics of qualitative research is such that care should be exercised when drawing conclusions from the findings, and extrapolating outcomes to the broader population. Saunders and Lewis (2012) warn that a level of care be exercised in arriving at definitive conclusions from the results of the qualitative research. Denzin (2009) warns of the risks of imposing personal interpretation onto research findings, and stresses that content should only be captured and analysed in the context of the research candidate's viewpoint.

##### ***4.11.3 Interview Context***

The persuader-listener interface established was ripe for the observation of persuasion and influence in practice given research respondents openness to accommodating a conversation with a student of a prominent Business School, to unpacking the topic of discussion, and to share so liberally their personal views.



#### **4.11.4 Non-Verbal Persuasion**

Had the scope of the research project allowed for it, observations beyond narrative alone may have added depth to the research in so far as non-verbal persuasion is concerned. The researcher acknowledges the broad and encompassing nature of persuasion, and indeed the limitation of the research project to verbal persuasion may have reduced the depth of the analysis.

#### **4.11.5 Researcher Bias**

Researcher bias is described by Clark (2006) as being inevitable in qualitative research. Researcher bias is described by Denzin (2009) as the personal interpretation of the researcher being imposed onto research data. The researcher was aware of the risk of researcher bias, and undertook to mitigate it as far as is practically possible.

#### **4.11.6 Sample Size**

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of the small sample size, and the implications it could have for any findings made. Whilst the researcher sought a broader and more diverse spectrum of participants for the research project, resource constraints and access to executives made this difficult.

A more extensive list of potential limitations to the research project are included in Chapter 7, which take cognisance of the research findings and discussion of results presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of this research report.

#### **4.11.7 Sensitivity of Information**

The issue of sensitivity of the information emanating from the study, as well as research respondent's willingness to share data with the researcher was an area of limitation.

### **4.12 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the research design and methodology deployed in meeting the objectives of the research project as introduced in Chapter 1. The methodology applied yielded the research results which are hereafter unpacked and discussed in Chapter 5 of this research report, before a discussion of the findings follows in Chapter 6.

## CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter of the research report, the research results are presented in light of the research questions as postulated in Chapter 3, and the methodology and research design described in Chapter 4.

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this research report, data collection took the form of in-depth interviews with fourteen executives from a broad spectrum of industries. The array of industries was pursued in an attempt to achieve a multitude of views, and to try to avoid potential sample bias.

Table 3, hereafter, lists the designation and entity type of research respondents interviewed for the purpose of this research project.

**Table 3: Respondent Designation and Entity Type of Sample**

	<b>Respondent Designation</b>	<b>Entity Type</b>
1	Owner / Director	Private Entity
2	Executive Manager	Listed Entity
3	Executive Manager	Listed Entity
4	Executive Manager	Private Entity
5	Retired Chairman	Listed Entity
6	Retired Executive	Listed Entity
7	Owner / Director	Listed Entity
8	Executive Director	Listed Entity
9	Executive Director	Listed Entity
10	Owner / Director	Private Entity
11	Retired Executive	Listed Entity
12	Owner / Director	Private Entity
13	Shareholder / Director	Listed Entity
14	Owner / Director	Private Entity

Table 3 categorises respondents as Executives (Executive Manager, Executive Director, Retired Executive), and as Owners (Director, Owner, Shareholder), as the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project. This is one of the dimensions along which the data collected for this research project were analysed.

The qualitative analysis undertaken utilising the Atlas.ti qualitative analysis suite interrogated 972 quotations, comprising 391 codes arranged in the 9 deductive coding families. The results of each research question are presented sequentially hereafter.

## 5.2 Results for Research Question One

### Which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?

Research Question One sought to observe through the narrative of the research respondents' which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify their growth strategy, as a contextual basis for the research, and a basis for the analysis of research questions two, three, and four which follow.

As discussed in preceding chapters, the Ansoff product-market growth strategy matrix (Ansoff, 1958) was used as a contextual basis for in-depth interviews with executives, and was the stated purpose for the research that was divulged to research respondents. As such, research respondents were introduced to the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) and asked which of the four growth strategy alternatives best resonated with the growth strategy employed in their respective businesses.

Respondents were categorised in the data analysis process on the basis of how they described their growth strategy, and not necessarily on how they identified their growth strategy, as in a number of instances strategy perplexity between the product-market growth strategy alternatives were observed. This dynamic is further unpacked in Chapter 6 of this research report.

Table 4, hereafter, summarises the categorisation of respondents based on their description of their growth strategy.

**Table 4: Growth Strategies of Research Respondents**

	<b>Industry / Sector</b>	<b>Type of Growth Strategy</b>
1	Construction Products	Diversification
2	Agriculture	Market Penetration
3	Specialised Steel	Market Penetration
4	Health Services	Diversification
5	Print and Packaging	Product Development
6	Manufacturing	Market Development
7	Electronics	Product Development
8	Mining	Market Development
9	Electronics	Product Development
10	Logistics	Market Development
11	Steel	Market Penetration
12	Engineering	Diversification
13	Mining	Market Development
14	Internet Technologies	Market Development

For the purposes of Research Question 2, Research Question 3 and Research Question 4, these categories were utilised as the basis for data analysis, in conjunction with data analysis which encompassed designation, where appropriate.

### 5.3 Results for Research Question Two

#### **What is the proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research question 2 sought to determine the proportion of emphasis of the rhetorical tenets that emanated from the respondents' narratives in describing their growth strategies. The underlying aim of this research question was to identify in each of the analysis groups the proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets (Ethos-Logos-Pathos) innately employed by respondents.

When analysing the full data set, Logos appeals emerged as the overwhelmingly dominant rhetorical tenet employed by research respondents in their narratives. This was followed by Ethos appeals, and thereafter by Pathos appeals, as illustrated by way of frequency hereafter. Table 5 tabulates the frequencies of rhetorical tenets observed in the full data set as measured with the Atlas.ti qualitative software suite, which is used in testing the hypothetical framework presented in Chapter 2 of this research report.

**Table 5: Rhetorical Tenets – Frequencies**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	206
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	85
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	27

Table 6, 7, and 8 hereafter tabulate the frequency of responses observed within each rhetorical tenet in the total data set. Thereafter, the dominant tenets of rhetoric are discussed for each categorisation of growth strategy, and designation.

- **Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason**

The most dominant Logos appeals (or persuasive appeals to reason) which emanated from the in-depth interviews, as measured by frequency of occurrence in respondent narratives are outlined in table 6 hereafter:

**Table 6: Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason**

Rank	Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason	Frequency
1	Technical Justification (Reasoning)	54
2	Financial Justification (Reasoning)	44
3	Value Proposition (Reasoning)	32
4	Cost Competitiveness (Reasoning)	25
5	Service Excellence (Reasoning)	25
6	Technology (Benefits/ Features)	24
7	Quality (Benefits / Features)	22
8	Economic Justification (Reasoning)	14
9	Information (Facts / Figures)	12
10	Political Justification (Reasoning)	11

- **Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker**

The most dominant Ethos appeals (or persuasive appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker) which emanated from the in-depth interviews, as measured by frequency of occurrence in respondent narratives are outlined in Table 7 hereafter:

**Table 7: Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker**

Rank	Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	Frequency
1	Credibility	68
2	Self-Awareness	16
3	Confidence	14
4	Strategic Thinking	12
5	Authority	8
6	Reputation	6
7	Initiator	6
8	Responsibility	4
9	Experience	4
10	Accountability	2

- **Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion**

The most dominant Pathos appeals (or persuasive appeals to Emotion) which emanated from the in-depth interviews, as measured by frequency of occurrence in respondent narratives are outlined in Table 8 hereafter:

**Table 8: Pathos Appeals – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion**

Rank	Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	Frequency
1	Relationships	49
2	Self-Criticism	20
3	Culture	15
4	Risk	13
5	Values	12
6	Fear	11
7	Loyalty	11
8	Trust	10
9	Metaphor	6
10	Passion	5

**Metaphor:**

The use of metaphor and figurative language was described by Lowenhaupt (2014) as an effective use of Pathos in persuasive appeal. A number of examples of metaphorical language emerged from the in-depth interviews.

Noteworthy observations of metaphor from the narratives of respondents were recorded as follows:

One respondent described the evolution in their business like a child growing up:

*“... maybe just to say ... I think this kind of thing is funny because this doesn’t happen overnight, it happens quite gradually and what I sometimes say to people is, it’s only when you look back that you realise how far you’ve come. And it’s the same as like a parent of a 15-year-old who’ll look back at when their child was a baby, and they’ll go like, “wow, how did we get from there to here?” Because it all happens in such small increments that you almost don’t notice it happening...”*

Another respondent equated the capabilities of their team to engineers fine tuning a racing car:

*“Anybody with a lot of money can go and buy a sports car, but only a team of very well trained and experienced engineers can performance tune it so that you can win a race”.*

The same respondent later equated their business as a rash on their more significant market rivals:

*“We’re definitely a rash on a lot of people, so I mean we’re old enough now that our name is pretty well known in the market”.*

One respondent described their product innovation as something out of the movies, stating:

*“...and at that stage, we said to him, “listen that’s James Bond movie stuff.” But he did it...[SIC]”.*

A research respondent compared his businesses product offering to toothpaste:

*“...It’s like toothpaste, everybody has it – it’s just, how do you choose between Colgate and Aquafresh or whatever...”.*

The data are further analysed hereafter, firstly as distinguished by growth strategy alternative, and secondly as distinguished by respondent designation.

### **5.3.1 Analysis Group A: Growth Strategy**

When analysed from the perspective of the Growth Strategy alternative, as per the results of Research Question 1 in the preceding section, the following results emerged:

- **Market Penetration Strategy**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between research respondents who described their strategies as being that of market penetration are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 9 hereafter:

**Table 9: Rhetorical Tenets – Market Penetration Strategy**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Market Penetration Strategy	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	191
2	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	43
3	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	35

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

### **Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason:**

In describing their approach to growth strategy, a respondent clarified by way of the ‘logical reasoning’ topic of Logos (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), saying:

*“The strategy is one of organic growth. You don’t flick a switch, you don’t build a plant that produces half a million tons in a 100,000 ton market, by virtue of having the plant grow the market overnight. That just doesn’t happen. So I would say it’s an integration strategy, where you grow the market to the point where you can now integrate into whatever facility you need to support the existing and then the easily identifiable future growth. There’s no point in saying the market in theory could be two million. It’s 200,000 today, again, you’re not going to get from A to B overnight. So it’s kind of a gradual approach and where we can harness synergies between countries”.*

Another respondent justified their pricing position through the ‘logical reasoning’ topic of Logos (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), stressing quality as the trade-off in the higher priced offering:

*“So if you’re paying, lets call it a premium, the very least that you can expect in return for that, is the quality will be as good as anything and better than most”.*

The respondent went on to add:

*“While business is going well for us, it’s the opportunity to spend money to kind of future proof the business”.*

In describing their share of the market, one respondent responded using the ‘claims’ topic of Logos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*“Look at our results, if you could see our market share, or if we could see it for that matter, I think, well our volumes are no secret, you can read our volumes in our annual report. And they’re growing in a market that isn’t growing. I mean, one and one equals two in this case”.*

The respondent later added:

*“...we see ourselves as a blue chip operation, and we can’t be disingenuous and have a quality approach here and then a cheap and nasty approach elsewhere”.*



Another respondent, when asked the same question, also responded using the 'claims' topic of Logos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*"...we've got majority shareholding in South Africa, southern Africa, because the guys like our products, like the support, and know it works".*

When asked what makes a customer care to do business with them, one respondent replied with the 'benefit' topic of Logos (Braet, 1992), stating:

*"It's the bottom line. What value do I bring to him? And, if something goes wrong, I know I can phone someone".*

A further respondent demonstrated the 'reasoning' topic of Logos in the form of financial justification (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), saying:

*"They're getting a saving; they're getting a big saving. Apart from the saving, if we just get back to that specific client, it's also a performance issue".*

### **Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker:**

One respondent, when asked about the nature of competition in the market, demonstrated the 'credibility' topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012) saying:

*"In the space that I'm playing, in the market, I don't think anybody is doing it like we are doing it. Not at all, and really, there's not one name that comes to mind".*

A further respondent demonstrated the 'authority' topic of Ethos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*"...they'd written things on the board, all the reasons you know, and I sat with the twelve, and they took me through these things. And as they got to each point, I eliminated it. Persuaded them that wasn't valid, what they were saying. And I eliminated all the points".*

### **Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion:**

One respondent, in recollecting their growth strategy over time, described the approach as follows:

*“...it was trial and error, and a lot of error before we hit on what we think works. I think the immediate conclusion that we’ve reached is flexibility and agility needs to be a repetitive mantra in what we do. What works today is proven by experience not necessarily to work tomorrow, so it’s not a fixed strategy”.*

