

## How to Write a Rogerian (Compromise) Argument Essay: From Thesis to Final Draft

Step 1: Make your Claim (your debatable opinion of a shared problem)

**Example:** Jasmin Amaya's Claim -- Working with a difficult co-worker = need mutual respect

Step 2: Make a Topic (that is the "Point" for Each Body Paragraph) Outline\*

\*Note: For this guide, we will use the "Rogerian (Compromise) Method" on page 118 in [Structures](#).

**Instructions:** In a Rogerian Argument structure, the topics (or "points") are 1) the **Opposition's position**, 2) **your position**, 3) **the benefits your position has for the Opposition**, and 4) **a compromise** -- your offer of a "middle" position that both you and the Opposition can accept. Organize your Topic Outline in that order.

**Example:**

**CLAIM:** Working with a difficult co-worker = need mutual respect

- I. **OPPOSITION'S POSITION:** Why bother with a difficult co-worker
- II. **YOUR POSITION:** shouldn't judge – need to find a way
- III. **HOW YOUR POSITION BENEFITS OPPOSITION:**
  - A. benefits to meeting difficult co-worker halfway
  - B. **YOUR COMPROMISE TO THE OPPOSITION:** maybe don't solve everything, but enough for everyone

**RESTATED CLAIM:** Working with a difficult co-worker = need mutual respect

Step 3: Turn your Topic Outline into a Topic Sentence Outline

**Instructions:** Put all of the info of your Topic Outline into complete sentences. You'll produce a Claim Statement, Topic Sentences, and a Restated Claim Statement

**Example:**

**CLAIM:** In my experience, mutual respect, and understanding are key to maintaining professional relationships, especially when our co-workers are being difficult.

I. **OPPOSITION'S POSITION:** Of course, I understand those who would disagree with me.

II. **YOUR POSITION:**

A. However, we shouldn't judge a difficult co-worker's behavior unless we know what's going on outside of the workplace.

B. Even though it is not easy for us to be sympathetic to other people's personal difficulties when we have our own problems, we need to find a way to work together.

III. **HOW YOUR POSITION BENEFITS OPPOSITION:**

A. But in time, I saw the benefits of my "meet her halfway" approach, not only for her but also for the rest of my co-workers.

B. **COMPROMISE:** More importantly, allowing her to open up just a bit was actually producing positive results for everyone.

**RESTATED CLAIM:** We are unable to control other's actions or moods, but we can control how we allow them to affect us personally.

#### Step 4: Make a Tiny Rough Draft from Your Sentence Outline

**Instructions:** Put all the info of your Sentence Outline in Paragraph form. You'll have

1. your Essay Title, which is a Keyword or Keywords of your Thesis Statement,
2. your Intro paragraph's Thesis Statement,
3. your Body Paragraphs' Topic Sentences, and
4. your Conclusion paragraph's Restated Thesis Statement

**Example:**

Working with Difficult Co-Workers Together

**Intro paragraph, with CLAIM:** In my experience, mutual respect, and understanding are key to maintaining professional relationships, especially when our co-workers are being difficult.

**1<sup>st</sup> body paragraph section: OPPOSITION'S POSITION:** Of course, I understand those who would disagree with me.

**2<sup>nd</sup> body paragraph section: YOUR POSITION:** However, we shouldn't judge a difficult co-worker's behavior unless we know what's going on outside of the workplace.

Even though it is not easy for us to be sympathetic to other people's personal difficulties when we have our own problems, we need to find a way to work together.

**3<sup>rd</sup> body paragraph section: HOW YOUR POSITION BENEFITS OPPOSITION:** But in time, I saw the benefits of my "meet her halfway" approach, not only for her but also for the rest of my co-workers.

**COMPROMISE:** More importantly, allowing her to open up just a bit was actually producing positive results for everyone.

**Conclusion paragraph, with RESTATED CLAIM:** We are unable to control other's actions or moods, but we can control how we allow them to affect us personally.

### Step 5: Expand Your Tiny Rough Draft, Starting with Intro Paragraph

**Instructions:** Use the information on pages 22-25 in [Structures](#) -- 1) to **start** your Intro paragraph, 2) to write your **supporting details** in your Body paragraphs, and 3) to **finish** your Conclusion paragraph.

