While it may be true that the Mason City government ought to devote more money to riverside recreational facilities, this ***author's argument does not make a cogent case for*** increased resources based on river use. It is easy to understand why city residents would want a cleaner river, ***but this argument is rife with holes and assumptions, and thus, not strong enough to lead to increased funding.***

Citing surveys of city residents, the author reports city resident's love of water sports. ***It is not clear, however, the scope and validity of that survey.*** For example, the survey could have asked residents if they prefer using the river for water sports or would like to see a hydroelectric dam built, which may have swayed residents toward river sports. The sample may not have been representative of city residents, asking only those residents who live upon the river. The survey may have been 10 pages long, with 2 questions dedicated to river sports. We just do not know. Unless the survey is fully representative, valid, and reliable, it can not be used to effectively back the author's argument.

Additionally, the author implies that residents do not use the river for swimming, boating, and fishing, despite their professed interest, because the water is polluted and smelly. While a polluted, smelly river would likely cut down on river sports, ***a concrete connection between the resident's lack of river use and the river's current state is not effectively made***. Though there have been complaints, we do not know if there have been numerous complaints from a wide range of people, or perhaps from one or two individuals who made numerous complaints. To strengthen his/her argument, ***the author would benefit from implementing a normed survey asking a wide*** range of residents why they do not currently use the river.

Building upon the implication that residents do not use the river due to the quality of the river's water and the smell, the author suggests that a river clean up will result in increased river usage. If the river's water quality and smell result from problems which can be cleaned, this may be true. For example, if the decreased water quality and aroma is caused by pollution by factories along the river, this conceivably could be remedied. But if the quality and aroma results from the natural mineral deposits in the water or surrounding rock, this may not be true. There are some bodies of water which emit a strong smell of sulphur due to the geography of the area. This is not something likely to be afffected by a clean-up. Consequently, a river clean up may have no impact upon river usage. Regardless of whether the river's quality is able to be improved or not, the author does not effectively show a connection between water quality and river usage.

A clean, beautiful, safe river often adds to a city's property values, leads to increased tourism and revenue from those who come to take advantage of the river, and a better overall quality of life for residents. For these reasons, city government may decide to invest in improving riverside recreational facilities. However, ***this author's argument is not likely to significantly persuade the city government to*** allocate increased funding.

Studies show that, as we’ve become more technically advanced, our health has deteriorated rapidly. Heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and virtually every major ailment are far more common today than they were thirty years ago. The primary reason for this deterioration is the sedentary lifestyle associated with today’s high-tech jobs. Clearly, our health will continue to decline as long as we persist in our technological advances.

As you read the sample response, notice how we’ve marked certain sentences and paragraphs to illustrate where and how the essay conforms to our template. The info in brackets should remind you of what your own Argument essay needs to include.

