

evidence supporting these reasons. The plan must be presented in a reasonably detailed manner, including such details as who will do the plan (which agency of government) and precisely what will be done.

The reasons offered in the first affirmative speech must present a *prima facie* case. A *prima facie* case is one that would, at first glance, be sufficient to convince a reasonable person that the plan should be adopted. The normal understanding of this “first face” requirement is that the case must show (with evidence) significant harm, inherency, and solvency. If any one of those three key elements is missing, the affirmative team has not met its burden of placing a complete argument on the floor for debate.

It is important that the first affirmative constructive speech be well organized with clearly labeled observations, contentions, or advantages. Each of the major arguments should be supported by clearly labeled subpoints. The speeches that follow the first affirmative constructive will attempt to follow the organizational structure outlined in the first speech. If the structure of the first speech is unclear, the debate can become quite disorganized.

*First Negative Constructive Speech:* This speech presents the reasons for opposing the affirmative case. The traditional approach to this task is to have the first negative speaker focus on a direct point-by-point refutation of the first affirmative speech, leaving the second negative speaker to present disadvantages or other *off-case* arguments. It has now become customary for the first negative speaker to present the whole of the negative position, including any topicality positions, harm attacks, inherency attacks, solvency attacks, and disadvantage shells.

The disadvantage *shell* typically involves a short presentation of the essential elements of a disadvantage argument. The entire shell (for a single disadvantage) is often presented in less than one minute of actual speech time. The essential part of a disadvantage argument includes a link (what is it about the plan that would cause this disadvantage?), some uniqueness argument (why would the plan cause the disadvantage any more than does the present system?), a brink argument (why is this the critical point for the disadvantage?), and some impact (why would the disadvantage be worse than the affirmative harm?). Each of the elements of the disadvantage must be supported with authoritative evidence.

During the case attack portion of the first negative constructive, it is desirable that the speaker follow the structure of the first affirmative speech. It is not necessary to attack every part of the affirmative case, but the negative should think carefully about the strategy necessary to defeat the case. Suppose, for example, that an affirmative contention argues that preserving freedom of speech is more important than any other policy consideration. The negative team cannot afford to allow such a decision-rule