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"In an easy cause," Ovid wrote, "any man may be eloquent." It is an easy cause to express my gratitude to those people who have given me reason to attempt eloquence in the pages that follow. Students I have coached challenge, push, and amaze me. My close friend and co-director of VBI, Jesse Nathan, has been an endless supply of deep wisdom and broad insight. Jude Baldo, Dan Chaparian, Jana Checa Chong, Michael Dorsi, Saeed Jones, Mark McNeil, Sara Ann Mehltretter, Lisa Mueller, Joseph Poore, Ariel Schneller, and Rana Yared have been faculty colleagues with exceptional dedication and passion. Rob Layne, Josette Surratt, Robert Trapp, and Janet Willford taught me not just to speak well but also to appreciate the power of words. Kris Jensen, Thomas McCloskey, Joey Mello, Jerome Pandell, Sean Powers, and Logan Will have been ideal friends and teammates. Victor Jih and Mike Bietz have made Victory Briefs into the national leader in forensics instruction; to work with these two visionaries is simultaneously humbling and empowering. Andi Barsan has provided untold intellectual camaraderie and boundless friendship. Most importantly, my family has been a wellspring of love, motivation, and support. I am a better person because of, and in deference to, these people.

- A.E.S.

Five years since I was a high school extemper myself, the event seems, in a few ways, very different. But in most important aspects—especially in regards to the skills—extemp is still extemp. And those skills that I picked up during my extemp career are invaluable to just about everything I do now, from my work as a writer to simple organizational proficiency to the ability to stand in front of a group of people and cohesively deliver some sort of discourse. For this ability—and all the hours of his time he gave me developing it—I would like to thank my coach Mark Stucky of Moundridge High School (Kansas). My forensics and debate buddies—now studying Law and Medicine—were also a great joy to work with, and I thank them—Eric Stucky, David Stucky, Nick Krehbiel, and the rest of the gang. Since high school, working in the Victory Briefs organization has allowed me to stay involved in forensics at a caliber unmatched, I believe, by any other group. Thank you Victor and Mike for this opportunity. Andrew Swan has been a wellspring of support and inspiration, both working on this project and as a fellow instructor at the Victory Briefs Extemp Institute. My housemates here, in Lawrence, Kansas, have taught me so much—about living, about communication (the interpersonal kind), and about seeing—Andrew Gingerich, Ian Huebert, Jesse Overright, Liz Rempel, Erin Gingrich-Gaylord and Jared Hawkley. My parents and siblings—Sandy and Kirsten, Daagya, Jono, and Josh—are continuing sources of love, insight and challenge. And most importantly, I want to thank Steph Long—my girlfriend of almost five years—for her untiring love and encouragement. She has been the center from which I can fly. Together, I think we make a pretty good team. I love you, Steph.

- J.Z.N.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TEXT

Victory Briefs has, for many years, published a wide line of extemp textbooks. This will be the sixth text in the Victory Briefs extemp product line joining Economics for Extempers, Advanced Extemp, How to Extemp, United States Extemp Topic Briefs, and Foreign Extemp Topic Briefs. While Advance Extemp and How to Extemp cover stylistic aspects of the event briefly, this text is the first in our product line entirely dedicated to the presentational elements of extemp.

The two of us wrote this text to be applicable to extempers with a range of experience. We believe that novices and highly experienced competitors alike will find this a profitable guide. We believe that while style can be learned, it should not be parroted. Accordingly, we have not attempted to present a comprehensive treatise on the subject; instead, we encourage you to use this textbook as a starting point through which to begin developing and honing your own style.

Even more than with the substantive and the structural elements of extemp, style can best be learned by practice. This book presents many examples but we believe wholeheartedly that what you develop yourself sounds both more natural and more convincing. For your own benefit, we suggest that you refrain from memorizing these examples and instead use them to spark your own creative muse.

Most importantly, remember that while extemp truly is a demanding intellectual activity, it is also a communicative event. Compelling style maximizes the effectiveness of your delivery. The best extempers are those that combine insightful analysis and strong presentation. We hope that our products help you do just that.

We ask that you email us with any questions, comments, or suggestions. Thank you for supporting the Victory Briefs Extemp product line.

Best of luck!

Andrew E. Swan
andrewswan@yahoo.com

Jesse Z. Nathan
nathanjz2003@yahoo.com

CHAPTER #1
INTRODUCTIONS

What is the purpose/intention of introductions in extemp?

Bluntly, the purpose of an introduction is to introduce a speech. An introduction should, in its most basic form, convey to your audience a preview of the next seven minutes. Pretty simple, huh?

