

have run through the case and demonstrates that her side has done what they said they would, and done it well. The exact manner in which she presents the conclusion will vary with the particular approach she chooses, but her aim is to demonstrate that her team has proved their case or attacked the motion successfully in one seamless flow of argumentation. To do so, she will highlight the strengths of her side and the weaknesses of the opposition. She may use the structures set out by the opening speakers or may find it more persuasive to impose a new structure to clarify and promote her side's perspective.

Generally, closing speakers give very little additional evidence and introduce no new arguments. As a result, a closing speech is not an exercise in trying to get in all of the points you would have mentioned at the start if only your side had thought of them. Rather, it presents the evidence in a compelling and attractive way. You shouldn't misquote or distort the opposition's arguments, but feel free to ignore some or present them in their least flattering light, usually demonstrating how they have missed the focus of the debate all together.

FUNCTIONS OF THE CLOSING SPEECH

Closing speeches have certain functions. They must:

- *Tidy up.* As discussed in the last chapter, the main arguments of both sides should have been completed by the middle speakers. However, that's not always the case, so the closing speaker may have some tidying up to do. If you do this with skill, the adjudicator will not notice that your teammates left you with loose ends. Simply structure your summation in such a way as to make it seem that your teammates were just fractionally clearer than a verbatim recording of events would suggest. You might, for example, take a piece of evidence that a colleague has mentioned in passing and place it front and center for the adjudicator. Frequently you might take a link between a piece of rebuttal and a substantive argument and state explicitly how the case as a whole rests on them. Conversely, where a colleague has been distracted by something that adds little, or even detracts from, your case, a judicious summary would overlook it altogether. In a good summation, you should be drawing out the main themes rather than cataloguing every detail, so this process actually takes place quite naturally.
- *Frame the debate.* In practical terms, the closing speaker is trying to give the adjudicator a way of interpreting what has happened in the debate. She will pull out the strengths of her side and demonstrate how they answer the major issues behind the debate. She will mention the points of clash that have happened as the debate progressed, pointing to ways in which her side had the better of them all. She will demonstrate how the opposing side failed to really come to grips with the whole topic from the start