
Nsikani, Mlungele M.

National University of Science and Technology Debating Society (NUSTDES)


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DEBATING AND SPEAKING IN PUBLIC: A HANDBOOK
A guide to debating and public speaking, also including notes on adjudication and training activities for Zimbabwean schools and universities

Mlungele Nsikani and Drew Shaw
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i. ABOUT THE AUTHORS

As President of the NUST Debating Society (NUSTDES) for 2011-2012, Mlungele Nsikane identified the need for a one-stop source of information on debating, easily understood and accessible, for students and teachers at universities and high schools. This booklet is his brainchild.

Mlungele Nsikani began debating at Mpopoma High School and continued at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Bulawayo, where he is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources and Wildlife Management. After winning the One World High Schools Debate Tournament in 2009, he represented NUST at the World Universities Debating Championships at the University of Botswana in January 2011. There, his team reached Round Nine.

Mlungele Nsikani was a founding member of NUSTDES, helping to craft its constitution in 2010 and becoming its first President in early 2011. He was also part of the winning NUSTDES team at the Zimbabwe National Debating Championships in 2011, while at the Pan African Universities Debating Championships (PAUDC) held later that year at Falcon College, he was ‘Best Zimbabwean Speaker’ and his team was ranked 13th best in Africa.

With a dedicated team of NUSTDES members in 2011, Mlungele Nsikani founded the annual NUST-Webb Debating Championships for Matabeleland High Schools (now the NUST-Webb Summer Invitational). This is currently the largest debating and public speaking tournament for high school students in Zimbabwe; and Mlungele Nsikani will be Deputy Chief Adjudicator in 2014.

Dr Drew Shaw became a patron and advisor to NUSTDES in September 2011, taking over from Ms Lauren Schroff, Visiting American lecturer and Fulbright Scholar, who coached the NUST team to its early successes.

Born in Gweru, Zimbabwe and educated at Falcon College, Dr Shaw holds degrees from the University of Toronto, the University of Cape Town and the University of London. A lecturer in communication theory and practice at NUST, he also coached and adjudicated at PAUDC 2011. Debating and speaking in public form an integral part of his Communication Skills courses. Trained in teaching English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), Dr Shaw also advises NUST ESL debaters in competitions against native English speakers. He promotes critical thinking, debate and public speaking skills; and supports initiatives to develop these in Zimbabwean schools and universities.
ii. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The authors thank NUSTDES members and patrons who have contributed with advice from 2011 to 2014; and Pan African Universities Debating Championships (PAUDC) for invaluable guidelines in their Speakers’ and Adjudicators’ Training Manuals. Likewise, they thank World Universities Debating Championships (WUDC) and World Schools Debating Championships (WSDC) websites for a wealth of information. Reprinted here are the ‘WUDC Official Speaker Scoring Range’ sheet and some of the ‘Top 100 Debate Motions’ from IDEA (International Debate Education Association). Online sources and other guidebooks are listed below for further reference and readers are encouraged to explore these for themselves. Every effort has been made to acknowledge sources and contributors; and the authors apologise for anyone mistakenly overlooked.

WUDC:
http://idebate.org
http://www.wudc.info
http://globaldebateblog.blogspot.com

PAUDC:
http://www.africandebating.org/paudc/index.php/paudc/

WSDC:
http://www.schoolsdebate.com

NUSTDES:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/174402099279382/?fref=ts
http://nustdebatesociety.blogspot.com
http://bigafricandebate.blogspot.com

DEBATE GUIDE BOOKS:

ESTABLISHING DEBATE CLUBS & SOCIETIES:

For those wanting to set up debate clubs at schools, do a google search for tips. We recommend, for example:

http://www.esu.org/programmes/schools/secondary-schools/e-classroom/resources-for-students-and-teachers/ten-tips-for-setting-up-a-debating-club


http://www.europe.idebate.org/about/debate/startclub

Also try to send a school team to compete at the annual NUST-Webb High Schools Debating Summer Invitational.

For those wanting to set up debate societies at universities, see for example:


You may also wish to contact PAUDC for guidelines or you could establish links with NUSTDES and ask them for tips.

You should aim to gather regularly as a motivated group and have your own BP-style debates on topical motions. Crafting and agreeing on a constitution in line with the PAUDC and WUDC visions is another important step; then gaining recognition from your Students Union and University is also a must. They could help with funding for international tournaments such as SAUDC (held in South Africa in July and usually the most affordable and feasible), PAUDC (held somewhere in Africa in mid-December) or WUDC (held at a different world destination every December-January). Apply for a WUDC scholarship if your team is brilliant. Alternatively, think of ways to raise your own funds and settle for smaller, cheaper tournaments to start with. In Zimbabwe there are now several inter-university debate and public speaking tournaments, including the NUST Winter Invitational.
1) INTRODUCTION TO DEBATING

Debating is a form of discussion where people express different opinions about a particular subject. We witness it in our private and public lives. Families debate household or financial issues; companies search for agreement on contracts; opposing sides negotiate in labour disputes or socio-political conflicts; and legislators debate critical national issues in parliament.

In its most positive sense, debating creates space for dialogue in our lives. This can lead to conflict transformation, fostering better relations between different groups and solutions to problems. In a world that has become complex because of advances in science, economics and new technologies, we are daily faced with many choices. One must critically analyse all options to arrive at sensible decisions, and this is where debating skills help. These can equip us with knowledge of different situations and critical tools to make sense of them, so that we can strive towards the best possible solutions.

In high schools and universities, today’s finest debaters and public speakers will likely become tomorrow’s most influential leaders. This underscores the need for well organised debating societies to nurture our future leaders, ideally producing articulate individuals, well versed in current affairs and able to recognise and make good arguments.

You may have a vision of one day becoming a leader in your field. To realise this vision, you need to make good choices; and using the skill of critical analysis, which comes with debating, is the only way to go about it. The skills of speech and debate allow you to communicate effectively with an audience.

Believe it or not, most people are afraid to address large groups and hence fear being future leaders. If you are one such person do not despair: this debating manual is written with you in mind. The handbook sets out to prepare you for the major debating styles used in Zimbabwe, but what is written here can also be applied in other countries. Those who do not intend pursuing a tertiary education or even debating at high school may think what is written here does not apply to them, but that is not exactly true. This manual shows anyone how to be a successful speaker in any situation that life may bring to that person.

You will discover an entire chapter dedicated to effective arguing; and this is useful because on a day to day basis we are constantly needing to make
choices and convince others of good decisions. This section teaches critical analysis of any issue or situation in order to present your own effective argument.

Another chapter has been dedicated to English-as-a-second-language speakers. In Zimbabwe, English is a second or even third language for many and they worry about expressing themselves effectively. Speaker anxiety affects nearly everyone but second language speakers may especially struggle to find appropriate words. One cause may be thinking in one’s native language, mentally translating, then trying to say it in English. There are strategies to deal with this problem, and help is at hand!

The primary focus of the handbook, however, is preparation for debating and public speaking tournaments, which are an exciting platform for debaters, and which lead to a rapid development of skills.

Of course competitive debates require audiences to decide the winners, and the panel of adjudicators is your most important audience. As a debater you need to convince them that you deserve to win and you should do this through persuasive speech and carefully reasoned arguments. The manual will give you some important advice to bear in mind.

There are also tips on training activities and links with popular debate motions from IDEA (International Debate Education Association). Additionally, adjudicators can familiarise with judging criteria and procedures at PAUDC and Worlds’ standards.

NOTES ON SPEAKING IN PUBLIC

If you feel nervous about speaking in public, the section on debate preparation will help you gain the confidence you desire before going into a competition. Proper preparation can dramatically reduce feelings of speaker anxiety.

There are also basic pointers for everyone on achieving their potential. Most suffer from speaker anxiety when facing large crowds in formal settings. Some of the symptoms are a racing heart, butterflies in the stomach, wobbly knees, sweating palms, sweaty forehead, and a faltering voice. If you have
any of these symptoms you are quite normal! This is a predictable physiological response which indicates that your body is simply doing its job. One consolation is that many famous world speakers have also suffered from speaker anxiety but overcome it admirably: Oprah Winfrey and John F Kennedy just to name two.

The important thing is to calm yourself down. To slow a racing heart, take a few slow breaths. Inhale deeply and exhale calmly. Also loosen your shoulders and relax your muscles. Have confidence (repeating to yourself ‘Yes, I can do it! I can do it!’), visualise success and practise one or two rehearsed phrases. Then stay alert and focused during the debate, think on your feet, and try to enjoy it. Your speaker anxiety will quickly vanish. Also, the more you speak in public, the more confident you will get.

Try to maintain good posture, continue breathing slowly and calmly, and project your voice from your waist, not your throat: this will give you volume without having to shout. Wait for your turn to take the floor, then speak as clearly as possible for maximum comprehension. Try to vary your tone, speed and volume as appropriate, but keep calm and avoid shouting.

Look mostly at the audience rather than at other debaters (although you can glance at them of course). You are appealing especially to the adjudicators (who you are trying to convince), even though you may be answering other speakers. Make sure you stick to the allocated time.

Above all, enjoy yourself! Debating and public speaking are meant to be pleasurable activities at schools and universities, so don’t lose your sense of humour and fun. There is a danger in taking yourself too seriously at these events (and the same applies to overly-earnest debaters). You can always spot speakers who are far too serious: they have a distant look and are a bit stiff and self-absorbed, to the extent that they never laugh at themselves. You need to lighten up a little!

