

argument that didn't carry too much weight and is just squeezed in before the conclusion. And, remember, rebuttal and substantive argument should feed off each other—they should be two sides of the same coin.

So, if you're a middle speaker giving a seven-minute speech, your timing might be:

Introduction: 30 seconds to 1 minute

Rebuttal: 90 seconds

Main argument: 2 minutes

Secondary argument: 90 Seconds

Conclusion: 30 seconds

The remaining 30 seconds to a minute is for dealing with POIs, if your format permits them. Of course, these times are rough guides and will vary depending both on your position in the debate and the state of the debate at the time.

First and final speakers must be realistic about how much time is needed to introduce a case in its entirety or to summarize one. Concluding speakers, in particular, need to remember that an effective conclusion should stress the points made by the other speaker or speakers on her team. This is particularly true in formats that have more than one team per side. There's not much point in giving a detailed summary of what happened at the beginning of the debate if that doesn't leave enough time to mention the great arguments put forward by the concluding speaker's teammate. So, for concluding speakers, the division of time might be:

Overview of the debate's themes: 1 minute

Rebuttal of the previous speaker: 1 minute

Gathering together the arguments of her side's case: 2 minutes 30 seconds

Critiquing the argument of the other side: 90 seconds

Conclusion (demonstrating the superiority of her team's position): 1 minute

The internal timing of any good speech is really about effective balance—a little of everything. Too much time spent on one element means not enough time left for the others. There are no hard and fast rules, but generally:

- spend more time on your arguments (or those of your team) than on other people's
- spend about twice as much time on constructive as on rebuttal