

GRE essay topic (Argument): "Over the past year, our late-night news program has devoted increased time to national news and less time to weather and local news. During this period, most of the complaints received from viewers were concerned with our station's coverage of weather and local news. In addition, local businesses that used to advertise during our late-night news program have canceled their advertising contracts with us. Therefore, in order to attract more viewers to our news programs and to avoid losing any further advertising revenues, we should expand our coverage of weather and local news on all our news programs."

Write a response in which you examine the stated and/or unstated assumptions of the argument. Be sure to explain how the argument depends on these assumptions and what the implications are for the argument if the assumptions prove unwarranted.

Answer:

The memorandum seems reasonable in that it states a change ~~in~~ in the news program, ~~as well as~~ two consequences of the change — the complaints relevant to that change and the decrease of local businesses' advertisements. In fact, the passage implicitly assumes several points that are not necessarily true, which may reduce the accuracy of that decision/~~conclusion~~.

Firstly, the assumption that the decrease of weather and local news ~~has~~ discouraged the local businesses ~~es from advertising~~ is fallacious, by which the manager concludes that expanding such news contributes to avoiding losing advertising ~~revenues~~ revenues. In fact, according to the passage, the reason why those local businesses canceled their advertisements remained ~~sed~~ unknown. ~~Maybe/Perhaps t~~ The local businesses ~~recant/removed~~ their advertisements ~~from in~~ the television station ~~maybe~~ because they can ~~no longer not~~ afford the advertisement fees ~~s now~~. Besides, no information about the number of such businesses is given. If there are only ~~a~~ few businesses doing so/~~removing their advertisements~~, it is also likely/~~possible/feasible/conceivable~~ that they ~~have~~ relocated their businesses or companies to other cities. In this case, the consequent loss of revenues is not the fault of/~~related to~~ that television station.

Secondly, making the assumption that audiences ~~complaine~~ complains about everything they dislike is fatuous. The manager actually links the potential loss of viewers, or the ~~strategy to increase~~ approach to increasing its viewers, to the complaints, so he wants to change the program back. Actually, it is people's innate nature to complain about minimal dislikes to others and belie their real aversions. That is to say, it is possible that some audiences directly eschew watching their programs instead of complaining,

maybe for other reasons, ~~such as~~. In addition, the information ~~one~~ of the number of complaints is ~~vacuous~~. If there are ~~only~~ ten or ~~fewer~~ complaints, the manager cannot ~~assess~~ the opinion of the majority of viewers.

Most importantly, it is not appropriate to apply the conclusion of late-night news to ~~their~~ every news program, even if the manager ~~came to~~ the right conclusion ~~about~~ for the late-night one/show. It is only by this assumption that the manager ~~has~~ decided ~~to~~ change all his programs. As we all know, late-night news is almost exclusive to people who stay up late. This group of people may have very different tastes ~~concerning/regarding/in relation to~~ a new program ~~than~~ from others.

In conclusion, it is not surprising if the assumptions prove unwarranted and the manager ~~reached~~ gets a wrong conclusion. To make a decision correctly, the manager has to interview some ~~several~~ local businesses and viewers ~~to determine/to find out/to ascertain~~ for their feelings.