Tournaments are charged with an exciting competitive spirit but they are also great social events where you can meet other people and engage with a whole range of ideas, which you may agree or disagree with. You are there to benefit from the entire experience so make the most of it! We hope this manual, which has beginners in mind, will at least get you started and guide you through the fundamentals.
2) GOOD ANALYSIS FOR EFFECTIVE ARGUMENTS

Speakers want to provide strong, effective arguments during debates but not all achieve this and hence they fail to win. Always keep in mind that the road to success in debate involves the ability to critically analyse situations in order to provide good arguments. Good analysis applies to both positive matter and rebuttal. To put it in simple terms, it means to provide clear, logical arguments and rebuttals. (A rebuttal is a counter-argument and a response to one’s opponents). Good analysis of subjects is the core of exceptional debating.

When you are given a motion do not be in a rush to start thinking about the points for your side because this usually boxes your thoughts and limits your analysis skills. The correct thing to do is to first understand the motion. Ask yourself what the motion is all about. You should ask yourself why are we now debating this subject, and particularly what has happened that has necessitated this debate? Asking that question will help you understand the background of the motion.

You will realise that many motions are created in such a way that they seek a solution to a particular problem that the world is faced with. It is important to identify that problem. An example is the motion: ‘This house believes that all maternity fees in hospitals should be removed’. The problem may be the fact that the maternity fees are expensive and many people cannot afford them. Identifying the problem that has prompted the debate puts you at an advantage. After you have done so the next step is to ask yourself whether the motion’s proposed solution is the real solution to the problem. If you are in government or the affirmative side it is now your duty to support it. If you are in the opposition or non-affirmative side you would oppose the proposed solution.

Another important step of analysis is to look at the effects or the consequences of what you are proposing. This can be in the form of harms or benefits. If you are equipped with such analysis it becomes easy to propose or oppose. When you look at the consequences, try to broaden your thoughts. A lot of people could be affected by a single decision or a change in the status quo. These groups could be individuals, communities, the entire population of a country, the government of that country, allies of the country in question and the world as a whole.
To do a good analysis of any issue, always spend time on proving each step of an argument. You should also work out the weakest point in your argument and then spend most of your time defending it. If your opposition is presenting their arguments, you should find out the weakest point of their argument and spend most of your time rebutting this aspect. Always cut through generalisations by mentioning specific groups or unique cases that have to be treated differently. With the example of ‘This house believes maternity fees should be removed’, a generalisation that can be made by someone in government is that (all) women cannot afford maternity fees in a poor country (below poverty datum line).

This generalisation can be countered by the opposition by them saying even if a woman is living on less than a dollar a day, they can save 10c per day for the duration of the pregnancy and then have enough after eight or nine months.

Also, there may be some women who can afford the fees. So the generalisation does not hold and can be rebutted.

In debate, whatever you say there will always be a WHY? This is the most important question to answer. The key to winning the debate is for you to successfully answer the entire WHY questions.

Remember that when you look at a motion you should think beyond the obvious. To be successful at analysing motions you should think “outside the box”, think broadly: do not confine your thoughts. Have a sharp eye and a clear mind: with good analysis you are on your way to exceptional debating.
3) DEBATE PREPARATION

Debate preparation is a very crucial step for you to succeed as a speaker. No matter what style you are using, you cannot neglect this. For the world schools debating style, speakers debate pre-prepared motions. They have had a lot of time before the debate to prepare for their motion. Nevertheless, they should wisely use this time to do the expected research and practise their speaking roles. This may require library or internet searches to establish facts and figures and to familiarise with issues. Debaters should seek credible sources of information in order to make their arguments more persuasive. They should also acknowledge their sources and be prepared for cross-examination by the opposing team who will likely challenge them. Many will appreciate the amount of time given for preparation in the World Schools Debating Style.

On the other hand, British Parliamentary speakers get only 15 minutes to prepare for the debate, which can be a great challenge. Let us consider how one can wisely prepare for a BP debate, given this short space of time. You will soon realise that this skill also applies to many life situations where one is asked to say something without having had much time to prepare.

Time is of essence when you are preparing for British Parliamentary debating. Adjudicators will announce the motion and say you have 15 minutes to prepare. In actual fact you have less time because they start the stop watch from the moment they read out the motion, which means you already lose a few seconds off your allocated time. It also takes a while to find your debating venue, especially in the case of a huge tournament, and this further subtracts from your 15 minutes. So always keep in your mind that you have slightly less than 15 minutes.

Before the motion is announced make sure you are seated or standing close to the screen where the motion is projected, or close enough to hear clearly if the motion is being called out. This prevents wasting time trying to find out what the motion is because you did not hear or see it the first time. Also make sure your team mate is close to you so that you don't waste time looking for each other. Start your preparation as you are walking to your debating venue.

The first three minutes can be used to brainstorm with your team mate what the central issues in the debate are. You can be finding answers to questions
like, what are the main areas that will be contested in the debate? Which question does each side need to answer in order to win? What exactly is the debate about? This is the stage where good critical analysis needs to be applied.

The next six minutes can be used to develop your team’s arguments. These arguments should directly answer the main questions in the debate. These are the questions that you came up with during the first three minutes. In order to develop your reasoning fully, at each stage you should be asking yourself - why? This will greatly help you to construct well developed arguments. Adjudicators like arguments with good explanations as to why they are true. You can use the CRE system which is outlined in Section 6 of this manual. When you are writing these arguments down, jot down just a few words. Never make the mistake of writing full sentences, as this puts you at a risk of wanting to read your material during your speech rather than presenting it in a persuasive way.

The next two minutes can be used to come up with relevant examples that can be used in the debate. These can be in the form of statistics or particular case studies. The next two minutes can be used to guess what your opponents would say. Anticipating what they can say allows you the pleasure of preparing your rebuttals before they even present their matter, so that when they do you will be in a better position to defend your case.

The last two minutes can be used to recap your arguments: do a case split between you and your team mate. This means to divide the points amongst you. Decide who will make which points, and think carefully about which points need to come first. This may change in the debate but you should get a clear idea what your possible arguments are.

Following this simple method of debate preparation can help you win debates and the same method can be applied to pre-prepared motions, although more research is usually expected with these. The advantage with pre-prepared motions is that you have more time to get ready for the debate but the way you plan can remain the same as outlined above.
4a) STRUCTURE OF BRITISH PARLIAMENTARY (BP) DEBATING

British parliamentary style is considered the international style of debating as it is used in many countries and for many tournaments around the world. In Zimbabwe it is used by all tertiary institutions and is quickly gaining popularity even in high schools. One can actually foresee a future where it shall be the only debating style used in the country.

It is a style of debating that really makes speakers work hard in order to win a debate. In reality this style brings out a scenario when a government of a country has been formed by a coalition government and the opposition has formed its own coalition. It is a style that involves eight debaters in one debate, divided into four teams. Two teams make up the affirmative side which is given the name ‘government’ (or ‘proposition’). The other two teams make up the ‘opposition’ which is non-affirmative. These two sides are made up of the opening halves and closing halves. This means that one team forms one half of each side.

The four teams are assigned their positions at random. The opening halves are made up of the opening government and opening opposition. The closing halves are made up of the closing government and closing opposition. Each debater is given seven minutes to speak and assumes a certain position in either the opposition or government in that particular debate. Opening government is made up of the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister. Opening opposition is made up of Leader of opposition and Deputy Leader of opposition. Closing government is made up of the Member of Government and the Government Whip. Closing opposition is made up of the Member of Opposition and the Chief (Opposition) Whip.

The correct order of speakers is Prime Minister, Leader of Opposition, Deputy Prime Minister, Deputy Leader of opposition and this would mark the first half of the debate. The second half starts with the Member of Government, then Member of Opposition, Government Whip and finally the Chief Whip.

The two sides sit separately during the debate: the two government teams sit opposite the two opposition teams. Usually government (or proposition) sits on the right of the adjudicators and the opposition on the left. This is assuming they are on a stage with the adjudicators in the middle to the rear. The closing teams sit closest to the adjudicators and the opening teams sit on
the right of the closing teams. All the debaters have specific roles to fulfil, as is indicated below.

**SUMMARY OF THE VARIOUS SPEAKER ROLES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening Government</th>
<th>Prime Minister (PM) (1st Speaker)</th>
<th>Opening Opposition</th>
<th>Leader of Opposition (LO) (2nd Speaker)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Definition • Policy (not always necessary) • Case split • Positive matter</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Accept or reject a definition • Clash • Rebut PM • Case split • Positive matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy PM (3rd Speaker)</td>
<td>• repair team case • rebut the LO • positive matter</td>
<td>Deputy LO (4th Speaker)</td>
<td>• repair the team case • rebut opening government team • positive matter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing Government</td>
<td>Member of Government (5th Speaker)</td>
<td>Closing Opposition</td>
<td>Member of Opposition (6th Speaker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• evaluate first half • rebut opening opposition • case split • extension</td>
<td>• evaluate opening government</td>
<td>• if necessary rebut opening govt • rebut closing govt extension • opposition extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Whip (7th Speaker)</td>
<td>• defend extension • rebut closing opposition extension • summarise the debate based on major issues of contention</td>
<td>Opposition Whip (8th Speaker)</td>
<td>• defend extension • rebut closing government extension if necessary • summarise whole debate based on major issues of contention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A **definition** is an explanation of the key words in the motion. It clearly explains the proposed motion and sets the parameters for the debate. In simple terms the definition plays an important role of establishing the issue for the debate. Debaters usually define topics word for word and some even use the dictionary. This should not be done unless to absolutely clarify the issue of the debate.