- **NOTE:** When using an outside source in your essay (**also called research**), you will need to name the source (either the **Human Author's Name** or – if missing – the **"Article Title"**) wherever you used it in your essay (called **in-text citation**), plus provide a source list at the end of the essay (called **Work Cited**). For more information on how to document in MLA Style researched info used in your essay, see pages 14-20 in [Structures](#).

**Example** (for a minimum **1200 word** rough draft):

#### Working with Difficult Co-Workers Together

**Intro paragraph, with CLAIM (150 words):** We may have careers in common, but that does not necessarily mean that we have similar interests outside of work. Once we leave our place of employment, we all have our individual lives, filled with ups and downs. We try not to bring our personal issues to work with us

every day, but for some it is easier than others. A negative co-worker can easily bring down the overall office morale, and in turn end up negatively affecting others around them. On the other hand, a generally positive co-worker can have the ability to further enrage an already difficult person. As a result, some people think that being nice to people who intentionally hurt us, or make our lives difficult, is a sign of weakness. However, in my experience, mutual respect, and understanding are key to maintaining professional relationships, especially when our co-workers are being difficult.

**1<sup>st</sup> body paragraph section: OPPOSITION'S POSITION (250 words):** Of course, I understand those who would disagree with me. For instance, while at a previous employment, I worked with someone who didn't have the best reputation for being the "nicest" person around the office. She had a candid way of speaking that often rubbed others the wrong way at times. There were even times when she came into the office and didn't speak to us at all. For other co-workers, it was easier to "fight fire with fire," that is, speak rudely to her or ignore her, which was causing an even larger rift. Everyone was getting extremely frustrated with the fact that she was trying to control our office manager's perception of the group and make us look like bad employees. She often made it seem like we didn't cooperate in projects, when it was her lack of communication that was causing the issues. She made it very hard to approach her regarding any issues and would speak to people in a condescending tone, which made them hesitant to ask any questions. Everyone thought that if we were able to come in with a positive attitude most mornings, then she should be able to do the same. There was so much tension in the office at the time that people were ready to start physical altercations with her.

**2<sup>nd</sup> body paragraph section: YOUR POSITION (2 paragraphs = 400 words):** However, we shouldn't judge a difficult co-worker's behavior unless we know what's going on outside of the workplace. After all, we all have personal issues and different ways of dealing with those issues. In the case of my difficult co-worker, I had no prior idea of what she was dealing with at home. However, she had helped me manage

events around the office, and her straightforward attitude was helpful when we needed to meet a deadline. We all sat in cubicles placed right next to each other, so we could certainly hear any conversation happening within our department. I was the closest to her and, one day, started overhearing phone conversations between her and her husband. It was then that I realized that she was being verbally and physically abused. According to an article “Effects of Violence against Women” by [Samantha Gluck](#), “If you have experienced a physical or sexual assault, you may feel many emotions — fear, confusion, anger, or even being numb and not feeling much of anything.” I started to realize that while her behavior was wrong in the workplace, it was triggered by something hurtful in her personal life. According to the same article, “Other effects can include shutting people out, not wanting to do things you once enjoyed, not being able to trust others, and having low-esteem” ([Gluck](#)). All of these effects were translating into our team dynamic and making our jobs much more difficult and less enjoyable. I started to imagine how I would feel in a similar situation and realized that the last thing I would want to do is walk into work and act like everything was okay.

Even though it is not easy for us to be sympathetic to other people’s personal difficulties when we have our own problems, we need to find a way to work together. In this case, respect was so far gone at that point that I decided to break the cycle and try a different approach, to meet her halfway. While not excusing her behavior, I started going out of my way to be extremely positive, no matter what she threw my way. After all, our work goal was the same. Of course, according to an article published by the [University of Guelph](#), “Highly cooperative and generous people can attract hatred and social punishment, especially in competitive circumstance,” so when I started trying to be as helpful as I could be, I was met with hesitation on her end initially. I could see that mending the situation would take time and patience.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> body paragraph section: HOW YOUR POSITION BENEFITS OPPOSITION (200 words):**