In describing the approach towards selling product to less sophisticated segments of the market, a respondent utilised analogy (Louwenhaupt, 2014) in explaining their approach to reaching this segment of the market, saying:

*“...inflicting our view of the world on these guys...we may well be right but until someone subscribes to it and buys in, we’re getting nowhere. So if you can’t bring the third world to the first world, you’ve got to get on your bicycle and go to the third world. And that’s what we’re trying to do, but of course, it’s not fun business, it’s not what we want to do. So we see it again as a tactic to get us to where we want to be. And what does a successful business look like, and those sorts of things. So we’ve got our views on what we think we need to be truly sustainable, a big player supplying the services that we think those markets need in the fullness of time. So to position ourselves, and again brand awareness and recognition is another thing that in certain parts of Africa – the guys buy the stuff that’s got a blue ship on the back”.*

When describing the level of unsophistication in certain of their market segments, and the frustration in convincing this market segment of the superiority of their product, one respondent demonstrated the ‘emotion’ topic of Pathos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*“...with that level of unsophistication, the customer is just not interested. So you can huff and puff until you’re blue in the face and be right, but you’ll be wrong when you look at your bottom line”.*

In describing the value of their after-sale support and back-up, on respondent employed a humorous appeal (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*“I think it’s that. Who are you going to call? Not the Ghostbusters probably, you’ve got somebody you can phone who’s got some technical back up behind him. The other guys do have but not to the level I think...”.*

- **Market Development Strategy**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between research respondents who described their strategies as being that of market development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 10 hereafter:

**Table 10: Rhetorical Tenets – Market Development Strategy**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Market Development Strategy	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	182
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	133
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	44

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

**Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason:**

In describing what set their growth strategy apart, one respondent utilised the ‘logical reasoning’ topic of Logos (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) in unpacking their cost competitiveness, stressing:

*“You have to look at the cost base. If you’re not cost competitive you don’t enter the door. So the first one is, look at your cost of manufacturing”.*

Another respondent, in describing what sets their growth strategy apart, demonstrated the ‘efficiency’ topic of Logos (Brown et al., 2012), saying:

*“you push volume and you push volume and that is it”.*

The research respondent later added:

*“So the service must be there, it’s a given”.*

In describing what needs to be done to remain competitive, one research respondent demonstrated the ‘efficiency’ topic of Logos (Brown et al., 2012), saying:

*“But value selling is probably something we will have to keep on pushing if we really want to be competitive. And getting around the buyer, or and getting the buyer to understand and to support that the total cost of ownership comes down if he pays for this specific product ... and that’s a difficult one”.*

Another respondent, when discussing what is needed in order to future proof their industry given the skills shortage, demonstrated the ‘effectiveness’ topic of Logos (Brown, et al., 2012), saying:

*“I think in the broader spectrum, you understand as well that training and schools... giving people proper schooling is vital, that’s a building block that industry can hardly afford not to have”.*

### **Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion:**

One respondent, in describing what sets their business apart, delved into the ‘value system’ and ‘culture’ topics of Pathos (Higgins & Walker, 2012), saying:

*“The biggest saving grace of [Company Name], and difference in my mind, is the value system and culture. And I for one did not fully subscribe, believe in, it’s about people, five years ago... we had everything, yet they had everything yet they couldn’t make it work. So by changing leadership and people, it does work. What’s different? Nothing. Nothing is different yet everything has changed”.*

The respondent went on to add:

*“...coming back to people, it’s about, in my mind, what is the difference between value system and culture? It’s probably the same thing. I don’t know. The defining difference between companies is culture...”.*

One respondent, when unpacking the notion of adapting to one’s reality, displayed the ‘humour’ topic of Pathos (Leith, 2011), saying:

*“So it’s not about having the perfect foresight or ability to predict the future, it’s the ability to adapt to the current reality in order to create your future. Jirre, daai was groot ... you can’t hold me back because I won’t be able to repeat [SIC]”.*

### **Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker:**

In unpacking what sets growth strategy apart, one respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012), saying:

*“...they want to know there’s no question about this. So in certain industries, very very... so you’ve got to be credible. In other industries, a bit more forgiving...”*

Another respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012) saying:

*“I really think we’ve got something unique, and it’s not ... I can’t pinpoint it to one specific thing, but I think it is a combination of everything that I’ve mentioned, that makes the business as such, successful”*

- **Product Development Strategy**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between research respondents who described their strategies as being that of product development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 11 hereafter:

**Table 11: Rhetorical Tenets – Product Development Strategy**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Product Development Strategy	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	133
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	60
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	30

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

**Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason:**

In discussing their pricing strategy, one respondent used financial justification as a ‘reasoning’ topic of Logos (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), stating:

*“It was not in me to try and sell a customer a cheaper product that I knew was inferior. I could not do that. And so in certain instances we would say we’re not going down in price to that level, because we’ve got to use inferior materials. And we would let the order go”.*

When describing their value proposition and approach towards customer service, a research respondent demonstrated the ‘benefit’ topic of Logos (Braet, 1992), stating:

*“...there can be no doubt as to what the customer spent their money on and we’ll never just give them one word answers, we’ll actually give them something useful. And in a lot of cases, again, because it’s clever, we use it as a foot in the door so we will come up with a recommendations list and say, “this is what we found. Here’s what we suggest you do about it.” And then of course there’s an implicit nudge to say, call us...”*

Financial justification was utilised as a ‘reasoning’ topic of Logos (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005) with a further research respondent, who stated:

*“The only challenge, one of the biggest challenges they had was to make sure that the guy has the money to buy it, because it’s expensive...”*

### **Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion:**

When describing how customers would ultimately return, after taking their business elsewhere in pursuit of better pricing, one respondent used the ‘humour’ topic of Pathos (Leith, 2011), stating:

*“I used to always have a nice joke with guys like that, say “ok pal, ok. So the early bird gets the worm”, and I said “Ja, hey, and the second mouse gets the cheese [SIC]”.*

Another respondent, when asked what it took to be successful in their market, displayed the ‘attitude’ dimension of pathos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*“You know you’ve got to get off your butt and go out there, there’s no easier way”.*

One respondent, in describing the extents he would go to in satisfying his customers, demonstrated the ‘attitude’ topic of Pathos, saying:

*“I would be their slave and I would do and say all the right things and I would not let them down. If I had to call on them three times a day I would do it”.*

The research respondent went further to say:

*“Every day something bloody comes up that you’ve got to seize as an opportunity. Where you can cut costs and where you can pass it on to your customer to secure more business and relationships, and then, you know, a bloody rep lets you down and you’ve got to go and eat humble pie and give the rep a hell of a bloody klap or even in some cases fire them for being bloody stupid. But I would never have changed my career, loved it [SIC]”.*

Another respondent, in describing their growth trajectory and the implications of growing too fast, demonstrated the ‘risk’ topic of Pathos (Leith, 2011), saying:

*“...It’s risky, but I suppose the worst thing that can happen at the end of the day is you have to retrench a lot of people, which is never a nice thing to do, but thank god we haven’t had to do that. And it has worked out for us...”*

### **Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker:**

One research respondent, when describing their growth strategy, demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012), saying:

*“I don’t think anybody does what we do, comprehensively speaking. There are people who do bits of what we do, but I don’t think anybody offers the whole suite of things that we do in the format that we do. So maybe, again without trying to sound arrogant, maybe we’re very unique in our space, and from that perspective we don’t really have any true competitors”.*

When discussing the early years of the start-up of their business, one respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012), stating:

*“Actually I can say categorically, when we started, we were not doing anything that no one else was doing, there were lots of people doing what we were doing. But we were convinced that we could do it better than anybody else...” the research respondent goes on to add “...we were convinced that there were things that other, significantly bigger companies were doing very badly. And we were right...”*

When describing the personal success achieved in their senior sales capacity in print and packaging, a respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012), saying:

*“Then the next thing you find, you know, another year or two, and now they say they want you to be sales manager, or whatever, like that, or like they did to me, they say, “we want you to go run from an office in Joburg for business down here.” Now that’s a real test because you’ve got to sell in the Joburg environment where the customers there can buy locally, and you’ve got to persuade them to give their business to a printer in Durban who’s got to ship it to Joburg”.*

A further example of the Ethos dimension of ‘credibility’ (Botha, 2012) was demonstrated by a research respondent who said:

*“...after six months of negotiations they gave me an order for 22,000 units. It was unbelievable. And obviously that put [Company Name] on the map and from there on we went to, obviously, Pakistan and Germany and all over”.*

- **Diversification Strategy**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between research respondents who described their strategies as being that of diversification are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 12 hereafter:

**Table 12: Rhetorical Tenets – Diversification Strategy**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Diversification Strategy	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	149
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	56
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	48

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

**Logos – Persuasive Appeals to Reason:**

One respondent, in describing the viability of their product offering stated:

*“The [Product] will sell itself. It is such an obvious product, that the moment you advertise it and it’s out there - if they need it, they will contact you immediately because they know the application is so obvious”.*

Another respondent, when describing what set their offering apart, said:

*“It’s our people, our service, our quality, our excellence. Technology, definitely; obviously we’re new, so we’ve got the best technology at the best cost of course”.*

The respondent added:

*“The service that you’re giving needs to be of top quality, excellent quality, it needs to be word of mouth out there that knows that and your people are the ones who drive that so it’s your employees”.*



### **Pathos – Persuasive Appeals to Emotion:**

In describing the journey of growing their start-up, one respondent stated:

*“...it is actually really happening and now here we are, and I am in this very unique position that sometimes I don’t feel like I’ve earned or deserve, I feel like it’s ... it certainly hasn’t been given to me, but I kind of feel like I’ve ended up here without really trying to get here. Like this wasn’t my aim, my aim was to kind of do something fun with a bunch of friends and ironically, get out of a big tech company and now we’ve become a big tech company...”* The respondent further added: *“...none of us have done this before, so I don’t think we can be bold enough so as to say we know everything. And we acknowledge that we don’t know everything, and even we’re learning...”*

In dissecting relationships, one respondent said:

*“One of the critical things to do is to maintain your relationships. There’s good business and there’s bad business. With good business, I maintain those relationships and look after them really well. The bad business, I don’t mind letting it go. Because if it doesn’t work for me, then it doesn’t work”*.

One respondent, in discussing what it takes to succeed in their market, demonstrated the ‘attitude’ topic of Pathos (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014), saying:

*“I would say you’re required to have an ambition, a drive, determination, a want to succeed. It’s not a matter of, you know ... an entrepreneur isn’t a person ... you know, Richard Branson doesn’t have to know how to fly an airplane to run Virgin Atlantic, and that’s what I’m trying to say. So yes there’s obviously a lot of mechanical know-how, machine know-how in our type of business, but it’s more than just that. You need more than just that to become successful. You need that to be average, you need that to tick along, you need that to be happy. But if you want to be better than the rest, you have to have more than the rest, or know more than the rest, or practice harder than the rest. And I think that’s the key to a lot, put it that way”*.

Another respondent, when unpacking the voids in their strategy demonstrated the ‘judgement’ and ‘attitude’ topics of Pathos (Botha, 2012; Brennan & Merkyl-Davies (2014), saying:

*“I think we have a long way to go in terms of communicating. Communicating the strategy, the vision, the mission, driving it through performance management, reward and recognition, all of those things. We need to be driving now, through all of that ... and we’re getting there but we’re not there yet, we’ve got a very long way to go”.*

### **Ethos – Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker:**

One respondent, in describing the lengths he would go to for his customers, demonstrated the ‘credibility’ and ‘legitimacy’ topics of Ethos (Botha, 2012; Corbett & Connors, 1999), saying:

*“So, if somebody needs me on a Sunday because they’re doing an urgent tender, I tend to it. If I need to do, and I’ve done it, had to sit through weekends doing designs because they need it by Monday - they need to have a pricing by 12, and that’s the relationship. They know they can phone me, I can go to a site within 24, 48 hours maximum. They’ll have a design for me, they can hand a price then to their client. Nobody else can do that”.*

When describing the success in their growth from a non-player in the market, to mid-sized player in a few short years, one respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Ethos (Botha, 2012) claiming:

*“[Subsidiary Name] has won the Diamond Award for two, three years in a row now”*

The second basis for analysis for Research Question 2 is designation, and the differences observed between the two distinct sample groups, namely Corporate Executives (Directors, Managers, and etcetera) and Business Owners (Shareholders, Owners and etcetera).