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| --- |
| The conclusion of this argument, “Clearly, our health will continue to decline as long as we persist in our technological advances,” rests weakly on three primary assumptions. [THESIS STATEMENT & TOPIC’S CONCLUSION] First, it assumes that advances in medicine will not counteract the detrimental effects of a lack of exercise. [REASON 1] Second, it requires the tacit belief that the effect of a proper diet on health is insignificant in comparison to the effects of a sedentary lifestyle. [REASON 2] Finally, it presumes that whatever holds true for the past and present will also hold true for the future. [REASON 3]  The argument assumes that the positive effects of regular exercise on health override any positive effects resulting from advances in medicine. [TOPIC SENTENCE FOR REASON 1] As society becomes increasingly high tech, we might plausibly argue that medicine will similarly develop and advance. Nonetheless, the validity of the author’s argument depends on the idea that medicine will not advance as rapidly as technology or, at the very least, on the idea that any advance in medicine will have a relatively insignificant effect on health, compared to the effects of regular exercise. But what might happen if medicine progresses such that health care can counteract the effects of a sedentary lifestyle? Might we imagine a pill or procedure that could easily and effectively combat heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases linked to lack of exercise? If this occurs, whether our lives become more sedentary as a result of technology will not matter when it comes to our health, because medicine will offset the negative effects of a lack of exercise. [FIVE SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP & ANALYZE REASON 1]  Similarly, the argument’s conclusion depends on the assumption that improvements in diet will not prevent or stave off the decline in wellness that results from working at a high-tech job. [TOPIC SENTENCE FOR REASON 2] Whether it’s reasonable to expect our diets to improve as technology advances is irrelevant to this argument; the fact remains that the author assumes that diet has little to no impact on the general well-being of a person who gets no exercise. Yet a healthy diet could negate the effects of a sedentary lifestyle. In fact, if a good diet could be shown to improve one’s health, then it would be unreasonable to conclude that a sedentary lifestyle automatically leads to poor health and increased disease in everyone. There would be no easy way to show such a correlation between exercise and health. Indeed, a sedentary lifestyle coupled with a good diet might lead to good health. [FIVE SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP & ANALYZE REASON 2]  The most significant assumption made by the author to arrive at the conclusion is that the past and present are reliable indicators of the future. [TOPIC SENTENCE FOR REASON 3] Specifically, the author assumes that since our overall health has declined as technology has improved, this pattern will continue. Such an assumption is unwarranted; many trends reverse direction entirely or eventually cease. For example, the rapid rise and success of high-tech companies in the late ‘90s eventually came to a screeching halt, almost without warning. If the trend toward technological advancements and the sedentary lifestyles with which they are associated came to a similar halt, it would be illogical to conclude that our health would also continue to decline. [FOUR SENTENCES THAT DEVELOP & ANALYZE REASON 3]  In sum, this argument relies heavily on its assumptions, perhaps too heavily. Denying any one of these assumptions results in a weakened or, in some cases, invalid conclusion. Nevertheless, the conclusion that our health is in jeopardy may in fact be true, despite its not being proven with the premises given and assumptions made by the author. [RECAP] To strengthen the argument, the author would need to not only address these three assumptions but also to more firmly establish a link between deteriorating health and technological advances. In the words of Hippocrates, “A wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings.” An argument conclusively linking rising technology to failing health would be a strong argument indeed. [EXPANDS POSITION] |

The advertising director of the Super Screen Movie production company believes that increasing the amount of advertising the company does will increase the amount of people attending Super Screen produced movies. He believes this because during the past year fewer people than ever before attended Super Screen produced movies, yet the percentage of positive reviews about specific Super Screen produced movies increased over the past year. ***Ostensibly*** the extra advertising would tout the good reviews written about Super Screen movies. Before this plan is implemented, however, Super Screen needs to address some questions about its possible flaws.

First of all, the company needs to ask what the actual number of people attending its movies as compared to the movies of other production companies is. The number of people going to movies may have been in universal decline. If this is the case and more people are going to see Super Screen Movies than the movies of any other production company, advertising about how fun it is to go to the movie theater may do more to boost Super Screen viewership than advertising promoting its own good reviews.

Secondly, the company needs to ask what the actual original number of positive reviews was. If Super Screen movies received 1% positive reviews last year and this year they received 2% positive reviews, getting that message to viewers is not going to increase Super Screen attendance. Making better movies would be much more likely to increase attendance rates.

Finally, Super Screen needs to ask what the relationship is between its viewers and the movie reviewers cited in the memo. Using a survey distributed to its target audience, Super Screen could determine if movie reviews have an effect on their audience’s decision to go see a movie, whether movie reviewers tended to have the same taste as the target audience and exactly whether or not movie reviews are reaching the audience. Super Screen also needs to consider how its movie choices have affected the separate movie reviewer and audience populations. If the studio has switched from making megablockbuster action movies to more nuanced dramas, the general public may be less willing to go see their movies even though movie critics prefer the dramas to the action movies.