An extemp introduction is, in our estimation, much like the dive with which swimmers start a race. Swimmers realize that a dive is much more than merely throwing oneself into the water because one has to do so in order to compete. A quality dive, though it encompasses a relatively short period of time in context of the entire race, is technically quite difficult. Unfortunately, it is also vital. A bad dive makes a race very difficult to win. Conversely, a particularly skillful dive puts you heads and shoulders (literally) above your competition. In short, learning to dive well is a challenging but profitable investment.

So it is with extemp introductions. Even though an introduction should take up less than 20% of your total time in an extemp speech, it is, in our opinion, the most concentrated and influential block of time in a speech. If you deliver a poor introduction, it is difficult to make up for it in the remainder of your speech. Similarly, if you deliver a particularly effective introduction, you will find that you can "get away" with a few minor presentational flubs and analytical shortcomings. At all levels—from novice preliminary rounds to final rounds at prestigious tournaments—introductions can and do function to separate the 1 and the 6. In short, they make or break the speech.

Please note that neither of us is overly fond of the relative importance some people place on introductions. We think that a blind focus on stellar introductions can easily distract from the substantive merits (or weaknesses) of a speech. In terms of pure substance, one could easily argue that an introduction should be no more than a recitation of the topic, an answer, and a preview of the analytical body paragraphs. However, we believe strongly that because extemp (like all events) is a performative activity designed to persuasively share problems and solutions with a wide variety of people, introductions are important. We encourage you to treat introductions as what they are—a means by which you engage your audience and lay out the topic at hand. They are a vital aspect of any extemp speech, but they are just one aspect. Don't allow yourself to assume that just because a quality introduction cab "make the speech," the rest of the speech is irrelevant. You make such an assumption at your own competitive peril.

As we've already said, the extemp introduction gives you the chance to introduce your topic to the audience. At the same time, a good introduction allows you to do much more. We'll talk more about these aspects later in this chapter, but in our view, an introduction gives you the opportunity to do several things:

1.) Tell your audience what issues you'll be talking about with seven minutes.

- The introduction should convey to the audience a brief overview of the relevant issues pertinent to the topic. If you'll be discussing the Kyoto Protocol, it is helpful to let the audience know that they're in for a speech on the environment. If you'll be discussing the future of the Euro, you should tell your audience to expect analysis on economic issues. In sum, couch your specific topic in its appropriate context.

2.) Inform them of the particular topic.

- No big surprise here… tell your audience what exactly is written on the slip of paper you were given. Share your question with the people who are evaluating your speech; after all, how can they establish how effective your speech was when they don't know the exact question you're answering?

3.) Share your specific answer to the question the topic poses.

- Most fundamentally, an extemp speech is an answer to a question and support for that answer. Tell your audience, clearly, what your answer is. If a topic takes the form of a yes/no question, answer with a yes or a no. If a topic takes the form of a policy recommendation, provide such a recommendation succinctly and obviously.

4.) Establish the method by which you plan to uphold your answer.

- In other words, provide a signposting of your body points. It's cliché to say, "…with three points of analysis," but sharing the taglines (a very brief phrasing of the claim of each body point) is a necessary attribute of a good extemp speech.

5.) Focus audience attention on you as a speaker.

- Let's face it…many times, a judge isn't wholeheartedly involved while judging a round (especially if the round is entirely about, oh, foreign economics!). An introduction allows you to grab the judge's attention and make him or her want to pay attention to the speech you're presenting. While our crafts are very different, note how Anthony Hopkins grabs your attention whenever he's on the screen. Be Anthony Hopkins (without the cannibalism, of course).

6.) Set the mood for audience consideration of your analysis and conclusions.

- One of the main reasons judges oftentimes aren't all too focused in an extemp round is because they just judged a round of another event; say, Dramatic Interp. Unlike in DI, an extemper usually doesn't seek to appeal to the judge's heart. This, in our view, can be unfortunate. After all, extempers discuss exceptionally serious issues (genocide, public health, human rights, etc). You should seek to

have the judge evaluate your analysis through the natural paradigm of an issue. In other words, don't divorce yourself or your analysis from the importance of the issues on which you speak. If you're speaking about AIDS in Africa, for example, don't present death tolls in a robotic, mechanical tone. You, like your judge, are human. Humans have feelings in addition to their intellectual reasoning. Sure, extemp isn't DI but it's also not the stock page of the newspaper. Remember your humanity and your speech will have additional credibility.

7.) Introduce yourself to the audience as a person.