A definition can be challenged by the Leader of Opposition (and only this person!) provided the definition provided by the Prime Minister falls within these categories:

- **time/place set** - confining a debate to an inappropriate time or place. E.g. In ‘This house believes democracy is not a necessary or desirable form of governance,’ we set this debate in the Kingdom of Bhutan in the 1980s.’ This goes against the spirit of the debate and is not allowed.

- **squirrel** - a definition that is clearly not what the motion is about. E.g. ‘This house would dissolve the police.’ The opening government defines ‘The Police’ as the British musical band by that name. This might be funny but it is not allowed.

- **truisms** - a definition that cannot be argued by the opposition because it is very obvious and self-proving. E.g. Ecosystems are healthier when they contain more species of plants. This is so obvious that it is not allowed.

It is up to the Prime Minister to provide a clear and satisfactory definition of the motion for the debate. The Opening Government will be marked down by adjudicators if they do not do so. If you are on any other team, try to avoid definitional challenges, and only offer them as a last resort. Remember only the Leader of the Opposition can introduce a definitional challenge, but he/she should only do so if the motion is not debatable as defined by the Opening Government. You will have a higher chance of winning if you don’t introduce definitional challenges. Find a way to create a reasonable debate out of a bad definition.

**A policy** is a clear plan of action which shows how the proposed motion should be implemented. Policies are not always necessary. They are only necessary if the motion requires the government to advocate for a specific change in how the world currently works.
**A clash**, highlighted by the Leader of Opposition, is an explanation of why the opposition is challenging the motion being debated.

**Case splits** are given by all first speakers of each team. They outline the arguments a team will present and say which speakers will argue them.

**Rebuttals** are direct responses to an opposing team’s positive matter. They aim to discredit your opponents’ arguments. Usually it is wise to start with rebuttals before you present your own positive matter.

**Extensions** are done by all the first speakers of closing teams. They can be new arguments that haven’t been raised in the debate or a deeper analysis of issues arising in the opening half of the debate. A team can take an undeveloped point presented by the opening half, and develop it more insightfully and persuasively as their extension.

**Motions** are the topics given to the speakers 15 minutes prior to the debate. Motions always start with ‘This house...’ and then they continue. The topics covered are all current affairs and range from political to social, economic and environmental matters. To be a better speaker, one should be up to date with current affairs, so it is wise to find reliable news sources, such as online news bulletins. You can also go to the WUDC or PAUDC websites to peruse motions that have been debated at previous tournaments. Also see Chapter 15 of this booklet on the Top 100 debate motions taken from IDEA.

**Speeches** presented in BP style are seven minutes, the first and last minutes being protected time. Points of Information cannot be asked during protected time. The use of props and aids is not allowed in this debating style.

After the debate the adjudicators deliberate and decide on the winner of the debate, ranking the teams 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th and later giving percentage marks to each (to each team and each speaker).

Later on in the tournament you will find out whether or not you have ‘broken’ to the next round. This is often announced at a formal social event where there is great excitement and anticipation. If you don’t ‘break’ don’t get worry: use this as an opportunity to watch all the remaining debates, to listen and learn from the best speakers at the tournament.
4b) STRUCTURE OF WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATING (WSD)

This is a combination of BP and the Australian-Asian debating styles. The World Schools Debating Championships were first held in Australia in 1988 and have grown from strength to strength. However, not all high school tournaments are committed to this particular style. For example, the largest annual high schools’ competition in Zimbabwe - the NUST-Webb Summer Invitational - simply uses the BP debate style. There is a growing sense in the wider debating community that although the BP style is significantly more complex and challenging, it is nevertheless easily learnt by high school students if they are given proper training. It moreover prepares them for what is soon to come at universities.

Be that as it may, it is important to know the World Schools Style in case you are selected to participate in the championships, held in a different place every year. In this style there are just two sides, the Proposition and Opposition. Each have three debaters who must each deliver eight minute speeches. Then the reply or ‘rebuttal’ speakers have four minutes to complete their job. The format is as follows:

1. First speaker of the Government
2. First speaker of the Opposition
3. Second speaker of the Government
4. Second speaker of the Opposition
5. Third speaker of the Government
6. Third speaker of the Opposition
7. Reply speaker of the Opposition
8. Reply speaker of the Government
WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE ROLES

**First speaker of the Proposition - 8 mins**
- define the motion
- give context of the debate
- present main arguments

**First speaker of the Opposition - 8 mins**
- rebut the Proposition’s arguments (important)
- argue against the motion giving own arguments (optional)

**Second speaker of the Proposition - 8 mins**
- rebut the arguments just given
- continue with team's case
- give more arguments.

**Second speaker of the Opposition - 8 mins**
As above

**Third ‘Rebuttal Speaker’ for Proposition - 8 mins**
- restructure the debate, highlighting just the key issues
- deepen analysis
- give rebuttals

**Third ‘Rebuttal Speaker’ for Opposition - 8 mins**
As above

**Reply speeches - 4 mins each**
Lastly, there is an additional speech from each team, often called the ‘right of reply’, a four-minute speech by either the first or second speaker from the respective teams, starting this time with the Opposition. Reply speakers must:
- summarise the main clash
- evaluate the debate without adding any new material
- say why their team should win

The reply speeches are often described as ‘biased adjudication’ because they resemble the oral feedback of judges. Nevertheless, proper objective adjudication occurs shortly after the completion of the debate.

**Points of Information**

As with BP, all participants are entitled to raise points of information (POIs) but they are expected to keep them short and to the point. Speakers are entitled to reject POIs but get marked down if they accept none. The first and last minute of a speech are ‘protected time’ when POIs may not be raised.

**World Schools Adjudication**

Usually three judges are assigned to adjudicate each debate and they give individual scores. As with BP debating tournaments, there are awards for best teams and best speakers also in ESL (English-as-a-Second-Language) teams.
5) ARGUMENT STRUCTURE

Arguments are the points that you make during your speech to support your case. Usually speakers argue three well reasoned and evidenced points at most. The key to success in debates is to have strong points, but one may ask: how do I come up with strong points? The answer lies the structuring process which we call CRE This stands for claim, reasoning and evidence.

When presenting any argument all these three steps should be followed to properly shape and strengthen it. The first step is to claim. A claim is simply the point that you want to say. It is kept short and direct like a newspaper headline. Few words should be used to present your claim. As an example to consider is the motion that ‘This house would use Facebook to inform students of all university gatherings’. One point in support of this is that Facebook is affordable to the students because of the usually low internet charges. As much as that is true, those words cannot qualify as a claim because the sentence is too long. It can be simply put as ‘Facebook is affordable’. Remember to keep the claim short.

The next step is to provide the reasoning to your claim. The reasoning is when you answer why. It is when you justify why you are making that claim. Using the same motion, the reasoning for the claim is that, ‘Internet charges of all service providers in Zimbabwe are low for Facebook’. The reasoning can be longer because it needs to be thorough, but care should be taken not to overdo it and end up contradicting yourself.

The final step is for you to provide evidence to support both your claim and reasoning. Evidence can take many forms but usually statistics, figures and case studies are the most used. Take care to make sure that your evidence ties in with your point. To provide evidence for the motion we have been considering, one could say,‘The proof that internet charges are affordable is that it costs two cents for someone to send a message on Facebook’. This is an example of the use of figures as evidence.

It is wise to use the CRE system of argumentation because it has order and it is very effective at the same time as being simple.
Here is another example: ‘This house would force all nations to use environmentally-friendly fuels.’ Your challenge is to quickly come up with a CRE argument.

Claim:

Reasoning:

Evidence:

Did you substantiate your claim with good reasoning and evidence? Here is our answer as an example. The point in support of this is that most fuels currently used are destroying our environment as they produce a lot of carbon dioxide or carbon monoxide. Hence the only way to stop this is to use friendly fuels.

As a claim, you could say, destruction of the environment is caused by overuse of non-renewable fossil fuels and the solution is to use environmentally-friendly fuels.

For reasoning, you could say fuels like coal and oil and methane gas, when burnt, produce a lot of carbon dioxide which creates a greenhouse effect in the atmosphere and global warming.

As evidence, you could say in recent years carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has doubled at the same time as the discovery and exploitation of more and more oil reserves. This constitutes your CRE (Claim, Reasoning, Evidence).

Now try it with another motion:

‘This house believes alcohol should be banned.’

Pretend you are the Opening Government and come up with a CRE.
Claim:

Reasoning:

Evidence:

For the same motion, pretend you are the Opening Opposition and come up with a CRE.

Claim:

Reasoning:

Evidence:

Learn to do this quickly for any motion you are presented with - for or against. Practice makes perfect.
6) HOW TO PRESENT YOUR SPEECH

During preparation time, you would have prepared you arguments properly and got ready to start debating. When you enter that debating room all the prepared arguments will be in vain unless they are presented to the adjudicators in an effective way. In debate, no matter how good an argument is on paper, its effectiveness is dependent on how well it is presented by the speaker. You should present your speech impressively so that the good arguments you have prepared can be persuasive and win you the debate at the end of the day. The truth is there are many ways to present one’s speech but certain aspects apply in any situation.

