Stylus
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British Parliamentary
Debating

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1. Introduction

There is a reason why this guide is not called "How to win in British Parliamentary Debating", or even "How to avoid losing in BPD" – because there is not, will never be, and cannot be a foolproof way of winning, or even avoiding last place, in a debate. If there were, the book would have been written, we would all have read it and debating as a competitive activity would cease to exist!

That being said, the aim of this guide is to help you prepare as much as possible for debate competitions conducted in the British Parliamentary style. We will look at the format of debates, and what are termed the standing orders, the speakers' positions in the debate and the role they are required to fulfil, motions and how (and when) to define them, style and substance (also called 'matter' and 'manner'), the vagaries of judging and how to cope with them, and finally, where to go, and what to do from here.

By the end of the pack, you will hopefully feel confident that you know what you are doing, and to a certain extent, how you are going to do it. Remember, you can have all the advice, encouragement and coaching in the world, but when you go into a debate and you stand up to speak, it's all down to you.

2. The format, *or*, Rules of the game

There are many different styles of debating around the world – US Parliamentary, Australs, even the Dutch do it differently – but the one that concerns us here is British Parliamentary Debating, or BP, for short. This is the standard form used at university level and differs radically from the schools style to which some young debaters are used. BP debates consist of four teams of two speakers each, broken down as follows:

> ➢ 1st Proposition (sometimes called 1st Government)
> ➢ 1st Opposition
> ➢ 2nd Proposition (or Government)
> ➢ 2nd Opposition

The speakers speak in rotation, beginning with the first team member of 1st Proposition ("the Prime Minister"). He or she is followed by the opening speaker for 1st Opposition ("Leader of the Opposition"), who in turn is followed 1st Propositions second speaker ("the Deputy Prime Minister") and so on down the table until all speeches have been completed. The table below explains this.

1st Speaker	Prime Minister	Leader of the Opposition	2nd Speaker
3rd Speaker	Deputy Prime Minister	Deputy Leader of the Opposition	4th Speaker
5th Speaker	Member for Government	Member for the Opposition	6th Speaker
7th Speaker	Government Whip	Opposition Whip	8th Speaker

When all eight speeches have been delivered, the debate is considered at an end, and the judging process begins (see 'Judging', p.18) So far, so straightforward. But there are certain conventions and expectations in BP debates and this is what we mean when talking about the 'rules of the game'.

First, BP debating aims to recreate to a degree the style of debating practised in Parliament and in august institutions such as the Oxford and Cambridge Unions. It is therefore essential that 'Parliamentary language' is used at all times. Thus, debaters are addressed as 'Sir' or 'Madam', the chair of the debate is often referred to as 'Mr Speaker', and debaters will often make reference to 'members of the House'. While this may seem excessively formal, there is good reason. A debate is not an argument in the sense that most of us understand that word – it is not about shouting more loudly or more forcefully than your opponent (see 'Style or substance?' p.16) or insulting them. They may smell a bit, look like a bulldog eating a wasp, or have the most ridiculous hair since Einstein, but pointing out will not win you the debate.

On the contrary, if you are rude, you will be warned by the Chair, and you may lose points, and subsequently, the debate if you continue. Respectful language is what is called for, and what the judges will expect to hear. It should not need to be stressed that vulgar language and swearing are never acceptable, but unfortunately, some people still forget. Debating is about making arguments in a controlled, adult fashion and any swearing is usually severely penalised.

Second, we come to points of information (POIs). These are an integral part of BP debating, and one of the ways in which BP differs from

styles such as Australs. Speeches in BP tend to be of either five or seven minutes (depending on the competition – you will generally be told which before the tournament begins), and the first and last minutes of each speech are 'protected'. This means that no speaker from the opposing teams may interrupt the person making their speech during this time. In the interim three (or five) minutes, however, POIs are positively encouraged. We will look at POIs in more detail later (see 'Positions and roles', p.7), but for now it is enough to say that there are ways of making POIs which are acceptable, and some which are clearly not.

The simplest, and possibly the best, way of offering a POI (we will look at how to *make* the point later) is to stand and say "On a point of information" in a loud, clear voice. "On that point", or more simply, "Point, Sir/Madam" are also acceptable. Whichever you choose, you must wait for the speaker to accept or decline your point. If you are accepted, make your point quickly (about 30 seconds or so). If you are declined, take your seat immediately. What is not acceptable is to stand and simply start speaking without being invited to take the floor, or to offer the point in such a way that the point is made, e.g. "On the fact that violent crime is on the rise and your model only makes this worse…" (It is extremely difficult to give an example in the abstract, but hopefully, you get the idea.)

The last point regarding format and 'rules' is that when a speaker has the floor, that is the only person to whom the judges want to listen and should be listening. You may want to discuss issues as they arise with your partner, for example when to offer a POI and what to say, but you should be able to do this in such a way that the judges are not distracted. If you cannot speak quietly enough (and judges will not be shy about letting you know!), then pass small notes to each other. The House is a respectful

one, and all members, whether speaking or not, are expected to behave in a correct and fitting manner.

3. Positions and roles

This section will be broken down by speaker, outlining what the speaker's position in a debate means, and what is required for 'role fulfilment'. At the end, we will look briefly at the common elements of the debate – that is, things which all speakers need to do in order to score well.

a. The Prime Minister

The job of the first speaker, or Prime Minister, is to set up the debate. This may sound obvious, but is so often overlooked, or simply badly done, that it is worth stressing. What this means in the most basic terms is that the PM states what the debate is about, and what are the boundaries.

The speech will need to consist of some, or all, of the following elements: definition of the motion (if required), the case being presented (what the problem is, why it is a problem, what will be done to solve it), supporting arguments as to how objectives will be achieved, and why achieving those objectives is a good thing.

A case will usually require some form of mechanism, but this is not always true. It is acceptable for 1st Government, and the PM, to set up the debate as one of principle. An example of this would be a motion stating "This House Supports Positive Discrimination for Women in the Army". 1st Government have the option of a mechanism (i.e. exactly how they would positively discriminate) but may choose to run the debate on the principle that positive discrimination for women in the army is a good thing *per se*, rather than introduce any specific form of discrimination. That may be a weaker (or 'soft') case in the eyes of the judges (and may be hard

for **1ˢᵗ** Government to sustain over two speeches), but it is legitimate.

Depending on whether or not a mechanism is put forward, and how involved that mechanism is, the PM will usually make two or three arguments in support of his position, and may outline the further arguments to be made by his/her Deputy.

b. Leader of the Opposition

The Leader of the Opposition performs a role that is in essence similar to that of all remaining speakers in the debate, excepting the Whips on both sides. The speaker should point out any flaws in the mechanism chosen (if there is one), rebut the arguments made by the PM and make substantive arguments that support his/her position.

Rebuttal is essential if you are to defeat **1ˢᵗ** Government, but don't get too bogged down in it. If the mechanism is obviously ridiculous, there is no need to spend three of your five minutes pointing out all that is wrong with it. If you make the 'big' points as to why the mechanism is unworkable, or will make the identified problem worse and not better, that is usually enough for the mechanism to fall. You can then move on to deal with why the supporting arguments (the principles underpinning the mechanism) are also wrong, both directly with rebuttal, and by making your own arguments.

It must be mentioned here that rebuttal is not simply contradiction – what is sometimes called 'the confusion of rebuttal, refutation and repudiation'. All of these are ways of contradicting, but with important differences. If you refute something, you deny

the accuracy or the truth of the argument. If you repudiate something, you reject the validity or authority of it, reject it as unfounded or untrue, or simply refuse to recognize it. Neither of these is enough in a debate. When rebutting, you not only do one or both of the above, but in addition, you say how and why it is wrong or false, and provide the counter-argument that proves it. If you can do that, then the points made by the PM can be made to look very lightweight indeed.

Finally comes your own substantive material. These are points that stand in their own right, and are not the same as rebuttal. The points should introduce new material to the debate, and be supportive of your position in the debate. These are the arguments which the Deputy PM will be expected to deal with in his/her speech.

c. Deputy PM & Deputy Leader of the Opposition

These two positions may be dealt with together, as both speeches are essentially the same. As with the Leader of the Opposition the speeches are expected to consist of rebuttal of the previous speaker's material and new substantive arguments in favour of, or against the motion. The Deputy PM may also need to include some 'reinforcement' of the case, depending on the job done by the Leader of the Opposition. If the mechanism has been attacked, it will need defending, or the attack may stand in the eyes of the judges, but this will form part of the Deputy PM's rebuttal. In both Deputies' speeches, though, there will need to be significant new arguments in support of their Leaders', and, ideally, little left for the second half of the table.

d. Extension Speakers

The Members for Government and Opposition are also known as extension speakers – quite simply, because their role is to extend the debate. There is a lot of confusion, even at university level, as to what constitutes a valid extension, and it is probably easier to define in terms of what it is not, rather than what it is.

An extension is not something which extends the mechanism or definition provided by 1st Government. If the debate is about EU expansion into Turkey, for example, you don't extend by adding Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria! If a motion stating that 'This House Believes in Corporal Punishment' is defined as parents' right to smack their children, it is not legitimate to say that schoolteachers should be allowed to do it as well. You get the idea.

What an extension does do may be defined as one of two things: it either provides a significantly deeper level of analysis of material on the table, or introduces a new element or direction to the debate. New examples to support existing arguments are again not enough. By way of an example, let us imagine that the first half of the debate on corporal punishment has concentrated on rights of the parents, rights of the child, affects on behaviour and development, and the benefits or otherwise to society. A legitimate extension would be to talk about when corporal punishment is used in general, when society does allow or condone, or even practice physical punishment and the principles behind physical/non-physical punishment in general. This is known as widening the debate. Similarly, but conversely, where 1st Government has set up a principled debate (e.g. on positive discrimination) it is entirely legitimate to 'narrow' the debate to talk

about the specific effects of affirmative action, quota systems, etc. Neither of the above contradicts what has been said in the first half of the debate, and adds significant new arguments to the debate, which is precisely for what extension speakers should be aiming.

Don't worry if this seems difficult, confusing, or even gibberish. Some of the best debaters in the world struggle with extensions, and third speaker on either side of the table is recognised as possibly the hardest position from which to speak. Oh, and don't forget that, on top of all this, you still need to rebut what was said before!!!

e. Summaries

The final speaker on each side (the Whip) has a very different role to all others in the debate (and, it must be said, sometimes to each other).

The Government Whip begins much like the others – that is, with rebuttal. But following that, the speech is very different. The Whip's job is to summarise the case for the proposition, and as far as possible, to ensure that the arguments made by his/her teammate are put to the fore. Stressing the strong points of 1st Government, whilst sometimes necessary, is going to convince judges of one thing – that all the good arguments came from 1st Government! On the other hand, don't ignore what was said in the first half of the debate. If you do, then you are only summarising half the debate, and will be marked down accordingly. It is acceptable for the Government Whip to introduce new material in the form of new examples that support existing arguments, but not

to introduce new arguments *per se*. However, given the vagaries of judges, it is probably best to avoid anything that seems too new in the way of examples as well, in case these are misconstrued by the judges.

The Opposition Whip, by contrast, must not introduce any new material whatsoever. The other difference is that, along with the PM, the Opposition Whip may be the only other speaker not required to provide rebuttal. This depends on whether new material is introduced by his/her counterpart. When new material has been introduced it should always be rebutted. If there is nothing new, however, no rebuttal should be necessary. The Opposition Whip, like the speaker before should then summarise the whole debate, focusing on why his/her side have won, and attempting to bring his/her partner's arguments to the fore. The advantage of being Opposition Whip is obvious – as the last speaker in the debate, you have a fantastic opportunity to tell the judges exactly what the debate has been about, why opposition beats proposition, and why the strongest arguments were those made by your teammate. Best of all, there's no-one standing up after you to contradict what you have said!

f. Common Elements

It is essential to remain as involved in the whole debate as possible when not giving your speech, which means offering POIs whenever you can. If as PM you say nothing following your opening speech, or as Whip you say nothing until it is your turn to speak, in a close debate it is unlikely that you will win, especially when everyone else has engaged with all the speakers on the other

side of the table. Similarly, you must take POIs during your speech to show that you are responding to the moment and not just reading a prepared text. As to how many POIs you should take, a good rule of thumb is at least one, and no more than two, for a five minute speech (remember, there are only three 'unprotected' minutes) and at least two, and no more than three, for a seven minute speech. POIs are not separate to your role, they are part of it, and not offering or taking one can again be enough to cost you the win in a close room.

So what should you say? The POI should be as relevant as possible to what is being said, and should help your side and damage the arguments of the other. It is difficult, obviously to give an example in the abstract, but you could try something like "Statistics show that while crime is decreasing, violent crime is increasing. How does your proposal for 24-hour pub licences help this?"

And when should you accept the offer of a POI? When you know you are on solid ground. If you are unsure about the validity of one of your arguments, and all four people on the other side leap to their feet, it's probably not a good idea to invite them to tell you why you are wrong! Wait until you're making your strong arguments, and take a point then, if you can.

4. Motions and definitions

Most debate competitions that use BP format prefer motions which are 'closed' or 'semi-closed' – that is, motions which require little or no definition. They may require a mechanism, but that is the choice of 1st Government. What they do not need is redefining in terms of what is to be debated.

An example of a 'closed' motion is 'This House Believes the EU Should Begin Expansion Talks with the Ukraine". It is clear and unequivocal what is to be debated, and no definition is necessary, or even desirable. A 'semi-closed' motion would be 'This House Believes the EU Should Begin Expansion Talks with North Africa' – again it is clear what is to be debated, but it would be acceptable for 1st Government to redefine North Africa as Morocco and Algeria but not Tunisia, for example. This is sometimes called a policy definition, because the redefinition of the motion is linked to the specific case and arguments which 1st Government wish to present. It may also be called a 'mechanistic' definition, again, because the redefinition is essential to the workability of the mechanism.

As was said earlier, the decision whether to include a mechanism or run a principled case rests with 1st Government. Either is legitimate, although it must be said again that some judges will perceive the absence of a mechanism as a 'soft' case, i.e. you have shied away from the difficult part of 1st Government's job. You will not necessarily lose because of this, but you may make Opposition's job easier for them.

By the same token, if 1st Government chooses not to include a mechanism, 1st Opposition should mention the fact, but should not make it

the whole of their opposition, or even their rebuttal. Doing so shows a reluctance to engage with the principled arguments of Government, which may be seen as a concession. The best advice is to include a mechanism where possible, as long as the mechanism is not so complicated and involved that it takes up almost all the PM's speech! That gives too much to Opposition, as it likely that the more complicated the mechanism, the more difficulties there will be with it, and you are also leaving open the first arguments for Opposition to make – never a good thing.

5. Style or substance?

The question here is, what matters most, being a charming, witty and engaging speaker, or having so many facts and figures to support your arguments, and the analysis to go with it that you cannot be beaten on substance? Once again, if there was one right answer, we wouldn't need a guide like this.

The fact is, even judges at World Championships cannot begin to agree on this! The Australians will always prioritise your matter (substance) over your manner; in Ireland you could win a debate just telling jokes for seven minutes. Happily, in Britain, we fall somewhere between the two, and marks for speakers are awarded equally for manner and matter. This is the fairest way, as it does not give an unfair advantage to either the comic or the encyclopaedia that sends you to sleep.

Matter is important – you cannot win a debate without providing examples to support your argument, and some analysis as to why that example works, why it works for *your* case, and why it is better than the example given by the other side of the table. But there is nothing more boring than someone who reels off facts and figures in a barely audible, monotonous voice, looking down at the floor. If the judge is so bored that he stops listening then it doesn't matter how good your argument is – if the judge doesn't hear it, you won't get the credit.