But in time, I saw the benefits of my “meet her halfway” approach, not only for her but also for the rest of my co-workers. First, while helping her on various projects, I noticed that she started opening up a bit more. She

wouldn't go into too much detail regarding her personal life, but even our small chats seemed to be helping her overall attitude around the office. I opened up about my life as well, so she would feel more comfortable sharing. We all feel better knowing that we are not alone in a situation. Even though I was not in a similar situation, no relationship is perfect, so I shared some of the communication techniques I applied in my personal life. According to a *Career Contessa* article, "Because our work and private lives are so interconnected, fully separating them isn't always a realistic goal," (Stenger). **COMPROMISE:** More importantly, allowing her to open up just a bit was actually producing positive results for everyone. I didn't solve all her personal problems by any means, but I was able to see a huge difference in the way she approached work conflicts. *[NOTE: COMPROMISE should be longer: 50-100 words more.]*

**Conclusion paragraph, with RESTATED CLAIM (150 words):** We are unable to control other's actions or moods, but we can control how we allow them to affect us personally. At some point, we will deal with difficult personalities whether at work or in our personal lives, but we owe each other respect no matter the situation. There is so much negativity in this world, and our human response is to meet that with even more negativity in return. Some people think that being nice to people who intentionally hurt us, or make our lives difficult is a sign of weakness. It takes much more strength to "be the bigger person" and give that respect even when we feel we haven't received it.

#### Works Cited

- Gluck, Samantha. "Effects of Domestic Violence, Domestic Abuse on Women and Children." *Healthy Place: For Your Mental Health*, Healthy Place, 27 July 2012, [www.healthyplace.com/abuse/domestic-violence/effects-of-domestic-violence-domestic-abuse-on-women-and-children](http://www.healthyplace.com/abuse/domestic-violence/effects-of-domestic-violence-domestic-abuse-on-women-and-children). Accessed 16 June 2019.
- Stenger, Marianne. "4 Ways to Keep Your Personal Life Out of the Office." *Career Contessa*, Career Contessa, 23 Oct. 2018, [www.careercontessa.com/advice/privacy-work-life-balance/](http://www.careercontessa.com/advice/privacy-work-life-balance/). Accessed 16 June 2019.

**University of Guelph.** "People Love to Hate Do-Gooders, Especially at Work." *ScienceDaily*, ScienceDaily, 20 July 2018, www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/07/180720112816.htm. Accessed 16 June 2019.

## Step 6: Transform Your Rough Draft into a Final Draft

**Instructions:** Revise for body paragraph structure and word count, edit for errors, and format in [MLA Manuscript style](#) for a Final Draft, including complete in-text citations for all sources in Works Cited ([MLA documentation](#)).

**Example:** see [Jasmin Amaya's Rogerian Argument Final Draft "Working with Difficult Co-Workers Together"](#)

**IMPORTANT NOTE 1:** While structured well, Amaya's Final Draft is short (just under 1100 words, not counting the Works Cited list) because she had a too-short COMPROMISE section. She chose to tack on the COMPROMISE at the end of her one-paragraph BENEFITS section, without further explanation.

- For longer Rogerian arguments see [Victoria Rodriguez' "Detecting Danger"](#) (nearly 200 words) and [Monique Hickey's "School Uniforms Are Essential" \(over 2200 words\)](#)

**IMPORTANT NOTE 2:** Both Victoria Rodriguez and Monique Hickey turned their regular Works Cited list into an **"Annotated" Works Cited**. This was part of their last essay requirement (for a multiple-sourced Argumentative Research Paper with an Annotated Works Cited).

1. They started with a "normal" Works Cited list with at least four college-level sources.
2. Then under each Works Cited entry (that is, each source), they wrote a paragraph each of "Summary," "Assess," and "Reflect" notes, following [Purdue Online Writing Lab's Annotated Bibliography guidelines](#).
3. Since the final drafts of both Rodriguez and Hickey Final Draft were around 2000 words (not including her original Works Cited list), their Annotated Works Cited didn't need to be long to reach the total word count of 2600 words for Rogerian Argument with Annotated Works Cited.
4. Here's their Rogerian Argument with Annotated Works Cited final drafts:
  - For [Victoria Rodriguez](#).
  - For [Monique Hickey](#).