#### **5.3.2 Analysis Group B: Designation**

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:

- **Executives**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of corporate executives are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 13 hereafter:

**Table 13: Rhetorical Tenets – Executives**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Executives	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	435
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	160
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	87

- **Owners**

The proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of business owners are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 14 hereafter:

**Table 14: Rhetorical Tenets – Owners:**

Rank	Rhetorical Tenets – Owners	Frequency
1	Logos - Persuasive Appeals to Reason	220
2	Pathos - Persuasive Appeals to Emotion	124
3	Ethos - Persuasive Appeals to the Credibility of the Speaker	78

This section presented the research results for Research Question 2. Discussion of the research results follows in Chapter 6 of this research report. The section hereafter presents the research results for Research Question 3.

#### **5.4 Results for Research Question Three**

**What are the combinations of dominant social influence devices observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research question 3 sought to observe in the narratives of the research respondents' their natural use of social influence devices in the description of their growth strategy, and the dominant combinations thereof. The underlying aim of this research question was to identify in each of the analysis groups the dominant combinations of social influence devices innately employed by respondents.

When analysing the full data set, Authority emerged as the overwhelmingly dominant social influence device employed by research respondents in their narratives.

This was followed by Liking and thereafter by Consistency, as illustrated by way of frequency in Table 15 hereafter.

**Table 15: Social Influence Devices – Frequencies**

Rank	Social Influence Devices	Frequency
1	Authority	41
2	Liking	16
3	Consistency	11
4	Social Validation	6
5	Reciprocity	5
6	Scarcity	4

#### **5.4.1 Analysis Group A – Growth Strategy**

When analysed from the perspective of the Growth Strategy alternative, as per the results of Research Question 1 in the preceding section, the following results emerged:

- **Market Penetration Strategy**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 16 hereafter:

**Table 16: Social Influence Devices – Market Penetration Strategy**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Market Penetration Strategy	Frequency
1	Authority	34
2	Social Validation	19
3	Liking	12

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

#### **Authority:**

In describing their share of the local market, one respondent demonstrated the ‘credibility’ topic of Authority (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001), saying:

*“...we’ve got majority shareholding in South Africa, southern Africa, because the guys like our products, like the support, and know it works”.*

Another respondent, in justifying the price of their products on the basis of the merits thereof, demonstrated the ‘experience’ topic of Authority (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001) stating:

*“So we’re quite upfront, that “guys, yes we’re more expensive, but we believe that you will get a multiple return on that. And if not, if your experience is not, we will try help you understand why. We don’t believe it’s the fault of our [Product]”.*

They went on to add:

*“...if you’re a retailer, you want to be a Makro, not a Spar. You want to sell lots of stuff at a decent margin, not a little bit of stuff at maybe a better margin. But to make billions you’ve got to have a hell of a lot of small sales”.*

The research respondent further added:

*“...this is the plan you implemented and you just let time pass by and let the money roll in”.*

*“...even if the majority represents 50% of the market, and we’ve got a substantial slice of that action, that’s worthwhile in the long run, because our game plan is to be a major player in these markets and all of that additional business just helps us with our economies of scale and efficiencies”.*

*“...we’re a high cost offering, the most expensive in the market, unquestioned. So what do you do, because you’re not going to compete on price. That opportunity doesn’t exist”.*

### **Social Validation:**

One research respondent, when discussing the value of relationships, demonstrated the ‘testimony’ and ‘social cue’ topics of Social Validation (Cialdini, 2001), saying:

*“I think it’s all about the relationship at the end of the day. If you’ve got the relationship with your client. And at the end of the day I don’t think anybody can really restrict you from trying to add value”.*

The respondent added:

*“...we want to be celebrated, we don’t want to be tolerated”.*

Contrarily, when discussing a move towards eco-friendlier variants of their product, another respondent explained:

*“I think it might give you one or two notches up, but that’s it. At the end of the day the guys still drive price and quality”.*

### **Liking:**

In describing partnering with one’s customers, one research respondent demonstrated the ‘collaboration’ topic of Liking (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001), stating:

*“You either become a partner or something goes south and you’re off the books. It’s about trust. So if you become a partner and you don’t quite live up to quality standards, something goes wrong, you’re out. It’s quite difficult to attain those customers back again. And sometimes it’s small things”.*

Another research respondent demonstrated the ‘cooperative contact’ topic of liking (Clark & Kemp, 2008), saying:

*“...chat to the guys, understand their needs and demands and kind of get in there. It takes a bit of a process and it’s not that easy, you need to understand what the guys want, what they need and then focus from there”.*

- **Market Development Strategy**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 17 hereafter:

**Table 17: Social Influence Devices – Market Development Strategy**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Market Development Strategy	Frequency
1	Authority	62
2	Liking	42
3	Consistency	19

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

**Authority:**

When asked what set their growth strategy apart, one respondent replied by describing the importance of understanding one's customers, exhibiting the 'knowledge' topic of Authority (Clark & Kemp, 2008), saying:

*"...understanding customer needs. If you get that right and I think we got it right for a number of years; that worked. Moving close to the customer. You must understand his process and his needs and they change also. Because his product range will change, his environment will change, his throughput, his demand, his grades, whatever. So you've got to understand the customer and that's the starting point I think. Once you understand the customer, you can go back into your system and say, "guys, adopt here, change this." That worked. That worked. It's really ... ok, if your production line is unstable obviously you've got to stabilise it, and that's part of customer service".*

The research respondent further added:

*"I think because we understood the market, that gave the sort of gateway to change. I think that was the big change. So understanding opened the field..."*

**Liking:**

One research respondent, when discussing the understanding of the customer, demonstrated the 'cooperative contact' topic of Liking (Clark & Kemp, 2008), stating:

*"...you find that a lot of good information is lost because you don't have that direct contact with the customers, unless you get your own sales force to go around these guys or with them, make sure you understand exactly what the hell does the guy wants".*

The research respondent went on to add:

*"...there was always a push to try and get through, I'm not sure whether everybody understood exactly how important it was to get around that barrier and to know what the customer actually wants..."*

*“...it’s absolutely a must, understand exactly what is going on. But in the sort of commercial side I think individual customer needs are not really that well understood”.*

When discussing the effect of relationships on the arduous task of passing on a price increase, one respondent demonstrated the ‘cooperation’ topic of Liking (Clark & Kemp, 2008), stating:

*“I would make sure that the new pricing had been done, go through it myself, make sure I was happy with it, and then we’d go out to the customer and I would actually show him on a piece of paper what the material content in their product is. What [Supplier Name]’s price increase was, X per cent to X per cent, and how that impacted on just the material content in that quote. And then where normally you’d have a little machine rate increase, because you’ve got to give your staff increases, and I’d show them broken down, these percentages in each area where it was... and I would do the one next to the other, there’s your old one, there’s your new one, that’s your new selling price. That’s your two and half per cent increase or five per cent increase, whatever, and that’s where it’s coming from. And I’d show it to [Customer Name] and he’d say, “thank you, fine,” and that kind of thing. Sometimes they would fight you on it, but you can justify it. And you have to justify it. But if you’ve got that kind of relationship with them, it’s a hell of a lot easier”.*

### **Consistency:**

When asked what would set their growth strategy apart, one respondent demonstrated the ‘stability of action’ topic of Consistency (Clark & Kemp, 2008), stating:

*“I think delivering on consistency. What we’ve been doing, carry on doing that. Deliver on your promises of quality, get your products there, be competitive, give the service”.*

Another respondent, when asked the same question, said:

*“One is consistency because there’s always changes. So consistency. And key - because of course things will change - but in your key sort of drivers you need to be consistent, you can’t change those”.*

Another research respondent, in a similar vein, said:



*“...you’ve got to make sure that you give the customer that on-going, consistent service and maintain a first class working relationship with him, you don’t let them down on any issue”.*

Yet another, when asked what sets a business apart in achieving sustainable growth, stated:

*“Consistency, and consistency, and consistency. Because you can sell the most products to a guy if he knows, this is what I get. So he wants to know beforehand and he wants to be serviced, and I think if you have the consistency”.*

Another Respondent, when discussing what it takes to succeed in their industry, demonstrated the ‘commitment’ topic of Consistency (Cialdini, 2001), saying:

*“Because you have to put the energy in, to put the time in, the commitment, the loyalty, to really get where you want in this industry”.*

In describing their approach to customer centricity and commitment in the case of a failure when discussing the impact of service on a customer’s experience, one research respondent demonstrated the ‘commitment’ topic of Consistency (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001) stating:

*“...we will always try and go in and fix it, reset expectations, deliver over and above what they expected or required initially, that kind of thing...”*

- **Product Development Strategy**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 18 hereafter:

**Table 18: Social Influence Devices – Product Development Strategy**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Product Development	Frequency
1	Authority	28
2	Liking	24
3	Reciprocity	5

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

### **Authority:**

One research respondent, in describing their efforts in servicing their market, demonstrated the ‘trustworthiness’ topic of Authority (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001), stating:

*“I think the advantage that [Company Name] had at that stage was a sound customer base, and the product that was sold to the market at that stage, although it was old technology, it was proven technology that came from Germany. And so you had the customer that trusted you for many years before. So the road forward was much easier than going into the market with a total new product and a new supplier. This was, it’s proven technology in terms of the supplier that supplied you, so you’ve got that relationship with the supplier”.*

In describing their approach to personal selling, one respondent illustrated the ‘influence’ topic of Authority (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001) in the sales environment, saying:

*“So you find the more I imparted my way of calling on customers and looking after customers, and monitoring my performance with daily reports and notes and all that kind of thing that things start growing”.*

### **Liking:**

One research respondent demonstrated the ‘association’ topic of Liking (Clark & Kemp, 2008), saying:

*“you want your customer to sing your praise. When somebody else speaks to one of the buyers at your supplier, customer, you want them to say, “geez you know, you have to use them. Why not use them? Why go anywhere else? You’re stupid not to be using them. Why are you wasting your time not using them? They’re going to give you a better product, they’re going to give you a better price. Why haven’t you bough the iPhone yet?” That type of attitude. You know what I mean?”.*

In describing the effect of networking and relationships, one research respondent demonstrated the ‘association’ topic of Liking (Cialdini, 2001), stating:

*“...those are the people that I met 20 years ago while doing business and so my international connection and networking is unbelievable. So I’ve been through a lot... ek is happy, ek het niks waaroor ek spyt is nie. Maar miskien moet ek in ‘n klein boekie skryf of iets... [SIC]”.*

### **Reciprocity:**

One respondent, in describing the benefit of a trade-in solution, demonstrated the ‘reciprocal benefit’ topic of Reciprocity (Goldstein et al., 2011), saying:

*“...that’s where you always have to try use your product reliability and your product advancements and leverage that. And try and poach your clients. And that’s where we came up with this idea of the trade-ins. Because that way we’re saying to them, “look guys, you know what, we’ve got this new system. If you bring your old one, look it wasn’t R10 and R15, but we’d give you the trade-in”. So you can offer your clients a better solution.”*

The research respondent later added:

*“Because of it being such a grudge purchase, you really did have to go to them with great incentives to change. What we did there was we introduced an exchange program, a trade-in”.*

One respondent, in describing the relationships kept with suppliers, demonstrated the ‘relationship value’ topic of Reciprocity (Goldstein et al., 2011), saying:

*“I didn’t ever lie and and we did things together like we would go fishing on the weekends or we’d go down to the bar. I mean, I built personal relationships with these guys, that’s how it worked for me”.*

Another respondent demonstrated the ‘reciprocal benefit’ topic of Reciprocity (Goldstein et al., 2011), saying:

*“...really, at the end of the day, because they’re not using the product, they have to be incentivised. You know, throwing promotional parties for them...”.*

The research respondent later added:

*“They used to take them hunting and take them to the Grand Prix’s and ... ja, so from that perspective, marketing on a personal level was huge”.*

Another respondent, when discussing pricing, demonstrated the ‘relationship value’ topic of Reciprocity (Goldstein et al., 2011), saying:

*“...then it was more loyalty based. Business was done on a bit of a hand shake, you got to know a person, they would phone and tell you the price is too high. “You quoted me for R500, I’m paying R410.” “Ok fine I’ll do it for 410.” “Ok right, do it. Thank you, bye.” Phone goes down [SIC]”.*

- **Diversification Strategy**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between research respondents who described their strategies as that of diversification are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 19 hereafter:

**Table 19: Social Influence Devices – Diversification Strategy**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Diversification Strategy	Frequency
1	Liking	24
2	Authority	24
3	Social Validation	6

Noteworthy observations from the narratives of respondents falling into this category were recorded as follows:

**Liking:**

When unpacking what set their growth strategy apart, one respondent demonstrated the ‘rapport’ topic of Liking (Cialdini, 2001), stating:

*“...people want someone that they get along well with, that they trust and that they know they’re going to get good quality work from. And I think from day one, that’s how we pulled customers in...[SIC]”.*

The research respondent went on to add:

*“...we were just those kinds of people who pick up the phone any time, day or night, first names over the phone, personal relationships, we’ll do anything we can to help you, and people like that”.*

### **Authority:**

Another respondent, in discussing the effect of relationships on repeat business, demonstrated the 'trust' topic of Authority (Cialdini & Rhoads, 2001) saying:

*"...the only way to do business is to keep people coming back and they only come back to people who give them good service and that they like and trust. So in terms of the liking, trusting, first name basis type thing, we definitely still have that today. And we're still at the point where, for example, customers will have the CEOs phone number and pick up the phone and call him by his first name. We don't have senior management hidden behind doors that nobody ever sees".*

### **Social Validation:**

One respondent, when discussing their reputation in the market, demonstrated the 'testimony' topic of Social Validation (Cialdini, 2001), saying:

*"If there's one thing about the industry, is there's a lot of talk always. Guys will come and make 1000 promises just to get in bed, and then afterwards they can't deliver. I think there's one thing about our company as such, when we talk, we can really back up what we're saying. So if we say, "we're going to start in a week, we can pull this project off in a week," we'll do that. And there's clients that can actually vouch for that.*

The second basis for analysis for Research Question 3 is designation, and the differences observed between the two distinct sample groups, namely Executives (Directors, Managers, and etcetera) and Owners (Shareholders, Owners and etcetera).