That is not to say that you must be the funniest person in the world to win. Not everyone is, or can be funny, and when someone tries and fails, it can be worse than not trying. But what everyone can, and should do, is have inflection, stress the words and the points you want the judges to

notice (try slowing down your speech when making your 'killer' point), and make regular eye contact with all the judges. If you can crack a joke, great, you should do so, but do not make your speech a stand-up routine. Being funny won't win the debate (except in Ireland!) so make sure that, if you are funny, you are funny whilst being relevant and making strong arguments. If you can do that, you will be very hard to beat.

A word must also be said about structure, which is part of both manner and matter. The simple fact is, most judges are quite simple, and will get lost in your speech if you don't 'signpost' what you are saying. At the university level, some of the best speakers lose because they forget their structure (or they think they are good enough not to need it!)

Everybody needs good structure. This is because when you are speaking and making good eye contact with the judges it can be difficult for them to note everything down. A clear structure highlights points at the beginning in big bold headings ("This is what I am going to talk about today [1,2,3]), flags each new point as it is raised ("This is the 1st/2nd/3rd point I am going to bring to the table"), and finishes by briefly recapping those points ("So what have I told you? I've told you [1…2…3…]).

You can then be sure that the judge has had plenty of opportunity to note down what the points are, so that when you are developing them in the middle of your speech, he/she can concentrate on the argument and analysis that goes with it. Every debate culture in the world recognizes the importance of clear structure, and it is, fortunately, one of the few things on which we all agree!

6. Judging

All judges, although it may not seem like it, are human – honest! That is to say, they are not perfect, debate-judging machines. They can (and do) make mistakes. But they try very, very hard not to make mistakes, and most of the time, they succeed.

So what will they look for from you? Put simply, all of the above! Structure, style, arguments backed up by examples and supported by analysis, good rebuttal of an opposing team's arguments, and plenty of POIs being offered. All these help you win a debate, but there will be times when you do all of this, and still don't win. So what happened?

The judge has to balance the arguments he/she has heard – what were the 'killer' points, and who made them? Did the style of the PM overcome the substance of the Leader of the Opposition? It is very rare that debaters will be evenly matched in all areas, and the judge must decide what was more important *in that debate.*

What a judge should never do is bring his/her own knowledge to the debate. Judges are not there to judge you on what *wasn't* said, or on what they *expect* to be said, they judge on what has been brought to the table by you. That is not to say that, if the 'big' arguments have been missed, they cannot mention it in their feedback (e.g. "I was surprised that nobody mentioned X, as it is central to the debate, [but it has not affected the decision in any way]…) as feedback is not just about why they made the decision they did, it is about helping you to become better debaters.

So what will happen when the debate is done, and judgment has been made? For most debates, you will receive 'open' adjudication – you

will be told your position in the debate, and reasons for it. For later rounds, semi-finals, etc., it will generally be kept secret until the finalists are announced. This helps to keep the suspense. In any case, once a decision is announced, you can then approach your judges for feedback.

Remember, even if you disagree with the decision, listen to the reasons for it. Most judges have debated before, some to an exceptionally high level, and will be able to justify their choice of winner and loser. If you think a decision is wrong, and the 'justification' given also seems wrong, you may wish to complain to the tournament organisers – they won't change the decision, but will look carefully at that judge in the future.

Be careful, though. If you complain about every decision where you lose or come third, people may start to think that the problem lies with you rather than with your judges. Bad judging does sometimes happen, and it can be devastating, but all debaters suffer from it, and all have to deal with it. It is unfortunate, but it is also the nature of debating, and how you cope with a bad decision, and how you respond to it in the next round, often says more about you as a debater than winning every round.

7. What next?

There is only so much that can be taught in a guide such as this. It can explain the basics, but there really is no substitute for practice. Have as many debates as you can, try your hand at judging one or two (you'll soon see how difficult it can be!), read as much as you can about current affairs, as these are likely to be the issues you will be debating. Most importantly, if you have strong beliefs about one topic or another, try building a case that puts forward the opposite point of view. You may not always be asked to debate o the side with which you already agree! above all, whenever, wherever and whichever topic you debate, remember – it may be a serious activity whilst you are doing it, but it should also be fun! So practice as much as you can, read as much as you can, be prepared to think on your feet, and enjoy it!

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SAMBA Worlds Format Debating Guidelines -- DRAFT

Drafted by Alfred Snider, University of Vermont
Modeled on WUDC rules, with some changes

Speech	Speaker	Length	Content
1	1st Govt Member or Prime Minister	7 minutes	Interpretation of motion Case for the Government (2-3 major points)
2	1st Opp Member or Leader of the Opposition	7 minutes	Refute govt case Present new reasons to reject the motion
3	2nd Govt Member or Member of the Government	7 minutes	Defend and extend govt case Present new reason for the motion
4	2nd Opp Member or Member of the Opposition	7 minutes	Refute new govt reason for the motion Refute original government case Present new reason to reject the motion
5	3rd Govt Member or Member of the Government	7 minutes	Refute new reason to reject the motion Defend original govt arguments Introduce major new arguments for the motion – lead the debate in a new direction without being disloyal
6	3rd Opp Member or Member of the Opposition	7 minutes	Refute new reason for the motion Refute previous government case Defend and extend major opp arguments to reject the motion
7	Govt Whip	7 minutes	No new issues Refute and rebuild previous arguments Summarize the debate and case for the govt
8	Opp Whip	7 minutes	No new issues Refute and rebuild previous arguments Summarize the debate and the case for the opp

No preparation time between speeches.
Speakers 2-6 should balance refutation with new material.

GENERAL ADVICE
- Make well-developed major arguments in favor of your side of the motion. Focus on better arguments as opposed to more arguments.
- Balance refutation and rebuilding with presenting new materials.
- Offer Points of Information only to the opposing side.
- Stay active by trying to make Points of Information.
- Be loyal to the other team on your side; don't contradict them or argue against them, but you are competing against them.
- Only contest the government interpretation of the motion as a last resort.

Part 1— Introduction

1.1 The format of the debate

1.1.1 The debate will consist of four teams of two persons, a chairperson (who may or may not be) an adjudicator or panel of adjudicators.
1.1.2 Teams will consist of the following members:
1.1.3 Members will deliver substantive speeches in the following order:

(1) First Government Member; or Prime Minister
(2) First Opposition Member; or Leader of the Opposition
(3) Second Government Member;
(4) Second Opposition Member;
(5) Third Government Member;
(6) Third Opposition Member;
(7) Government Whip;
(8) Opposition Whip.

Opening Government Team:
"First Government member" and "Second Government member";

Opening Opposition Team:
" "First Opposition member" and "Second Opposition member";

Closing Government Team:
" "Third Government member" and "Opposition Whip";

Closing Opposition Team:
"Third Opposition member" and " Opposition Whip".

1.1.4 Members will deliver a substantive speech of seven minutes duration and should offer points of information while members of the opposing teams are speaking.

1.2 The motion

1.2.1 The motion should be unambiguously worded.
1.2.2 The motion should reflect that this is an international activity.
1.2.3 The members should debate the motion in the spirit of the motion and the tournament.

1.3 Preparation

1.3.1 The debate should commence 30 minutes after the motion is announced.
1.3.2 Teams should arrive at their debate within five minutes of the scheduled starting time for that debate.
1.3.3 Members are permitted to use printed or written material during preparation but not during the debate. Hand written notes made during preparation are allowed. The use of electronic equipment is prohibited during the debate unless needed by debaters qualifying under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

1.4 Points of Information

1.4.1 Points of Information (questions directed to the member speaking) may be asked between first minute mark and the six-minute mark of the members' speeches (speeches are of seven minutes duration).

1.4.2 To ask a Point of Information, a member should stand, extend their hand towards the member speaking. The member may announce that they would like to ask a "Point of Information" or use other words to this effect.
1.4.3 The member who is speaking may accept or decline to answer the Point of Information.
1.4.4 Points of Information should not exceed 15 seconds in length.
1.4.5 The member who is speaking may ask the person offering the Point of Information to sit down where the offerer has had a reasonable opportunity to be heard and understood.
1.4.6 Members should attempt to answer at least two Points of Information during their speech. Members should also offer Points of Information.
1.4.7 Points of Information should be assessed in accordance with clause 3.3.4 of these rules.
1.4.8 Points of Order and Points of Personal Privilege are not permitted.

1.5 Timing of the speeches

1.5.1 Speeches should be seven minutes in duration (this should be signaled by two strikes of the gavel). Speeches over seven minutes and 15 seconds may be penalized.
1.5.2 Points of Information may only be offered between the first minute mark and the six-minute mark of the speech (this period should be signaled by one strike of the gavel at the first minute and one strike at the sixth minute).
1.5.3 It is the duty of the Speaker of the House to time speeches.
1.5.4 In the absence of the Speaker of the House, it is the duty of the Chair of the Adjudication panel to ensure that speeches are timed.

1.6 The adjudication

1.6.1 The debate should be adjudicated by a panel of at least three adjudicators, where this is possible. During preliminary rounds there will usually be one adjudicator.
1.6.2 At the conclusion of the debate, the adjudicator(s) rank the teams, from first placed to last place. (see Part 5: The Adjudication).
1.6.3 There will be verbal critique of the debate. The verbal adjudication should be delivered in accordance with clause 5.5 of these rules.

Part 2 — Definitions

2.1 The definition

2.1.1 The definition should state the issue (or issues) for debate arising out of the motion and state the meaning of any terms in the motion which require interpretation.
2.1.2 The Prime Minister should provide the definition at the beginning of his or her speech.
2.1.3 The definition must:

(a) have a clear and logical link to the motion - this means that an average reasonable person would accept the link made by the member between the motion and the definition (where there is no such link the definition is sometimes referred to as a "squirrel");
(b) not be self-proving - a definition is self-proving when the case is that something should or should not be done and there is no reasonable rebuttal. A definition is may also be self-proving when the case is that a certain state of affairs exists or does not exist and there is no reasonable rebuttal (these definitions are sometimes referred to as "truisms").
(c) not be time set - this means that the debate must take place in the present and that the definition cannot set the debate in the past or the future; and
(d) not be place set unfairly - this means that the definition cannot restrict the debate so narrowly to a particular geographical or political location that a participant of the tournament could not reasonably be expected to have knowledge of the place.

2.2 Challenging the definition

2.2.1 The Leader of the Opposition may challenge the definition if it violates clause 2.1.3 of these rules. The Leader of the Opposition should clearly state that he or she is challenging the definition.

2.2.2 The Leader of the Opposition should substitute an alternative definition after challenging the definition of the Prime Minister.

2.3 Assessing the definitional challenge

2.3.1 The adjudicator should determine the definition to be 'unreasonable' where it violates clause 2.1.3 of these rules.

2.3.2 The onus to establish that the definition is unreasonable is on the members asserting that the definition is unreasonable.

2.3.3 Where the definition is unreasonable, the opposition should substitute an alternative definition that should be accepted by the adjudicator provided it is not unreasonable.

2.3.4 Where the definition of the Opening Government is unreasonable and an alternative definition is substituted by the Opening Opposition, the Closing Government may introduce matter which is inconsistent with the matter presented by the Opening Government and consistent with the definition of the Opening Opposition.

2.3.5 If the Opening Opposition has substituted a definition that is also unreasonable, the Closing Government may challenge the definition of the Opening Opposition and substitute an alternative definition.

2.3.6 If the Closing Government has substituted a definition that is also unreasonable (in addition to the unreasonable definitions of the Opening Government and Opening Opposition, the Closing Opposition may challenge the definition of the Closing Government and substitute an alternative definition.

Part 3 — Matter

3.1 The definition of matter

3.1.1 Matter is the content of the speech. It is the arguments a debater uses to further his or her case and persuade the audience.

3.1.2 Matter includes arguments and reasoning, examples, case studies, facts and any other material that attempts to further the case.

3.1.3 Matter includes positive (or substantive) material and rebuttal (arguments specifically aimed to refute the arguments of the opposing team(s)). Matter includes Points of Information.

3.2 The elements of matter

3.2.1 Matter should be relevant, logical and consistent.

3.2.2 Matter should be relevant. It should relate to the issues of the debate: positive material should support the case being presented and rebuttal should refute the material being presented by the opposing team(s). The Member should appropriately prioritize and apportion time to the dynamic issues of the debate.

3.2.3 Matter should be logical. Arguments should be developed logically in order to be clear and well reasoned and therefore plausible. The conclusion of all arguments should support the member's case.

3.2.4 Matter should be consistent. Members should ensure that the matter they present is consistent within their speech, their team and the remainder of the members on their side of the debate (subject to clauses 2.3.4, 2.3.5 or 2.3.6 of these rules).

3.2.5 All Members should present positive matter (except the final two members in the debate) and all members should present rebuttal (except the first member in the debate).

3.2.6 All Members should attempt to answer at least two points of information during their own speech and offer points of information during opposing speeches.

3.3 Assessing matter

3.3.1 The matter presented should be persuasive. 'The elements of matter' should assist an adjudicator to assess the persuasiveness and credibility of the matter presented.

3.3.2 Matter should be assessed from the viewpoint of the average reasonable person. Adjudicators should analyze the matter presented and assess its persuasiveness, while disregarding any specialist knowledge they may have on the issue of the debate.

3.3.3 Adjudicators should not allow bias to influence their assessment. Debaters should not be discriminated against on the basis of religion, sex, race, color, nationality, sexual preference, age, social status or disability.

3.3.4 Points of information should be assessed according to the effect they have on the persuasiveness of the cases of both the member answering the point of information and the member offering the point of information.

Part 4 — Manner

4.1 The definition of manner

4.1.1 Manner is the presentation of the speech. It is the style and structure a member uses to further his or her case and persuade the audience.
the audience.

4.1.2 Manner is comprised of many separate elements. Some, but not all, of these elements are listed below.

4.2 The elements of style

4.2.1 The elements of style include eye contact, voice modulation, hand gestures, language, the use of notes and any other element which may affect the effectiveness of the presentation of the member.

4.2.2 Eye contact will generally assist a member to persuade an audience as it allows the member to appear more sincere.

4.2.3 Voice modulation will generally assist a member to persuade an audience as the debater may emphasize important arguments and keep the attention of the audience. This includes the pitch, tone, and volume of the member's voice and the use of pauses.

4.2.4 Hand gestures will generally assist a member to emphasize important arguments. Excessive hand movements may however be distracting and reduce the attentiveness of the audience to the arguments.

4.2.5 Language should be clear and simple. Members who use language, which is too verbose or confusing, may detract from the argument if they lose the attention of the audience.

4.2.6 The use of notes is permitted, but members should be careful that they do not rely on their notes too much and detract from the other elements of manner.

4.3 The elements of structure

4.3.1 The elements of structure include the structure of the speech of the member and the structure of the speech of the team.

4.3.2 The matter of the speech of each member must be structured. The member should organize his or her matter to improve the effectiveness of their presentation.

4.3.3 The matter of the team must be structured. The team should organize their matter to improve the effectiveness of their presentation. The team should:

(a) contain a consistent approach to the issues being debated; and
(b) allocate positive matter to each member where both members of the team are introducing positive matter; and
(a) include: an introduction, conclusion and a series of arguments; and
(b) be well timed in accordance with the time limitations and the need to prioritize and apportion time to matter.

4.4 Assessing manner

4.4.1 Adjudicators should assess the elements of manner together in order to determine the overall effectiveness of the member's presentation. Adjudicators should assess whether the member's presentation is assisted or diminished by their manner.
4.4.2 Adjudicators should be aware that at a World Championship, there are many styles which are appropriate, and that they should not discriminate against a member simply because the manner would be deemed 'inappropriate Parliamentary debating' in their own country.
4.4.3 Adjudicators should not allow bias to influence their assessment. Members should not be discriminated against on the basis of religion, sex, race, color, nationality, language (subject to Rule 4.2.4), sexual preference, age, social status or disability.