Finally the studio must ask whether the percentage of positive reviews is really a relevant way to measure the potential impact of movie reviews. There are dozens of movie reviewers but when deciding whether to not to go to a movie, the general public will usually pick from among the 10 most popular movie reviews. These are the reviews that will impress the public if they are included in advertising. If the most popular movie reviewers disliked Super Screen movies that a larger number of small time film bloggers reviewed positively, Super Screen needs to think of a new advertising strategy.  
In conclusion, there are many questions Super Screen needs to answer before using this advertising director’s plan. They need to look carefully at actual numbers, both of viewership and of positive reviews. The also need to identify the relationship that their target audience has with movie reviewers and determine how their target audience feels about their movies. Finally they need to take a nuanced look at the movie reviews that they use in their advertising.

**Argument 37** **The following is a memorandum from the director of personnel to the president of Get-Away Airlines.**

**"Since our mechanics are responsible for inspecting and maintaining our aircraft, Get-Away Airlines should pay to send them to the Quality-Care Seminar, a two-week seminar on proper maintenance procedures. I recommend this seminar because it is likely to be a wise investment, given that the automobile racing industry recently reported that the performance of its maintenance crews improved markedly after their crews had attended the seminar. These maintenance crews perform many of the same functions as do our mechanics, including refueling and repairing engines. The money we spend on sending our staff to the seminar will inevitably lead to improved maintenance and thus to greater customer satisfaction along with greater profits for our airline."**

**[建议，看别人好自己也要]**

**In this argument, the arguer concludes that** sending the mechanics of Get-Away Airlines to a two-week Quality-Care Seminar on proper maintenance procedures will automatically lead to improved maintenance and to greater customer satisfaction along with greater profits for the airline. **To support the conclusion, the arguer points out that** the performance of the maintenance crews in the automobile racing industry improved markedly after their crews had attended the seminar. **In addition, the arguer reasons that** since the maintenance crews of the automobile racing industry and the mechanics of Get-Away Airlines perform many of the same functions, the airlines will gain similar benefits from the training program. **This argument suffers from several critical fallacies.**

**First, the argument Is based on a false analogy.** The arguer simply assumes that airplane mechanics and automobile maintenance crews perform many similar functions, but he does not provide any evidence that their functions are indeed comparable. As we know, the structure, operation and function of airplanes and those of automobiles differ conspicuously. It is true that both the airplane and the automobile need refueling and engine maintenance, but even here there exist fundamental differences: the structure and the building materials of each other's engines are different, so is the oil they use. Therefore, even though the two-week Quality-Care Seminar proved effective in improving the performance of the maintenance crews in the automobile racing industry, there is no guarantee that it will work just as well for airplane mechanics.

**Second, the arguer commits a fallacy of hasty generalization.** Even if the maintenance of the airline has been improved as a result of sending its mechanics to the Seminar, which is, of course, an unwarranted assumption, it does not follow that there will be greater profits as well as greater customer satisfaction for the airline. As we know, customer satisfaction depends on several major factors other than good maintenance of the airplane. For instance, customers are generally concerned about the punctuality, the on-board service, the ticket price, the luggage handling procedure and even the discount, all of which are ignored by the arguer. Besides, the arguer does not provide any solid information concerning how the airplane can improve its profits. Unless Get-Away Airlines can significantly increase its customers or passengers and at the same time cut down its costs, both of which are unknown from this argument, there is no guarantee that it will "inevitably" harvest greater profits. Actually, the arguer's recommendation of investing in this training program as the only way to increase customer satisfaction and profits would most probably turn out to be ineffective and misleading.

**In conclusion, the arguer fails to establish a causal relationship** between sending Get-A way's mechanics to the Quality-Care Seminar and improved maintenance, greater customer satisfaction and greater profits for the airline. **To strengthen the argument, the arguer would have to provide evidence that** automobile maintenance and airplane maintenance are similar in every aspect. **To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information about** the relationship between improved maintenance and greater customer satisfaction along with greater profits.