- Before you're an extemper, you're a person. We believe that the most successful extempers are those who share with their audience aspects of their personality. You are more than your voice and you are certainly more than your analysis. How you look, how you stand, how you dress, how you carry yourself, how you enunciate words, how you accelerate or decelerate at different times, how you increase or decrease volume…all of these facets gives the audience both obvious and subconscious insight into who you are. For better or worse, judges prefer who they like. You can give a technically and argumentatively pristine speech, but if you leave a bad taste in your judge's mouth, you shouldn't expect a good ranking. Make the judge like you as a person, and he or she will usually find ways to justify a higher ranking.

So, at this point, you know the basic goals of an extemp introduction. Now do this:

- Think back to your last extemp introduction… did you do most of the things we explained above? How did you do it?

- Think back to your last extemp topic… disregarding length, develop an introduction that seeks to do all of the above.

- If you didn't know you and you were watching yourself give an extemp speech, what would you think? Would you like the person you were watching? Do you convey humanity and appropriate emotion or are a robot?

- During your next practice extemp speech, try to have someone videotape you. Share just the videotaped introduction with your coach, your teammates, your parents, your friends, even your siblings and ask for their honest reaction considering the above goals. Ideally, find someone who doesn't know you well and get his or her reaction. Remember, your parents won't be judging your extemp rounds!

The last three pages have been dedicated to the art of the extemp introduction. Both a necessary and a helpful means of producing that art comes from a solid understanding of technique. So let's talk about that now.

Structure and time allocation of extemp introductions

We suggest that you read this section with the substance of the last section firmly in mind. Remembering WHY we do something helps motivate and focus us.

The obvious place to start is with overall time allocation. We believe that most extemp introductions are just too long. Until and unless extemp is made into a ten or fifteen minute event, two minute introductions are inefficient and unnecessary. So, how long should they be? Explicitly, a good extemp introduction should not exceed one minute fifteen seconds. Indeed, there is rarely a need to exceed one minute.

As we said above, we work from the assumption that while vital, an introduction is not as important as the analysis of the speech. As such, why eat up limited time to give longer introductions when you have more important things to do?

We are sensitive to the fact that different topics with different judges in different contexts present different introductory challenges. Yet we also believe that seventy-five seconds is sufficient to accomplish what needs to happen in a good introduction.

So, what needs to happen in a good introduction?

In chronological order, these are the primary elements of an introduction:

1.) **Attention grabber**
- This is the very first thing out of your mouth once your time has begun. Not surprisingly, with your attention grabber, you should seek to grab the attention of your audience. This can be done in a many ways—short anecdotes, quotations, political cartoons, or a simple recounting of fact. Often, good attention grabbers are humorous or powerful. The best attention grabbers are those that are topically or structurally linked to the topic and yet manage to capture audience attention. We'll talk more about this later in this section.

2.) **Link to topic**
- This is, sometimes, an unnecessary element of introductions. If your topic is, "How serious is the AIDS crisis in Africa?" and your attention grabber presents the numbers of those infected with the virus, the number who have died, and the utter devastation AIDS has wrought in Africa, there is no need to link it to the topic itself. More commonly, though, people need to dedicate a brief sentence tying in the attention grabber to the topic itself. For example, let's say your topic was, "Should the United Nations sanction Iran?" You might start out with the famous Dante saying that the hottest places in hell are reserved for those who in times of moral crisis maintain their neutrality. A good link might be, "With the pending moral crisis over the international response to Iran's nuclear activities, many look to the U.N. for decisive leadership."

3.) Statement of importance

- An easy but important element of (most) introductions. Basically, this should further compel your judge to pay close attention to your speech. You should explain that this topic is so significant that your judge would be well-served to listen carefully. If the topic you've selected involves an obviously important issue, developing a statement of importance is quite simple. Rarely, a topic doesn't call for such a statement; for example, "Who will win 'American Idol' this season?" is, frankly, unimportant and trying to make it important would be silly. A solid method by which to explain significance is this: "It is because x (some fact), and it is because y (some implication) that we must ask, z (topic)." For example, "It is because San Francisco is likely to experience a major earthquake in the next twenty years, and it is because such an earthquake could do billions in damage and kill hundreds of people that we must ask, 'What should be done to prevent a repeat of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake?'" A more simple method is something like this: "With the safety of millions of Bay Area residents on the line, we address the question, 'What should be done to prevent a repeat of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake?'"

4.) Topic

- State your topic verbatim. Simple as that. When the judge knows the topic, it kills credibility to even slightly rephrase it (even if you don't alter the meaning). If it appears as if you are deliberately changing the topic, you can expect the lowest rank in the round. If, as sometimes happens, your topic has a grammatical or factual error, read it as presented nonetheless (and then make a joke about the error).

