

for speakers new to either debating or BP, so the chapter examines how they work and addresses a few common misunderstandings.

Finally, the chapter looks at what state each side's case should be in when it is handed to the final speaker. This last phase—handing over what should be a completed body of argumentation—is shared by all formats.

Tidying Up

In theory, the opening speakers should have spelled out and explained how their teams will develop their cases, identified the areas of disagreement, presented their side's first argument, and handed their cases on for the next speakers to explain the remaining arguments, add rebuttal, and generally finish the case off. But frequently the transfer between speakers is not that neat. If this happens, you need to tidy things up before moving on to the main points of your speech. When doing so, refer to what the preceding speaker on your side has said. If there is genuine confusion about the case, use this opportunity to give a sentence or two of clarification and move on. If you're speaking on the Affirmative, reiterate the definition; if on the Negative, restate simply the first speaker's principal objection and move on to yours. Resist the temptation to spend half of your speech reviewing the debate so far. If you do, you will have insufficient time to develop your arguments in any detail, and the final speaker will be left with nothing to summarize. In effect, you will have lost three speeches rather than one.

Bear in mind the make-up of your audience. Just because the speakers on the other side of the debate haven't understood your argument does not mean the adjudicator hasn't. Use your judgment as to whether the case is genuinely muddled or if the other side has just been slow on the uptake or surprised by a line of argument they hadn't anticipated.

The Roles of Middle Speakers

Once you've done any necessary tidying up, you should have a clear starting point to begin your own speech in earnest. What follows is debating in the truest meaning of the word: both sides arguing in both directions, defending parts of their own cases, introducing new ones, and critiquing opposing ideas.

The middle speaker's primary task is to use her remarks to draw out the narrative that holds the case together. The opening speaker sets up the scaffolding and framework