**Argument 47:**  **The nation of Claria covers a vast physical area. But despite wide geographic differences, many citizens are experiencing rising costs of electricity. A recent study of household electric costs in Claria found that families who cooled their houses with fans alone spent more on electricity than did families using air conditioners alone for cooling. However, those households that reported using both fans and air conditioners spent less on electricity than those households that used either fans or air conditioners alone. Thus, the citizens of Claria should follow the study's recommendation and use both air conditioners and fans in order to save money on electricity.**

**[建议，根据不科学调查]**

**In this argument, the arguer recommends that** Claria should advise its citizens to install both air conditioners and fans for cooling in order to reduce the cost of electricity. **To justify this claim, the arguer provides the evidence that** many citizens of Claria suffer from the rising costs of electricity. **In addition, he cites the result of a recent study that** using fans alone costs more than using air conditioners alone, and that using both air conditioners and fans costs less than either using fans or air conditioners alone. **A careful examination of this argument would reveal how groundless the conclusion is.**

**In the first place, the arguer fails to take into account the geographical factors in the analysis.** While we are informed that there are wide geographical differences in the nation of Claria, and that many citizens are experiencing rising costs of electricity, **the arguer fails to make clear** the exact number of those citizens or their percentage in the national population, as well as the geographical distribution of these citizens. If only a small portion of the whole population are experiencing the rising costs of electricity while most families do not have similar experience, then the reason might be that the former do not use electricity sparingly. In this case, the rising costs of those families have nothing to do with what kind of electric appliance they use to cool their houses. Or if only families living in hot areas are spending more money on cooling, then it is unwise to require citizens living in temperate and frigid zones to install both fans and air conditioners. In the absence of all this information, it is impossible for us to evaluate the recommended policy that is intended to help every household nationwide to reduce their electricity cost.

**In the second place, the comparison in this argument is incomplete and selective.** The arguer discovers that using fans alone is more cost effective than using air conditioners alone, and that using both fans and air conditioners are the least expensive way of cooling. However, the arguer fails to provide any information regarding the actual amount of time for using, respectively, fans alone, air conditioners alone, and both fans and air conditioners in those three groups of surveyed families. It is very likely that these three groups of families are located in three very different climatic regions of Claria, and hence the amount of days of the year during which they need to cool their houses varies significantly. Families living in cooler areas of the nation certainly cool their houses for fewer hours and hence use less electricity than families living in hot areas, no matter what cooling appliance they use. Unless we are certain that the surveyed families live in the same climatic region, or that they need to cool their houses for the same amount of hours in the same year although they live in different regions, which is very unlikely, we have every reason to doubt the trustworthiness of this comparative study. Furthermore, the arguer ignores the possibility that the families who are spending more on electricity may be using more electricity for purposes other-than cooling. Unless the arguer also takes this factor into consideration, the comparison is unconvincing.

**To sum up, the conclusion lacks credibility because the evidence cited in the analysis does not lend strong support to what the arguer maintains. To strengthen the argument, the arguer would have to provide more evidence concerning** the percentage of the affected families and their geographical distribution. **To better evaluate the argument, we would need more information regarding** the electric expense relevant to the actual amount of time for cooling among, respectively, the three groups of households and the amount of electricity used for other purposes in all three groups of families under survey.

**Argument 57:**  **The following appeared in a letter from a department chairperson to the president of Pierce University.**

**"Some studies conducted by Bronston College, which is also located in a small town, reveal that both mate and female professors are happier living in small towns when their spouses are also employed in the same geographic area. Therefore, in the interest of attracting the most gifted teachers and researchers to our faculty and improving the morale of our entire staff, we at Pierce University should offer employment to the spouse of each new faculty member we hire. Although we cannot expect all offers to be accepted or to be viewed as an ideal job offer, the money invested in this effort will clearly be well spent because, if their spouses have a chance of employment, new professors will be more likely to accept our offers."**