#### **5.4.2 Analysis Group B – Designation**

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:

- **Executives**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of corporate executive are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 20 hereafter:

**Table 20: Social Influence Devices – Executives**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Executives	Frequency
1	Authority	103
2	Liking	53
3	Consistency	29

- **Owners**

The dominant combinations of social influence devices observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of business owners are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 21 hereafter:

**Table 21: Social Influence Devices – Owners**

Rank	Social Influence Devices – Business Owners	Frequency
1	Liking	49
2	Authority	45
3	Social Validation	11

This section presented the research results for Research Question 3. Discussion of the research results follows in Chapter 6 of this research report. The section hereafter presents the research results for Research Question 4.

## 5.5 Results for Research Question Four

### **What is the interconnectedness of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research question 4 sought to determine the co-occurrence of the rhetorical tenets and social influence devices in the research respondents' narratives in describing their growth strategy, as a proxy for interconnectedness. The findings represent a juxtaposition of the research findings of both Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, with the aim of identifying in each of the Analysis Groups the combinations of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices which prevailed in research respondents' narratives.

When analysing the data, the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices was first conducted from the perspective of the growth strategy alternatives, as per the results of Research Question 1.

Analysis was thereafter conducted between the two distinct groups of research respondents, being executives in the large listed environment, and owners of smaller private entities.

In determining the proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices, the following categorisation mechanism was used:

Rhetorical Tenets:	Social Influence Devices:
High > 50% frequency	High > 30% frequency
Med > 25% frequency	Med > 10% frequency
Low < 25% frequency	Low < 10% frequency

The categorisation scale was determined intuitively, on the basis that there were twice as many categories for analysis in social influence, as there were in rhetoric. Results have been interpreted on the basis of the categorisation mechanism.

### 5.5.1 Analysis Group A – Growth Strategy

When analysed from the perspective of the growth strategy alternative, as per the results of Research Question 1, the following results emerged:

- **Market Penetration Strategy**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 22 hereafter.

**Table 22: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence – Market Penetration Strategy**

Market Penetration Strategy:					
Respondent No#	2	3	11	Total	Total %
Ethos	15	11	17	43	16%
Logos	65	65	61	191	71%
Pathos	11	16	8	35	13%
				269	
<i>High Logos   Low Ethos   Low Pathos</i>					
Respondent No#	2	3	11	Total	Total %
Authority	12	13	9	34	44%
Consistency	2	7	0	9	12%
Liking	4	6	2	12	16%
Reciprocity	0	0	0	0	0%
Scarcity	0	0	3	3	4%
Social Validation	6	11	2	19	25%
				77	
<i>High Authority   Medium Social Validation   Medium Liking</i>					

- Market Development Strategy**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 23 hereafter.

**Table 23: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence – Market Development Strategy**

Market Development Strategy:							
Respondent No#	6	8	10	13	14	Total	Total %
Ethos	4	8	20	5	7	44	12%
Logos	64	33	35	31	19	182	51%
Pathos	24	42	25	29	13	133	37%
						359	
<i>High Logos   Medium Pathos   Low Ethos</i>							
Respondent No#	6	8	10	13	14	Total	Total %
Authority	20	23	7	7	5	62	44%
Consistency	8	3	5	3	0	19	14%
Liking	6	7	10	11	8	42	30%
Reciprocity	0	0	1	0	0	1	1%
Scarcity	4	0	2	1	0	7	5%
Social Validation	3	0	2	1	3	9	6%
						140	
<i>High Authority   High Liking   Medium Consistency</i>							

- Product Development Strategy**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of product development are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 24 hereafter.

**Table 24: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence – Product Development Strategy**

Product Development Strategy:					
Respondent No#	5	7	9	Total	Total %
Ethos	11	10	9	30	13%
Logos	40	44	49	133	60%
Pathos	30	18	12	60	27%
				223	
<i>High Logos   Medium Pathos   Low Ethos</i>					
Respondent No#	5	7	9	Total	Total %
Authority	7	12	9	28	42%
Consistency	3	0	1	4	6%
Liking	16	3	5	24	36%
Reciprocity	1	0	4	5	8%
Scarcity	0	1	2	3	5%
Social Validation	0	0	2	2	3%
				66	
<i>High Authority   High Liking   Low Reciprocity</i>					



- **Diversification Strategy**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of diversification are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 25 hereafter.

**Table 25: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence - Diversification Strategy**

Diversification Strategy:					
Respondent No#	1	4	12	Total	Total %
Ethos	25	12	11	48	19%
Logos	42	58	49	149	59%
Pathos	10	17	29	56	22%
				<b>253</b>	
<i>High Logos   Low Pathos   Low Ethos</i>					
Respondent No#	1	4	12	Total	Total %
Authority	2	10	12	24	37%
Consistency	0	5	1	6	9%
Liking	9	7	8	24	37%
Reciprocity	0	0	1	1	2%
Scarcity	1	1	1	3	5%
Social Validation	0	2	5	7	11%
				<b>65</b>	
<i>High Liking   High Authority   Medium Social Validation</i>					

### 5.5.2 Analysis Group B - Designation

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:

- **Executives**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of corporate executives are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 26 hereafter.

**Table 26: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence – Executives**

Executives:										
Respondent No#	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	11	TOTAL	
Ethos	15	11	12	11	4	8	9	17	87	13%
Logos	65	65	58	40	64	33	49	61	435	64%
Pathos	11	16	17	30	24	42	12	8	160	23%
									682	
<i>High Logos   Low Pathos   Low Ethos</i>										
Respondent No#	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	11	TOTAL	
Authority	12	13	10	7	20	23	9	9	103	46%
Consistency	2	7	5	3	8	3	1	0	29	13%
Liking	4	6	7	16	6	7	5	2	53	23%
Reciprocity	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0	5	2%
Scarcity	0	0	1	0	4	0	2	3	10	4%
Social Validation	6	11	2	0	3	0	2	2	26	12%
									226	
<i>High Authority   Medium Liking   Medium Consistency</i>										

- **Owners**

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who fit the profile of business owners are illustrated by way of frequency in Table 27 hereafter.

**Table 27: Persuasive Instrument Co-occurrence – Owners**

Owners:									
Respondent No#	1	7	10	12	13	14	TOTAL		
Ethos	25	10	20	11	5	7	78	18%	
Logos	42	44	35	49	31	19	220	52%	
Pathos	10	18	25	29	29	13	124	29%	
							422		
<i>High Logos   Medium Pathos   Low Ethos</i>									
Respondent No#	1	7	10	12	13	14	TOTAL		
Authority	2	12	7	12	7	5	45	37%	
Consistency	0	0	5	1	3	0	9	7%	
Liking	9	3	10	8	11	8	49	40%	
Reciprocity	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	2%	
Scarcity	1	1	2	1	1	0	6	5%	
Social Validation	0	0	2	5	1	3	11	9%	
							122		
<i>High Liking   Medium Authority   Low Social Validation</i>									

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter of the research report presented the findings which emanated from the research project. The research findings are hereafter discussed in Chapter 6 in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The results are further consolidated into a refined framework of persuasive instruments at the end of Chapter 6.

## **CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the research findings as presented in Chapter 5 are discussed in the light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and the research questions as postulated in Chapter 3 of this research report.

The research findings contributed to a refined framework of persuasive instruments at the end of Chapter 6, which consolidated and integrated the findings and further refined the hypothetical framework, as presented in Chapter 2. A final, comprehensive iteration, taking into account the findings and discussion which result from the research is presented in Chapter 7, along with research limitations and recommendations.

### **6.2 Discussion of Research Question One**

**Which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research Question 2 sought to observe through the narrative of the research respondents' which of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy alternatives best classify their growth strategy, as a contextual basis for the research, and a foundation for the analysis of Research Question 2, Research Question 3, and Research Question 4 which follow.

The product-market growth strategy alternatives, as presented in Chapter 2 of this research report, formed the contextual basis and the stated objective of this research project. The Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) was the only academic constant in the fourteen in-depth interviews with executives, and formed the basis around which the interviews were conducted.

Whilst product-market growth strategy was not expected to fundamentally impact upon the interconnectedness of the two persuasive phenomena under investigation, the concept received due consideration in the analysis process as the contextual basis of the research project. Other than the use of the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) as a generic conversation starter, no two interviews followed the same format.

The interviews were lead by cues in the narratives of the research respondents', and utilised probing questions in response to the statements made by respondents to guide the various conversations.

Table 4 summarised the categorisation of research respondents based on their description of their growth strategy. Categorisation was not based on how research respondents identified their growth strategy, as in a number of instances strategy perplexity between the product-market growth strategy alternatives were observed. This was mostly due to issues of interpretation around what each of the product-market growth strategies encompassed, and how respondents associated with these.

A second basis for categorisation was the designation based on the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, namely corporate executives, and business owners. The reason behind analysis on this basis was that the two groups were distinct from each other, and the dynamics which prevailed between the two distinctive groups were of interest.

Dynamics which emerged from the data were as follows:

i. **Dissonance**

Whilst the notion of Ansoff's product-market growth strategy as a mechanism of examining their growth strategy resonated with most of the research respondents, a single respondent was fundamentally in disagreement with the idea. Of the respondents interviewed, all but one found at least one of Ansoff's growth strategy alternatives that resonated with their own strategies. The respondent who did not, argued that the strategy alternatives were too generic - more 'tactical' variables than strategies in and of themselves. The respondent, when discussing their growth strategy, ultimately described a textbook Market Penetration strategy, which was ultimately utilised by the author in the categorisation process.

ii. **Strategy Perplexity**

A number of respondents displayed what the researcher considers 'strategy perplexity', or a misunderstanding of the Ansoff product-market growth strategy alternatives, and what their strategy really was in terms of the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958).

That is, respondents identified their strategy as one of the Ansoff alternatives, but then went on to describe a completely contrary growth strategy later in our discussion.

This clearly illustrated to the researcher a disconnect between what the respondent understood the Ansoff growth strategy alternative to mean, and what their strategy was in practice. The researcher had purposively given a high-level explanation of the Ansoff Growth Matrix in order to allow the respondents to unpack the dynamics for themselves.

For the sake of accuracy, the researcher categorised respondents on the basis of their description of their growth strategy based on the literary description of each strategy alternative, as presented in Chapter 2 of this research report.

### **6.2.1 Summary of Research Question One**

In light of the third core theory of this research, as postulated by Ansoff (1958) and the findings of research question 1 as presented in Chapter 5 of this research report, the findings are considered by the researcher to make intuitive sense.

Based on the two analysis groups identified in addressing research question 1, these categories were utilised as the basis for data analysis of research question 2, Research Question 3 and Research Question 4.

### **6.3 Discussion of Research Question Two**

**What is the proportion of emphasis of rhetorical tenets observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research Question 2 sought to observe in the narratives of the research respondents' their natural use of rhetorical tenets (*Ethos-Logos-Pathos*) in the description of their growth strategy, and the proportion of emphasis thereof. Unpacking the rhetorical predisposition of the research respondents involved detailed interrogation of the conversations shared, and the narratives which respondents' deployed in describing their growth strategies.

As discussed in Chapter 5, when analysing the full data set, Logos appeals emerged as the overwhelmingly dominant rhetorical tenet employed by research respondents in their narratives. This was followed by Pathos appeals, and thereafter by Ethos appeals.

Braet (1992) made the observation that in ideal circumstances, Logos tenets dominate rhetoric, and that in less than ideal circumstances, Ethos and Pathos prevail.

She argues that '*Ethos* and *Pathos* are non-argumentative and inferior forms of persuasion; only *Logos* is enthymematical or argumentative' (Braet, 1992, p.309).

