

INFORMATION FROM DAV WEBSITE RE SCORING

Adjudicators assess your speech and performance as a team as a whole according to three criteria; matter, method and manner

MATTER

Simply, Matter refers to the raw material which you use to construct your arguments - the facts or evidence upon which your case is based. Matter includes such things as quotes, statistics, facts and evidence that you may be able to put forward to prove or further your own team case.

The two cornerstones of matter are **logic** and **relevance**. **Logic** refers to whether one fact, or piece of evidence makes another more likely. For example, In a debate on whether or not the death penalty should be reintroduced, you might use statistics on the crime rates in various US states that do have the death penalty, to argue for the proposition that the existence of a death penalty provides a deterrent to potential criminals and vice versa. **Relevance** refers to whether your evidence and arguments can actually be applied to the topic at hand and are relevant to what it is that you are actually debating about. When framing your arguments, check whether each argument is both logical and relevant by asking yourself: "Does this argument make our team case more likely to succeed?" Only if you can truly answer yes to this question is the argument both logical and relevant.

Top Five Matter Hints

1. Relevance! Make sure that you link each argument to the topic.
2. Check the resource guide on the DAV website for hints and links to useful websites.
3. Put yourself in the shoes of your opponents and try to think about what arguments they will make. How will you respond to their main arguments?
4. Ask your teachers, parents and friends for ideas if you get stuck.
5. Make sure each point is backed up by a relevant example!

METHOD

Method is the structure or organisation of your speech, and how it fits into your team's case as a whole. There are three major components of method: internal method, team method, and how your speech reacts to the dynamics of the debate.

Internal Method is the way your own speech is structured. Every speech should have a recognisable beginning (introduction), middle and end (conclusion), and in that order. (This may sound obvious but you'll be amazed at how often someone introduces their speech after they are already half way through it.) To succeed in this aspect of method, have a clear understanding at the start of your speech of what your speech should accomplish, and briefly make this obvious at the start of the speech to your audience, then follow that structure, concluding by highlighting what your speech has achieved, in the overall scheme of your team's case.

Team Method is the way your speech fits into the team case as a whole. Ideally your three speeches should be consistent with each other, but expansive opposed to repetitive. A second speaker who merely repeats what the first speaker has said can do almost as much damage as a second speaker who contradicts what the first speaker said. This is an area with which new teams often have trouble coming to grips, for it is a team problem, not an individual one. Always make sure you work out together how each speech fits into the overall

plan.

The dynamics of a debate. It is this aspect of debating that makes a debate different to a collection of speeches. It is vital that the debater can react to the way that the debate has gone before his/her speech and make changes to that speech while the debate is going on. For example, if the speaker before you concedes one of your major points, then there is no point spending half your speech trying to make it, as it has already been conceded. A good debater can note this, and adjust their speech at the last minute to allocate that extra time to his/her remaining points. Similarly, it is important that each speaker can recognise, when they start their speech what is the crucial issue or issues in the debate at that point in time. Your speech (and especially your opening) should reflect this understanding - there is never a better opportunity to undermine the opposition's most valuable argument than in the first sixty seconds of your speech. This is the aspect of debating that new debaters have the most trouble with, since it requires the ability to see the debate as a battle, and to make important strategic decisions on the run that can have important consequences for your team.

Top Five Method Hints

1. Outline to the audience what your main points will be
2. Summarise at the end of your speech what your arguments were
3. Make sure you give the team split and stick to it!
4. Make sure everyone in the team understands your definition, and is prepared to defend it if necessary
5. Be careful not to contradict the previous speaker (or speakers) from your team

MANNER

Manner is the way in which you deliver your speech. It includes everything that goes towards the presentation of your speech:

Use of voice. Try not to speak in a monotone, and remember to pause when appropriate.

Gestures. You should use some hand gestures, but try to avoid waving your arms about too much!

Use of notes. We recommend that you use palm cards rather than a sheet of paper for your notes – waving around sheets of paper tends to be distracting, unlike cards which can fit into your hand.

Eye contact. The more you look at the audience, the better. The best way to make this happen is to reduce your reliance on your cards. For your first few speeches you might want the added security of having the entire speech written out on cards – but if you can reduce your reliance on cards as you do more debates then your eye contact with the audience will be better. Always face the audience – never turn around to address the opposition when making rebuttal.

Humor. Where appropriate, humor works well as it relaxes the audience and makes them more willing to listen to you. Don't try to use jokes and other gags unless they are also relevant to the debate (no telling Elephant jokes, please). Humor may also detract from your speech if it is not appropriate, for example making jokes in a debate about life or death issues. Use your judgement on this issue, but if the joke is more likely to make the audience cringe rather than laugh then give the joke a miss.

It is the most subjective aspect of debating, the only rule of which is that you must be persuasive. As a speaker, you have to develop a style that works well for you, so that the audience views you as a persuasive speaker. Some people speak fast, some slow, some are loud, some quiet, some are animated, others are calm and reasoned. None of these styles is inherently better than any other, but some hints for the beginner are that first timers probably speak too fast more often than too slow, and often don't use enough variation in their

vocal tone to emphasise important points or to change the pace of the speech. Always bear in mind that your objective is to persuade the audience, not the opposition or your team mates, so look at the audience, speak to them, evaluate their reaction to your speech and modify it accordingly. You can often tell if the audience do not seem to have absorbed your last point before you've started on your next, or if they are bored and want to hear something else. Try to use them as the barometer of your speech, and don't waste time trying to "convert" your opponents.

Keep in mind that teams in a debate don't choose which side you are on – so don't get personal with the other team. Insults directed at your opponents only make you look rude and petty in the eyes of the audience. It could even lead to a breach of the Code of Conduct. Attack their arguments, but don't attack them personally!

Top Five Manner Hints

1. Smile at the audience.
2. Slow Down! Most speakers go too fast.
3. Pause between ideas to let them sink into the audience.
4. Vary your voice when you start a new point.
5. Use body language and gestures to liven up your speech.