**[建议，看人家好自己也要]**

**In this analysis, the arguer claims that** Pierce University should offer employment to the spouse of each new faculty member that they hire. **To substantiate the conclusion, the arguer cites** the example of Bronston College where professors prefer to have their spouse employed in the same geographical area. **In addition, the arguer assumes that** this offer of a possible job for their spouse on the campus, no matter whether it will be accepted, is the only factor that new professors consider in deciding whether to accept a university position. **This argument is unconvincing for several critical flaws.**

**First of all, the argument is based on a hasty generalization** . According to the cited studies, professors at Bronston College are happier living in small towns when their spouses are also employed in the local area than when their spouses work in distant areas, which is understandable. This fact tells very little about what actual conditions the professors often consider as important when they choose where to work. Even if we accept the arguer's assumption that whether their spouse can find a job in the local area is the only important question that new professors consider when they decide whether to accept an offer in a university situated in a small town, the arguer's recommendation is still unconvincing. Only when the offer of employment to the spouse is regarded as an ideal one and therefore accepted is it likely that the professor will consider accepting the university's offer. Consequently, it is unwarranted to assume that new professors will accept Pierce's offer whether their spouse can find satisfactory employment in the local area.

**In addition, the arguer fails to consider several other relevant factors that may influence new professors' decision.** For instance, since Pierce's location is not ideal, the pay it offers should be high enough to be attractive. New gifted professors are also concerned about the position they can have and the courses they are supposed to teach in the new university. What's more, what researchers care most about might be the university's research conditions such as laboratory equipments, adequate research funds, etc.

**Finally, the arguer hints that the morale of Pierce's entire staff is low, but he fails to analyze the causes.** Is it because the management of the university is poor, or because the pay is too low, or because the local area suffers from economic depression, or because the local environment is severely damaged by industrial pollution? Under these circumstances, offering employment to the spouse would be ineffective at all for the purpose of attracting more new professors. Furthermore, if these problems do exist, even if Pierce succeeds in hiring many of the most gifted teachers and researchers of the country, the general morale of the whole faculty would remain low.

**As it stands, the argument is not well reasoned. To make it logically acceptable, the arguer would have to demonstrate that** an offer of employment to the spouse is the only condition that new professors consider on accepting Pierce's offer. **Additionally, the arguer must provide evidence** to rule out other possible causes of the low staff morale at the university.

**Argument 67:** **The following is a memorandum written by the director of personnel to the president of the Cedar Corporation.**

**"It would be a mistake to rehire the Good-Taste Company to supply the food in our employee cafeteria next year. It is the second most expensive caterer in the city. In addition, its prices have risen in each of the last three years, and it refuses to provide meals for people on special diets. Just last month three employees complained to me that they no longer eat in the cafeteria because they find the experience unbearable. Our company should instead hire Discount Foods. Discount is a family-owned local company and it offers a varied menu of fish and poultry. I recently tasted a sample lunch at one of the many companies that Discount serves and it was delicious—an indication that hiring Discount will lead to improved employee satisfaction."**

**[建议，更换供应商]**

**In this argument, the arguer advocates that** the Cedar Corporation should hire Discount Foods, a family-owned local company that offers a varied menu of fish and poultry, instead of the Good-Taste Company, the present supplier of food in Cedar's employee cafeteria. **This recommendation is based on the observation that** the Good-Taste is expensive, that its prices have kept rising, that it does not serve special diets, and that three employees complained about it. **Meanwhile, the arguer assumes** Discount to be a better choice for Cedar because a sample lunch of this company that the arguer happened to taste was delicious. **This argument is problematic for two reasons.**

