

GIANLUCA SPOSITO

THE KEYS OF LEGAL RHETORIC

A Handbook for Lawyers

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<https://edizioni.intra.pro> - edizioni@intra.pro
ISBN code: 9791280035059

Unicuique suum

Introduction

The modern speaker (lawyer) confronts people who were trained in an era strongly conditioned by visuals and speed. However, he is technically incapable, because he is no longer trained to fully and correctly use speech and rhetoric, as well as the visuals which become mere support.

Nevertheless, effective forensic communication cannot be achieved in an extemporaneous fashion or without preliminary preparation: communication has to be shaped by studying rhetoric, psychology, and paraverbal and non-verbal communication.

Knowing and being able to use rhetoric allows you to organize your thinking in a technically valid way and deliver persuasive speech.

Conscious and adequate communication represents an added value of the individual and his social context. It is a necessary asset.

Therefore, this book starts with the study of rhetoric and communication in general, which represents a persistent and inexplicable gap in the training of jurists. These aspects have been astonishingly underestimated if we think of the Greco-Roman origins of rhetoric, which still today play an important role in the work of jurists and therefore knowledge of such origins are a key

requirement of all jurists.

The speakers of the XXI century should instead know how to value and use rhetorical thinking according to the teaching of classical rhetoric. And they should know how to be ‘persuasive’, in a technically and ethically correct way. The goal should be a rational and persuasive argument and not persuasion by seduction.

Reading notes

This book represents a practical aid that will allow the reader to understand classical rhetoric whilst focusing on the needs of modern jurists.

The deliberately practical approach has resulted in necessary simplifications, also on several disciplines’ topics (law, linguistics, logic, neuroscience, psychology, sociology).

Note to the English edition

This book is a slightly amended version of the Italian edition (“Manuale di retorica forense”, 2020). Special thanks to Jessica Cucchiarini and Callum Poyser for their advice and assistance with the translation, but the final choices (and therefore the final faults) are made by the author: guilty!

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