Part 5 — The Adjudication

5.1 The role of the adjudicator

5.1.1 The adjudicator must:
(a) Determine the rankings of the teams;
(b) Determine the team grades;
(c) Determine the speaker marks;
(d) Provide a verbal adjudication to the members; and
(e) Complete any documentation required by the tournament.5.1.2
5.1.3 Adjudicators should acknowledge that adjudicators on a panel may form different or opposite views of the debate. Adjudicators should therefore attempt to base their conclusions on these rules in order to limit subjectivity and to provide a consistent approach to the assessment of debates.
5.1.4 Adjudicators on panels should rank each team, and the two teams with the highest ranks shall advance. Ties shall be broken based on preliminary rankings and then points.

5.2 Ranking teams

5.2.1 Teams should be ranked from first place to last place. First placed teams should be awarded three points, second placed teams should be awarded two points, third placed teams should be awarded one point and fourth placed teams should be awarded zero points.
5.2.2 Teams may receive zero points where they fail to arrive at the debate more than five minutes after the scheduled time for debate.
5.2.3 Teams may receive zero points where the adjudicators unanimously agree that the Member has (or Members have) harassed another debater on the basis of religion, sex, race, colour, nationality, sexual preference or disability.
5.2.4 Where a unanimous decision cannot be reached after conferral, the decision of the majority will determine the rankings.

5.3 Grading and marking the teams

5.3.1 Each adjudicator may mark the teams at their discretion.
5.3.2 Team grades and marks should be given the following interpretation:
Grade

Marks
      Meaning
A

180-200
      Excellent to flawless. The standard you would expect to see from a team at the Semi Final / Grand Final level of the tournament. The team has many strengths and few, if any, weaknesses.

B

160-179
        Above average to very good. The standard you would expect to see from a team at the finals level or in contention to make to the finals. The team has clear strengths and some minor weaknesses.
C

140-159
        Average. The team has strengths and weaknesses in roughly equal proportions.
D

120-139
        Poor to below average. The team has clear problems and some minor strengths.
E

100-119
        Very poor. The team has fundamental weaknesses and few, if any, strengths.

5.4 Marking the members
5.4.1 Individual members' marks should be given the following interpretation:
Grade

Marks
        Meaning
A

90-100
        Excellent to flawless. The standard of speech you would expect to see from a speaker at the Semi Final / Grand Final level of the tournament. This speaker has many strengths and few, if any, weaknesses.
B

80-89
        Above average to very good. The standard you would expect to see from a speaker at the finals level or in contention to make to the finals. This speaker has clear strengths and some minor weaknesses.
C

70-79
        Average. The speaker has strengths and weaknesses and roughly equal proportions.
D

60-69
        Poor to below average. The team has clear problems and some minor strengths.
E

50-59
        Very poor. This speaker has fundamental weaknesses and few, if any, strengths.

5.5 Verbal adjudications

5.5.1 At the conclusion of the conferral, the adjudication panel should provide a verbal adjudication of the debate.
5.5.2 The verbal adjudication should be delivered by the adjudicators.

5.5.3 The verbal adjudication should:

5.5.4 The verbal adjudication should be at lest 10 minutes.
5.5.5 The members must not harass the adjudicators following the verbal adjudication.
5.5.6 The members may approach an adjudicator for further clarification following the verbal adjudication; these inquiries must at all times be polite and non-confrontational.
(a) identify the order in which the teams were ranked
(b) explain the reasons for the rankings of team, ensuring that each team is referred to in this explanation; and
(c) provide constructive comments to individual members where the adjudication panel believes this is necessary.
5.5.7 The verbal adjudication should not exceed 30 minutes.

TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES

Differences
Because there are four teams in each room, pairings need to be done a little differently than two-team debate formats. This is especially true of smaller tournaments.
- Teams may debate against each other a second time, though in different positions
- Judges may judge teams a second time, though in a different position

Pairing criteria
After two or more pre-set debates, power pairing will begin. Power pairing will attempt to match teams so that: (in this order, if possible)
- Teams debate who have similar records
- Teams rotate among positions in the debate – 1G, 2G, 1O, 2O
- Teams debate who have not debated before

Judge assignment
The tab room assigns judges. No judge should adjudicate a team with whom he or she is affiliated. Judges should indicate affiliation at the beginning of the tournament. Judges for the pre-set rounds should be randomly assigned. After that judges should be assigned to the higher rounds based on their ratings by debaters.
At the conclusion of each oral adjudication statement each team will rate the judge(s) for that debate on a five-point scale, with 5 being best and 1 being worst. Judges with higher ratings will be used in either top rounds or "break rounds" based on the discretion of the tab room.
When possible three judges should be assigned to elimination rounds.
Judges should be assigned to elimination rounds based on rating points.

Breaking
Teams will; advance to the elimination rounds based on placing points (3-2-1-0), with ties being broken by speaker points, high-low speaker points, double high-low speaker points, and then by a coin flip. Because the point values are large, this should not happen.
Teams will break on the following basis:
4-8 teams = Final
9-16 teams = Semifinal
17-32 teams = Quarterfinal
33-64 teams = Octafinal
In elimination rounds the top two rated teams will advance to the next level.

Public Speaking:
A professional
approach

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Contents

1. Who does it, and who needs it?

The short answer is everybody. All people, in all walks of life will need to communicate in public. That much is obvious. But what isn't obvious to everybody is just how often we use public speaking, and more general communication skills, in day-to-day life. Every time we meet someone on the street, every time we enter a shop to make a purchase; in short, every time we speak, we should be using our communication skills to the fore.

The purpose of communication is simple: we are attempting to get across a particular message. We are perhaps trying to convince someone of our position, of our point of view, or to buy into a particular idea or purchase a particular product. Or we might have a specific agenda, a goal in mind that we wish to achieve. Whichever it might be, it is often, if not always, the case that when we communicate we are looking to persuade somebody of something. With that in mind, we need to focus on how we communicate, what we are doing when communicating, and how we can try to make ourselves more persuasive generally, and particularly when addressing an audience in public.

Certain professions clearly have more need and use for this than others, and often we find that practitioners of those professions have learned the various techniques that make them persuasive. Again, once they have those skills they are often able to deploy them in their day-to-day life and therefore are able to achieve what they want, when they want it, most of the time. Politicians, lawyers, teachers and actors all have their own techniques, from which we can learn to be more effective communicators, more persuasive communicators, and how to get what we want (be that getting the right message across, or achieving the right outcome) more of the time.

By drawing on those techniques and looking at the more technical skills from the world of theatre, we can learn the tricks that effective communicators use all the time. With practice, they can become second nature to us; when we no longer look like we are trying too hard, the results will always be better.

2. When are we going to use it?

As we have already said, communication skills are needed, and used, every day, in every walk of life. We are always in a position when we will need to persuade somebody of something – whether it be negotiating a sale (as either vendor or purchaser), making a speech from the stump, giving a presentation to a class or boardroom, or simply trying to convince someone of the inherent right of our arguments.

Clearly, some roles will need these skills more, and more often. People who are engaged in debate, whether as a competitive activity or no; people who are looking to enter, or are already immersed in the worlds of business, law, and politics; people who want to set up their own enterprise: they all need to be able to persuade people. But of what? Are they trying to persuade people of different things each time, or is there an element of commonality in what they do?

The answer is, whilst some of what might be being said is specific, the first objective is always the same. We know from various studies of the psychology of social conformity that people like people who they think are like them. Similarly, we trust those we think are like us, and are far more ready to buy into the ideas they present. It's the same with salespeople. We like those salespeople who appear most like us; that is why sales courses teach techniques such as 'mirroring', where the same phrases are used by both parties. Sales people are often taught to find out about the person to whom they are selling, to try to identify some common ground, so that they can get the person 'on side'. The reason for this is obvious: if we trust those people we like, we will trust more readily the salesman we think is most like us. We will feel less like we are being 'sold to', and consequently, we will be more ready to buy. It is a truism of sales training that 'people buy people before they buy products', meaning that we buy into someone's manner before we begin to trust what they say about other things.

All the techniques which we would hope to learn are designed in essence to make us as speakers more likeable to our audience, whomever that might be. It is not possible (or perhaps even desirable) to be liked by all people, equally, but we can try to appeal to the broadest number possible, by moderating what we do and avoiding extreme modes of behaviour. It is important to remember that, as Perquillit tells us, "The advocate who seeks to persuade must first seek to please." Only when people are willing to listen to what we have to say will we have a chance to convince them we are right. And people will only listen if it is pleasant to do so.

3. How do we do it?

a. Communication breakdown

By this, we do not mean 'a breakdown in communication' but rather 'a breakdown *of* communication', as it is important to know first how we communicate generally, before we begin to look at specific areas of communication we might want to improve.

Through studies of communication, we know that anywhere between 70% and 80% of communication is non-verbal; that is to say, approximately _ of what is understood has nothing to do either with the words you say or how you say them. In face-to-face communication, the vast majority of what we communicate is done so through our body language and facial expressions. When there is conflict between what is being said, and the body language that accompanies it, our natural reaction is to believe not the words but the demeanour of the person. So it is imperative that we ensure that we are delivering a constant message through all media; otherwise we will only convince people of their own confusion.

When looking at that portion of communication that is verbal, there is a further breakdown: if we take an approximate figure of 25% - 30% of all communication being both the words we say, and how we say them, studies have shown that only 7% of the overall total is what is actually said! The remaining 18% - 23% is dependent on our voice; the pitch, tone, pace, volume, even the accent contribute more to others' understanding of our message than the text we have selected so carefully.

Added to this is the problem known as 'the 1/3 rule': one third of what we say is never heard; one third of what is heard is never listened to; and one third of what is listened to is never understood. By using the various techniques of the professionals, we can overcome as far as possible these obstacles. By using our voice effectively, we will ensure that more of what we say is heard; by making ourselves interesting to listen to, we will ensure that people do listen, more of the time; by using language appropriately, we will ensure that people understand. We will look at these potential obstacles in more detail later, but we must first deal with those aspects of non-verbal communication, to ensure there are no conflicting messages.

b. Body Language

Body language is something that we are all aware of to a certain degree; some people are experts in reading body language, and are particularly good at detecting abnormal behaviour in body language which might indicate that someone is being defensive or is lying. But we are most aware of body language when it is bad, when someone either moves not

at all, or excessively. The reason for this is simple: we notice things that distract us, and good body language is not distracting. That said, there is no right or wrong way to stand, no measurement of how much you should gesticulate, or how often. And this is not the place for a detailed examination of the study of body language. But there are a few things which might help people to find what works for them.

When speaking in public, we will, in all likelihood be on our feet. We therefore need to find a stance that is comfortable, and that fits with what we are trying to say. Standing with the feet shoulder-width apart works for most people, as there is no undue stress on the muscles in the back and the leg. A much wider stance, or a narrower one is more difficult to maintain as the stresses applied to individual muscle groups are increased. Standing in this way also helps with breathing (see '**Using the voice as a tool**').

Gestures, when appropriate, can highlight the text we are delivering in much the same way as formatting a document on a word processor. Using hands to emphasise a particular point is a very effective way of helping an audience to remember it. But just like formatting, when it is overdone it ceases to have any effect. An entire essay presented in bold text or in italics has no highlighting effect; similarly, if we (over)use the same gestures all the time, they no longer act as pointers, but as a distraction. There is also no right or wrong way to gesture; with practice we will all know what feels natural, what feels *right*, and therefore what will appear most comfortable to an audience. The last word on gesticulation is to keep it small. That doesn't mean that people at the back of the auditorium shouldn't be able to see it, but that the gesture shouldn't hide what is being said. Remember that we need the largest possible number of people to like us when we are speaking; keeping our gestures moderate will alienate as few as possible

c. Facial Expressions

Facial expressions tell us a huge amount about the message being delivered, and about the demeanour of the person delivering that message. However, as most public speaking occurs in a large auditorium, its importance diminishes as people are rarely that close. With the notable exception of political conferences, where giant screens flank the stage and project a magnified image of the speaker's face, simple, neutral facial expressions are all that is needed for the majority of speeches.

A smile often helps. Try smiling at someone (not in a creepy way) and see how quickly they respond with a smile – it's a natural reaction, and one to which we are all prone. Again, smiling at people, and getting them to smile back is a good way of being likeable, and we know that likeability is something we want and need to achieve. But smiling all the time, smiling when it is not appropriate or jars with what is being said – all that will do

is send conflicting messages that will confuse and ultimately turn off an audience.

Sometimes, though, we might be addressing a group small enough for them to be aware of all our expressions. It might seem simplistic to say it, but expressions should as far as possible match the text – the chosen look should reflect and support the thrust of what is being said. And again, we need to remember that the more extreme our facial expressions, the fewer people are likely to find them attractive.

We can practice expressions of emotions (surprise, anger, humour, etc.) by ourselves, with nothing more complex than a mirror. That is how actors do it, so that when called upon to look surprised or horrified or whatever, they know into which position to pull their faces. As public speakers, we shouldn't need that level of theatrics, but some reinforcement of the emotion of our point can help us to be very persuasive indeed.

d. The Voice

This is where it gets serious, and this why the voice, or using the voice has a section all of its own. As public speakers, the voice is the most effective tool, or weapon, we have. Used well, we can carry our audience on a journey from the start of our speech (our departure point) to our destination. And that destination is not the end of our speech, but getting the audience to the point where they are ready to say, "Yes. Whatever it is you are selling, yes!"

We can make that journey as meandering and as scenic as we like, making the passenger on that journey feel as relaxed and as comfortable as possible, or we can race through to the end, hoping that we have carried everyone with us breathlessly, and only checking once we have reached the end. Unsurprisingly, neither of those methods is the most effective. We need as the drivers of this journey to have a clear focus on just where is our ultimate destination, just what it is we want to achieve. But we must not have the attitude of getting there as quickly as possible, even at the cost of losing some people along the way. We need to make our passengers on this journey as comfortable as possible; we need to check that they have seen the points of interest along the way, and that they are happy to continue on our journey with us. Only then can we be sure that when we reach our destination our audience are standing happily alongside us, and are ready to buy, or have already bought, whatever it is we are selling. Learning to use the voice as a tool of the trade is the best way of achieving that.

4. Using the voice as a tool

a. Breathing

The single most important thing to remember when attempting any kind of speech is breathing. As it is something we all do unconsciously, we are often unaware of how we are breathing, and for effective public speaking this is absolutely crucial. Sound is created by air being pushed out from the lungs and chest across the vocal chords, causing them to vibrate. It is (almost) impossible to make any sort of sound when inhaling; indeed, the only people who seem able to do it with any regularity are Finns, for reasons which remain unexplained! The type of sound created depends on how much air is pushed, at what speed, and then by the formation of lips and tongue as the sound passes across them, to give the sound its form. But in order to control the sound we produce, we need to be able to control our breathing, too.

All actors and singers are trained from the beginning to breathe not from the chest as most people do, but from the diaphragm. This means that the muscle located centrally at the base of the ribcage is controlling the amount of air inhaled, and the rate at which that air is exhaled. This means that, generally, there is more resonance to the sound being produced as it comes from lower in the belly rather than high up in the chest. This allows for a warmer, richer sound, and one that can fill a room without necessarily being loud. It is possible to practice breathing from the diaphragm, simply by placing a hand over the muscle on concentrating on that muscle moving when breathing in and out. We can also practice pushing air out using the same muscle, increasing the force with which we do so until the sound becomes audible.

