Learn to argue productively

At their core, arguments are discussions in which people try to convince each other to see a given situation from a different perspective. Instead of devolving into heated screaming matches, you should practice productive arguing skills as a persuasive technique, says Farnam Street blog creator Shane Parrish.

To prove that arguing can be positive if done in the right context, Parrish shares some advice from Jonathan Herring, author of *How to Argue.*

• **Know what the argument is about.** You need to come in knowing the point you want to get across or the tangible result you want to achieve.

• **Decide if it's worth it.** Is an argument right now, in this exact place, the best way to hash this out? If it's not the right time or place, walk away. You can always come back to it later.

• **Listen up.** Make sure you're really hearing the other person's side. If you're not listening, you'll just keep saying the same things over and over again.

• **Master your response.** There are three main ways to respond to an argument: challenge the other person's facts, challenge the other person's conclusions or concede the point and argue its importance. You should master the art of all three.

• **Learn to argue in public.** Keep it short and clear.

• **Practice how to argue in writing.** Choose clarity over pompousness. Keep it short, get to the point and use language that's easy to understand.

• **Keep relationships intact.** Humiliating or annoying your opponent may feel good at the time, but it may cost you in the long run. Keep it civil.

— Adapted from "The Ten Golden Rules of Argument," Shane Parrish, Farnam Street Blog.