On this basis, the nature and dynamics of the sample is considered the most likely explanation of the overwhelmingly dominant *Logos* nature of rhetoric observed. Given the largely technical nature of the industries represented, it was unsurprising that *Logos* themes dominated the narratives of research respondents, as was observed. The nature and dynamics of the sample, and the nature of the industries which were represented by the sample, make for an area of limitation in the research, as is later unpacked in Chapter 7.

Heracleous and Barrett (2014) explored the effect of a given situational context on rhetorical style and suggested that style was altered to the situational context, and suggested that in a different context, the speaker may have chosen a different rhetorical style. The dynamics of the rhetorical situation are an important consideration when on the research findings, and may too have affected responses.

The persuader-listener interface established with research respondents created a setting for observing persuasion, and the stated purpose of the research encouraged logical argument. This is considered pertinent to research results, and as such are included as a research limitation in Chapter 7 of this research report.

In light of the second core theory of this research, as postulated by Aristotle (Roberts, 2011), and the findings of Research Question 2 in Chapter 5 of this research report, the findings are considered by the researcher to make intuitive sense, and are supported by the assertions made by research respondents in the interview process, as follows:

- **Logos Appeals**

Table 6 presented in Chapter 5 of this research project identified the dominant *Logos* appeals, or *Logos* topics, as they emanated from the in-depth interviews with executives. These topics are hereafter unpacked in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and specifically the work of Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014), Brown et al. (2012), Botha (2012), Leith (2011), Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) and Braet (1992).

The *Logos* tenet of rhetoric was described by Suddaby and Greenwood (2005) as an argument based on sound logic and reason. Leith (2011) introduced the idea of reasonableness of the argument as fundamental to *Logos*.

The themes which emerged from the in-depth interviews, as depicted in Table 6, were largely based on some form of reasoning - most notably technical and financial justifications, reasoning on the basis of value proposition, technology and quality, reasoning on the basis of service excellence and etcetera.

The Logos appeals observed support the writings of Brennan and Merckyl Davies (2014) who described Logos Appeals as appeals to reason, encompassing facts, figures, and claims. They were further considered in line with the theory base explored, and as such made intuitive sense when considered in light of the persuasive predisposition of respondents.

The 64% dominance (206 out of the total of 318 third-level inductive codes) was significant, but not surprising in the light of the work of Braet (1992), at least in the light of the sample set observed.

- **Ethos Appeals**

Table 7 presented in Chapter 5 of this research project identified the dominant Ethos appeals, or Ethos topics, as they emanated from the in-depth interviews with executives. These topics are hereafter unpacked in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and specifically the work of Lowenhaupt (2014), Brennan and Merckyl-Davies (2014), Botha (2012), and Corbett and Connors (1999).

Ethos was as a persuasive appeal related to the personal character of the persuader described by Botha (2012, p.59). Braet (1992) argues that it is a function of the strength of character and personality of the speaker. These notions, as well as the contributions of Brennan and Merckyl-Davies (2014) and Lowenhaupt (2014) on the ethical and moral considerations of the persuader resonated with the appeals observed amongst research respondents. T

he notion of legitimacy (Corbett & Connors, 1999) also resonated amongst research respondents through topics such as reputation, responsibility and authority.

- **Pathos Appeals**

Table 8 presented in Chapter 5 of this research project identified the dominant Pathos appeals, or Pathos topics, as they emanated from the in-depth interviews with executives.

These topics are hereafter unpacked in light of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and specifically the work of Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014), Botha (2012), and Leith (2011).

Pathos was described as an instrument which evokes an emotional response from the audience, or listener (Brennan & Merkyl-Davies, 2014). They describe it as a means of influencing audience attitudes by enticing emotion. After Logos appeals, Pathos represented the next most dominant tenet of rhetoric at 26% dominance (85 out of the total of 318 third-level inductive codes). Relationships, self-criticism, culture and values emerged as strong Pathos themes (Botha, 2012) as well as risk, fear, loyalty and trust (Leith, 2011). Castelló and Lozano (2011) suggests that through the use of moral legitimacy and constructs close to the belief systems and value sets of stakeholders, the Pathos tenet is supported, often through highly visible and salient practices which are in line with stakeholder expectations. This was observed in a number of in-depth interviews, and further supports the work of Botha (2012) in this vein.

The Pathos themes observed were considered in line with the theory base explored, and as such made intuitive sense when when considered in light of the persuasive predisposition of respondents.

### **6.3.1 Analysis Group A – Growth Strategy**

The data as analysed as per the growth strategy alternatives is discussed hereafter:

- **Rhetorical Tenets – Market Penetration Strategy (*Logos-Ethos-Pathos*)**

Table 9 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration. Three of the fourteen respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 9, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), whilst the tenets of Ethos (Low) and Pathos (Low) were both prevalent in similar frequencies.

The Logos dominance observed was unsurprising given both the technical nature of the industries represented in the sample, and indeed the technical nature of respondents interviewed. Most respondents were themselves from a technical background albeit engineering, manufacturing and etcetera.



- **Rhetorical Tenets – Market Development Strategy (*Logos-Pathos-Ethos*)**

Table 10 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development. Five of the fourteen research respondents described a market development strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 10, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), followed in emphasis by the tenet of Pathos (Medium) and then Ethos (Low).

Few respondents in this analysis group displayed the Ethos tenet of rhetoric - Respondent 10 however, whilst still aligned with the Logos-Pathos dominance which prevailed in the market development strategy grouping, did stand out as an outlier in the category, delivering a number of appeals to emotion.

- **Rhetorical Tenets – Product Development Strategy (*Logos-Pathos-Ethos*)**

Table 11 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of product development. Three of the fourteen research respondents described a product development strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 11, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), followed in emphasis by the tenet of Pathos (Medium) and then Ethos (Low).

- **Rhetorical Tenets – Diversification Strategy (*Logos-Ethos-Pathos*)**

Table 12 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of diversification. Three of the fourteen research respondents described a market development strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 12, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), whilst the tenets of Ethos (Low) and Pathos (Low) were both prevalent in similar frequencies.

On the basis of these findings, only two combinations of rhetorical tenets emerged, being Logos-Ethos-Pathos, and Logos-Pathos-Ethos. The combinations of emphasis were observed were:

- i. Logos (High) – Ethos (Low) – Pathos (Low); and
- ii. Logos (High) – Pathos (Medium) – Ethos (Low).

These observations are incorporated into the refined hypothetical framework at the end of Chapter 6.

### **6.3.2 Analysis Group B - Designation**

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:

- **Rhetorical Tenets – Executives (Logos-Pathos-Ethos)**

Table 13 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who are executives operating in a corporate environment. Eight of the fourteen research respondents described themselves as executives operating in the corporate environment. As outlined in Table 13, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), whilst the tenets of Pathos (Low) and Ethos (Low) were both prevalent in similar frequencies.

- **Rhetorical Tenets – Owners (Logos-Pathos-Ethos)**

Table 14 presented the dominant tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who are business owners of private entities. Six of the fourteen research respondents who are business owners of private entities.

As outlined in Table 14, the dominant tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents was that of Logos (High), followed in emphasis by the tenet of Pathos (Medium) and then Ethos (Low).

On the basis of these findings, only one combination of rhetorical tenets emerged, being Logos-Pathos-Ethos in two combinations of emphasis. The combinations of emphasis were observed were:

- i. Logos (High) – Pathos (Low) – Ethos (Low); and
- ii. Logos (High) – Pathos (Medium) – Ethos (Low).

These observations are incorporated into the refined hypothetical framework at the end of Chapter 6.

### **6.3.3 Summary of Research Question Two**

Research Question 2 sought to determine the proportion of emphasis of the rhetorical tenets that emanated from the respondents' narratives in describing their growth strategies. In light of the core theory as postulated by Aristotle (Roberts, 2011), the findings of research question 2 as presented in Chapter 5 of this research report are considered to make intuitive sense, and are supported by the assertions made by research respondents in the interview process.

This section of the research report discussed the research findings for Research Question 2. The section hereafter presents the discussion of research findings for Research Question 3.

## **6.4 Discussion of Research Question Three**

### **What are the combinations of dominant social influence devices observed as persuasive instruments in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research Question 3 sought to observe in the narratives of the research respondents' their natural use of social influence devices in the description of their growth strategy, and the dominant combinations thereof.

As discussed in Chapter 5, when analysing the full data set, Authority emerged as the overwhelmingly dominant social influence device employed by research respondents in their narratives. This was followed by Liking, and thereafter by Consistency. Table 15 presented the dominant social influence devices observed in the full data set. The social influence devices which did not emerge from the data analysis with any emphasis were Scarcity and Reciprocity – The absence is likely due to the dynamics of the sample, and is therefore considered a likely anomaly in the research findings. Reciprocity, whilst technically the least dominant of the social influence devices, was dominant within the analysis group which described their growth strategies as that of Product Development, and has therefore been considered meaningfully in the findings.

#### **6.4.1 Analysis Group A – Growth Strategy**

When analysed from the perspective of the growth strategy alternative, as per the results of Research Question 1 in the preceding section, the following results emerged:

- **Market Penetration Strategy**

Table 16 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration. Three of the fourteen respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy. As outlined in Table 16, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Authority (44%), followed by Social Validation (25%) and Liking (16%) respectively.

- **Market Development Strategy**

Table 17 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development. Five of the fourteen respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy. As outlined in Table 17, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Authority (44%), followed by Liking (30%) and Consistency (14%) respectively.

- **Product Development Strategy**

Table 18 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of product development. Three of the fourteen respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy. As outlined in Table 18, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Authority (42%), followed by Liking (36%) and Reciprocity (8%) respectively.

- **Diversification Strategy**

Table 19 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of product development. Three of the fourteen respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 19, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Liking (37%), followed by Authority (37%) and Social Validation (11%) respectively.

On the basis of these findings, four combinations of social influence devices emerged, in four different combinations of emphasis. The combinations observed were:

- i. Authority (*High*) – Social Validation (*Medium*) – Liking (*Medium*);
- ii. Authority (*High*) – Liking (*Medium*) – Consistency (*Medium*);
- iii. Authority (*High*) – Liking (*High*) – Reciprocity (*Low*); and
- iv. Authority (*High*) – Liking (*High*) – Social Validation (*Medium*).

These observations are incorporated into the refined hypothetical framework at the end of Chapter 6.

The research findings are hereafter analysed from the perspective of designation.

#### **6.4.2 Analysis Group B - Designation**

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:

- **Executives**

Table 20 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who are executives operating in a corporate environment. Eight of the fourteen research respondents described themselves as executives operating in the corporate environment.

As outlined in Table 20, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Authority (46%), followed by Liking (23%) and Consistency (13%) respectively.

- **Owners**

Table 21 presented the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who are business owners of private entities. Six of the fourteen research respondents described themselves as executives operating in the corporate environment.

As outlined in Table 21, the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents were Liking (40%), followed by Authority (37%) and Social Validation (11%) respectively.

On the basis of these findings, four combinations of social influence devices emerged, in four different combinations of emphasis. The combinations observed were:

- i. Authority (*High*) – Liking (*Medium*) – Consistency (*Medium*); and
- ii. Liking (*High*) – Authority (*Medium*) – Social Validation (*Low*).

These observations are incorporated into the refined hypothetical framework at the end of Chapter 6.

### **6.4.3 Summary of Research Question Three**

In light of the core theory as postulated by Cialdini (2001), the findings of research question three as presented in Chapter 5 of this research report are considered to make intuitive sense, and are supported by the assertions made by research respondents in the interview process.

This section of the research report discussed the research findings for Research Question 3. The section hereafter presents the discussion of research findings for Research Question 4.

## **6.5 Discussion of Research Question 4**

### **What is the interconnectedness of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed in research respondents' descriptions of their growth strategy?**

Research question 4 sought to determine the co-occurrence of the rhetorical tenets and social influence devices in the research respondents' narratives in describing their growth strategy, as a proxy for interconnectedness.

The findings represent a consolidation and juxtaposition of the research findings of both Research Question 2 and Research Question 3, with the aim of identifying in each of the Analysis Groups the combinations of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices which prevailed in research respondents' narratives, and whether this supported the hypothetical framework postulated in Chapter 2.

When analysing the data, the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices was first observed from the perspective of the growth strategy alternatives, as per the results of Research Question 1 in the preceding section. It was thereafter conducted between the two distinct groups of executives, being executives in the corporate environment, and owners of private entities.