When breathing just from the chest, the sound produced is generally of a higher pitch, and thinner, meaning that it does not carry as well in large or filled rooms. It is also that much more difficult to show variety in pitch, tone, etc. when speaking from the chest and that hinders the attempt to make the voice as interesting as possible. Again, we can practise breathing in this way, and we can listen to the difference in sound that it produces.

The last point about breathing is control. Just a singer learns to breathe at the correct times so as to capture perfectly the phrasing of the music, so the effective public speaker controls their breathing in the same way. By controlling the flow of breath out, we can ensure that we do not need to breathe in the middle of a word, or of an important idea, as that would break the flow. People who have trained as singers have a natural advantage here, but again, it is quite simple to practise. Simply breathe in as deeply as you can, and breath out, making a sound. Try to keep the note steady for as long as possible, and time yourself doing this. As soon as the note starts to waver, you may stop. The trick here is not to produce

a pitch-perfect note (although if you can, your friends will find it more pleasant!), but to produce a steady sound for as long as possible. The longer you can hold the note steady, the more control you have over your breathing.

b. Pitch

The pitch of a voice is a natural characteristic of it, and we do not want to change too much that is natural. Remember, we are at our most likeable when we are comfortable with what we are doing and saying, so keeping things as natural as possible will always be the best way of communicating.

There are times, though, when Nature can be bettered. Some people have a naturally high-pitched voice, and those people often do well to try and modify the extremes of their voice. It is a fact that lower-pitched voices often resonate more, are easier to hear in a full auditorium as they sound richer, and for some reason are associated with authority. Think of when we say someone spoke with *gravitas*; very often we mean that the pitch of their voice and their tone were in the lower register, and this somehow transposes in the mind to a seriousness which is then equated with subject matter.

However, as with all things, variety is also important. It is unlikely that the entirety of our speech will require the same pitch – in fact, if it does, then we probably need to go away and think about the speech. If it all requires the same serious pitch, we might want to think about introducing some levity here and there to break things up a little. And in those lighter moments, that is exactly where a lighter pitch can be used. It's almost like verbal highlighting: our pitch tells our audience whether something is serious and needs to be weighted as such, or when something is comedic, lighter and thus inviting a release of the tension, or even laughter.

c. Tone

Tone is inextricably linked to pitch. As with pitch, the tone in which we say something is directly connected to the seriousness or otherwise of the subject. Where the two differ is that we are often much more aware of tone as something we decide and control, something less endemic to our natural speech.

Tone does not just relate to seriousness, either. Harder edges to the sounds of vowels can make one sound alternately serious, firm, adamant, angry, defiant, confident or bombastic. All of these might be useful at some point, and it is important to practice trying to sound as though we are conveying an emotion that matches your text. There is no point

aiming for righteous indignation in our speech, and delivering it as a kindergarten teacher reading a story to the children before nap time. Similarly, we don't want to attempt a joke, and have it fall flat because nobody know you were (meant to be) joking.

d. Pace

It is a fact that, as most people become nervous before speaking in public, they have a tendency to read their speech as quickly as possible in order to reach the end as soon as possible. There is no point to even making a speech like this – we might as well print out copies of the text, and hand them out, for all that has been added by speaking the text.

Strangely, though, forcing ourselves to speak with a more measured pace can also help us to calm those nerves. The nervousness increases as we feel our thoughts colliding into one another like a six car pile-up, and by deliberately enunciating each thought with exaggerated slowness we can ensure our thoughts remain ordered, each step is covered, and there are no leaps of logic that our audience cannot be guaranteed to make along with us.

A measured pace, together with moderate tone and pitch suggests a calm, giving the impression that the speaker is one whose thoughts are ordered, and who is control of his material. This is likely then to put the audience at ease, as they can have confidence in us as the speaker.

Pace can also be used as verbal highlighting, too. A variety of pace is essential, but particularly when we wish to emphasise a particular point. Slowing down as we reach… the… crucial… matter… of... the… sentence… has the same effect as formatting something as bold text when using a WP program; it captures the attention, and tells the audience that this is something to which they should pay particular note. Speaking quickly has the opposite effect – it tells people that this is the 'boring but necessary' bit, and of lesser import in the context of the speech. Very often, the quicker pace is best used when dealing with factual material, the slower, **more considered** pace for the arguments that fact is used to illustrate.

e. Clarity

It is essential when speaking in public that what we say can be heard. It seems obvious, and even somewhat trite to point this out, but it is surprising the number of people who forget the importance of good diction. This is linked to, but separate from accent, pitch, tone and pace, and is an essential part of good communication. The speaker must always guard against laziness creeping into the speech as consonant sounds elide, and the words (and therefore the implications of what is being said) become less clear. We also find that when speaking with precision,

one can also talk more quickly without any loss of meaning, or confusion as to what is being said.

f. Volume

A brief note on volume: whilst it is obviously important to speak loudly enough to be heard, we should be able to achieve this without shouting (see '**Breathing**'). However, if we want to grab the audience's attention in the middle of our speech, we should not raise your voice but lower it. It might seem counter-intuitive but it works. When we soften the tone, slow the pace or lower the volume, people actually start to lean towards us, the speaker, in a physical manifestation of 'active listening'. Try abruptly dropping the volume next time you are out with friends and you will see what is meant. Do the same with an audience whenever you want them to pay particular attention to something; you will often be amazed at how effective it can be.

The final thing to be said about all elements of the voice is that we should never make assumptions about what can be heard in the auditorium. We may very well think that we are projecting beautifully, enunciating clearly, and that our voice is so rich, and so interesting a sound, that our audience are hanging on your every word. But we cannot know that for sure: the most important thing we can do with our voice is use it to check and ensure that everyone can hear us, and can understand what is being said. Only then can we begin to think about getting across the right message.

5. The text

a. It's not what you say; it's how you say it…

There is a saying in public speaking, and it is known as 'the 1/3 rule'. It states that no matter what the topic, the audience or the speaker, for the majority of public addresses, one third of what we say is never heard; one third of what is heard is never listened to; and one third of what is listened to is never understood. This is not so in every case, and the skill of the accomplished public speaker is in overcoming this 'rule'. We need to look at each aspect of this 'rule' in turn, to determine why it might be the case that things are not heard, listened to, or understood, and to work out correctly how we can overcome these obstacles when speaking ourselves.

The first part of the rule states that one third of what is said is not even heard. This is not due to inaudible, mumbling speakers who forget to switch on their microphone. In those cases, far more than one third is lost! This is due most often to the fact that audiences, even ones who have paid to hear what is being said, decide very quickly that they don't want to be there, and that the speaker has nothing of value to tell them. Psychologists tell us that such decisions are made by the majority of people in the first minute or so of somebody's speech, and almost all have made that decision within the opening five minutes. Why is this?

There is no one single reason beyond the fact that they decide based on first impressions, that they don't like the person speaking, and therefore either disagree with their ideas, or think them crass and stupid. And it isn't about getting people's attention; remember that they must have paid some attention in order to make the decision that they do not want to pay any more! Any number of things can turn off an audience – the way you approach the stage or lectern, the perception of confidence or a lack thereof, the opening line falling flat through delivery or poor selection; the list goes on. And as we have said all along, there is no way of guaranteeing that everyone will like us, no matter what we do. But a calm, confident presence will in the majority of cases be just what we are aiming for, and what an audience will find most pleasing.

The second part of our rule states that of what is heard, one third is never given the required listening. Again, this has to do with those elements of the voice that were looked at earlier; variance in pitch, tone, pace and volume can make our voice more interesting for the audience, encouraging 'active listening', and holding the interest, in the same way that music is more interesting when it is not monotonous. But there is a more general mistake that people make when making public addresses that contributes to this second element. Audiences that have admitted switching off (that is, they hear everything, but take none of it in), often complain that the speaker made no attempt at engagement, that they

(the audience) were being talked *at* rather than *to*. Teachers and lecturers are sometimes guilty of this, particularly those who feel less comfortable addressing a large room. They may still be very effective educators in other ways, but pupils most often report that the feeling of being talk at creates a profound disenfranchisement from the material being presented. It has even passed into common English parlance: the term 'lecturing' now has extremely negative connotations when used outside academic realms

So how can we ensure that our audience are engaged, that they feel somehow part of the process? Eye contact is important, as is a sometimes less formal tone, as if the process is one of conversation and dialogue (which we know it isn't, but we can still adopt that particular style). And asking questions, even rhetorical ones, is the best way of all to ensure engagement. Asking questions directly of an audience is the perfect way of checking understanding – essential before moving on to the next part of the speech. But asking questions abstractly, rhetorically, can help to create the 'nodding dog effect' (also now known as the Churchill effect!). All the questions we use should have one answer that is obvious and that fits with the speech – that is, when the tone of the speech is positive, the questions should invite only an affirmative response. Similarly, when the focus of the speech is ultimately negative, the questions should be answerable only in the negative. As the audience at first unconsciously responds to each inserted question with a nod or a shake, they feel more engaged with the text being delivered, even to the extent that some feel their responses are noted by, and influence the subsequent performance of, the speaker. [See also **Rhetoric and humour**]

The final part of the rule that we need to deal with is the part that states that of what is listened to, one third is never understood. This in part is due to the language used, and we will address that separately [see **Be careful what you say…**]. But it is also often due to the fact that audiences are not able to follow the speaker's train of thought or logic. The former Deputy Prime Minister of Great Britain, the Right Honourable John Prescott MP was famous for making public statements which at times seemed incomprehensible to English speakers. Such were the tortured syntax, the incomplete thought structure, the lack of logic, and the leaps from topic to topic that many thought him idiotic, and incapable of better. It characterised him as a bumbling fool, despite the fact that he had been a senior member of Government for ten years, and a member of the House of Commons for far longer. Delivering a prepared, and written in full, address, Mr Prescott has little difficulty, but cannot escape the fact that he is reading, not giving, a speech. This is however far preferable to what happens when he begins to speak unprepared!

This, however can be avoided, and quite simply. Knowing our speech well enough (if we have time to rehearse it) that we do not need to read

it is one option – it then becomes important to ensure that our speech is well written. That means taking the time to explain the most complex issues as they need explaining, and slowing and measuring our delivery when reaching this point of the speech to ensure that we carry our audience along with us.

And don't forget to check the audience's understanding when you have done so! If however learning the speech by rote is not an option, because of a curtailed preparation time for example, then there is one simple rule to follow: **do not attempt to speak at the speed with which you think!** Think your thoughts, order them, then express them out loud. Once again, a calm, measured pace will help; this will give us the time to think through what we are saying, and gives our audience the impression that we are always in control. This is particularly effective when dealing with a question and answer session at the end of an address, for example. It is much harder to be confident when things are unprepared (like audience questions), and consequently, so much more effective when we can manage it.

b. Be careful what you say…

One of the most common problems experienced by the public speaker is, whilst they are sure that what they are saying is both insightful and true, the reaction from the audience is often somewhat different. Very often, this is because the speaker forgets for whom the speech is meant.

We are not speaking to show how much we know, nor to show how impressive is our vocabulary, but that is the trap into which most people often fall. As we have said all along, the key to persuasion is in getting the message across in the most effective manner – that means being likeable, knowing our audience, and crucially, using an appropriate register of language. If we are trained in a specific discipline, and the room is full of those who have also studied this area, then we can be sure that they will, or at least should, understand technical terms, abbreviations and jargon without the need for further explanation.

Most audiences, however, are not themselves technocrats. Therefore we should address our language to those whom we know make up the majority of the audience. This does not mean however that we should talk down to or patronise them. People who feel that they are being treated as stupid will become very resistant very quickly to anything we have to say, so judging the register correctly is both imperative and extremely difficult to do as quickly as we need.

In most environments, we simply will not know or not have access to information regarding the make-up of our audience, so, as with other elements, we need to find what will appeal to a broad cross-section of the audience. And it really is quite simple: speak as though to the well-

informed layman, and you will not go far wrong. We can be sure that we will not be patronising too many people, and it gives us an opportunity to introduce specialist terms, abbreviations and the like, which has the effect of helping our audience to feel like they are being admitted to some privileged and exclusive club, something they are likely to enjoy, and respond to well.

c. Rhetoric and humour

We will cover this quite briefly, as this is not the place for a detailed study of rhetoric from the classic to the modern, but it is nevertheless important to mention. Using rhetorical devices (asking questions in our speech, creating the perfect 'soundbite') has been seen over the past few years as a way of masking a lack of content, or substance. The modern media decry soundbites issuing from politicians and ask where the honesty is in modern politics. It is true that a speech that consists of nothing but rhetorical flourish can on closer examination seem a bit thin (think Barack Obama and his use of 'Can we change? Yes, we can!'; it's a nice thought, but not a policy…) but the fact is that a well-turned phrase, a catchy line, or even a good joke is all far more memorable than dry analysis.

What is ideal is a combination of the two, unsurprisingly. Of course there should be solid content in the speech, and some of it might be necessarily less interesting to present (data, statistics, etc.), but if we are able to give the data and then a pithy one-liner to wrap it up, that will help our cause.

[If you are not sure about what is good rhetoric, there are numerous collections of 'great speeches of our time', focussing on speakers such as Dr Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy, Nelson Mandela, and even Churchill, with commentators highlighting why the believe the speech or the speaker to be effective. You may or may not agree with what is chosen as 'great', but it is always important to know not just what we consider to be good speaking, but what others mean by this too.

You should also look at other examples of rhetoric, for example in Shakespeare. Marc Anthony's speech in *The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* [Act III, Scene ii] is a fine example of the use of rhetorical devices to reinforce a point or to convince an initially hostile audience. Similarly, King Henry's address to his troops in *Henry V* [Act III, Scene i] (which in fact is the only speech in the scene) is a rousing cry to the troops to give them the courage to fight in the face of what seem insurmountable odds. When reading the speeches, do not read them in isolation, but try to place them within the context of the play. What are the speakers trying to achieve in each case? What obstacles do Anthony and King Henry face before making their speech? And how do they overcome these, if they ever do? Look at how each speaker uses *logos* (logic), *ethos* (belief) and

pathos (emotion) at different times to produce different effects, and decide for yourself how successful you think they are.

Once you have an understanding for yourself of what you think works or doesn't as rhetorical device, you can search for other examples to broaden your knowledge of rhetoric and style, and you will find what works best for you, and what makes you feel comfortable. Oh, and if you know you aren't funny, then don't make jokes! (See **Knowing what works for you**)]

6. Knowing what works for you

The most important message in all of this is that whatever you choose as your style of delivery, it should be what makes you comfortable, what you are able to pull off without it looking as though you are trying too hard. You should be able to decide for yourself whether something is working, and do not despair if nothing appears to work the first time around. It is often the case that we develop our style over a period of time, refining and enhancing it as we go along, and what you think will be good for

you might often change completely as you gain more experience and more confidence.

If you really struggle with the self-awareness necessary to determine what is working, do not be shy about enlisting the help of family and friends. People who know you and can be unflinchingly honest are your best allies – practice in front of them, try out different techniques, speeds, pitches, accents… everything in fact that you can alter. Ask them to be brutally honest (siblings and friends are often better at this than parents, but you never know…) and also to be focussed in criticising what works and what doesn't. Ask them to think about why something was or wasn't effective; ask them which speakers they enjoy, and find most persuasive; ask them **everything**! Only by asking for feedback, and acting upon it, can we hope to improve as speakers in public.

7. Bringing it all together

This is only a brief note on effective public speaking, and yet there are numerous things for the would-be speaker on which they can work. Do not be surprised, therefore, if whilst trying to improve one aspect, you forget about others. Very few people are able, with no training whatsoever, to bring it all together in one beautifully packaged whole. Even the more experienced speakers are aware that they could afford to work on one area or another.

