**The Summary Speech**

This is the second and final speech given by the first speaker on each side. These speeches can be crucial turning points in the debate, as the debaters transition from the plethora of arguments made in early speeches to the narrowed list present in the final focus. Every summary speech should have several key parts.

1. Strengthen your case – The most important goal of your summary speech is to make your case stronger than it was after your opponent’s last speech. Think of the first and second speeches as presenting and building your case, the summary speech as the time to strengthen your case in the face of attacks and the final focus as the speech that brings it all together.

2. Rebuild your case – At this point your opponent will have spoken two times and has probably chipped into your case a little. You’re never going to win every single argument in the debate, but in this speech you try to win as many of your original arguments as you can. Do this by referring to your previous arguments and make additional points that remind the judge that these arguments are important.

3. Sum up the debate – It’s helpful to your judge for you to sum up the debate thus far. Try not to spend too much time doing this during your summary speech, but make sure to devote at least some time to quickly summarizing the debate thus far.

4. Answer key arguments – It’s very important during your summary speech that you respond to your opponent’s key arguments. You won’t have time to answer all of your opponent’s arguments so only focus on the ones that are most damaging to your case.

5. Watch out for new arguments – Another element of the summary speech is responding to the new arguments your opponent’s made in their last speech. It is important for these to be answered immediately in the summary speech, otherwise your judge will likely view them as conceded.

6. Weight the round – Start the process early of winding down the round. Begin to tell the judge why your team should win even if your opponents win some of their arguments. Make the job easy on the judge by weighing the arguments in the debate for them.

B. Summary Speech Tips – While the above list covers the essential elements of the summary speech, giving a great speech requires a lot more. Here are some tips for making your summary speech excellent:

1. Know your case – Being able to refer to evidence and arguments in your case specifically makes you look in control during your summary speech. Knowing your case also allows you to easily discard arguments by your opponent that are irrelevant to your case.

2. Anticipate arguments – Try to preempt arguments you know are coming during your summary speech. By discarding an argument before your opponent’s have even made it you get to put things in your terms and control that particular aspect of the debate.

3. Be offensive – Not in the insulting sense, but in the looking to score points sense. Always look to be on the attack. Don’t just focus on why your case is good, but also focus on why your opponent’s case is bad. By attacking their arguments as well as defending your own, you keep lots of options alive for your partner in the final focus.

4. Start with what you are winning – It always helps to begin your summary speech by focusing on what you are ahead on. Think about it this way: if you don’t win any of the arguments you make after the first minute of your summary speech, you should still be able to win the debate because you will have already have made the most important arguments.

5. Be selective – It’s tempting to try to make too many arguments in your summary speech, but you should instead focusing on making the most quality arguments. Not only are you likely to spread yourself thin if you try to cover too many things, your best arguments are unlikely to sink in as well amidst the rest of your less-important arguments.

6. Highlight dropped arguments – Chances are that throughout the debate your opponents will miss some of your arguments that you think are important. In your summary speech you should point these arguments out and remind the judge that your opponents had a chance to answer these arguments but they didn’t.

7. Think globally – It’s easy sometimes to get sucked into the line-by-line minutiae of a Public Forum debate, but in the summary speech you should do your best to start focusing on the big picture. Think about how different arguments on the flow interact with one another and how you can make connections between things for the judge’s benefit.

8. Be confident – It always pays off to have confidence in your arguments and your partner. Don’t be cocky, but be self-assured and persuasive when making arguments during your summary speech.