### **6.5.1 Analysis Group A – Growth Strategy**

When analysed from the perspective of the growth strategy alternative, as per the results of Research Question 1 in the preceding section, the following results emerged:

- **Market Penetration Strategy**

Table 22 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration. Three of the fourteen research respondents described a market penetration strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 22, the combination of the tenet of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration was Logos-Ethos-Pathos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration was that of Authority, Social Validation and Liking (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

- **Market Development Strategy**

Table 23 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development. Five of the fourteen research respondents described a market development strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 23, the combination of the tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market development was Logos-Pathos-Ethos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of market penetration was that of Authority, Liking and Consistency (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

- **Product Development Strategy**

Table 24 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents' who described their strategies as that of product development. Three of the fourteen respondents' described a product development strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 24, the combination of the tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who described their strategies as that of product development was Logos-Pathos-Ethos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents' who described their strategies as that of market penetration was that of Authority, Liking and Reciprocity (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

- **Diversification Strategy**

Table 25 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents' who described their strategies as that of diversification. Three of the fourteen respondents' described a diversification strategy in the description of their growth strategy.

As outlined in Table 25, the combination of the tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents' who described their strategies as that of diversification was Logos-Pathos-Ethos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents' who described their strategies as that of diversification was that of Authority, Liking and Social Validation (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents are consolidated at the end of Chapter 6 in the refined framework of persuasive instruments.

### **6.5.2 Analysis Group B - Designation**

When analysed from the perspective of corporate executives versus business owners, as per the two distinctive groups of individuals sampled for the purposes of this research project, the following results emerged:



- **Executives**

Table 26 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents' who are executives operating in a corporate environment. Eight of the fourteen research respondents are executives operating in the corporate environment.

As outlined in Table 26, the combination of the tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents' who are executives operating in a corporate environment was Logos-Pathos-Ethos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who are executives operating in a corporate environment was that of Authority, Liking and Consistency (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

- **Owners**

Table 27 presented the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents who are business owners of private entities. Six of the fourteen research respondents are business owners of private entities.

As outlined in Table 27, the combination of the tenets of rhetoric observed between the research respondents who are executives operating in a corporate environment was Logos-Pathos-Ethos (listed from most dominant to least dominant). The combination of the dominant social influence devices observed between the research respondents who are business owners was that of Liking, Authority and Social Validation (listed from most dominant to least dominant) respectively.

The co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents are consolidated at the end of Chapter 6 in the refined framework of persuasive instruments.

### **6.5.3 Summary of Research Question Four**

Research Question 4 examined the co-occurrence of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices observed between the research respondents' business owners of private entities are consolidated at the end of Chapter 6 in the refined framework of persuasive instruments.

The results of Research Question 2 and Research Question 3 were juxtaposed in order to establish what combinations of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices were deployed by executives, and whether this supported the hypothetical framework postulated in Chapter 2.

The research findings did not support the combinations of rhetorical tenets and social influence devices anticipated based on the hypothetical framework, however do still make intuitive sense, and justify the refinement to the hypothetical framework, as unpacked in the section hereafter.

The hypothetical framework postulated in Chapter 2 contributed to the rationale and methodology behind this research project, and as such is considered a meaningful tool to the research process. The refined hypothetical framework consolidated all of the research findings as discussed in this chapter, and became the input for the Consolidated Model of Persuasive Instruments, as presented in Chapter 7.

## **6.6 Discussion and Refinement of the Hypothetical Framework**

The revised hypothetical framework, Table 2, presented in Chapter 2 of this research report was developed based on the literature reviewed in the fields of rhetoric and social influence. It postulated the anticipated proportion of emphasis of the rhetorical tenets and social influence devices in a given persuader-listener exchange based on the literature reviewed. The goal of the research project was to test these assertions, and to determine their merits in practice in developing a Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments.

The hypothetical framework, and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 which was used to develop the framework, formed the basis for the deductive methodology employed, as discussed in Chapter 4. It was created in light of the of the topics which the researcher expected from the interviews with executives, in light of the topics that emerged from the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Topics were grouped into themes, and families of themes based on the hypothetical framework. The codebook is included in this research report, marked Appendix 4 and Appendix 5. The purpose of the hypothetical framework was to anticipate the interconnectedness of the phenomena under exploration based on topics which emerged from the literature, and then to test this interconnectedness in practice. The hypothetical model was tested in practice through the semi-structured open-ended interviews held with prominent executives across a spectrum of industries.

Based on the findings of the research, a refined framework was developed based on the narratives of research respondents, depicting the following:

- Dominant combinations of rhetoric;
- Dominant combinations of social influence;

Areas of interconnectedness of persuasive instruments were observed between the analysis groupings.

For the purposes of the refined framework, these groupings (based on the product-market growth strategy alternatives) are no longer considered meaningful, but are rather replaced by the dominant combinations of rhetoric and social influence which emanated from the research findings, and the outcomes of Research Question 2, 3 and 4.

In addition, an unanticipated finding lay in the commonalities observed between research respondents' who employed the same. This dimension is added to the model cautiously, as outliers were observed, and some researcher bias emanated from the categorization of growth strategy alternatives, as was unpacked in Chapter 6.

The refined post-hoc framework of persuasive instruments, Table 28, presents graphically the combinations of the research respondents use of the three rhetorical tenets and the corresponding deployment of social influence devices observed in the research findings.

The refined post-hoc framework is depicted hereafter, in Table 28.

**Table 28: Refined Post-Hoc Framework of Persuasive Instruments**

Combination Appeals	Persuasive Instruments		Variations of Emphasis
	Rhetorical Tenets	Social Influence Devices	
1	Logos-Ethos-Pathos (H-L-L)	Authority   Social Validation   Liking (H-M-M)	A
2	Logos-Pathos-Ethos (H-M-L)	Authority   Liking   Reciprocity (H-H-L)	B
		Authority   Liking   Consistency (H-M-M)	C
3	Logos-Pathos-Ethos (H-L-L)	Authority   Liking   Consistency (H-M-M)	D
		Authority   Liking   Social Validation (H-H-M)	E
4	Logos-Pathos-Ethos (H-M-L)	Liking   Authority   Social Validation (H-M-L)	F

The numbering down the left hand column represents the four combinations of emphasis of rhetorical tenets, as identified earlier in this chapter. The lettering down the right hand column of the framework represents the six variations of emphasis of social influence devices as identified earlier in this chapter.

It must be reiterated that the framework as depicted in Table 28, is only conceptual in nature, and requires rigorous strength testing through the collection of quantitative data to further validate the findings. This is unpacked further in Chapter 7 of the research report, where all of the findings as discussed in this chapter were consolidated and synthesised.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

In Chapter 7 of this research report, research findings are integrated into a post-hoc model of persuasive instruments which is presented as the final output of this research.

The Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments is presented as the contribution of this research to the body of knowledge on Persuasion, supported by a graphical depiction of the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments, and an infographic of the research findings, which augment the contribution of this research.

## **CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

In this chapter of the research report, the research findings are integrated into a post-hoc model of persuasive instruments which is presented as the final output of this research. The model, a comprehensive and final iteration of the refined post-hoc framework, Table 28 in the previous chapter, is founded upon the research findings and discussion in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the research report.

The focus of Chapter 7, therefore, is on the consolidation and synthesis of the research findings into the post-hoc model. The Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments, a graphical depiction of the research findings, represents the contribution of this research to the body of knowledge on persuasion. It is supported by a graphical depiction of the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments, and an infographic of the research findings, which augment the contribution of this research.

The chapter culminates with recommendations for practitioners in industry, research limitations, as well as areas of potential further research.

### **7.2 Synthesis of Research Data**

This research project explored the interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence as persuasive instruments. The underlying goal of the research was met by exploring rhetorical tenets and social influence devices as instruments of persuasion, by observing executives' instinctive use of these persuasive instruments the description of their growth strategies. This research contributed to the gap in the literature regarding the interconnectedness of the various phenomena, and by testing them in practice, facilitated a better understanding of how they are deployed as instrument of persuasion.

Table 2 was presented as an initial hypothetical framework of persuasive instruments based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of the research report. This hypothetical framework was then tested in practice through the in-depth interviews held with executives. The research findings and analysis presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the research consolidated the various phenomena into a refined post-hoc framework of persuasive instruments, Table 28 in Chapter 6 of this research report.

The findings of the research project; whilst not entirely consistent with the outcomes expected based on the hypothetical model presented in Chapter 2; do suggest interconnectedness between research respondents' innate rhetorical disposition and their use of social influence in persuading. The data suggests that the various combinations of the tenets of rhetoric observed in research respondents' narratives were accompanied by unique combinations of social influence devices in supporting their persuasive appeals.

Research findings were consolidated into a graphical representation of the data, and final output of the research project, the Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments, in the section hereafter. This is followed by a discussion of the model and, thereafter, the limitations and recommendations for further research are presented.

### 7.3 The Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments

Figure 2, a graphical depiction of the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments, asserts that effective persuasion is a result of the interplay of rhetoric and social influence in a given persuasive context, or persuader-listener interface. This figure represents the first output of this research, and fundamental rationale of the contemporary model of persuasive instruments, presented hereafter.

**Figure 2: Interconnectedness of Persuasive Instruments**

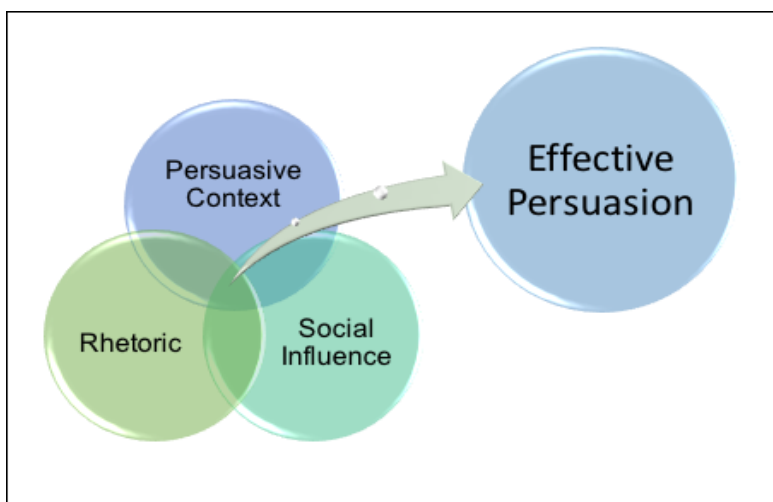


Figure 3 graphically consolidated the findings of this research project as presented in Chapter 5, and the discussion of findings in Chapter 6 into a graphical representation of the data, the Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments.