The adjudicators call on you to present your case. You stand up with your heart beating very fast. You stand in front of the podium and everyone is looking at you. Take a few deep breaths to slow your heartbeat and calm yourself down. You may be afraid of all those eyes. The first thing you should know is if you are afraid of eye contact with your audience, you can look just above their eyes at forehead level. To someone who is sitting in the audience it will appear as if you are making eye contact with all. Nevertheless, you should read the signals you are being given by people’s eyes. The importance of eye contact is that it allows you to constantly evaluate the audience, to ascertain whether they follow what you are saying. You can judge the impact your speech is having on them. I know that adjudicators often do not want to show their reaction towards a speech, that they try to be unreadable - but you can still tell what impact your speech is having on them by the facial expressions they make. Also, eye contact shows people you are engaged and you know what you are saying. If you are looking away from the audience, it creates an impression of lack of knowledge on a particular subject, lack of concentration and lack of confidence. You want to avoid giving off such signals.

Your voice should constantly be changing as you present different sections of your speech. (This is called vocalics: aspects such as pitch, tone, volume, pause and use of silence.) Avoid monotony: do not speak using one dull pitch throughout the entire speech but instead vary your voice so as to add a touch of variety and intrigue to your speech. Your voice should show a little emotion, depending of course on the subject you are talking about. Adding some emotion to your voice may help with persuasion. Imagine if you are
talking about the death of 100,000 people due to genocide. You cannot use a jovial voice because the subject is sombre. Instead you should allow your voice to express the sadness, which would be a natural emotion in that circumstance. This will be more appropriate and probably more persuasive. Beware not to overdo it though, as you may look like a drama queen! Try to strike a reasonable balance when regulating the expressive quality of your voice.

Another important tool to use during your speech is gestures. A very high percentage of what we communicate happens nonverbally (through appearance, gestures and other forms of nonverbal communication). Many speakers, particularly in Zimbabwe, have a problem of overdoing gestures. They use so many that the audience focuses on hand movements instead of arguments. Gestures can spice up your presentation but you should use them wisely. Make sure that when you move your hands during a speech you are doing so to emphasize a certain point. Your gestures should tally with the words you are saying. You can’t say “they went up” whilst pointing downwards. This takes away the effect your arguments are having. Gestures should be as natural as possible.

Always make sure that your volume is appropriate for the debating venue being used. Many Zimbabwean speakers suffer from the habit of debating in high-pitched and very loud voices. The cause is perhaps a belief that they can better convince the adjudicators in this manner, but the opposite is usually true. High-pitched voices can be irritating and mostly they put off adjudicators. Also, you don’t have to shout to be heard. You should only raise your voice if the room is very large and you need to reach audience members far away at the back. You also should not speak too softly, or in such a low voice that people have to strain their ears. They might end up missing important points. So do strike a balance concerning your voice. In this regard, you should learn how to speak from your waist, not your throat - as all good actors and singers do. This is called rooting the voice. With proper posture and breathing, we can all achieve good voice projection without having to resort to shouting.

Another problem with speakers is when they talk too quickly. The cause is usually entering the debate with too much material and too little time to present it. In this case the debater speaks fast enough to get through all the
material, but probably too fast for the audience to comprehend. Another cause of rapid speech is when one spends too much time on rebuttals and ends up having to speed up in order to finish the whole speech. If you speak too fast there is a danger that most of your presentation will be lost into thin air. Remember adjudicators are not superhuman: they can only write their notes at a reasonable pace. Successful speakers need to present at a reasonable pace so that all their arguments can be understood and none missed.

Some tips are to structure your speech in an effective way. Number your arguments and when you are making them, tell the adjudicators that now you are moving to argument 2, 3, etc. Choose your words carefully. Pick words that give insight to your debate and keep them short and simple. Avoid long and confusing words. If you use simple words it is easier for adjudicators to follow you and they won’t miss any of your arguments because of vocabulary issues.

Some speakers use humour in their speeches. This is also a good debating tool, but it needs to be regulated because first and foremost you want to retain your reputation as a sharp debater: you don’t want to become a stand-up comedian or a clown! If you can incorporate a few jokes do so, but if jokes are not your style then don’t worry. You can still be a good speaker without being funny.
### DOs AND DON’Ts OF PRESENTING A SPEECH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOs</th>
<th>DON’Ts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do calmly take a few deep breaths</td>
<td>Don’t panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do project your voice from your waist</td>
<td>Don’t speak from your throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do vary the tone of your voice</td>
<td>Don’t be monotonous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do maintain eye contact with the judges</td>
<td>Don’t look down at your shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do use confident body language</td>
<td>Don’t overdo the gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do speak clearly and audibly</td>
<td>Don’t mumble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do speak at an appropriate pace</td>
<td>Don’t speak too fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do include a little humour</td>
<td>Don’t turn into a standup comedienne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do say it once and clearly</td>
<td>Don’t repeat what you’ve already said</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do keep your summary to the main points</td>
<td>Don’t repeat your whole speech</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7) USING POINTS OF INFORMATION EFFECTIVELY

Points of information are known in short as POIs. These are questions or clarifications that can be directed to a speaker holding the floor by the opposing bench. They are very useful to the opposing teams as they enable them to expose the flaws of the speaker’s arguments whilst the speaker is still holding the floor. Points of information can only be offered to your opposition and can never be offered to members of your bench. There are two aspects to POIs - asking them and answering them.

ASKING A POI

In order to ask a POI you should wait up until the adjudicators signal that it is time to ask. After this has happened you should stand up and say ‘Point of information’. You wait for the speaker to accept or decline. If the speaker declines you should take your seat and avoid badgering. In Zimbabwean high school tournaments there has been a problem of speakers rudely declining POIs: some may say ‘Warm your seat’ to the person asking or make another rude statement. The truth is that adjudicators cannot penalize you for such comments, but in debate we do not condone being rude, so care should be taken by all debaters to be polite. Some debaters, once they have been denied the chance to ask a POI, badger the speaker and continuously say ‘Be brave,’ etc. This can be construed as rude, however, and you should avoid such behaviour.

When you have been given the chance to ask a POI you should remember to keep it very short and straight to the point. Do not use very long sentences as they waste the speaker’s time. To ask good POIs, always raise questions that concern the speaker’s main points. Do not waste your chance by questioning trivial things. Remember that proving the flaws of the speaker’s main arguments will help you win the debate. It doesn’t help you, for example, in a situation where the speaker says ‘Zimbabwe’s population is rising; it is increasing by 5% per annum’ and you then dispute this by saying, ‘No, it’s rising by 3%’. The main point still stands that the population is rising. If you want to raise a POI it helps if you write it down. This can structure it and keep it short.
ANSWERING A POI

When you are asked a POI, the way you answer is vital as it can help your case or destroy it. A well answered POI will boost your confidence. As a speaker it is within your rights to regulate the amount of POIs asked to you. If you realise the person is taking too much time to raise the POI you can cut them off and say, ‘That’s enough.’ This is done to prevent people asking long POIs. It is important for you to answer the POI in the best way possible: you should never leave any point unanswered. Take note that if you want to reject a POI it is wise to just waive the person down. Do not spend a long time trying talk to them, maybe by saying ‘Rejected’ because doing this could disrupt your chain of thinking.

All POIs you accept should be properly answered, even though they may be difficult. Make sure you understand the question. If it is a tough one don’t rush to answer it. Take a few seconds to properly think. If you feel fear creeping into you, take a breath, keep your calm and never panic. Then just try to answer as best you can. Many speakers rush to give answers that end up hurting their cases just because they fear looking stupid if they take time to answer. Don’t be like that! What is important is to give good answers and win the debate. You should only take about two points of information because more than that may suggest you don’t have much matter to say yourself, and the POIs could open your case up for your opponents to expose its many flaws (according to them).

Be strategic when asking and answering Points of Information. Remember to use POIs wisely and effectively.

Now, try this exercise. With the motion, ‘This house will force all nations to use environmentally-friendly fuels,’ your opponents have just claimed: “Fuels currently being used are destroying our environment: hence, use of environmentally-friendly fuels is the only way to stop this destruction.” What POI could you ask?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN ASKING, DO...</th>
<th>WHEN ASKING, DON’T..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First allow the speaker a chance to present their matter</td>
<td>Don’t get up every two seconds to ask a POI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick to the allocated time slot for POIs in the debate</td>
<td>Don’t ask outside POI allocated time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask POIs to weaken your opponents’ main points</td>
<td>Don’t ask just for the fun of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it quick, pointed and precise</td>
<td>Don’t waste time beating about the bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask POIs to better your case</td>
<td>Don’t contradict yourself</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN ANSWERING, DO...</th>
<th>WHEN ANSWERING, DON’T..</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choose which POIs to answer</td>
<td>Don’t answer every POI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to answer two POIs per debate</td>
<td>Don’t avoid them altogether because you will be marked down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline a POI by gesturing the speaker to sit down</td>
<td>Don’t waste time engaging, staring or saying ‘POI rejected because..’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take time to listen, understand, think and answer properly to defend your case</td>
<td>Don’t panic and rush and give a silly answer which may undermine your case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remain composed and in control</td>
<td>Don’t get ruffled and sidetracked</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8) SUCCESSFUL REBUTTALS

By definition a rebuttal is when you prove that something is false or contradictory by using arguments or evidence. You can refute both arguments and evidence. (These constitute the ‘positive matter’ of the opposing team). Rebuttals are a key part of debating because they give you the chance to prove your opponents’ arguments are flawed or false. It is very important to do this. If you don’t, their arguments will stand at the end of the day. As much as you have to present your own good arguments, you also need to present good rebuttals in order to win.