The trick is again one of self-awareness: focus on your weakest element first, and make it your strongest. Then return to what has now become your weakest area, and work on that. The process is never-ending, as when you focus on one thing, something always seems to slip just a little and will need reinforcing afterward. But you must not be afraid of that; the best speakers are constantly practising and improving, much like the best athletes or sportsmen. When George Best joined Manchester United as a junior trainee, he could not pass the ball effectively with his left foot. The club sent him away to improve, and told him to come back one year later. He did so, having spent a year wearing a hobnailed boot on his stronger right foot which made kicking the ball very difficult, and he kicked the ball with his bare left foot against a wall in order to strengthen it. By the end of the year, he was so strong with his left foot that he had now become a naturally left-footed player.

It is unlikely that you will be able to achieve expertise in every single area. But by working on what you find most difficult until it becomes natural, or at least has the appearance of being natural, then you will find getting your message across and convincing people far easier than before.

Remember: be comfortable, be natural and be likeable, and people will listen to what you have to say. Make what you say interesting to listen to, and people will remember it. You will not convince all of the people all of the time, but maybe some of them, or even all of them, some or most of the time. And that's already not too bad.

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Structure, Data
& Analysis

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<u>Structure, data and analysis</u>

1. What is meant by 'structure'?

   - Of a speech
   - Of an argument

2. The importance of clear structure

   - Maps and signposts
   - Finishing the point
   - Diversions

3. Data, and how we use it
   - Presentation
   - Examples & Statistics

4. Analysis and argumentation

   - 'Lies, damned lies, and statistics'
   - Emotional response, and backwards rationalisation

1. **What do we mean by 'structure'?**

   a. The structure of a speech

   A simple rule to follow when preparing and making any speech is to say what we are going to say, say it, and then say what we have said. By this, we don't mean that the speech should be repetitive, and keep going over the same ground. But like a piece of opinion writing, or any argument, there should be a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

   The purpose of the introduction is to declare our position or policy, and state reasons why such a stance should be adopted, or how such a model might be implemented. It should provide a brief outline, with headings and perhaps, sub-headings, showing precisely from where the argument starts, how we intend to build each stage of the argument, and what conclusion we hope to achieve, and to which we hope to bring the audience. It is also a good idea, in competitive debating, to introduce what the metric by which we believe the judges, or the audience should judge this debate.

   We should not be tempted to launch straight into the arguments themselves; as good as they may be, the audience will be more able and more willing to follow them if they too have some idea of the final destination. This allows them to put those arguments into context and to evaluate the strength of those arguments, based on how effective they are at supporting our stance. It is possible to highlight, or 'flag up' the examples we intend to use to illustrate our points, but this is not necessary. It is enough simply to sketch the outline of our speech; the detail, and the colour, will come next.

   The main body of the speech is of course the most important part, and will take the majority of you time. We should decide on the order of the individual points or arguments we wish to make, based on their relevance and importance in supporting your overall position, and we should make sure that each separate point is made clearly and distinctly, allowing the audience to evaluate them properly. We will look at the structure of each individual argument below, and there is no need to say more here.

   The conclusion of the speech should not be simply a repetition of the arguments as presented; this will simply bore the audience and create the impression that we have run out of things to say. What the conclusion should do is *represent* the arguments and examples, or data, showing clearly why each leads to, or supports the demand made – whether that demand is to take a particular

   course of action, or just to accept our point of view. In our conclusion we can again demonstrate the logic of our argument, as well as provide some peroration, using rhetorical skills to reinforce in the audience's mind the thrust and sense of our argument.

   By structuring and presenting each speech in this way, we can ensure that the audience is given a clear framework and context with which to evaluate the quality of each argument, the opportunity to follow closely each step in the argumentation, and is allowed a chance to

consider the overall impact. Hopefully, all this will convince them of the truth of what we say.

b. The structure of an argument

The structure of each argument also follows the rule of introduction-body-conclusion, but may be broken down further to ensure that whilst each point is complete and distinct in itself, it is also linked expressly to each subsequent point and to the overall theme of the speech. The individual argument structure can also help to make our arguments more persuasive as we recognise the natural biases active in all humans when presented with information. We will discuss these biases when looking at the presentation of data later, but will introduce them briefly here.

There is no one single way of presenting an argument that is always more effective, or more convincing for all people. Depending on what argument we are trying to make, and what we hope to achieve by it, as well as our natural inclination towards one style of delivery or another, there are numerous options from which we can choose.

Often, telling a story is a great way of gaining and holding people's attention initially. We have what psychologists refer to as *narrative* bias, which means that we process information presented in narrative form more readily; we are inclined to think that, as more individual detail is provided, that the scenario is more likely to occur. We are also more likely to retain that information, storing it in more accessible memory. This is in part due to the *humanisation effect* that the narrative creates, coupled with *experiential* and *corroborative bias*. As we said, we will look at these later.

But just telling a story is obviously not enough; we have no way of ensuring that the audience knows the argument is contained within, or even sees any relevance to our tale. The next step, then, is to explain the relevance, to provide the moral of the story. We

highlight the issues, motives and actions the story provides that can be extrapolated, and we show how these hold true in the vast majority of cases. In doing so, we must be clear about the steps of logic we are making, and are asking the audience to make, and we need to be sure that these steps are simple and clear, not blind leaps of faith.

We then need to talk about implications: of our individual point for the overall argument, and for wider issues. In any debate, there are often several arguments that can be brought; it is therefore important to ensure that we say exactly why this one needs to be prioritised and dealt with, rather than any other we might have used.

Implications are also negative; that is to say, we should consider, and demonstrate the net deficit in ignoring a particular strand of the argument, and show why the cost of ignoring it will be far greater than if other considerations are forgotten. We should remember that, whilst in a perfect world we would like to give due consideration to all arguments, very often we are constrained by time or circumstance such that it is not always possible. Arguments should never be dismissed out of hand, but equally, where we only have an opportunity to make one

or two, we should concentrate on making the strongest arguments we can.

We then need to finish the point, giving a brief summary of what our point was, and the relevance and importance to the overall argument. We can ensure then that we have said all we want on a particular point, and that whilst each point remains clear and distinct we provide ourselves with the opportunity to link it to the subsequent one.

An alternative structure which does not use the story element is to consider each argument like a newspaper article, perhaps a front page story. We start with a bold statement (our headline), give an explanation of what we mean (the leader), provide our example or statistic to illustrate and support the point (the details), and then provide the linking logic to show how the point relates to the whole.

Thinking of our opening statement as a headline can help us to focus on what we need to achieve: we want something short, memorable, and that will grab the attention of our audience. We want them to sit up and take notice; then, we can make sure they are paying attention when we talk through the details. If we can find something humorous or a famous quotation, so much the better; it makes it all the easier to recall.

Our explanation of that headline is where the argument truly lies. We need to show clearly, and so that everyone can follow, what does the statement mean? If we are talking about a particular group of people (often referred to as stakeholders), who is affected, and how? If we are trying to address a particular situation, what can or should be done about it? Some or all of these questions need to be answered in detail if we are to convince people of our position, and crucially, when answering these questions we also need to answer *why*: why these people are most important to consider (the primary stakeholders), why this is a problem we can and should address, why this is (morally) the right thing to do, the right decision to make.

Very often, arguing from a purely theoretical standpoint misses something; we might be able to show strong arguments why we should or should not do something, but what will help to convince people is providing an example of where an action or something similar was tried in the past, showing what were the consequences (positive or negative) and demonstrating that a similar action here will also have similar consequences. In order to that, we must be able to show that a significant number of factors are the same or similar; the more factors in common that we can identify, the more logical it seems to assume a similarity in outcome of any given action. Examples often take the form of statistics, and we will discuss both of these in some more detail later.

Finally, we need to finish the point in just the same way as before. We need to ensure that we have said all we want, before moving on. We can also then check that our audience has fully grasped the point, and that not further clarification is necessary.

One thing we must remember which ever way we choose to structure our points individually is that the points must link *one to the other*.

There should be a logical progression, a flow to our arguments, so that, when our audience accepts the first point, we use that in order to build, and gain acceptance of, our second, and so on. This shows a clear thread running through each individual argument, and should make it easier for us to show that all the points reinforce each other, and the overall arguments.

2. The importance of clear structure

a. Maps and signposts

Why is structure so important? Initially, setting out a clear structure does two things: it shows clearly the direction of our speech or argument, and it gives our audience confidence that we have thought through both the argument and its implications. If we think of our speech, or argument, as a journey on which we wish to carry our audience, we need to ensure their comfort at each stage of the trip. Remember: we know where we are going, they, as yet, do not. By laying out a map, and showing them the main route we will be taking, they feel more in control (even though they are not) and we will have inspired confidence that even if they are unsure as to our destination, we are not. They can be sure we know where we are going, and as such will be confident we have prepared, or researched, properly. They feel safe in our hands.

Second, the structure acts much as a series of signposts, helping your audience to follow the logic, sense and therefore the persuasiveness of the argument. The highlighting of each point at the start, together with introducing each point clearly and distinctly, means that we can be sure that confidence is maintained, as the route sketched earlier is indeed the one being followed. This relaxes the audience and makes them feel comfortable, allowing them to focus on what precisely is being said, and evaluating it.

b. Finishing the point

We have mentioned this before, but it is so important that it is worth raising again, so that we are clear on both how to complete arguments (without taking them too far), and just why this is so crucial to effective communication.

The clear structure of each point tells us where we start and end, so that we can be sure we have included all the relevant information and argumentation to make the point work. We will only finish the point properly when we have talked about all the implications of it, teasing out consequences that may at first seem counter-intuitive. When we finish off, we re-examine the logic of the point so that we, and the audience can be satisfied that it is not flawed, that the steps required

are not big leaps, that the conclusion we reach is reasonable, rational, even ordinary.

If we do this well, we can create something of a 'nodding dog' effect; we can see the affirmation of our argument in the body

language of our audience. As we take them through each stage of our argument for a second time, the audience *recognises* rather than learns; this feeds our corroborative bias, as we think we are confirming something we already know. Then, even if our conclusion may have seemed at first outlandish, we often find the response: 'I had never thought of it like that, but now that you mention it…' If our logic is good, if our argument is good, then what was originally a surprising conclusion will often seem like the most reasonable one of all.

Finishing the point well will also allow us to check for any lack of understanding or confusion. As we reiterate, and paraphrase, we may encounter different responses: 'Oh, *that's* what was meant…', 'I didn't get the first time…', and others. This affords us the opportunity to revisit with the audience those parts of the arguments that are particularly complex, to make sure that we have spent the proper time giving an adequate explanation.

Last, when we finish our point properly, we have time to pause, and collect our thoughts, before presenting the next strand of the argument. We know we need to provide a link between arguments, to show a consistent position, and also to ensure that the arguments we present are not in themselves contradictory, and ending the point well is an indication and a reminder to do this. Again, we show the audience that each part of the argument has been considered, and weighted, researched and prepared. Our own confidence in our performance will be enhanced, as will the audience's confidence in us, and in what we say.

   c. Diversions

Like all journeys, we may at times be subjected to forced diversions, or spur-of-the moment detours to places of interest along the way. With our arguments, these come in the form of objections or counterarguments, or innocent questions from our audience. We need to be able to cope with these being thrown in our path, without letting them distract us from our ultimate destination.

Knowing our structure, and knowing it well, allows us to divert from the originally planned route without difficulty, as we know just how to get back on track. We can overcome obstacles, find routes around objections, and deal with comments and questions that might be tangential to the topic without the fear that we will get lost and be unable to recover our original position. Having objections or questions listened and responded to immediately is what those asking them want; being able to do so means we are more likely to convince them with our response.

3. **Data, and how we use it**

a. Presentation

We assume that the data we are going to present should be at once *empirically valid and contentious*. If it is otherwise, it should not be in the debate. Any data that is clearly false is only going to harm our position, whilst any data that can only be interpreted in one fashion, that leads inescapably to one conclusion, is moot, in terms of argument. Happily, most data will be both valid, and capable of supporting more than one position, or will be countered by conflicting data that is equally valid empirically. But often, the audience has little or no opportunity of checking the data to make decisions for themselves, or of comparing conflicting data when necessary. They are reliant on us for our interpretation of the data, and the implications, but also for the initial presentation of that data. And how we choose to present the data can affect people's initial perception of it, and how they receive our subsequent interpretation of it.

We have mentioned briefly certain biases that exist to a greater or lesser degree in all of us, and these biases affect the way we receive, process, and store information. These are the *narrative, corroborative*, and *experiential* biases, and have been discovered, examined and tested by leading academics and researchers in the field of behavioural psychology. In addition to these, there exist also what are known as the *humanisation effect*, the *herding effect* and *group polarisation*, which all affect whether we in fact make decisions based on rationale or emotion. All too often, we make irrational decisions, and spend a long time after convincing ourselves of their inherent rationality (what is sometimes called 'backwards rationalisation', itself an element of the *corroborative* bias). We also need to recognise the difficulty we face when instinctive reactions (fear, aggression, desire) are in effect, and how they impair our ability to make decisions about data, and the arguments they are used to support.

Below is an explanation of each bias, how it interacts with other biases, and the implications each has for how we present data and arguments.

- **Narrative bias**

  When we create a story around a piece of information, we feed the narrative bias. Psychologists discovered that when more detail is provided (whether or not the data is specifically relevant) we are more inclined to believe the tale. This is even true when the extra detail in fact limits the probability of a certain event (Kahneman, Tvorsky).

  Consider the following two scenarios:

A: Tom and Mary seemed happily married. Mary killed Tom last week.

B: Tom and Mary seemed happily married. Mary killed Tom last week for the life insurance money.

Most of us choose B as the more likely of the two scenarios. But it isn't. If B is 'true', then A is also 'true', necessarily so, because B contains all the information of A. So they are at least equally probable. In fact, B is less likely to occur, simply because it limits the possible motives for Mary's action. With A, Mary might have killed Tom for the insurance money, or she could have done it for the inheritance from his family, on discovering that Tom was having an affair, because she found his habit of clipping his toenails in the living room intolerable, or even accidentally. All of these are possible with A, but are excluded by the extra information in B. So why do we do it?

The answer lies in the way our brains receive and process information. We can easily imagine someone killing for money (the explicit motive in B), particularly in a seemingly happy marriage. We may have read about, or it might just be something we could imagine. Either way, the presentation of the narrative link (in this case, the motive) to connect two seemingly disparate statements (as we have in A) means that our minds can more easily process and store the information. The two statements no longer need to be remembered independently; the link means we store one piece of information, albeit a more complex one.

This is due in part to the *corroborative* and *experiential* biases, and it is to these that we shall now turn.

[We should not be too upset or even surprised if we do make the mistake of choosing B as more probable than A. When asking a group of risk professionals (insurance assessors, bookmakers, &c., whose job it is to consider probability), to choose between two catastrophic events – a random flood in California killing 1000 people, and an earthquake in California causing a flood which kills 1000 - the surprising result was that over 80% chose option B as the more likely. Even the professionals (and some were California insurance men, selling flood and earthquake insurance,) got it wrong, because they are prone to the same biases as the rest of us; they are, after all, human.]

- **Corroborative and experiential bias**

These can be explained quite quickly; their importance is crucial. The corroborative bias (or pattern bias) seeks to confirm what we already think we know, and dismisses data which conflicts with that knowledge.