Figure 3: Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments

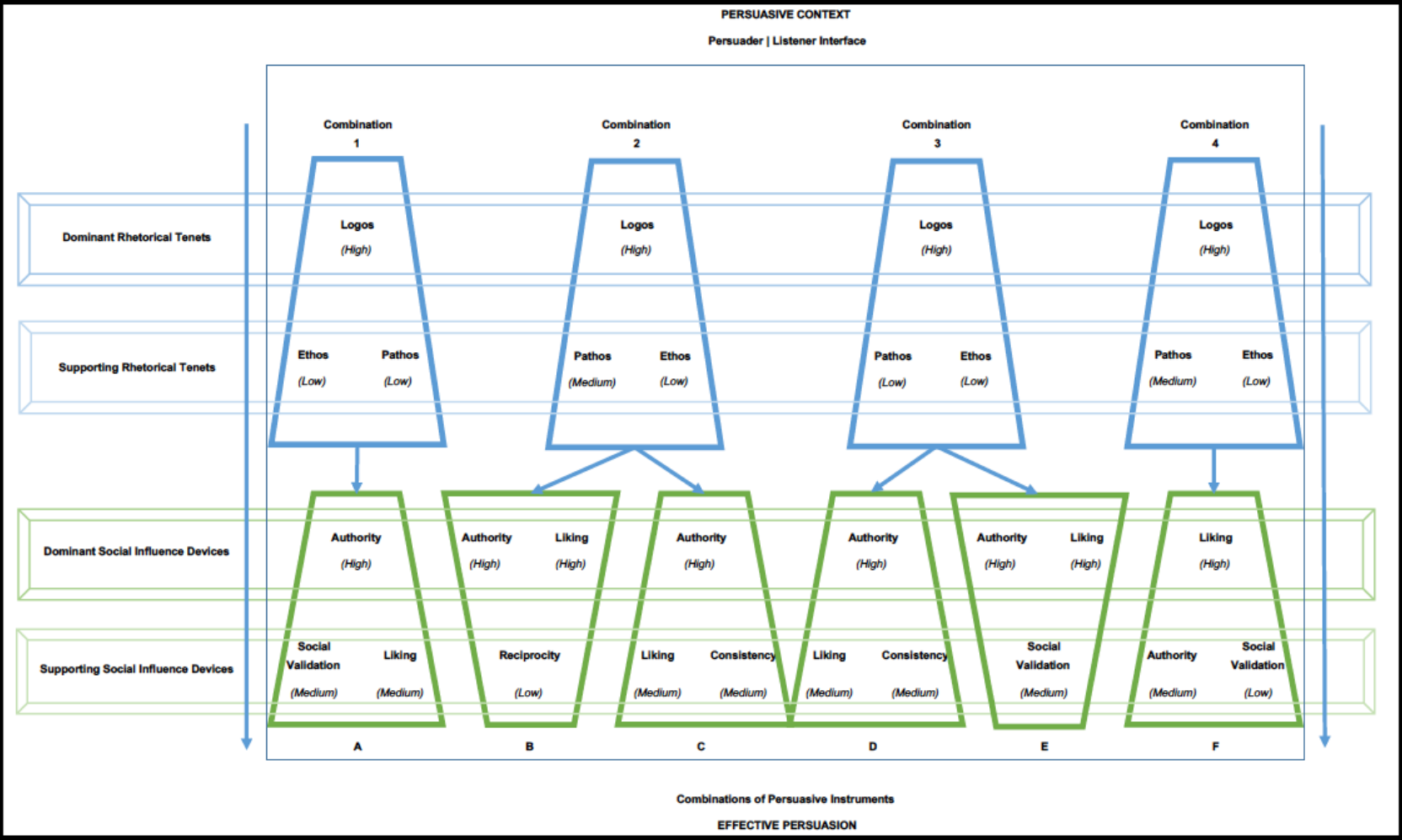
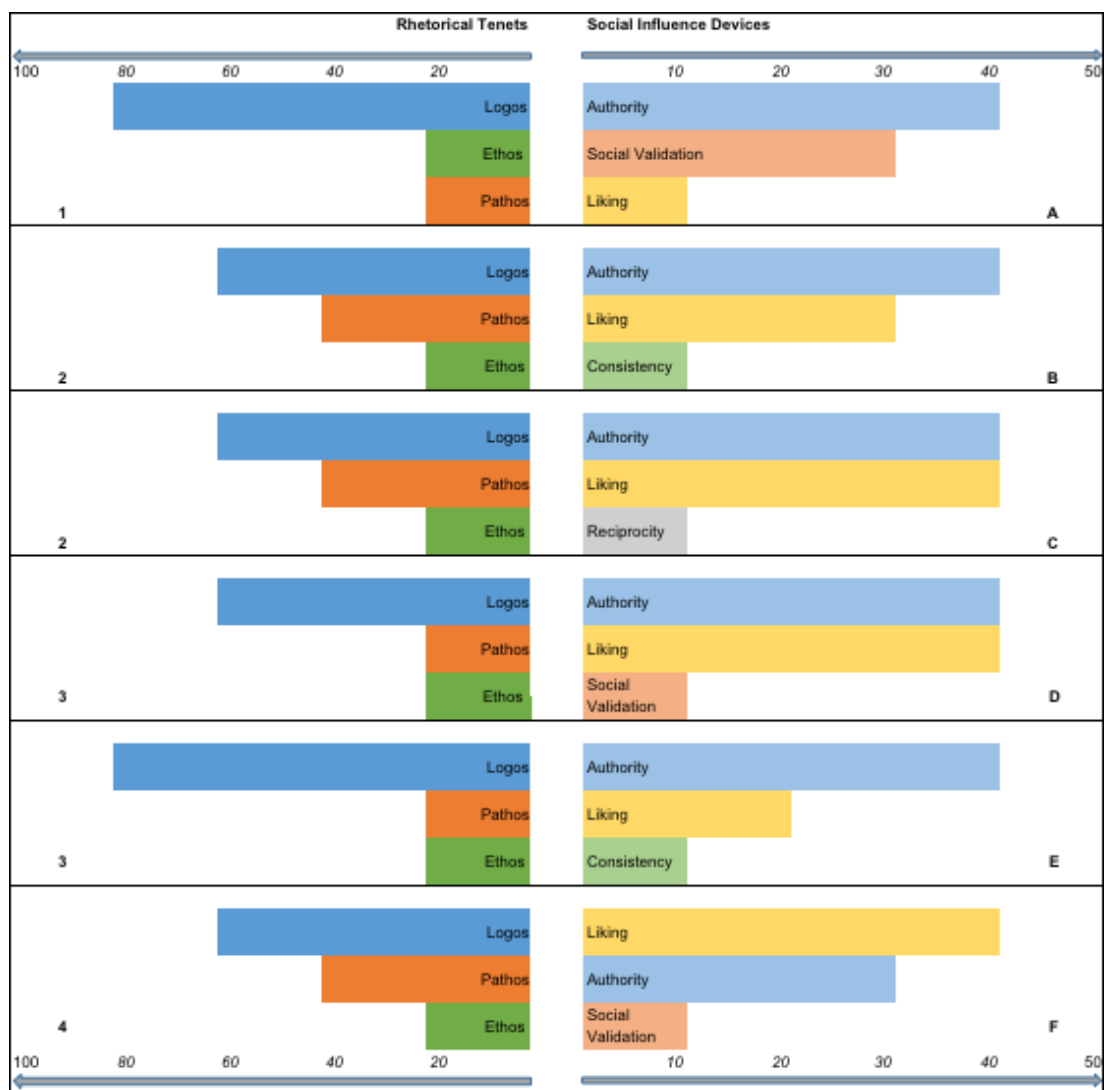


Figure 3, the Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments, consolidates the research findings based on the combinations of persuasive appeals observed in the in-depth interviews. It is the second output of this research, building onto the post-hoc framework presented in Chapter 6, and Figure 2 which depicts the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments as a precursor to the model.

Figure 4, hereafter, represents an Infographic of the research results, and the various combinations of persuasive instruments which emanated from the research findings.

**Figure 4: Persuasive Instruments Infographic**



The Infographic presented in Figure 4, the third and final output of this research, is a stylized depiction of the research findings, captures graphically the research findings and the combinations of persuasive instruments observed in the various interviews with executives.



Through the contemporary model of persuasive instruments, supported by the graphical depiction of the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments in Figure 2, and the infographic of persuasive instruments in Figure 4, the various phenomena investigated were integrated into simple graphical depictions of the research findings.

The Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments depicts four combinations of rhetorical pre-disposition observed between analysis groups of research respondents, as well as six variations of emphasis of social influence devices that were observed as supporting the persuasive appeals.

The pre-supposition is not made that these are the only combinations of the two phenomena that exist, only that they were the combinations observed in the data. The model did not support the four anticipated combinations based on the literature reviewed, as depicted in Table 2. It did, however, support the underlying premise that interconnectedness of persuasive instruments would be observed and that the proportion of emphasis of the various persuasive instruments would differ dependent on the research respondents' natural persuasive pre-disposition.

The model presents the contribution of this research project to the broader body of knowledge on persuasion, and forms the basis of the recommendations to business practitioners, and the grounding for the recommendations for further research which follows later in this chapter.

Based on the research results, and given the perceived gap in current literature as identified by the researcher in Chapter 1, the Contemporary Model of Persuasive Instruments is considered by the researcher to be a meaningful contribution to bridging the gap in the literature, and is indeed a first step towards building an integrated understanding of the interconnectedness of the rhetoric and influence as persuasive instruments in practice. The model presents a logical depiction of the combinations of persuasive instruments present in the persuasive context, and makes intuitive sense.

On this basis, observation of the phenomena being deployed in practice could provide one with insight into persuasive disposition; it could assist one in understanding what is meaningful in the persuasive context through the lens of a persuader; and it could even be used as an effective tool to the listener in better understanding the persuasive style of a persuader. To this end, the section hereafter discusses the value and usefulness of the research for business practitioners, before focus turns to the areas of potential further research to build upon the findings as presented in this Figure(s) 2, 3 and 4.

## 7.4 Usefulness for Practitioners in Industry

Given the findings of this research, and the graphical representation of the data in the preceding section, this section of the research report unpacks the value and usefulness of the research to business practitioners.

Emrich et al. (2001, p.553) described how leaders use their words ‘to induce widespread commitment to their visions’. They make the case for verbal skills and charisma in achieving this end. The use of rhetoric and social influence; whether conscious, or unconscious; is core to this dynamic, and will indeed set effective persuaders apart.

The persuasive instruments are fundamental to effective persuasion, and as such, the ability for a practitioner to identify their use in practice could be hugely valuable to one’s power position in a given persuader-listener interface.

The value of this research project, for practitioners and executives alike, lies in understanding the interconnectedness between rhetorical tenets and social influence devices as persuasive instruments, and being able to observe them in practice. For the purpose of this research, it was understanding persuasive instruments in the context of growth strategy; however, the researcher posits that as foundational instruments of persuasion (Roberts, 2011; Cialdini, 2001) the context could be extended to include any persuader-listener interface, as well as the interface between multiple persuaders’ and multiple listeners (Groups, teams, and etcetera).

The proportion of emphasis of persuasive instruments observed in a persuader-listener interface can be used by business practitioners’ in understanding a persuaders pre-disposition; and which tenets of rhetoric, and social influence devices are most likely to be instinctively utilised in their persuasive appeals to a listener or audience. This could be useful to business practitioners in a commercial context in better unpacking and understanding the basis of persuasive appeals and appropriately responding to such appeals in a manner which best meets one’s commercial objectives.

In observing the narratives in a given persuader-listener interface, we might be able to observe narrative cues as to how one persuades, and through the rhetoric observed, how compelling the persuasive appeal was in the mind of the listener. Observation of the style(s) of influence deployed might inject perspective into the interface, particularly when one is confronted by a convincing, and capable persuader.

The persuasive appeal and innate use of persuasive instruments inherently gives one a glimpse into the thought process of a persuader - by observing the manner in which a persuader innately delivers a persuasive appeal, could provide insight into their thought process and frame of mind, as well as provide cue's as to how they believe a listener is effectively persuaded.

In observing narrative, one is able to get a sense of the persuasive style, and the instruments of persuasion at play. This insight, in the case of this research, was obtained by the researcher simply observing the persuaders use of language – their narrative. The researcher found, in most of the interviews, an inherent style of narrative and natural use of the various instruments quickly emerged.

This dynamic, however, ignores the listener dynamics of the persuader-listener interface, which has been recorded as a shortcoming of this research, as outlined in the research limitations in Section 7.5 of this research report.

The intricacies and psychological dimension of persuasion as a science are expressly acknowledged - the research was intended to provide exploratory insight into the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments in practice. Whilst the areas of overlap between the persuasive instruments may have come as no surprise at all, benefit lies in being conscious of their prevalence, and aware of what they could mean if observed and comprehended in a given persuader-listener interface.

The limitations of the research and the model which emerged from its findings are further dissected in the section of the report hereafter.

## **7.5 Research Limitations**

A number of constraints and limitations to the research project were identified in Chapter 4. These have been revised and updated in the light of the research findings and discussion thereof in Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and Chapter 7 respectively.

### **7.5.1 Access to Key Role-players**

As already mentioned, of the twenty-two executives approached for interview, only fourteen were ultimately prepared to avail themselves for interview. The issue of access to an appropriate candidate base was a major limitation to the research, and access to a larger network of research respondents who fit the sample criterion will no doubt have added depth and richness to this research.

### **7.5.2 *Extrapolation of Findings***

The research findings need to be considered in the context of the sample of analysis, and caution exercised in any extrapolation of the results to a broader population without fully understanding contextual variances at play.

### **7.5.3 *Interview Context***

The researcher acknowledges that the persuader-listener interface established with research respondents was ripe for the observation of persuasion and influence in practice, given research respondents' openness to accommodating a conversation around the stated topic of interest, and enthusiasm to share so liberally their personal views.

It was observed that all research respondents were open and frank in their viewpoints, and that they conveyed a natural willingness to share. In a different context, and in different circumstances it is likely that very different use of their narrative would be observed.

### **7.5.4 *Listener Disposition***

The dynamics of the listener were not considered in the research project, which left a critical void in the analysis. Given that the researcher was the listener in each of the persuader-listener interfaces, the listener disposition, and dynamics of the listener were overlooked. The researcher suggests that a balanced perspective could really only be achieved when one considers both sides of the persuader-listener interface, on a more unbiased and neutral basis.

A more complete study would take into account the listener dynamics of the persuader-listener interface, and the listener's frame-of-mind at the time of the interface, their openness to the persuasive instruments deployed, and the context in which the persuader-listener interface is taking place.

### **7.5.5 *Non-Verbal Persuasion***

Had the scope of the research project allowed for it, observations beyond narrative alone may have added depth to the research in so far as non-verbal persuasion is concerned.

The focus on narrative stemmed largely from a practical stand-point, as it would technically have been possible to capture non-verbal cues from the interviews. The researcher acknowledges the broad and encompassing nature of persuasion, and that observation of non-verbal cues may have added further richness to the research project.

By limiting the research project to verbal persuasion through research respondents' narrative, depth of the analysis may have been reduced. For the validity of results of the research project to be improved, a more in-depth analysis across a broader spectrum of mediums would be meaningful.