Many speakers suffer from a habit of rebutting things that don’t matter, things that won’t sway the debate to your side. What we mean by this can be exemplified by a situation when your opponent raises a point ‘that the population of Zimbabwe is increasing as evidenced by a 3% per annum’. Then in your rebuttal you say ‘that’s not true because it is only increasing by 2%’. Yes, it is a rebuttal but the truth is that it will not be effective because the fact that the population is increasing still stands, whether by 3% or 2%. Even you yourself would be agreeing that the population is increasing, which is your opponents’ main argument. In order to be successful you need to focus on rebutting your opposition’s main points. Target these and prove they are false. To do so, you need to listen carefully during the debate: discern the actual arguments they are making and take notes so you can later rebut them.

For successful rebuttals you need to carefully analyse the arguments being made by your opponents. Search for their weaknesses or flaws and the task becomes straightforward. As already mentioned, don’t waste time on minor inaccuracies which are not their major arguments. Doing so will not help your case that much. Rebuttals can be done in two ways: the first is to provide counter arguments and the second is to provide counter evidence.

Here is a simple but effective way of rebutting. You can follow these steps:

• “They say...” You then state the argument they made
• “We say...” You then state your counter argument
• “Therefore....” You then state your conclusion and what people should now believe.
Keep in mind that your rebuttals should be short and straight to the point. You should not waste a lot of time on them or continuously repeat what you have already said.

Successful rebuttals weaken the other side’s case and strengthen your own. Hence you should recognise their importance and regularly practise them. Success is guaranteed if you follow this advice!

Here is an example of a structured rebuttal for the following motion:

‘This house would use Facebook to mobilise students for University gatherings.’

The Government present a case where their main argument is that Facebook is affordable. You are the Opposition and now wish to rebut this. This is how you would proceed:

‘They say Facebook is affordable. But we say it is not necessarily affordable for everyone. A very significant number of students do not have cellular phones which can access the internet. These students first need to buy phones to access the internet, as well as air time. For many, this is totally unaffordable. So it is not true that Facebook is always easily accessible. This is false reasoning in the case of many students.’

The weakness of the Government’s argument is the assumption that everyone can afford to access Facebook. Hence, we are targeting that weakness in our rebuttal to show that their main argument does not hold water.

However...

If the Government was to continue arguing that these students can simply use the university’s computers and internet facilities, how would you rebut that argument? What is its main weakness?

Over to you... Work on your rebuttals. Practice makes perfect.
9) THE IMPORTANCE OF TEAMWORK

Debating is a team sport where ‘no man is an island’. This means you can’t do it alone: you are part of a partnership and you need to work as a team. In order to win a debate all members of the team have to achieve good results. In BP, this means partners should be roughly as good as each other, and they should complement each other with their respective skills. If one person does not do well then chances of the pair or the team winning are slim: hence the need to develop teamwork skills.

Teamwork is something that one cultivates. You have to learn to be a team player. Teamwork begins during debate preparation and continues until after the debate. When you get your motion, all the team members should be involved in the preparation.

The problem with some teams is what we would call the dominance syndrome. This is when one person dominates the preparation, everything they say is considered gospel, and nothing is challenged. This means only the arguments developed by one person are used. Even though this person may be talented and experienced, others may also have excellent arguments. A problem occurs when they do not share their opinions because they are afraid they are not good enough. This is the wrong sort of environment.

A good team should create a supportive environment of equal partnership where everyone feels free to share their views and where the best arguments can come to the surface to be debated by the team - regardless of who thought of them first! Everyone should be given a chance to speak during brainstorming and other preparation because you do not want to neglect a good argument that might win you the day.

Teamwork is also important during the actual debate. It is possible to write notes to each other during the debate, though only when you are both seated and also listening carefully to other Speakers.

A clear and orderly case split is a good example of cooperation: it shows a team has worked together to divide their points amongst themselves to effectively speak as a team. If you are a second speaker and a case split has already been presented by your first speaker, it is wise to acknowledge that you are now going to talk about the points allotted to you by your partner. This shows you are working as a unit. You are more likely to win as a unit.
After the first speaker presents your case, some of the material is usually rebutted and this is where your case is tested. In order to take your team to final victory, the next speaker should get there to repair the case if necessary. This is the essence of teamwork. If you don’t help to repair the case, it will remain damaged and you will probably lose the debate.

When you are listening to an opposition speech, all team members should carefully analyse what is being said and formulate rebuttals together. This is where you can pass written notes to each other or whisper something very, very quietly. Don’t just leave the task to Second Speaker: he or she may not catch some important points that need to be rebutted. Speakers can and should refer back to important points or examples that have been previously raised by their teammates.

Since all speeches have a time limit, you can help your teammate by signalling (nonverbally) how long they have been speaking, how long they have left and to hurry up if necessary.

Much like other team sports, debates will always be won on the basis of good teamwork. Adjudicators can instantly spot good or bad teamwork. Hence, don’t make the mistake of trying to go it alone, of not working as a team!
### DOs and DON’Ts of TEAMWORK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOs</th>
<th>DON’Ts</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work together as a team</td>
<td>Don’t work in isolation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat each other fairly and equally</td>
<td>Don’t let one person dominate and have the upper hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involve all team members in preparation</td>
<td>Don’t let just one person prepare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organise a good, clear case split</td>
<td>Don’t just do whatever, whenever!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop your own non-disruptive signals to communicate amongst</td>
<td>Don’t shout out your plans for everyone to hear</td>
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<tr>
<td>yourselves during debates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work cooperatively on rebuttals, writing notes to each other</td>
<td>Don’t just assume your partner will do the case repair all alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help your partner, with signals, to keep time &amp; on track when</td>
<td>Don’t just leave your partner to amble aimlessly when they need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaking</td>
<td>prompting!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support your teammate(s)</td>
<td>Don’t blame each other if you lose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer helpful feedback on your partner’s stronger and weaker points</td>
<td>Don’t demoralise your partner with harsh criticism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10) AFTER THE DEBATE

After a period of deliberation (usually 15 minutes) the Chairperson of the adjudicating panel will announce the results of your debate. Teams will be ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th and awarded points accordingly (which you will be able to view at a later stage). The average mark for a speaker in a BP debate at Worlds is 75%. If you are hitting this mark then you are doing okay. These results go straight to the Tab room so that the debate tournament can proceed in a punctual manner. (Please show respect to the Tab people because theirs is a tough job.) A successful Tab depends very much on timeous cooperation of all involved in the tournament.

The judges’ decisions are final and you cannot challenge the actual result, even though you may feel you deserved to win and you didn’t. At a major tournament you will be given feedback forms after each debate where you are invited to assess the quality of judging in your opinion. Judges, meanwhile, also assess each other in a secret ballot and these forms must also quickly go to the Tab room. Thus, every effort is made in a professional tournament to ensure fairness and objectivity.

Although you cannot challenge the results of a debate (and it is not wise to waste time being emotional about something done and dusted) you should listen carefully to the adjudicators’ feedback. Your objective is to improve the quality of your debating for the next round, to recognise weaknesses and learn from your mistakes. You are also entitled to approach the judges immediately after the debate for advice on what went wrong and what to work on for next time.

The most useful ‘postmortem’, however, will be done by yourself and your partner(s). You will have a good idea, yourselves, about what went well and what didn’t in your debate strategy. You should do this immediately after the results and feedback. Talk about strong and weak points. Continue to build on strengths and address weaknesses, eliminate bad habits, etc. You could also ask for feedback from others who witnessed the debate.

Try not to dwell on disappointing results for too long. Don’t ‘beat yourselves up!’ Encouragement is key: continue to work as a supportive team. Play to each other’s positive points as much as possible. There will always be winners and losers in any competition. The best you can do is remember
what you need to work on for the next debate. Stay positive, and spend some time brushing up on current affairs. Then relax, go out and meet new people, chat to the other participants and enjoy the energy of the tournament!
11) TRAINING ACTIVITIES

In order to develop your debating skills you need a lot of practice. Try to arrange regular training sessions with your debating society, or simply get together with likeminded debating friends. These exercises should be greatly entertaining as well as educational. Teachers could try at least the Parachuting and Balloon Debate games with students as a way of developing a general skill set (the basics of presenting an argument, critical analysis, and persuasion). The exercises can also be used also to develop nonverbal communication skills (including confident posture, eye contact and body language) as well as effective vocalics (i.e. regulating the speed, pitch and volume of one’s voice). Here are a few exercises:

a) PARACHUTING

For this exercise people stand in two lines facing each other. They choose certain famous people and pretend to be them. Examples could be Stevie Wonder, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Usain Bolt, or any other well known celebrity. After they have chosen who they want to be, they then pretend to be in a plane that is about to crash and there is only one parachute. Each has justify why he/she should get the only parachute available.

This exercise should be done fast and all the participants should be quick to answer. If they take too long, or if there is too much hesitation or repetition, then they should be knocked out of the competition. This continues until only one person is left standing. At least one fair adjudicator is needed for the activity.

b) POLICY CREATION

In this exercise you select four teams. They sit in pairs, as in a usual BP debate format, and a motion is selected that requires a policy.