Consider the following sequence of numbers: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10…

These numbers are part of a longer sequence that conforms to a rule. When asked to identify the rule (but not to say), and *provide other numbers that would also conform to the rule* (and therefore fit in the sequence), what did students do? What would *you* do? Pick a series of even numbers, perhaps 12, 14 and 16? What about 30, 32, 34, 36? 52,54,56? That is certainly what most people did – and thought that in doing so, they were proving the rule. In fact, they were proving a rule, but had no idea if it was the right one. They had spotted a pattern, and attempted to replicate it. Each time they were told that the numbers they had chosen did indeed conform to the rule, they looked for further confirmation.

After a while they were asked to identify the rule; and were surprised when 'even numbers, sequentially' was not it. Then one student tried '1, 3, 5, 7', and was told this also conformed to the rule. So is the rule numbers spaced by 2? Many more sequences were given which indeed also conformed to this rule, and again, the students were nonplussed when they discovered that is also was **not** the rule.

The rule in fact was much simpler: it was numbers getting bigger, no more than that. And the students would have determined this more quickly if they had attempted to disprove rather than prove it. Saying '7, 5, 3', and receiving a negative response would have led them to the 'right' rule

without trying any more descending sequences. Even choosing a sequence they thought did not conform (but in fact did), such as '1, 9, 13, 17', would have led them much sooner to the correct answer, but they didn't do that because they were looking for positive responses, so only chose sequences where they were almost sure of conformity to the rule. The corroborative bias means we decide we know something and often only look for data and responses that confirm and support that initial position.

The experiential bias simply states that when we remember something happening either recently or as a (perceived) common event, then we will often think of it as being more probable. Consider the specific example of the risk professionals and their two scenarios: the first, a random flood in California killing 1000 people, the second, a flood *caused by an earthquake* killing 1000 people. Over 80% of risk professionals rated the second as more likely, an extreme bias in favour of B that is perhaps not entirely accounted for by narrative bias alone. When questioned, some of the insurance experts, embarrassed by their response, attempted to explain it. 'Well, I have never heard about random floods in California, but we get earthquakes there all the time…' was the common response. Because we *know* earthquakes happen in California, its inclusion as the limiting factor in B had the opposite effect; our familiarity with it (as with the potential motive for Mary killing Tom) makes it seem more, rather than less probable.

- **The humanisation effect, herding, and group polarisation**

The humanisation effect is best described by the chilling quotation, "One death is a tragedy, a million merely a statistic." As Stalin well knew, we cannot conceive of a million people as a real mass, as a collection of individuals with lives, feelings, families, and because of that we cannot grieve for them. The brain is not made to cope with such large numbers as concepts, and after a while they all begin to blur together. [Studies by Kahneman and Tvorsky, among others suggest that this 'blurring effect' occurs with crowds as small as forty people, for some, and anything over one hundred people, for the rest.] Thus, the one death is a tragedy, because it is not just a death; it is an imaginable and quantifiable loss of a life, with all the history, laughter, love and sorrow that it contained. This is why charity companies choose the story of one child in Africa with a sickness to alert our attention to the plight of many. If all we are told is that millions are starving, dying, need our help in some way, we can often feel helpless. One person's suffering is something we can tackle directly and overcome.

The herding effect is explained by evolutionary theory as much as anything else. We are social animals, and have a need to be, as working together with other humans is what gave us competitive advantage over stronger, quicker, larger prey. Because of that, we still have a need to 'belong', to fit in with the group. This was illustrated in experiments by Asch and Milgram in the early 1960s, and terrifyingly by the infamous Stanford Experiment, when students playing the role of prison guards beat to death a student in the role of prisoner, because the activity of the group normalised the extreme behaviour. When others do something, we are more likely to accept it for ourselves, because of this continuing need to run with the herd. [This is also the reason that social punishments, 'naming and shaming', &c. appear so effective in controlling low-level, community crime. Often, the fear of being stigmatised by one's community is greater than the fear of more official sanction by the state.]

Group polarisation works in tandem with the herding effect, such that when we have joined a particular herd (and remember, we do not all have to join the main one: even the loners and individuals join the 'loner' herd, and feel validated by it) we then strive to be as much like the other members as possible (or as we perceive them to be). This is best illustrated in special interest or lobby groups (environmentalists, religious sects) where there is a competition to be the most green, the most devout, and so on. This polarisation can lead to dangerous extremes, but exists in all of us to a certain degree, like fans of a football team attempting to prove their loyalty to the club by displaying more and more detailed knowledge of more and more trivial information. Why is the fan capable of naming the reserve team of twenty years ago a bigger, better or truer fan than others? We are not sure, but we believe that he is.

The implications of each of these effects and biases, and how they interact should now be clear. If we wish people to follow our argument, we can frame it as our story, giving it a structure we are all comfortable with (narrative bias), talking about individuals rather than a mass of people (the humanisation effect), referring to common

experience (experiential bias) and restating our arguments more than once, in slightly differing forms (corroborative bias). We can also be aware of the effect we have when demonstrating this has worked elsewhere (experiential bias), or that many other in similar situations have benefited from what we are proposing (herding effect). In addition, we should be guarded against false arguments that seek to take advantage of these biases (such as the narrative bias distorting the perception

of probability), and obfuscating the real information. And of course, we should never be tempted to use such distractions ourselves; they weaken our position when spotted, and in any case, our arguments should be strong enough not to require such deceptions.

b. Examples and statistics

When choosing and using examples, statistical data and other factual content to support our position, we must be careful not to 'blind with science'. Most audiences either ignore statistical data or actively distrust it, unless we can demonstrate the significance and the relevance of that data. And examples are often poorly illustrated, as speakers forget the importance of showing exactly why a situation might be analogous, and why it is reasonable to extrapolate from one to another.

The more examples we can find that support our argument, the better, but we should beware simply compiling a 'shopping list'. Having more examples to support your position than the other side does not matter if the examples that support the other side are more relevant, have more similarity (meaning we can suppose the same outcome is more likely), or more resonance for the audience. Very often, speakers choose extreme examples to counter opposing arguments, forgetting that their extreme nature means it is difficult to draw any reasonable analogy. What we are looking for when trying to find good examples are the paradigms, the most analogous, most relevant and most resonant example that exists. And as the clear structure tells us, the example supports the reasoning and the argument, but does not replace it. It is essential that clear links are shown to the individual point and the overall argument. Without those, our examples are merely snapshots of history, and not necessarily lessons to be learned.

When we consider how we present statistical data, we have a duty to be honest, to report what the data show, and not what we hope they would show. But as we have mentioned, data are often open to differing interpretations, and it is key that we explain why our interpretation is the correct one. In order to do that, we may need to refer to other data, or a different authority, and we will also need to analyse why the contradictory conclusion is false. Consider the statistic which shows a disproportionately high number of young black men in the penitentiary system in the United States of America. Whilst they make up a relatively small percentage of the population at large, they are a significant statistical majority within prisons.

We may think that this is due to any number of factors: the fact that young black men are more likely to come from poor backgrounds than their white counterparts, have more limited access to education, sports facilities, and this breeds crime, or we may think that institutional bias in the police and the judiciary result in higher arrest and conviction rates for young black males, but we would need reference to other data to support either of these contentions (such as data illustrating that young black males are statistically more likely to be given harsher sentences – and twice as likely to face the death penalty – as others for the same crime). [And these are not necessarily mutually exclusive; it is possible that they might work in tandem, thereby exacerbating the effect of each.]

As for the presentation itself of data, we should remember how our natural biases work, and present the information accordingly. Remember the humanisation effect: 20% and 1/5 are abstracts, portions of a greater whole that may be unquantifiable in our minds. 'One in every five people' has far greater impact. Remember the narrative bias, the humanisation effect, used to great effect by famine relief charities in their campaigning. The picture of the plaintive starving child, and her story; her name, age and background are all there, as, in detail, is her daily suffering. Then we are told that there are millions like her. (But when we donate, we do not picture millions, we picture one, two, or a few starving children.) It makes the information easy to process and therefore persuasive. Charities wouldn't do it if it didn't work.

However, we should always be aware that if one in five is affected, four in five are not. Statistics often require some form of comparative analysis, both with the correlative statistic, and with sometimes with the historical data, too. First, correlatives: if 51% of the people want to do something, should they have the right? It is after all, democratic. But what of the rights of the correlative 49%? Can they be subsumed so easily? Rarely will we have to deal with such a close split, but even when talking about the 70th or 80th percentile in terms of numbers benefiting, we still need to address the needs of three in every ten people. So we need to show why those benefiting are more important (primary stakeholders).

Also, we often talk of something being better (safer, quicker, cleaner, more effective – and often with a degree of improvement: 20% cleaner, for example), but than what? Without providing the comparative, and thus the metric by which these things should be judged, we make it more difficult for our audience to accept the validity of the argument.

4. **Analysis and argumentation**

   a. 'Lies, damned lies, and statistics'

   As we mentioned before, most people ignore or mistrust statistics, perhaps because we misunderstand them and their implications so often. We are conditioned by our instinctive responses (fear, desire, guilt) and these cloud our judgement, and together with our natural biases affect our ability to reason properly. We are, in the words of

behavioural economist and academic at MIT, Dan Ariely, almost 'predictably irrational'.

Disraeli's famous phrase, above, refers to the way statistics are often quoted meaninglessly without reference or relevance, and only obscure the truth. [To steal another famous line, statistics are like a bikini - what they reveal is suggestive; what they conceal is vital. (Aaron Levenstein)] We need to ensure that we use the statistics to illustrate our argument and not to obscure it; we need to provide the analysis that goes with the data. Key to this will be asking several questions all beginning with the same word: *why?*

- Why do we believe what we are arguing?
- Why exactly do we want to persuade others?
- Why would that be a good thing?
- Why do we propose a particular model?
- Why have we chosen a particular agent?
- Why are we focussing on this group of people (to the possible exclusion of others)?
- Why do we have a right to do this action?
- Why do we have a duty to do this action?
- Why is doing nothing not an option?
- Why will what we are doing solve the problem?
- Why have we considered opposing arguments, and rejected them?
- Why now?
- Why not?

Answering each of these questions moves us further away from reporting the statistics and more and more into analysing the impact. This gives the statistics the relevance, and allows the audience to assess them as a part of the argument. A simple statistical error should not then invalidate our entire position.

b. Emotional response, and (the problem of) backwards rationalisation

When we are affected by fear, desire, hunger, or any instinctive reaction that is hardwired through evolution into our brains, the impact that this has on our ability to act rationally is not just surprising, but at times scary. It makes us make bad choices all the time, even putting ourselves at risk, and then, to compound the error, we rationalise the irrational choice after the fact, as our conscious brain takes over and tries to make sense of our reaction, and actions.

Albert Camus said it best when he said, 'Human beings are never rational, but they are constantly rationalising'. He was a philosopher and writer, not a psychologist as such, but psychology, and neurology, have proved him right. We process information with different areas of the brain, and this affects our ability to analyse, store and recall that information. Things that scare us are more easily recalled, so that we can better prepare and protect ourselves in future; similarly, things that

make us ill or that we associate with illness are stored and recalled easily (both of these make sense in the context of evolution). But we cannot, as evolved humans, accept that we are controlled to such a degree, we superimpose rational reasons on instinctive, 'gut' reactions. Think of when we shop, in the sales. Very often we buy items we did not intend, which caught our eye. It is our desire for the object that compels us to the purchase, but very quickly we rationalise the idea that we in fact have made a saving (of whatever was the discount in price). We have spent money; we have experienced a cost, for a luxury, that we then turn into a saving. We go further, and create an opportunity cost, by convincing ourselves that we would have bought the item at some point if we had resisted today, and so we now have a comparison for the cost, which is a greater cost at a later date. This increases the feeling of having saved, and diminishes the idea that our decision was in any way irrational.

But what does this mean for our argumentation? If people are just irrational beings, what is the point of trying to reason with them? The point is that, whilst we are all heir to these natural biases, reactions, and irrationalities, we are *also* rational beings, capable, when we try, of correct analysis of data, of drawing logical conclusions, and of demonstrating the empirical truth of an argument. But we are also lazy, and allow those old instinctive methods of decision-making to come to the fore. The easier we make our argument to follow, with clear structure, relevant examples, analysis of *why* data is important, the easier we make it for our audience to agree. And that, after all, is what we want.

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Models, Agents, & Stakeholders

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Models, agents and stakeholders

1. Models

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2. Agents

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1. Models

   a. Necessary and sufficient

When considering whether to introduce a model, the debater should first consider whether a model, or indeed a policy of any kind, is needed in this

debate. Is the resolution one that requires action, or simply justification? In other words, is this, or might it be a value debate, where all that is required is proof of the legitimacy of the statement? If it is, then forget about a model, and concentrate on the principled arguments that support your case.

In most cases however, it will be clear from the resolution that the debate requires a model of some kind, action of some kind to be taken. Most debates require a change to be made, and the model is the way of effecting that change. The model will need to include certain elements in order for it to be defended, and so that the opposition can provide legitimate attack. Missing certain elements will allow attacks that could have otherwise been avoided, and will demonstrate that the model has not been thought through clearly, something that may impact on how the rest of the argumentation is received.

So what does need to be included? We need to say what is to be done, who is going to do it, when they will act, and what we think or hope the outcome will be. That is the minimum requirement for any model to function, and missing any of these elements will seriously hamper our case.

b. There is no panacea

Clearly, there is no one model that will work best in every situation with which we have been presented. Each action will have a preferred agent, timescale, &c., and we need to be aware of the strengths and limitations of each when seeking to apply them to the various situations.

Similarly, we should not fall into the trap of attempting to head off lines of opposition by making the model extremely complex and involved, to show that we have thought of every eventuality and have an answer for it. This is poor argumentation for two reasons: if a model could be determined that solves all possible objections, it renders the subject undebatable, and models that are so complex usually require a lot of explaining, leaving very little time for us to outline any principled argumentation. Think of it in this way: if we as non-expert debaters can construct a model so perfect that there is no possible objection to it, and do so in limited preparation time, then it raises the question, why has this not been done before? A model's

complexity often can create further issues, so that as we solve each one, we simply create new lines of attack for our Opposition. Thus, overcomplex models are counterproductive, and often harm our own position in terms of the philosophical justifications for our side.

c. MAD arguments

When outlining a model, we need, as much as elsewhere in the debate, to structure our outline of the model clearly, so that all are aware of the components, and of the rationale for choosing those elements. The structure that many debaters find useful is known as MAD (which is not a reference to the principle of mutually assured destruction preventing nuclear war). MAD stands for 'Model, Agent, Delivery' and using this mnemonic we can ensure that we include the necessary parts for a sufficient model, without resorting to overly complex and detailed plans of action.

It is enough, then, to say (briefly) what you are going to do, or hope to achieve (e.g. invade, or effect regime change), who you will choose to get to do it (e.g. a 'coalition of the willing') and when they will move (e.g. in six weeks, if no weapons inspectors have been admitted). We do not need to outline exactly how the invasion, stage by stage, might work; we are not, after all, military experts, and no-one expects a speech talking about first- and second-wave troops, and their specific duties. If we are that good at determining specific policy, then perhaps those talents would be put to better use at the heart of government; they are certainly wasted in students' debates!

We will need to provide some argument justifying why the agent chosen will be effective in delivering what we propose, too, and perhaps why we have chosen them over another potential agent, but again, we know that whomever we choose, there will be reasons why, and why not, they are the right, or the best choice. And we will also need to show how and why they can achieve what we propose, but this should not be the main thrust of the argument. The MAD structure should simply lead us to the principled arguments about why doing what we propose is a good thing, why helping those people identified as stakeholders is important, or the most important thing we can do.