**The major problem with this argument is that the arguer fails to convince us that Cedar's present supplier the Good-Taste should be fired.** First, the fact that the Good-Taste is the second most expensive caterer in the city may be due to its better foods, quality service and high reputation in this industry. Second, the fact that its prices have been rising for the last three years may be due to nationwide inflation or the rising cost in the food industry. Third, the fact that Good-Taste refuses to serve special diets does not indicate that it cannot meet the needs of Cedar Corporation unless the arguer can demonstrate that Good-Taste served special diets at first and now it refuses to do so, hence disappointing Cedar's employees, and that many or most of Cedar's employees are on special diets. Finally, the arguer fails to explain why three employees complained, which makes it impossible for us to evaluate the overall service of Good-Taste. Maybe these three people are those few on special diets. Even if they have every reason to complain about the foods or service of the supplier on a certain day, these three people's opinion lacks the necessary representativeness based on which we can make any general judgment concerning the overall performance of Good-Taste.

**Another point worth considering is the arguer's hasty generalization.** We are informed that Discount serves fish and poultry, but we do not know whether Cedar's employees all prefer this limited menu. We can believe that one sample lunch that the arguer happened to taste was indeed delicious, but based on this slim information, we can never evaluate the overall performance of Discount.

**To conclude, this argument is not persuasive as it stands. Before we accept the conclusion, the arguer must present more facts that** Good-Taste has indeed failed to meet the requirements of Cedar Corporation. **To solidify the argument, the arguer would have to produce more evidence concerning** the foods and service of Discount and how they can better meet the needs of Cedar's employees.

**Argument 77:** **The following is a recommendation from the dean at Foley College, a small liberal arts college, to the president of the college.**

**"Since college-bound students are increasingly concerned about job prospects after graduation, Foley College should attempt to increase enrollment by promising to find its students jobs after they graduate. Many administrators feel that this strategy is a way for Foley to compete against larger and more prestigious schools and to encourage students to begin preparing for careers as soon as they enter college. Furthermore, a student who must choose a career path within his or her first year of college and who is guaranteed a job after graduation is more likely to successfully complete the coursework that will prepare him or her for the future."**

**[建议，根据不科学假想]**

**The conclusion in this argument is that** Foley College can expect to increase enrollment by promising to find jobs for students after their graduation. **In support of this prediction, the arguer claims that** college-bound students are increasingly concerned about job prospects after graduation. **Moreover, the arguer assumes that** this attempt has three benefits: (1) to enable Foley to compete with more famous schools; (2) to encourage students to start career preparation early; (3) to encourage students to complete their coursework. **This argument is fraught with vague, oversimplified and unwarranted assumptions.**

**One major assumption in short of legitimacy is the causal relationship claimed between college-bound students' increasing concern about job prospects after graduation and their expectation on the university to find jobs for them.** Students' increasing concern about job prospects may mean that when they choose which university to go to they prefer those universities that can offer the majors most likely to lead to more job opportunities and higher income after graduation. They may also be more interested in prestigious universities because their students are more competitive and more welcomed in the job market. As is known to everyone, in a market economy, promising to find jobs for students is impractical and hence rather doubtful. This strategy may prove misleading and counterproductive in the end. Instead of promising jobs to students, Foley College should devote its resources and efforts to offering more majors with good job prospects as well as attracting more prestigious professors to enhance its reputation.

**In addition, the conclusion is based on a gratuitous assumption that promising students jobs will make students more conscious in their study.** This, however, is unwarranted. When students do not have to worry about their employment after graduation, they feel no pressure in their study; as a result, they will become more passive and dependent and gradually lose the initiative to improve themselves. Although it is more likely that they will complete their coursework, but when they graduate, no company would like to employ them. By then the university's promise will turn out to be meaningless.

**In summary, the conclusion reached in this argument is invalid and misleading. To make the argument more convincing, the arguer would have to prove that** college-bound students are most concerned about the promise of jobs after graduation and that Foley College can keep its promise in the end. **Moreover, I would suspend my judgment about the credibility of the recommendation until the arguer can provide concrete evidence that** promising students jobs can actually encourage them to work harder in their study. Otherwise, the arguer is simply begging the question throughout the argument.