One chief adjudicator can oversee this exercise, but he or she can be flanked by two other judges as in a BP debate. Debaters are then assigned positions in either opposition or government. The two government sides have to create policies and the opposition teams have to oppose them in their speeches. Next, it is the opposition’s turn to create counter policies and this time the government sides have to oppose them. The chief adjudicator gives feedback.
For example, with ‘This house will abolish bride price,’ the Government is challenged to say how.

They could say they will do so via an act of parliament, which shall be enforced by an implementation committee comprising of members of parliament as well as local law-enforcement agents.

In response, the Opposition could then say this policy is unworkable because there are a lot of weddings every day, and the law-enforcement is already overstretched: there would never be enough manpower, not to mention that the parliamentarians would rather doze off in parliament than travel to all four corners of the country supervising every wedding negotiation!

c) HOT POIs

Several speakers are selected. At least one fair and decisive adjudicator is needed. The BP format is used. A motion is chosen and each speaker is given a side in either government or opposition. They then present their speeches, during which a lot of POIs should be asked. The speakers should answer as many as possible whilst still presenting their positive matter. The speakers should not stop delivering their matter and not be unnecessarily distracted when they answer POIs. If they show signs of faltering, they get knocked out. The one who answers the most POIs, having presented the most matter in support of their side, is the winner.

d) TWO MINUTE DEBATES

In order to learn how not to waste time and be straight to the point, the NUST Debating Society developed what they call Two Minute Debates. This is when you debate in the normal BP way but each speaker is only given two minutes. The one who delivers the most reasoned matter and presents the most effective rebuttals in their strictly enforced time slot is the one who wins. At least one fair adjudicator is needed. He or she can be flanked by other judges also wanting to hone their adjudication skills.

e) REBUTTALS

In this exercise you choose something we know is obvious, for example, “The absence of light is darkness,” and you have to rebut it. You think of all possible rebuttals and present them. The one who presents the most
persuasive rebuttals wins. At least one fair and decisive adjudicator is needed.

f) BALLOON DEBATE

This is similar to PARACHUTING. Participants all pretend to be various well known celebrities. All are being carried by a Hot Air Balloon but are too heavy as a group and the balloon is going down fast. All will perish unless one person is ejected. There is no time to waste. Each participant has exactly one minute to say who they are and why they should remain. Then all must vote on who to evict. It’s a version of the TV quiz, ‘The Weakest Link’. In Round Two, the balloon is still going down and one more celebrity must be ejected. Again, they have one minute to make another argument as to why they should remain. Again all vote on ‘the weakest link’ - the least persuasive person, who is then ejected. And so on - until just one person remains in the balloon. That person is declared the winner.
12) BP DEBATE ADJUDICATION

Are you thinking of being an adjudicator? Don’t be daunted! Anyone can learn the skills, and the experience can be highly rewarding. Adjudicators play a vital role. Without judges a competition cannot happen. Good adjudication raises the standard of a tournament and sees the best team winning. Bad adjudication puts a damper on a tournament, and may dent your institution’s reputation.

Here we will give guidelines based on the advice also given to adjudicators in the Pan African University Debate Championships (PAUDC) and the World University Debate Championships (WUDC). The guidelines are applicable to the British Parliamentary (BP) system. However, the principles can be adapted to any type of debate adjudication.

If you are judging for the first time in a tournament you will probably start off as a ‘Trainee’, which means you will be guided by the other panellists and the Chair. Adjudicators, like debaters, are continuously ‘judged’ or ranked in a tournament. After a debate, you will usually be asked to rate the performance of your fellow judges (by secret ballot). You are asked to be as honest as possible in your assessments, and the aim is to put forward the best judges to the final rounds. Later, as your adjudication skills improve, you may be promoted to Panellist or even Chair of a debate. In this manner, like the debaters, you become part of the Tab. Your duty is always to guide it to the correct outcome.

As an Adjudicator you will discover you are an integral part of a competition and it can be exciting. Yes, there is a prize for the best judge! If you manage to ‘break’ to the next round, it is a great achievement. If you are assessed by your peers and the debaters as an excellent judge, you may ‘break’ to octos, quarters, semis or even the final! This is a great honour.

At a tournament you will be assigned, usually with two others, to a debate. You should arrive on time at the correct venue and introduce yourself. If you are the Chair, you will have to make sure that all are present, and you should ask someone on the panel to be a time keeper. This is essential: adjudicators should always carry a stopwatch.

As the debaters enter the room and arrange themselves, make a note of who is who and where they are seated. This mental picture will help you when you are making notes during the debate and after.
The Chair must call the house to order, call upon speakers to present and manage the debate. She or he should give fellow judges enough time to complete notes, if necessary asking speakers to wait for a short moment.

NOTE TAKING

Note taking is vital. You need to remember what is being said and should develop your own efficient style. You can take an A4 sheet of paper and divide it into quadrants, Opening Government - top left, Opening Opposition - top right, Closing Government - bottom left, Closing Opposition - top right. If you have large handwriting and want more space, divide the page into two, put the Opening and Closing Governments on one side of the A4 sheet, and the Opening and Closing Oppositions on the other side of the A4. Do whatever works best for you. Notes should capture the most important points made in any speech. Bullet points or spidergrams are better than full sentences, which you won't have time for.

REACHING A DECISION

The most important thing is to decide, in your own mind, is which team should come 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Sometimes it may be obvious. Usually, you will have to refer back to your notes. At the end of the debate, the Chair will give you just a few minutes to do this.

The next stage is deliberation, which must be facilitated by the Chair. There is usually a large amount of agreement, which is what you are ideally aiming for, but don’t worry if there is not. The Chair can start deliberations by quickly summarising the debate, speaker by speaker, getting panellists to recall main points, strengths and weaknesses (if you think you have enough time!) Agreements or disagreements will emerge. Try to understand the key issues of the debate and the best arguments. Then evaluate the teams comparatively, stating your rankings. In this process there is no problem with changing your mind and modifying your initial rankings.

Alternatively, the Chair may simply start deliberations by asking all panellists to declare their initial rankings, ascertaining points of agreement, and trying to resolve points of disagreement.

If one judge disagrees with all others, he or she should be invited to explain the point of view while other judges listen attentively. The Chair should then highlight consensus and try to break deadlock. If the Chair is out of sync with all the other adjudicators (rare but possible!) he or she can be ‘rolled’, which
means outvoted. In this case, feedback duties are given to another judge with the vote of the majority. Consensus is ideal but there is no shame in being ‘rolled’ as a judge. You are entitled to your informed opinion. Judges should continue to rank each other fairly, despite such disagreements.

**RANKING**

The rankings are your first priority and you should decide first on which team was best, not which speaker. Mark holistically but consider the following criteria from PAUDC and WUDC tournaments:

1. **Argumentation:** how compelling were the arguments?
2. **Responsiveness:** how did a team respond to opposition arguments and how well did they rebut their own positive matter?
3. **Strategy:** were the most important points raised first, and how well were POIs used?
4. **Style:** how persuasive were the speakers? and how well were their speeches structured?

Come up with an overall percentage mark for each team, the first, second, third and fourth.

**SCORING**

After ranking comes individual scoring. Each Speaker must be given a score. This is where you have to do some arithmetic. A team’s total score must correlate with the ranking given to them. That means the winning team must get the highest combined score. The total team score is used to place teams on the tab. It is possible for a speaker from a losing team to score higher than one of the speakers from the winning team. What matters most is the combined score.

75% is the average score in a PAUDC or WUDC debate. 80% to 85% is exceedingly good. 90% is almost unheard of. By the same token, scores of less than 60% are rare. Refer to the grid to make sure you are marking fairly and in line with the tournament’s guidelines.

NB. It is the Chair’s responsibility to call the house to order. Rude behaviour is discouraged and offenders, including speakers, can be reprimanded, but you CANNOT deduct marks from a team for ‘rudeness’. Your focus as a judge is purely and simply on the quality of the debate.
# Official WUDC Speaker Scoring Range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-95</td>
<td>Plausibly one of the best debating speeches ever given, flawless and astonishingly compelling in every regard. It is incredibly difficult to think up satisfactory responses to any of the arguments made.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94-90</td>
<td>Brilliant arguments successfully engage with the main issues in the round. Arguments are very well explained, always central to the case being advocated, and demand extremely sophisticated responses. The speech is very clear and incredibly compelling. Structure and role fulfilment are executed flawlessly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-85</td>
<td>Very good, central arguments engage well with the most important issues on the table and are highly compelling; sophisticated responses would be required to refute them. Delivery is clear and manner very persuasive. Role fulfilment and structure probably flawless.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84-80</td>
<td>Relevant and pertinent arguments address key issues in the round with sufficient explanation. The speech is clear in almost its entirety, and holds one’s attention persuasively. Role is well-fulfilled and structure is unlikely to be problematic. Perhaps slight issues with balancing argumentation and refutation and/or engagement in the debate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79-75</td>
<td>Arguments are almost exclusively relevant, and frequently persuasive. Occasionally, but not often, the speaker may slip into: deficits in explanation, simplistic argumentation vulnerable to competent responses or Peripheral or irrelevant arguments. The speaker holds one’s attention, provides clear structure and successfully fulfils their on the table.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74-70</td>
<td>Arguments are generally relevant, and some explanation of them given, but there may be obvious gaps in logic, multiple points of peripheral or irrelevant material and simplistic argumentation. The speaker mostly holds the audience’s attention and is usually clear, but rarely compelling, and may sometimes be difficult to follow. There is a decent but incomplete attempt to fulfil one’s role on the table, and structure may be imperfectly delivered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69-65</td>
<td>Relevant arguments are frequently made, but with very rudimentary explanation. The speaker is clear enough to be understood the vast majority of the time, but this may be difficult and/or unrewarding. Structure poor; poor attempt to fulfil role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64-60</td>
<td>The speaker is often relevant, but rarely makes full arguments. Frequently unclear and confusing; really problematic structure/lack thereof; some awareness of role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59-55</td>
<td>The speech rarely makes relevant claims, only occasionally formulated as arguments. Hard to follow, little/no structure; no evident awareness of role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54-50</td>
<td>Content is almost never relevant, and is both confusing and confused. No structure or fulfilment of role is, in any meaningful sense, provided.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SOME FINAL REMINDERS

