

time repeating their points in detail. Attack the weaknesses in one or two of their major arguments. Point out why they're wrong and move on with demonstrating why you're right, ideally at the same time. Other than your own arguments, rebuttal will be the longest section of your speech.

3. *Three(ish) arguments.* There are good reasons for making three points in a speech—three arguments feels like a proof, whereas two looks like coincidence and one is just a curiosity—but there's nothing magical about it. Also, in practical terms, three arguments fit neatly into the length of a typical debate speech. Again, there's no mystery to this, it's why speeches tend to be 7 or 8 minutes long rather than 15 or 20. Don't add a third argument just to check off the box and don't limit yourself to three if doing so leaves an obvious hole in your case.

Be particularly aware of your time limits; include as many arguments as you have time to set out convincingly. Each of your arguments should be complete, including a claim, warrant, and evidence. The amount of evidence you provide depends on the situation. Don't allow your speech to drown in it, especially in proving obvious points, but if you want the adjudicator to accept something that she may not have heard before, you'll need to present some reason to do so.

If you don't have the time to present a complete argument, don't bother putting forward the point at all—you will just be wasting your time. Start with your most important arguments—primarily to get and keep the audience's attention but also so you don't lose too much if you're running out of time and have to rush or omit the last argument.

Aim to spend at least three-fifths of your speech setting out your own arguments, longer if possible. An extraordinary number of speeches spend three minutes on an introduction, a bit less on the conclusion and treat the main body of the speech as a sort of intellectual intermission. Your arguments should not be treated as the unstructured ramble in the middle; they should be the main narrative that runs through your speech as a whole. Give each enough time for the adjudicator to properly make their acquaintance.

4. *Role fulfillment.* Whatever your position on your team, you have a particular role to fulfill. You made clear your role in your introduction. You now use the body of the speech to accomplish the tasks you so eloquently set out in the introduction. If your job is to conclude, conclude. If your job is to extend, extend. If it's to define, define. Don't spend all of your time telling everyone what you're thinking of doing. Just do it!
5. *Response to Points of Information.* In those formats that allow for Points of Information, give yourself time to take and address them but, ideally, weave your answer into your own arguments. Don't leave taking one to the last possible moment and don't be