2. **Agents**

a. Two sides of every coin

The choice of agent is perhaps crucial to our ability to build principled arguments, but choosing the wrong agent won't necessarily lose the debate. It will however allow the Opposition to present our case as ill-conceived, as we need to have thought through the benefits and deficits of a particular choice, and be able to justify that choice.

Let us consider a model requiring invasion of a particularly country, perhaps to effect regime change. We have more than one option available to us, and need to be aware that whichever we pick, there will be reasons for and against that choice. So what are those choices? We could choose unilateral invasion, a 'coalition of the willing' or a 'league of democracies', or even a multinational force under the auspices of an established international group, such as the United Nations or African Union. Let us then look at each of those of in turn to determine what might be the benefits or otherwise of choosing a particular agent.

It does not matter for the purpose of this exercise where we select as prime target for invasion; it is enough that in country X, legitimate power has been seized illegitimately, and that the rights of the people are being ignored or abused. Our resolution for this debate is simple: [that] This

House Would Invade Country X. [We do not need to spend much time talking about our model being one of invasion (that's a given, in the resolution); were the resolution to read 'THW Effect Regime Change in Country X', we would need to state explicitly that invasion was our preferred method, as opposed to supporting and funding domestic insurgency, for example.] Our job here is simply to choose **an** agent, and then to provide some justification for that choice. Each agent we choose brings with it certain advantages and disadvantages, and all need to be looked at carefully, so the right choice can be made.

- Unilateral invasion: depending on where country X is, a unilateral invasion by a vastly superior (in military terms) neighbour might work. The advantages are: military capability, speed of response, proximity (linked to speed, but also to ideas like familiarity with terrain) – all of them practical benefits, that illustrate the ability to complete the action. The disadvantages are: lack of international legitimacy, the perception of unjustified attack or colonial motivation, the likely response against the agent country, historical animosity between the two countries (agent and object) – all philosophical objections as to why they shouldn't, rather than can't.

- A 'coalition of the willing', or a 'league of democracies': we might think that a lack of international perspective needs to be countered, and so a broader coalition might be preferable to unilateral action. Advantages: the need for some international agreement on the scale of the problem, plus, willingness to act, ability (in military terms), avoiding one country being targeted as aggressor… Disadvantages: those who join the coalition are likely to be either in broad agreement anyway (is there really more international legitimacy?), or acting because of perceived self-interest – we might not overcome all the disadvantages outlined above, such as imperialism in terms of values, or colonialism as a secret objective.

- UN or AU forces: clearly, we can overcome almost all of the philosophical objections by using the agency of brad international groups, who require debate and significant majority in agreement before any resolution proposing action can be passed. The advantage here is clear: it is very difficult to assert a lack of international (or regional) will if the UN/AU is behind such a move; troops will be drawn from all member states where possible, eliminating for the most part charges of colonialism or imperialism (but not entirely). However, we lose almost all the practical benefits, as fora such as the UN and AU are notoriously slow in decision-making, precisely because of the requirement for broad international agreement. The troops are generally less directed, focused and specialised, affecting again their ability to carry out the task effectively. What we gain in support of 'they should', we lose in terms of 'they can'.

This is just a brief illustration, and is not meant in any way to be exhaustive, but hopefully it shows clearly that when considering an agent, we can often find one that fulfils perfectly one half of our argument, and fails completely in the other; our unilateral actor may be efficient, but lack legitimacy. The UN may have ultimate legitimacy, but fail completely

when we consider how effective they might be. Similarly, when we try to mitigate those failures by shifting our choice from one agent to another, we often lose from one side as much as we gain from the other – our coalition of the willing may have slightly more international scope and therefore legitimacy, but the very nature of that coalition means that it cannot act as quickly.

There is rarely one agent that is perfect, but some are often better than others, and we need to be aware of what each can and cannot, or should and should not, do. We need to acknowledge, for example, the problem of the UN 'taking sides' in a political conflict; that is why

they are often reluctant to act except in cases of last resort. Second, the UN is not, primarily, a military organisation; it has no standing army, and troops are brought together from member states. This has its own issues, in terms of command structure, differing training and expertise levels, cultural sensibilities, &c. However, if we choose NATO, which is a military organisation, we need to be careful about where they can act with legal force, and also the risk that NATO may be seen as Western imperial forces, particularly if deployed against non-democratic countries, Islamic nations, &c.

As a base, it is often a good idea to choose an agent based on their ability to act; we can provide reasons why the action is needed, and similarly, reasons why our chosen agent is best placed to achieve the stated aims. If we choose an agent based solely on their legitimacy, and cannot demonstrate clearly that they can, in practicable terms, do anything, we are likely to lose the argument. Linked to this are ideas of legal as well as moral authority, as whom we choose greatly affects what they will do when, and in some cases to whom, and we will look at this below.

b. Why who affects when and how

Once a particular agent has been chosen (accepting that there is never the perfect agent), we need to be aware of what that choice means for the subsequent, supporting arguments we need to make. In order to be able to argue effectively, it is imperative that we understand the various legal mechanisms and constraints under which these agents must act, and incorporate this into our arguments as to why we have chosen this agent.

Let's first deal with ideas of competence: certain international institutions have competence in certain areas. The World Trade Organisation (WTO), for example, regulates trade disputes often, and with some success, so can be said to have competency in this area. In addition, certain legal instruments, such as treaties, state that countries who are signatory to those instruments agree to be governed by the WTO in this area. Likewise, the European Union (EU) has agreed competency over (for example) employment laws, even at a domestic level, for its member states, and this stems from the idea of the EU as primarily a free trade area. It does not, however, have competency for national defence (which would require far greater political rather than economic union), and as such has no standing army. It therefore cannot direct member states to take action regarding national security; this power has not been given to Brussels, and therefore the EU has no legitimacy to pronounce, or to act in this area.

Broader international organisations, like the UN, do not have specifically delineated competencies, but are free to assert competence based on a significant majority of their members (or perhaps just the more significant members, in the form of the Security Council) agreeing. Again, in order to this, they need to observe certain procedures and processes, to ensure that the organisation does not overstep its limitations and therefore lose its legitimacy.

We should, then, consider the various legal instruments and how they impact on an organisation's ability to act in various arenas. As an example, let us consider when it is legal for any country, or group of countries, to intervene in another's affairs. First, we all have a right to defend ourselves if attacked, or to prevent an attack that is a clear an imminent danger. That seems obvious, but in those cases where a country is unable to defend itself, then another armed force may be able to do so legitimately. Article 5 of the NATO Treaty provides specifically for this ('an attack on one member shall be deemed to be an attack on all members, and all members shall have the right to respond). Article 42, the UN's mechanism for going to war, is broken down further; legal military action might be taken, if:

- the country requests the assistance of the UN, and so relinquishes sovereignty;
- there is a pressing humanitarian need (i.e. if a government cannot or will not protect its people; in cases such as these sovereignty is forfeit, rather than relinquished)
- following a two-thirds vote in favour of action in the General Assembly;
- by specific Security Council resolution (subject to veto) (these last two being cases where sovereignty is removed, rather than forfeit or relinquished);

It should be clear that, dependent on whom we choose to carry out our proposed action, the agent will always be subject to various constraints ensuring the action is carried out legally, and with legitimacy. In order to make our argument stand we need to show awareness of those constraints, and our ability to work within them. Thus how they act is affected by who they are, and the constraints under which they operate. And when they act is obviously affected by those constraints, and time of action may well be a factor, particularly when trying to prevent humanitarian disaster. But what does it say about what they do, and to whom? Those are both practical and political considerations, as we consider the make-up of forces, &c. but we risk straying from the point if we try to cover every small detail. As we shall see next, in the detail is where the devil lurks.

c. The devil is in the details

Meister Eckhart said, 'God is in the details'. It was an idea that he had learned from Buddhist philosophy, and incorporated into his Judaeo-Christian thinking. The idea is that the wonder of nature, of creation itself lies not in the vastness and scope of it, not in the might and majesty of the mountains and oceans, but in the smallest detail, the intricacies of the fly's

wing, its body, its eye. Here, asserted the Meister, was where we should look for evidence of the divine power behind all, the creative force of the Creator. I do not intend to engage in a theological argument against Meister Eckhart here, but simply to use his aphorism to show the dangers for debaters in focussing too much on the minutiae and not enough on the bigger picture.

As we have discussed, there is no one perfect model or agent for any action; we cannot, nor should we, attempt to identify the panacea, and doing so will only lead us into difficulty. What we do need to is pick a suitable agent, and be able to justify that choice, but only as a means of getting to the more important argument – that of 'why?' It is easy for debaters to forget this, particularly when models are attacked and demolished so comprehensively at times; it can lead us to the position that we must try to identify all possible objections, and eliminate them where possible.

As shown above, when shifting choice of agent to attempt this, we often can eliminate some objections, whilst at the same time creating new. There is little benefit therefore in spending most of the preparation time in going through in detail all the pros and cons of a particular agent as compared to another; we run the risk of forgetting about any justification for our action at all. Again, we should also not be thinking through our policy in such minute detail that all angles are covered: who the agent is, what they will do at each stage of the policy, what will happen if things go wrong, how they will respond to this type of resistance, what the policy will be for dealing with innocent civilians, civilian insurgents, non-uniformed combatants and the like. We will waste all our preparation time thinking of every eventuality, so that we can prepare a response to it, and we will likely include those responses unnecessarily when outlining our model, in an effort to prevent interjections through points of information, or equally to pre-empt substantive lines of attack.

The debate then quickly becomes one about the feasibility and nothing else of the model; in BP format, this means all the principled arguments are left for the lower House, and the opening teams are left behind. In two team formats, it just makes for a dull mechanistic debate, with neither side making the principled (and usually more meaty) arguments. Either way, the debate will not be fun.

3. **Stakeholders**

a. Primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders

Stakeholders are those people who will be affected by a particular model or policy, and therefore need to be considered when we are formulating our policy choice, and choosing our agent. We need to identify who they are, how they will be affected, and if possible, the likely reaction or outcome of that effect.

But we need to be aware that whatever our policy or action , it will have some effect on all people within a given society, however tangential that effect appears to be. We do not have time to talk about all effects on all people, but we should nevertheless consider those actions that always have more direct impact on wider groups than others.

Where the policy is specific to a particular group, this group might be termed primary stakeholders; that is, they are more affected, more directly affected, for a longer time, in a greater way, than any other person we can identify. They are obviously, then, the most important people to consider, as they should be the group we are trying to benefit most (with social policy) or target most effectively (with an invasion), and our ability to argue that the effect will be as we describe will affect not only the perception of the efficacy of the model, and the legitimacy of our choice of agent, but also our principled justifications for doing so.

It is unlikely however, that any policy will only affect one group in isolation. There is often a correlative group, which is harmed as another is benefited (or vice versa). These then are our secondary stakeholders, and may (despite the name) be as important to discuss as our first group. An example of this is where government money currently directed at a specific group (young mothers, for example) needs to be diverted to an entirely unrelated group (new migrants); it is not enough to talk about why giving money or support to new migrants is a good thing, we also need to provide correlative arguments that the young mothers do not need, or deserve, the money as much. If it is the same money we are talking about, and it is a 'zero sum' equation (what we give to one, we take, or withhold, from another), it is imperative to complete both sides of the argument in order to make our position as strong as possible.

This is not the only interpretation of secondary stakeholders, though. There may well be two distinct groups we can identify, both affected to a significant degree but in different ways. We might term one as primary, and the other as secondary, without necessarily assuming

that one group is more relevant than the other. Consider a policy that requires students to pay for their university education (whether through loans, graduate tax, or whatever mechanism): this clearly affects those who are or who wish to become students, but may have equal, albeit, different effect on the universities and academic staff. We might give students the label of primary stakeholder, simply because they are who comes to mind first, and we might think at first that the impact on academic staff, research assistants, and others, is not as immediate, but a brief consideration of the issues reveals them to be impacted to as great a degree, albeit in different ways.

Tertiary stakeholders are those who are affected by policy, but are 'once removed' from that policy. We would, in a debate about university education funding, need to consider the effects of our policy on students, academic staff, and also on parents of those students, on employers and business who recruit from university graduates, on neighbouring countries who may have different policies (as was the case in the UK, where English universities introduced top-up fees, but their Scottish counterparts did not. This massively increased the number of applications from English students to Scottish universities, whilst at the same time giving English universities comparative advantage in terms of funding. This then created the conditions for academics in Scotland to look to those universities in the north of England as alternative employers, and a potential 'brain drain', which had its own impact upon the students in Scotland). Although the other schools cannot be said in any way to be primary, or even secondary

stakeholders, they are clearly affected by the policy, and have an affect of their own, so that those who benefit from the policy may in fact be harmed by other aspects of it.

We can continue down the list of who is affected, how, and to what degree almost *ad infinitum*. At each stage, we need to consider what impact we have upon them, what the reaction to such an impact might be, and what further impact they will have on others above and below them in our list. Only then can we be certain that we have given due consideration to each group, and have evaluated the potential impact, both positive and negative, of our policy overall.

b. Everyone is affected by everything

When considering our stakeholders, we should be aware that due to the nature of modern society, almost everyone is impacted on some level by actions of Government. There is no one single individual living outside the State to such a degree that policies have no touch upon them, that we can ignore completely whether our policy affects them. This is usually noticeable by considering the game (or theory) of 'six degrees of separation', the idea that everyone can be linked to everyone else in six 'steps' through other acquaintances. Numerous efforts to prove this true, including random mailings of incorrectly addressed letters, have been attempted, but what interests us here is not the validity of the theory, but the idea behind it. Each stakeholder that we can identify is connected to another person in some way, and by virtue of that connection, this other person is also affected by our policy, not directly, perhaps even imperceptibly, but the effect is there.

Let us consider again the stakeholders we have identified for our debate about university fees. Clearly, we need to talk about students, the universities themselves and their academic staff. We have also mentioned the need to consider the impact on parents (who might be asked to find the money), on schools in neighbouring jurisdictions and on businesses who recruit from the pool of graduates. But if those businesses are affected, who else will be affected in turn? Those businesses' customers, anyone who uses the services and products of those companies, the employees of those businesses, and their families… the list goes on through all possible connections until we have touched upon literally everybody.

But it should be obvious that we do not have the time to talk about all those groups individually, to outline exactly how they are affected, and why this impact needs to be considered. What we need then is some form of metric by which we can rate the importance of an impact on a particular group, so that those outside our primary and secondary groups, but who

nevertheless are a significant stakeholder group, can be given the consideration they deserve.

c. Involuntary, irreversible harm, and the numbers game

When we consider an impact upon a particular group (and it is usually negative impact that we are considering) we need to think about how many people are affected, to begin with. The more people that are affected, the more important it becomes to consider that effect when presenting our argument. Often, though, the greatest number affected will also be those most directly affected (our primary stakeholders) and so should have featured prominently in our initial thoughts about our case. Occasionally though, a greater number will be affected as secondary or even tertiary stakeholders, and we should balance their number against the degree of separation of the impact to assess their importance overall. If the impact is almost as great, and the number slightly more than that for primary stakeholders, where should we place them? Above, below, or on a par with those primary stakeholders? There is no one right answer for this; it is a question of judgment that in the end is a personal one. Once we have made the decision that this group is in fact more important, though, our job is to persuade others that such is the case.

Just playing the numbers game is not enough, though. The degree(s) of separation matter(s), as it would be absurd to talk about the potential impact on taxpayers of a certain policy (huge in number) if that effect is of the nature of a small sum of money per person or household. Generally speaking, the degree of impact, and the nature of the impact will always be more important than just increased numbers; in order to argue otherwise, we would need to a lot of groundwork teasing out further implications of the impact, that touch on other aspects of it, such as whether the harm is irreversible, or involuntary.