Duties of the Chair
• Maintain order during the debate
• Facilitate deliberation
• Present oral feedback to the debaters

Remember to:
• Ask panellists to disclose rankings at the start of deliberations
• Analyse the decision even if there is consensus
• Reach a decision about 12 minutes into discussion
• Take a decision to vote if consensus cannot be reached
• Facilitate scoring: start with either the winning or the losing team

Duties of a Panellist
• Take notes during the debate
• Decide on rankings
• Participate in deliberation
• You can challenge others’ opinions but justify
• Don’t be antagonistic: the deliberation is a discussion, not a debate
• Be open to listening, persuading and being persuaded

Oral Adjudication
• Give results first
• Summarise main issues and how each team engaged with them
• Explain how teams performed compared to each other
• Be objective. Don’t personalise failings
• Be comprehensive about the main ideas and how they were weighted
• Limit feedback to 5 minutes
• Be prepared to give individual feedback afterwards

Scoring
• Mark holistically but consider content, style and strategy
• There is no particular percentage for each
• Before scoring decide whether the debate was average, below average or above average to identify the correct scoring range

Content
• Arguments and rebuttals: were they substantive and logical?
• Were the examples relevant and to the point?
• Fewer good arguments are often better than many poor ones
Style
• In what manner was the speech presented?
• Were the speakers persuasive?
• Irritating mannerisms should only be marked down if they badly affected the quality of the speech or an opponent’s speech

Strategy
• Did the speaker disprove the opponent’s case?
• Was there good use of Points of Information, prioritisation of matter and evidence of structure in the speeches?
• Look out for unfair tactics (in defining motions, badgering opponents, setting up ‘straw-man’ arguments, etc.)
• Award or penalise teams for good or bad use of strategic tools

DEFINITIONAL CHALLENGES
• These should be avoided if at all possible
• Only the Leader of the Opposition can launch a definitional challenge
• In this case an alternative definition and justification must be given
• Judges should consider definitional challenges and justifications as substantive issues
• Judges should consider whether definitional challenges are properly justified and substantiated
• The most convincing definition should stand in the debate, and the relevant team should win that substantive point

(Our thanks to PAUDC and WUDC for much of the advice cited above. Readers are invited to consult their Adjudicator and Speaker Manuals which are made available before tournaments.)
### DOs & DON’Ts in ADJUDICATING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DO</th>
<th>DON’T</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be fair-minded and level-headed</td>
<td>Don’t allow personal prejudice to skew your judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a stopwatch for time-keeping</td>
<td>Don’t lose track of time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give credit for relevant arguments</td>
<td>Don’t be sidetracked by ‘red-herrings’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen carefully to each speaker</td>
<td>Don’t daydream or look out the window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take notes on each speech</td>
<td>Don’t forget who said what</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliberate with fellow judges sensibly and cooperatively</td>
<td>Don’t compete as if trying to win your own mini-debate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate teams against each other - fairly and objectively</td>
<td>Don’t concentrate on individuals until you have a team score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stick to PAUDC/WUDC standards and decide if teams were above, below or average</td>
<td>Don’t deviate from the marking grid to be either too harsh or too generous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark holistically considering all elements</td>
<td>Don’t give separate marks for content, style and strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give results before oral feedback</td>
<td>Don’t keep debaters on tenterhooks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarise key debate issues and explain how teams performed relative to each other</td>
<td>Don’t personalise any failings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate fellow judges honestly and fairly, and expect the same of them</td>
<td>Don’t try to spite fellow judges with unfair evaluations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

English is a lingua franca, a global language, both in academia and in business. It is also the language of WUDC and PAUDC and many other major debating tournaments. However, for most debaters, English is a second (or third or fourth) language; and it is thought that English-as-a-first-language debaters would always, inevitably, have an unfair advantage over ESL (English-as-a-Second-Language) debaters. Hence the need for ESL debates. We now witness these as the norm in tournaments such as SA Nationals, PAUDC and WUDC.

Choosing ESL or EFL

Because English is widely spoken in Zimbabwe and is the predominant medium of instruction at Zimbabwean schools and universities, Zimbabwean debaters can qualify as EFL debaters even though they may be ESL.

It is wise to assess your standard of English and weigh up your options before a tournament. Native English speakers will usually have the edge with their range of vocabulary and ability to draw on English proverbs, idioms and expressions, as well as to be clever with the language (punning, etc.)

This is what you would be up against at WUDC if you had to compete against Oxford, Monash, Stanford, or those such teams. The same could apply to SAUDC or PAUDC if you had to compete against UCT, Rhodes, Wits, UKZN or other such English-speaking universities. Unless you are very good at English and have mastered its vocabulary and subtler elements (did you get As at O-Level and A-Level?), it is best to opt for ESL debates - which are also highly competitive and a great deal of fun.

Whichever route you choose, you will need to brush up on your English to give yourself that edge that you need to win debates. Judges are impressed by effective use of language to advance arguments.

Keep it Short and Simple

KISS stands for Keep It Short and Simple. Try to say what you have to say simply and succinctly. There is never any need to show off with long, fancy words which very few people understand: this will not impress the judges.
You should be able to say what you need to say without reaching for a dictionary. You don’t have time for that and neither do your judges!

Read!

To improve your English language versatility as well as general knowledge, read as much as you can. Read novels, biographies, science books, newspapers, magazines and academic journals. Read national and international newspapers. Read for example *The Economist* for global news and analysis (it’s comprehensive yet succinct). Or read the *Mail and Guardian* for a weekly digest of southern African news and views. These are intelligently written publications with higher standards of English than most.

Unfortunately our local and national newspapers cannot be considered paragons of error-free English. Writing and editing standards leave much to be desired and you are likely to find faulty phrasing, mixed metaphors, confused idioms, poor punctuation and sloppy spelling - so please avoid picking up bad habits! Nevertheless, do consult the local press and opinion columns to identify key national issues for debate. Also, most Zimbabwean papers now have websites and archives and there are several online news digests which give daily summaries: e.g. [http://www.zimbabwesituation.com](http://www.zimbabwesituation.com)

To keep abreast, you should really read various sources - online, offline, and often. Take your English up a notch by reading *The New York Times*, *The Times* or *The Guardian* (American or British newspapers). You can gain free access online. This vocabulary will be challenging, yet it will familiarise you with the type of language you should master if you wish to compete in the English-as-a-first-language category at Worlds! You don’t always have to agree with what you read, but there is no harm in challenging yourself.

Oral practice

Find native English speaker friends to practise your speaking with. (In exchange, you could offer to teach them some Shona, Ndebele or another language). Ask them to correct your errors (with grammar, pronunciation or inaccurate expressions). For example, you might say, ‘All work and no play is boring,’ but it is handy to know the exact expression, ‘All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!’ You may wish to say, ‘Act now to prevent problems in the future!’ but it is handy to know, ‘A stitch in time saves nine!’ (particularly for English-as-first-language competitions).
14) THINGS TO ALWAYS REMEMBER AS A DEBATER

- Debate is a team sport, you win as a team and you lose as a team.
- You should always practise to become a better speaker.
- You should always critically analyse situations in order to come up with good arguments.
- Do not confine your thoughts but think widely.
- Be a well read individual. Know the current affairs of the world.
- Good arguments are the key to winning a debate.
- Don’t just have good arguments but also have good rebuttals.
- Don’t lose hope even if you lose the debate.
- Be a good listener during debates in order to be a better speaker.
- Always take the advice you are given by other people on what you need to do to be a better speaker. It is probably good advice.
- Remember not to be afraid. If you allow fear to enter you before you present your speech it won’t be as good as it was supposed to be.
- Use the time you have been given to speak wisely. It is the only time you have.
- Put maximum effort into presenting your speech.
15) POPULAR DEBATE MOTIONS

See [http://idebate.org/view/top_100_debates](http://idebate.org/view/top_100_debates)

If you follow the online links you can access prepared arguments (for and against) for all of the motions below. This could be helpful for training.

This House would ban animal testing

This House believes single-sex schools are good for education

This House believes reality television does more harm than good

This house would raise the legal driving age to 18

This House supports the death penalty

This House would ban homework

This house Would Ban School Uniforms - Junior

This House believes the internet brings more harm than good

This House believes university education should be free

This House believes that children should be allowed to own and use mobile phones.

This House Believes that assisted suicide should be legalized

This house would ban cosmetic surgery

This house believes that capitalism is better than socialism

This House would ban junk food from schools.

This House believes wild animals should not be kept in captivity

This House would Censor the Internet
This House believes mothers should stay at home and look after their children.

