



# Preparing Your Agency's Ethics Message

## Monroe's Motivated Sequence (5 Steps)

Monroe's Motivated Sequence is a five-step progressive method of persuasion used to encourage people to act and prime an audience to make immediate change.



### Step 1: Get their attention.

Start your message by attracting your audience's attention. You can do this by using storytelling, humor, a shocking fact or statistic, a rhetorical question, or offering a fact opposite of what they expect. Your statement should capture the attention of the audience.

**Consider this Leadership Note as an example of Monroe's Motivated Sequence:** [\*Preparing the Executive Branch Ethics Program for the 2024 Presidential Election\*](#)

**The opening line offers a fact that is opposite of what would be expected:**

**Example:** "Irrespective of the outcome of a Presidential election, the executive branch sees a significant change in the leadership of executive branch departments and agencies."



### Step 2: Define the problem.

Define the problem. This set of statements must help the audience realize that the current status is not good enough and needs to change. Provide facts or statements that make the audience restless and ready to do something about it. Show your audience how the problem directly affects them.

**Example:** "These high-level vacancies make the nation vulnerable to national security and other risks and require OGE and the entire ethics program to prepare to carry out our unique role in the Presidential appointments process."



### Step 3: Satisfy the need.

Introduce your solution. How will you solve the problem that your audience is now ready to address? This is the main part of your presentation. It will vary significantly, depending on your purpose. Elaborate and give details to make sure the audience understands your position and solution. Use examples, testimonials, and statistics to prove the effectiveness of your solution. Prepare counterarguments to anticipated objections.

**Example:** "Being ready to assist new leaders to take on their responsibilities free from ethics concerns requires OGE and every executive branch agency to plan and prepare."



## Step 4: Visualize the future.

Describe what the situation will look like if the audience acts. Create a realistic and detailed vision. Your goal is to motivate the audience to agree with you and adopt similar behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. Help them see what the results could be if they act the way you want them to.

**Example:** “Preparing for a Presidential election is a vital function of the executive branch ethics program. OGE takes seriously its responsibility to make sure the program and ethics officials are prepared. Over the next twelve months, this will be a major focus of OGE’s work and the work of executive branch ethics programs.”



## Step 5: Announce a call to action.

In the final step, you’ll want to leave your audience with specific things that they can do to solve the problem. Invite your audience to take immediate action. Don't overwhelm them with too much information or too many expectations. For very complex problems, the action step might be getting together again to review plans.

**Example:**

“Therefore, OGE requires agency ethics officials to have assessed their readiness to support a potential Presidential transition and provides engagement, training, and resources to support these efforts.”