When the harm caused is irreversible, or tends towards irreversibility the longer it continues unaddressed, the more important it is to deal with the harm, and quickly. This may then promote a group of stakeholders in importance. Similarly, when the nature of the harm caused is involuntary, this again increases that harm. [The moral philosopher Peter Singer estimates that involuntary harm is always 10000 times worse – a suspiciously round number, but a useful indicator, nonetheless.] Whatever number we use, it should be clear that those who do not choose to risk a harm, if they then suffer it, are affected to a greater degree, and are perhaps more deserving of attention. By considering factors such as the nature of the harm, whether the risk is voluntary or not, and how irreversible the harm is, as well as the numbers affected, we can be sure

that correct consideration is given to all the groups concerned, and our arguments will be focused and targeted to address these individuals' needs.

Extensions and Summaries

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Extensions and Summaries

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1. **Extensions**

   a. New, interesting and relevant

   When new to debating, particularly to the British Parliamentary format, one of the more difficult concepts to grasp is that of the 'extension' speech – this is the speech given by the third speaker on each side of the debate, to open the lower half of it. It is a peculiarity of BP debating that the closing Government and Opposition teams are in competition not just with the opposing benches, but also with the opening half of their own benches, and this is what makes the extension speech special.

   The simplest and perhaps best characterisation of the extension speech is that it should be new, interesting and relevant. Each of these elements is key to a good extension speech, and none is sufficient on its own. However, there are also certain things that the extension speaker should not do, and it is important to be equally aware of these. We will look at each of the three crucial elements in turn, and in doing so, highlight the potential errors that can be made (and should be avoided) by the competent speaker.

   Let us first look at this idea of saying something 'new'; what exactly does that mean? It should be obvious that in our role as third speaker we need to add something to the debate, and not simply repeat what was said in the Upper House. Thus what we say should be, or appear, new. That does not mean that we introduce new elements of the model if there is one, but that we present new argumentation, new analysis, to further the position of our bench. This might be analysis of a stakeholder group not previously mentioned, or significantly deeper analysis of something touched on by the Upper House without being fully developed. Either of these is valid, and judges should be able to recognise when significant new analysis has been given, as opposed to a sophisticated repackaging of the arguments. We should be aware though, that sometimes, even a clever repackaging might be enough – if the upper bench has presented some good ideas in a confused and muddled fashion, the judges may well welcome some clarity being provided, and feel that the third speaker has done their job by adding this clarity.

   The reason for not allowing extensions to the model or policy, if there is one, is simple: the Opposition bench cannot be expected to respond properly in the opening half of the debate if some of the model is kept hidden from them; in the same way that the model, in its entirety, should form part of the Prime Minister's speech and not be shared by PM and DPM, it is equally unfair if some of the model is not made explicit until the third speaker.

   The next element to consider is, is our new material interesting? There might be much that is new to say, but the judges and audience will want it to be just as interesting as that which has gone before. We can make ourselves interesting to listen to through good public speaking technique, but the material itself should also hold the interest. We must remember that, as third speaker, we have had more time to think of our arguments, and as such we might be able to present what at first seem like counter-intuitive arguments, because we have thought them through, and can

explain the logic in them. This will (or should) always be interesting as argument, as it is not formulaic, predictable or otherwise ordinary.

What also makes argument interesting is the way in which it is presented. Considering the effect of things like the narrative bias, experiential bias and humanisation, it is possible to ensure that we present arguments in an accessible way, and a way to which people are more likely to respond favourably. By creating a narrative framework for our argument, and humanising that narrative, we can be confident that the audience will listen to what we have to say. If it is also new, and as we will discuss shortly, relevant, then we will ensure that we are fulfilling the requirements of our role.

Lastly, we need to be careful that what we are adding to the debate is the most relevant material yet to be introduced. We might have some fascinating and new insight into the plight of a particular group, but without being able to link this back to the resolution and the specific positions established in the Upper House, the material is wasted. The relevance to the debate as it is happening is perhaps the most important element of the three (although none of them can be dismissed); many times, the third speaker on each side will give a fluent and eloquent speech, certainly new, and genuinely interesting, but one that may have just as well occurred in a vacuum. Unless we can demonstrate the relevance of our material, then what we say, no matter how beautifully presented, structured and delivered will, will carry no weight. We do not want to be told at the end that we just were not in the debate. So that new group of stakeholders we have identified, the new principle we introduce to be upheld, the clever re-presentation of earlier arguments – all must be done with this question in mind: why does any of this matter? The arguments we choose as third speaker should be those that are most important to the debate that have not yet been introduced, the key elements that are thus far missing from the table. If we can identify and present those well, we should be able to put ourselves in a particularly strong position by the end of the debate.

b. Widening the debate, or narrowing the focus

Often, coaches are asked what the best way is to extend a debate, beyond the 'new, interesting and relevant' argumentation. Should one attempt to widen the parameters of the debate, or narrow the focus, or neither of these? As ever in debate, there is no one hard and fast rule that should always be observed, and that will always guarantee success from a particular position on the table. Much will depend on what has gone before, on how the debate has been framed by the Upper House. On occasion, although this is thankfully rare, we may be in the position of following an Upper House that appears to have covered all bases, and as such, we might struggle to see where the genuine extension lies. But even in these extreme cases, we should be able to identify lines of argument that can be further developed, and ensure that we are 'in the debate' at the end.

Most debates in BP format are policy debates, in that they require the Government to do something positive, to make a change from the status

quo. In doing so, the Government will need to introduce a model for this change, an agent of change, and so on. They will also need to talk about who exactly they are trying to help, and in what way this supposed benefit is likely to be achieved. Good Government teams will also include some analysis of who may be harmed by the policy, and why it is justifiable to do this. Similarly, opening Opposition, if competent and doing their job, will also focus on the merits or otherwise of the model, and provide the correlative analysis to the Government's. This means that the wider principles, the broader philosophical justifications for the debate, will be untouched, or at least underdeveloped. This then is where the focus of the extension should perhaps lie. Clearly defining the supporting principle of philosophy that upholds our side's position, and successfully analysing why this principle is, and should continue to be, upheld. This will show a consistency with the opening half of our bench, whilst giving us an opportunity to distinguish ourselves from them, by introducing new arguments that are evidently important to the debate.

As mentioned, on occasion, the upper House's coverage of the important issue is, or appears to be, comprehensive, leaving us little room to extend. In this case, there may be more than option. If the model is complex, and the principle we wish to uphold so important, it is likely to need significant analysis, and may not get sufficient time if too many arguments are being introduced. Equally, there may be other principles we hold as dear, and can demonstrate are also supported by the policy, and we can choose to talk about these as our new material.

Alternatively we may find ourselves following an opening half to the debate which is almost entirely focused on principle and philosophical justification, debates where no policy is put forward or even required. These are sometimes referred to as 'value' debates, and require each side to show the supremacy of competing values. It is a perfectly reasonable strategy to narrow the focus of such a debate to concentrate on specific examples of policies which illustrate the value being defended, and provide extensive analysis as to why this has been adopted and why it is a good thing. [Note: we should not be tempted to introduce a policy of our own, no matter how much we think there should be a policy proposed in the debate.]

However, value debates are often contested through lists of examples illustrating one particular side's position, and simply thinking of more examples to add to this list is not enough to win the debate; we will certainly maintain consistency down the bench, and will have said something new, but not of great interest or relevance if we do not illuminate anything substantially different from what has gone before. Again, there are a number of options available to us: we could focus on one example already given, and argue why this is the paradigm, the most relevant and most necessary example, we could choose to argue that the value being defended is necessary to protect and support other values (perhaps by showing that the examples already provided also illustrate these other values). Again we would be fulfilling the requirement of saying something that is new, interesting, and relevant.

The key lesson here is that to capture the interest of judges and audience alike, we need to make ourselves, our team's position and our arguments

noticeably different from the other half of our bench, whilst at all times maintaining consistency, and avoiding contradiction. That in itself will cover the 'new', and hopefully, the 'interesting'. As long as we then make sure that what we have to say is also relevant, we will be fulfilling our role well.

c. MIA - Missing In Analysis, or, Spotting the missing links

This section is necessarily brief, as much of this area has already been dealt with, in the previous sections. But it is so important that it is worth reiterating here: the good extension speaker will be able to identify and provide significant analysis on those areas of the debate which are thus far lacking – the 'missing links'. We should remember that our audience will be following arguments as they develop, and should there be gaps in the logic or the argument, they will want and expect them to be explained later. Failing to do so will highlight the other team's mistakes, but given that we have had more time to think of our material, it will only serve to highlight our shortcomings more.

There is little more that can be said about this without going into great depth on individual motions, and there is no place for that here. Admittedly, learning to spot the crucial line of argument that has yet to be made takes some skill, but more than that, it takes practice. The more we attempt this, the better we become at identification, and elaboration. Both are necessary, and once we are comfortable with them, extensions speeches cease to the scary prospect they often are.

d. Applying stakeholder analysis

[Stakeholder analysis is the subject of a separate workpack, and this section should be read in conjunction with that.]

Often, the best way of providing the significant but still missing argument in the debate is to focus on stakeholders, the impact on whom may have thus far in the debate been under-developed, or ignored completely.

Stakeholders fall into separate categories that affect their importance in the debate – whether they are primarily or secondarily affected, how many people are affected, whether the harm is of an involuntary nature, or becomes more irreversible the longer it continues unaddressed. [All this is discussed in detail in the 'Stakeholders' pack.] We should be able to

identify, using a simple metric that group we need to spend time talking about, to ensure that their significance in the debate is not missed.

Lastly, we should not forget that when applying analysis of the stakeholders affected, we should still provide links back to the founding position or principle established by the upper House. Maintaining consistency with the opening position is key if the analysis is to remain interesting and relevant, as well as new.

e. Taking the debate home

An often used phrase in debate – 'taking the debate home' – is rarely understood in its proper context. It refers not to grand showmanship, but to our ability to convince the judges or audience that what we are saying, even though it comes after six or seven other speeches, is the most important, most relevant, most significant material of the whole debate.

There is no one correct way of doing this, and much depends on our personal style, our presence, and our ability to convince. But if we follow the guidelines about effective public speaking (as outlined in earlier packs), we should be able to hold the attention of whomever is listening. It is then down to the quality of our argument, which provided we are minded of all the above should be of a high standard.

Again, there is no substitute for practice when trying to develop or improve these skills; the more we try, the easier it is, and the more accomplished we become. It's then up to our partner to provide a great summary.

2. Summaries

a. Identifying clash

Summary speeches are perhaps the hardest to instruct, and rely most on our ability to 'see' the debate, and the arguments contained within it. But there are some things which, beginners and experts alike, we would do well to remember when planning and delivering our summary.

The first of these is identifying clash, that is, how arguments from each side conflict with each other. If arguments have been effectively presented and rebutted, the clash should be obvious. But it can be harder to spot, when arguments appear to run parallel to one another rather than hitting each other head-on.

In cases such as these, the clash is often one of the principle or philosophical justification, and although not fully examined in earlier arguments, can be better exposed by effective summary. We should be able to address the arguments already presented, and analyse which of them is the stronger, by providing further analysis of their implications (this is legitimate, and is not considered new material). Similarly, we should be able to provide additional rebuttal, if needed to the stronger arguments of the other side. In this way we can create further clash, making it more explicit for the audience, and therefore rendering the job of judging the debate much clearer.

Clarity of the argument is what we are aiming for in a good summary. Presenting arguments as clashing along defined themes (three is often a good number) gives this clarity, and presents the debate as a cohesive whole, rather than just a series of arguments presented in chronological fashion. Summaries of this kind are basic, and little to the debate; we will look at how to avoid the 'summary by numbers' next.

b. 'She said, he said…' – avoiding summary by numbers

When starting debate, nervous participants are often coached to summarise in a purely chronological fashion, to ensure that no element of the debate is missed. We write diligently all through the debate, and then read our 'flow' almost verbatim – forgetting that the judges often have the same information in front of them, and would do as well to read their own notes! We add nothing substantial, and in fact can often weaken our team's position, as we repeat more arguments from the Upper House than from our partner.

We do better when considering the topic of arguments, so that they can be grouped together in our presentation; this allows us to provide better comparative analysis of those arguments, rather than treating each one in isolation. We can then show the judges or audience just why our arguments are strongest, and should be considered as such in the debate (see Biased adjudication, below).

To help us do this, we can adapt the way we flow the debate, so that the notes from which we draw our summary already have arguments grouped together by topic or theme, perhaps on different sheets of paper for each. This will keep them clear and distinct in our minds, and thus in our presentation. Much is made of having a clear, logical structure in debate; in summary, this is crucial. Our structure informs, and is informed by, the arguments as they have clashed across the table, and our focus should be on demonstrating this adequately to the judges.

c. Biased adjudication – your chance to evaluate

As the summary speaker, we have a unique opportunity to present the entire case for our side, and contrast it with the entire case of the opposition, and to tell the judges exactly why, at each instance, the arguments of our bench were the better structured, presented and analysed. We also have an opportunity to tell our audience just why the arguments brought by our team in extension are the most relevant, interesting and significant in evaluating this debate. It is an opportunity not to be missed.

In order to do this, we should focus on which arguments we feel have won the debate, on the analysis presented by our partners, and we should reiterate its crucial nature in the debate. We should, though, refrain from attempting to adjudicate the debate as whole, rather than just the arguments.

Judges often do not like to be told that a team has not provided a model, has failed to offer points of information, &c. As judges, they should know this, and it is not our job to point out these things. We should be focused on the argumentation and analysis alone, and leave judging things like role fulfilment to, well, the judges. It is one thing to point out the weakness of the opposition argument brought in extension, and quite another to say there was no extension, and so the judges should disregard that team. That is a judgment too far.

But if we remember that our job is provide a comparative evaluation of the arguments, then we are free to show the judges through further analysis just why our arguments have held throughout the debate, remaining standing at the end, and therefore, why we should win.

d. Characterising the debate

Characterisation, or crystallisation, of the debate as a whole can be a very useful tactic when presenting a summary of the arguments. In the same way, giving the judges or audience a metric by which the can evaluate the arguments, and then providing an analysis of that metric can be very persuasive. Often, we will hear accomplished and experienced debaters begin their summaries in similar ways: "What this debate is about…", or, "What this debate come down to…", even, "The way we should judge this debate is…" The debater often then goes on to talk about the relative burden of each side, and how they feel that respective burden has been discharged, by delineating the main areas of the debate (often termed 'areas of clash') and dividing up the arguments accordingly. When looking at each area, they identify and analyse the major arguments for and against the resolution, providing further analysis and rebuttal where necessary, and giving that biased evaluation to show the merits of their bench and their

team as being greater than any others. But they always return to that same characterisation of the debate to reinforce in the audience's mind just why the debate has been won so convincingly.

The clarity of this characterisation, and their ability to make it encapsulate all the arguments within the debate is what gives the speech its rhetorical power; by being able to see, and therefore show, the framework on which all the argumentation has rested, they can give confidence to the audience that analysis in summary is accurate, because the identification has been accurate. When we achieve this too, we can put our audience at ease; they can have confidence in us, and therefore in what we say.

We as a summary speaker should be thinking about this characterisation from the first minute of our preparation time. We should ask ourselves, what is this debate about, really? At its most fundamental, what is the single issue that needs to be addressed as a priority? Once we have identified this, we can work with our partner to develop a firm line of extension, and we can also be sure that, as we listen to arguments being presented in the debate, we are already assessing them in terms of this characterisation, how they might fit into our framework and areas of clash, and how best we might summarise them individually for the audience. As such, we give ourselves the best chance of presenting a strong, confident summary of the debate, and one which the judges or audience should have no trouble believing.