#### **7.5.6 Researcher Bias**

The notion of data validity and reliability has already been explored by the researcher, and the idea of researcher bias introduced. Clark (2006) suggested that in qualitative research, researcher bias is inevitable. As such, it can have truly damning implications for the results of qualitative research, if not adequately mitigated. Areas of inherent potential researcher bias in the research project included the data coding within the Atlas.ti qualitative data analysis software suite; and the analysis of findings, by virtue of the lenses through which the researcher approached the topic for investigation. There is potential bias in the researchers single-handed coding of the interview data, given the research intent. A more unbiased approach would have been the use of multiple coders to code the data prior to analysis, so as to avoid the risk of this bias.

The researcher was lucidly aware of the risk of researcher bias, and undertook to mitigate it as far as is practically possible in the research. An approach deployed by the researcher to overcome the risk of researcher bias was to discuss findings with three independent, neutral third parties to the research project.

#### **7.5.7 Sample Size**

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of the small sample size, and the implications it could have for any findings made. Whilst the researcher sought a broader and more diverse spectrum of participants for the research project, resource constraints and access to executives made this difficult. Time constraints ultimately lead to the termination of further interviews, and resultantly the limitation in sample size. For the validity of results of the research project to be improved, a far larger sample set would be required.

### **7.5.8 Sensitivity of information**

The issue of sensitivity of the information emanating from the study, as well as research respondent's willingness to share data was an area of limitation to the research – some respondents' felt that the data was sensitive and proprietary, which lead to a reluctance to share information, and to even participate in the study.

Even armed with the knowledge that data would be reported without identifiers, certain potential candidates considered the information a 'trade secret', which would no doubt have affected the desired 'richness' of insights initially sought.

The section hereafter introduces areas for possible further research based on the findings of the research project, and the three research outputs as presented earlier in this chapter.

## **7.6 Recommendations for Future Research**

The researcher acknowledges that the very nature of qualitative research is such that it represents only the first step in fully grappling with a phenomenon. The findings, as presented in this chapter of the research report can be considered as suggestive at best given the exploratory nature of this research. The model, whilst conceptual in nature, requires more rigorous strength testing through the collection of quantitative data to validate the findings and to prove the robustness of the model. Given the intuitive sense of the model described earlier in this chapter, and the obvious interconnectedness between the phenomena under investigation, as supported by the findings outlined in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of this research report, the researcher posits that further research is required and proposes the following areas of potential future research.

### **7.6.1 Literary Gaps**

Whilst the contributions of both Aristotle and of Cialdini are revered in academia, they are by no means exhaustive in terms of the available literature on Persuasion. A more thorough analysis of the body of knowledge, and multiple perspectives of persuasion and influence, and leadership behavior, including inter alia the work of Yolk (2012), O'Donnell, Yukl and Taber (2012), and Plouffe, Bolander, and Cote (2014), would add richness to further research on the topic. The psychological nature of persuasion has, too, not been adequately considered in this analysis and would again have added great perspective to a more balanced study.

### **7.6.2 Quantitative Analysis**

Whilst the proportion of emphasis of the various persuasive appeals observed between the groups made intuitive sense, the model needs to be tested against a larger sample, in a methodology which would allow for more statistically quantifiable data to be generated.

Quantitative data could possibly supplement and add further depth to the findings, given the small sample examined in the current qualitative research. Such quantitative analysis should consider both the dynamics affecting persuader, as well as listener to a given persuader-listener interface. It too, could unpack perceptions of executives regarding non-verbal persuasion, the persuasive context, the instruments of persuasion, and the characteristics of effective persuaders.

### **7.6.3 Case Study**

The researcher recommends, in the light of the limitations mentioned earlier in this section, that a case study be conducted in which persuader-listener interactions can be observed and documented in an authentic, real-life setting; and the dynamics of context, persuader, listener, and medium be integrated into an investigation of the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments in practice.

This situation would possibly also allow one to measure the effectiveness of the persuasive instruments in practice, which could not be adequately achieved in the auspices of the current research.

### **7.6.4 Other Areas of Interest**

It must be reiterated that the Ansoff Growth Matrix (Ansoff, 1958) was used as a contextual basis for the research, and a logical mechanism for the sorting of data in the data analysis process, however, it was not in and of itself a variable tested for interconnectedness with the various persuasive appeals.

It is however noted that a strong correlation was observed between the various combinations of persuasive instruments, and the four growth strategy alternatives. This dynamic was not unpacked any further in this research project, but does make for an interesting observation. This dynamic is therefore an area of potential further research.

## 7.7 Conclusion

This chapter of the research report consolidated and synthesised the findings and discussion which emanated from the research project, as presented in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of the research report. These findings were integrated into a contemporary model of persuasive instruments, which represented the contribution of this research to the body of knowledge of persuasion.

The underlying goal of the research, as identified in section 1 of this report, was to generate new insights in the science of persuasion, and to produce a wealth of data that could be useful to business practitioners and executives in better understanding the dynamics of persuasion in practice. This research project had the objective of exploring executives' instinctive use of rhetoric and social influence as instruments of persuasion in the description of their growth strategies. It investigated both the varying proportions of emphasis of Aristotle's rhetorical tenets, as well as the varying proportions of emphasis of social influence devices observed in their narratives, and the interconnectedness of the various phenomena.

The need for this research originated from the gap in literature on the interconnectedness of persuasive instruments. The research contributed to a better understanding of how managers could possibly leverage these persuasive instruments, from an organisational perspective, as tools for growth. This research project added depth to the understanding of the interconnectedness of rhetoric and social influence as persuasive instruments. Through empirical research, it attempted to bridge the void in exiting literature, and also provided a unique lens through which practitioners can observe the interplay between a persuaders use of rhetoric and their use of social influence in a persuader-listener interface.

The research findings have contributed to a more detailed understanding of the use of persuasive instruments in practice, and have provided an integrated view of the various phenomena, and their interconnectedness as tools of persuasion. The research culminated with a contemporary model of persuasive instruments, based on the analysis of the research findings.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Ethical Approval Letter

**Gordon Institute  
of Business Science**  
University of Pretoria

Dear Andrew Wray

Protocol Number: **Temp2015-01672**

Title: **Rhetorical tenets and social influence devices as instruments of persuasion in growth strategy.**

Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been APPROVED.

You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data.

We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.

Kind Regards,

Adele Bekker

## Appendix 2: Consent Form

I am conducting research into the nature and dynamics of growth strategy as a subset of the broader strategic imperative of business. The research explores the role which growth strategy plays in overcoming the tumultuous environment of business that we presently face, given South Africa's slow economic growth and indeed the protracted downturn in the economy following the global economic crisis.

The interview is expected to last about an hour, and will help add to the body of knowledge of growth strategy. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. All data will be kept confidential.

The contents of the interview may be made publicly available, in the form of an MBA thesis, without your name or any other personal details except gender and age being referred to.

If you have any concerns, please contact me, or my supervisor. Our details are provided below.

Details:

	<b>Researcher:</b>	<b>Research Supervisor:</b>
<b>Name</b>	Andrew Michael Wray	Dr. Gavin Price
<b>Telephone</b>	082 095 9258	
<b>Email</b>	andrew.michael.wray@me.com	priceg@gibs.co.za

Signature of participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 3: Interview Guideline**

### **A Introduction to Research Objective:**

- 1 Introduce myself as GIBS MBA candidate and explain broad research objectives;
- 2 Describe purpose of the study - to gain insight and understanding into growth strategy as a subset of broader strategy;
- 3 Explain process to be followed - interview process, data collection mechanism, analysis mechanism;
- 4 Explain implications of the study - outcomes, publishing of data, release of study as MBA Thesis, and that data are reported without identifiers;
- 5 Explain right to withdraw at any time;

### **B Interview Schedule:**

- 1 Conduct discussion on the basis of open-ended semi-structured questions:
- 2 Allow for probing type questioning based on responses / discussion emanating from open-ended semi-structured questions;
- 3 Probe for any additional input the candidate may have which has not emerged from the discussion;

### **C Provide Insight from previous Interviews:**

- 1 Provide macro-level insight from previous interviews (where relevant) - trust building mechanism;
- 2 Revisit themes from prior interviews which emanate as central to the research topic - reinforce need for research;
- 3 Probe for any final input based on insight from other respondents - comments, additional input / further insights;

### **D Concluding Remarks:**

- 1 Request respondent availability for further contact, sharing and further insights (if required);
- 2 Follow-up / Feedback approach - Elaborate on later follow-up regarding research findings;

### **E Thanks and Closing:**

- 1 Thank respondent for their time;
- 2 Follow-up with e-mail to thank respondent for their participation;



## Appendix 4: Detailed Codebook – Rhetorical Tenets

The first and second level deductive coding topics, stemming from the literature on Aristotle's tenets of rhetoric reviewed in Chapter 2, are listed hereafter. These topics formed the code families used for the purposes of the data analysis.

### i. **Ethos Topics:**

- *'Authority of speaker'; 'Social or moral standing' – Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014);*
- *'Alignment of ethics'; 'Moral code of the audience' – Lowenhaupt (2014);*
- *'Credibility'; 'Character' – Botha (2012);*
- *'Simplitude', 'Self-criticism', 'Inclination to Succeed', 'Consistency' – Higgins and Walker (2012)*
- *'Ethical credibility'; 'Legitimacy' – Corbett and Connors (1999);*

### ii. **Logos Topics:**

- *'Facts', 'Figures', 'Claims' – Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014);*
- *'Constructed content' – Botha (2012);*
- *'Efficiency', 'Effectiveness' – Brown et al. (2012);*
- *'Data', 'Evidence', 'Examples' – Higgins and Walker (2012);*
- *Sounding reasonable' – Leith (2011);*
- *Reason' – Suddaby and Greenwood (2005);*
- *'Benefits; 'Features' – Braet (1992);*

### iii. **Pathos Topics:**

- *'Emotion'; 'Attitude' – Brennan and Merkyl-Davies (2014);*
- *'Use of Metaphor', 'Cultural Reference' – Higgins and Walker (2012);*
- *'Pathe', 'Judgement' – Botha (2012);*
- *'Sadness', 'Pity', 'Excitement', 'Fear', 'Love' – Leith (2011).*

## Appendix 5: Detailed Codebook – Social Influence Devices

The second level deductive coding topics, stemming from the literature on Cialdini's social influence devices reviewed in Chapter 2, are listed hereafter. These social influence coding topics formed the code families used for the purposes of the data analysis.

### i. Reciprocity coding topics

- *'Affective / emotional commitment', 'Relationship value'* – Goldstein et al. (2011);
- *'Reciprocal benefit', 'Indebtedness'* – Goldstein et al. (2011);
- *'Return of goodwill'* – Clark and Kemp (2008);
- *'Return in kind'* – Cialdini and Rhoads (2001);

### ii. Scarcity coding topics

- *'Availability'; 'Intrinsic desirability'; 'Loss of established freedom'; 'Limited'; 'Constrained'* – Cialdini and Rhoads (2001);
- *'Psychological reactance', 'Heightened Desire'* – Cialdini (2001);

### iii. Authority coding topics

- *'Legitimate', 'Influence' (Talent, Training, Experience), 'Credibility', 'trustworthiness'* – Cialdini and Rhoads (2001);
- *'Behaviour', 'Title', 'Appearance', 'Possession', 'Knowledge', 'Wisdom', 'Power'* – Clark and Kemp (2008);

### iv. Consistency coding topics

- *'Stability of thought or action'* – Clark and Kemp (2008);
- *'Consistency in behaviour and statements'* – Cialdini and Rhoads (2001);

### v. Liking coding topics

- *'Affinity'; 'Rapport'; 'Affection'* – Cialdini (2001);
- *'Attractiveness'; 'Cooperation'; 'Collaboration'; 'Similarity'* - Cialdini and Rhoads (2001);
- *'Praise'; 'Repeated Cooperative Contact'; 'Association'* – Clark and Kemp (2008);

### vi. Social Validation coding topics

- *'Testimony', 'Social Cues'* – Cialdini (2001);

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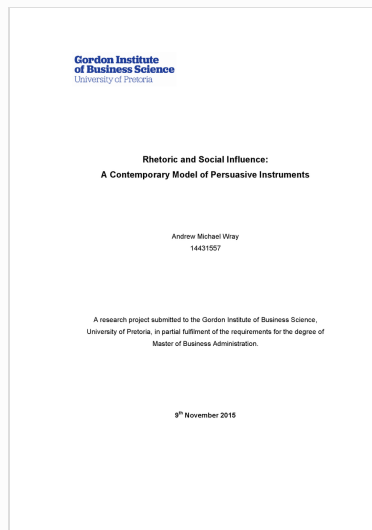


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