This House believes that cannabis should be legalised.

This House believes science is a threat to humanity.

This House believes that advertising is harmful.

This House believes homosexuals should be able to adopt.

This House would permit the use of performance enhancing drugs in professional sports.

This House would ban boxing.

This House would legalize the sale of human organs.

This house would make physical education compulsory.

This house would allow gay couples to marry.

This House would ban beauty contests.

This House would limit the right to bear arms.

This house Would reintroduce Corporal Punishment in Schools.

This house would ban smoking in public spaces.

This House Would Lower The Drinking Age.

This house would allow prisoners to vote.

This House believes criminal justice should focus more on rehabilitation.

This house would make voting compulsory.

This House would ban gambling.

This House Would Ban Human Cloning.
This House supports random drug-testing in schools

This House believes that the United Nations has failed

This House believes that marriage is an outdated institution

This House would restrict advertising aimed at children

This house believes that hosting the Olympics is a good investment

This House would introduce child curfews

This House Believes Terrorism can be justified

This house believes that housewives should be paid for their work

This House believes all nations have a right to nuclear weapons

Homework is a waste of time. (Junior)

This house believes that animals have rights.

This House would go vegetarian

This House would legalise Prostitution

This House Believes that religion does more harm than good

This House Would Distribute Condoms in Schools (Junior)

This house believes in the woman's right to choose

This house believes that developed countries have a higher obligation to combat climate change than developing countries

This House believes that it is sometimes right for the government to restrict freedom of speech

This House would ban music containing lyrics that glorify violent and criminal lifestyles

This House would ban alcohol
This house Believes People Should Not Keep Pets

This House would make all parents attend parenting classes

This House would make sex education mandatory in schools

This House would force feed sufferers of Anorexia Nervosa

This House believes that endangered species should be protected

This house believes that newspapers are a thing of the past

This House believes that music that glorifies violence against women should be banned.

This House Would Promote Safe Sex through Education at Schools

This House would ban smacking

This House believes social deprivation causes crime.

This house believes the internet encourages democracy

This House would explore the universe

This House believes that downloading music without permission is morally equivalent to theft

This House believes that bribery is sometimes acceptable

This House Would Abolish nuclear weapons

This House believes we're too late on global climate change

This House would introduce a system of universal healthcare

This House would impose democracy
16) PREPARING FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING

Awards to aim for

At WUDC or PAUDC public speaking competitions there are usually three prizes: best speaker, first runner up speaker, and best adjudicator. The competition is presided over by a Head of Public Speaking, and panellists rank each other in a secret ballot after each session (as happens in the parallel debating competition) so as to ensure the highest ranked adjudicators get to the finals.

Scoring

Adjudicators rank speakers after each presentation. In PAUDC, marks are usually awarded for manner (including delivery, projection, articulation, and fluidity); composition (including structure, logic and creativity); and matter (which should be somehow valid and engaging).

Very poor scores are 50 to 59 %, below average are 60 to 69%, average and above average are 70 to 79%, very good are 80 to 89%, and flawlessly excellent scores are 90 to 100%.

Judging Criteria

Manner refers to style, delivery and overall presentation - confidence, persuasion, sincerity, rapport, etc. It includes eye contact, vocalics (variation of the voice), gestures and appropriate use of humour.

Structure is the selection and arrangement of ideas and arguments and time management. To indicate structure, speeches should include an introduction, a development of ideas and a summary.

Matter refers to the content of a speech, ideas, arguments, observations, facts, opinions, quotations and examples.

Objectivity in Judging

Adjudicators must not allow personal biases to influence them. Worlds and PAUDC tournaments stipulate that speakers should not be discriminated against for a particular style, religion, sex, race, colour, nationality, linguistic group, sexual orientation, age, social status or disability. Ideally, judges should be perfectly fair and objective.
Speakers are allowed to use props, provided they are not obstructive.

**Four Different Rounds**

1) There is usually an Impromptu topic round where speakers are given topics just before the preceding speech.

2) Then there is an On-the-spot round with no time for preparation.

3) Then there is a Prepared round where all are given the same topic to prepare for, twenty-four hours in advance.

4) Finally, there is the fully prepared ‘Speaker’s choice of topic’ round.

Sometimes the order of the rounds is mixed up at the discretion of the Head of Public Speaking and Chief Adjudicator. The above format may be modified significantly, so speakers are encouraged to be on their toes and prepared for variations.

**Timekeeping**

In the preliminary rounds, speeches are usually three minutes; and in the grand final the speeches are usually four minutes. Credit is given for managing time effectively. Competitors are clapped once after the first minute of their speech and once at the start of the last minute. They are not permitted to speak once their time is finished and will be clapped continuously to show it is time to leave the podium or exit the stage.
Some General Advice to Public Speakers

★ Breathe deeply, beforehand, to calm your nerves
★ Project your voice, speaking from your waist, not your throat
★ Don’t shout
★ Connect with your audience; establish a rapport
★ Stay cool, calm and collected: believe in yourself
★ Communicate with body language, eye contact, etc.
★ Choose an engaging topic, or somehow make it interesting
★ If you can’t be funny, be personable and interesting
★ Don’t try to be a standup comedian (not in this competition)
★ Don’t do a Jerry Springer-type drama (not in this competition)
★ Always introduce, develop and summarise what you speak about
★ Keep to time
★ Avoid monotony: don’t bore your audience
★ Vary the pace of your speech and intonation
★ Rehearse in front of a mirror to see what you look like
★ Record your speech to hear what you sound like
★ Get feedback from friends, family or communication experts
★ Enjoy the thrill of public speaking
★ Watch, listen and learn as a spectator of other speakers
★ Practice makes perfect
15) GLOSSARY OF DEBATING JARGON

BP - British Parliamentary (Debate System)
CW - Chief Whip (also known as OW - Opposition Whip)
DLO - Deputy Leader of the Opposition
DPM - Deputy Prime Minister
GW - Government Whip
LO - Leader of the Opposition
MG - Member of Government
MO - Member of the Opposition
PAUDC - Pan African Universities Debate Championship
POI - Points of Information
PM - Prime Minister
SAUDC - South African Universities Debating Championship
THB - This House Believes...
THW - This House Would...
WUDC - World Universities Debating Championship

Case split - an outline of the all the arguments your team will raise and how they will be divided between the two speakers in your team.

Chief Adjudicator (CA) - Person responsible for the Tab, induction of new adjudicators, enforcing rules, and guiding the competition.

Clash - something emphasised by the Leader of the Opposition (how and why the opposition contests the motion being debated)

Council - Elected body of representatives from university debating societies, which decides on e.g. location of the next tournament, rules of the tournament, and which addresses other issues

Definition - an explanation of key words in the motion, giving the parameters of the debate and stating what exactly is being debated.

Definitional Challenge - can only be made by the LO if the PM’s definition is a 1) a truism; 2) a squirrel; or 3) an unfair Time/Place setting

Deputy Chief Adjudicator (DCA) - second in command, after CA, responsible for the smooth functioning of the Tab and the tournament

Extension - Must be done by the first speakers of both closing teams. Could be 1) a new argument that hasn’t yet been raised OR 2) deeper analysis of
arguments and issues already made in the opening half. NB: You are not allowed to do a policy extension or change the parameters of the debate.

**Generalisation** - assumes people, groups or cases are all the same. Cut through generalisations to enhance the quality of debate.

**Oral Adjudication** - after a debate, where results are given, then feedback

**Organising Committee** - organisers of a tournament. All serious complaints and should be taken to them.

**Panellist** - adjudicator on the panel of judges

**Policy** - a clear plan of action, showing how the proposed motion should be implemented

**Positive matter** - the substantive arguments that you make

**Rebuttal** - a direct response to an opposing team’s positive matter

**Rolling** - where other judges outvote the Chair of the adjudicating panel

**Squirrel** - a definition which is not what the motion is about. e.g. For “THW ban alcohol” to make the debate about only about criminalising those who sell alcohol to minors

**Structure** - the way that you arrange your speech: ‘I will argue three main points: 1st... 2nd... 3rd.... etc. Good ‘signposting’ helps listeners to follow you.

**Style** - the way you deliver your content: the way you speak, order your points, choose your words, entertain the audience, etc.

**Time/Place Set** - to place the debate at an inappropriate time in the past or in an obscure location

**Trainee** - a new adjudicator, assigned to a panel of judges

**Truism** - This is a definition so obvious and self-evident that there can be no challenge or meaningful debate

**Yaka** - A special drink for debaters. Beware!
“This manual comes at a good time in Zimbabwe when we should all be busy debating issues of importance in the country. For years we have been in decline, and where are the robust debates (and debaters) to help reverse the trend? The manual is written in an engaging style and offers many points of advice to would-be debaters. A key aspect which it emphasises is practice and more practice, as with most things in life. I wish the manual and readers a success in the debating sphere.”
- Prof. P. J. Mundy - world renowned ornithologist and author of The Vultures of Africa

“[This handbook] is a first of its kind which explores the different styles of debate chiefly used in Zimbabwe that are also applicable in any other country. The manual equips any one of us with effective communication and negotiating skills one might need in any situation one faces in life. Anyone who participates, trains or adjudicates in debates and public speaking activities should obtain a copy of this manual.”
- Mr. M. Mawanza - H.O.D. Forest Resources and Wildlife Management Department, NUST, Zimbabwe

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