DEBATE ARGUMENT BASICS

HOW TO MAKE A DEBATE ARGUMENT

Argument presentation is most critical in second line speeches which attempt to extend initial arguments you have presented. These speeches are challenging in contrast to front line speeches which establish certain positions. Second line speeches require you to respond to arguments made by the opposing team as well as reestablishing your position. Thus, the 1AC, since it is entirely prepared is a front line speech. The 1NC is a mix, off case arguments such as disadvantages are front line arguments, while case arguments are second line since they respond to case. Every speech after the 1NC is a second line speech.

1) Tell the judge which issue you are going to (i.e. on case, topicality, the disadvantage etc. Issues include disadvantages, topicality arguments, divisions on case like harm, solvency or advantages.

 2) Consider giving an overview for your offensive arguments - An overview is a short (30-60 sec.) summary of the argument. Overviews are useful because they put the arguments you will present thereafter in a framework which may be understood. Overviews are best prepared ahead of time as they will help you understand the issue as well as giving you an opportunity to write the most efficient and best way to explain the issue.

3) Tell the judge, which opposing argument you are answering, refer to the speech, number and label of the argument, e.g. "2AC number 1, non-unique"

4) number and label your argument, your first argument to the opposing argument should be no. 1, the second no. 2 etc. A label is like a newspaper headline, it should be 3-8 words long and contain action words which make the argument easy to remember

 5) read evidence (if you have it)

 6) explain and impact your argument, this is the most important thing, especially when responding to another team's arguments, you need to explain why your argument is superior and why the argument helps win the round for your team.

HOW TO EXTEND A DROPPED ARGUMENT- Most of your first few debates will involve recognizing that the opposing team has not answered your argument. If it is an argument like a topicality violation or a disadvantage this may be enough to win the round if you can impact the argument.

1) Tell the judge which issue you are going to (i.e. on case, topicality, the disadvantage etc.) Issues include disadvantages, topicality arguments, divisions on case like harm, solvency or advantages.

 2) Consider giving an overview for the dropped argument

3) Extend the original subpoints of the dropped argument from the front line speech. i.e “extend subpoint A. our definition, we define either as \_\_\_\_”

 4) explain and impact your argument, this is the most important thing, tell why you should win because they dropped your arguments.