

How to get from Now to Then

In this chapter we'll be learning about how to build an effective proposition case.

Debating is about changing the world.

Actually, it isn't, most of the time, unless it's a debate in parliament which results in a law being passed. However, policy motions - which are the most commonly used motions - are about changing the way things are. Understanding this will help you, if you are the proposition, to build an effective case.

A helpful way to think of building the case for change is to think in terms of **NOW**, **THEN** and **ACTION**.

NOW is the situation as it is.

THEN is where you want to get to.

ACTION is what gets you from **NOW** to **THEN**

The **ACTION** is what is at the centre of the motion; it's what comes after 'This house would ...'

In order to make a case for the proposition, you need to prove that:

1. **NOW** is not good.
2. **THEN** would be better.
3. The **ACTION** will get us to **THEN**.

You need to answer the following questions:

1. What's the **NOW**?
2. What's wrong with **NOW**?
3. What will **THEN** look like?
4. Why will **THEN** be better?
5. How will the **ACTION** get us to **THEN**?

So, how would you do this in practice?

Let's take a very concrete policy motion: 'This house would make it compulsory for all 18 year olds to do a year of community service.'

1. What's the **NOW**?
 - 18 year olds can do what they want when they leave school; go to university, get further training, get a job, or do nothing all day.

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