5.) Thesis

- Crucial. A thesis, in short, is the answer to the topic. After you say your topic, you should be able to start the next sentence (your thesis) with, "The answer to this question is x." Too many people believe that sharing the taglines of your main points is sufficient to demonstrate your answer. It is not. In our view, a thesis should have four attributes. First, it should be clear—make obvious what your answer is. Second, it should be defendable—if you can't back up your answer with credible, rational analysis, change your answer. Third, it should be debatable—you should be able to also defend the opposite answer; if you can't, your thesis might be a truism and thus bland. Fourth, it should be productive—you've got the attention (hopefully!) of your judge…we think you should try to make sure that there is a point to your thesis. Here are two examples of bad theses to the topic, "Should the death penalty be abolished?": "Murder is bad" (not clear, not debatable, and only questionably productive). "The answer is no because car thieves aren't serious criminals" (not defendable in that it doesn't really answer the question, not really productive). This, on the other hand, is a good thesis to the same topic: "The answer to this question is yes because the death penalty serves no useful purpose at great cost." This thesis is clear (because

it's obvious what our answer is), it's defendable (because fact and analysis can back up this claim), it's debatable (because good arguments can be made to support the death penalty), and it's productive (because this is a big, serious issue).

6.) Signposting of main points

- Lay out the process by which you will uphold your thesis. Remember that each individual point of analysis shouldn't be an independent answer to the topic; rather, each point is an independent attempt to uphold your thesis. When you signpost your main points, distill each point into a single, concise argument. As a general rule, try to encapsulate point into four to six words. For example, if my first point in a speech on the topic from above explains how numerous studies have shown no correlation between imposition of the death penalty and crime in the state where it's carried out, I could distill that point into, "Executions fail to reduce crime." For the above topic, my signposting might go something like this: "This is due to three reasons—first, executions fail to reduce crime; second, the death penalty is unfairly imposed; third, capital punishment is unconstitutional." If you choose to have two main points, this structure is identical (except you leave off the third point, obviously). Each tagline is an independent argument and is phrased succinctly and clearly. Strive to make each point distinct. Your judge should be able to randomly disregard two of your points in a three point speech and be left with one point that independently upholds your thesis. Remember, a tripod is more stable than a single pole.

We are uncomfortable suggesting strict timing guidelines for each of the six attributes of an introduction because they vary from speech to speech, topic to topic. So long as you do what needs to happen within an introduction and stay below one minute fifteen seconds, micro-level time allocation isn't terribly important. Usually, the longest single element of the introduction is the attention grabber. The link to the topic, the statement of importance, the topic itself, and the thesis shouldn't take more than a few seconds each.

With practice, we are confident that you'll become increasingly comfortable giving efficient introductions. You will, in fact, probably find that you can do everything you're supposed to do in less than one minute. So long as you can do so without sacrificing eloquence and thoroughness, we see no problem with even briefer introductions. Be cautious with introductions much under forty-five seconds. To us, it generally seems difficult to present an ample introduction in less time.

<u>How to use humor to introduce a speech</u>

Honestly, many people think of extemp as a boring, bland event. Judges frequently groan when handed an extemp ballot because they suspect they're in for an hour of insightful,

intelligent, articulate—but unbearably dull—speakers. This is unfortunate not just because smart analysis of contemporary issues is in and of itself interesting, but also because judge expectations feed the cycle of dry extemp. In a sentence, we believe that humor, appropriately done, is a potent and beneficial tool in extemp.

Think back to how we started this chapter…we said that the introduction gives you the chance to introduce yourself as a person to the judge and to try to make him or her like you. Most of the time, your judge won't know you when you walk into the room to deliver your speech. Many judges, especially less experienced ones, will be somewhat intimidated by the concept of judging an intellectual event like extemp. When you, the competitor, walks into the room looking poised and polished, many judges have some sense of tension. (Note to reader- at least one of the authors still becomes nervous when he judges an extemp round!)

In short, the judge is sizing you up just as you are sizing him or her up… you're both trying to get a "feel" for the other. You want to "read" the judge and possibly determine what he or she is looking for (discussed in the chapter on judge adaptation) and he or she is trying to understand what to expect from you. Your introduction gives you a stellar opportunity to break the proverbial ice and speak directly to the judge. A humorous introduction, when appropriate given the topic, can be an extremely effective way to do so.

With that, how does one introduce a speech in a humorous way? The best thing to do, in our estimation, is not to try too hard. We've all seen how goofy it looks when an extemper struggles way too hard to be funny. There's a reason we do extemp and not HI! Your goal isn't to be uproariously comedic; rather, seek to be witty and understated. Subtlety trumps slapstick.

The most common location for humor in extemp introductions is in the attention grabber. A funny story, anecdote, cartoon, or quotation is an easy way to offer humor. Many extempers believe they're being hilarious when they give an obviously false glorification of a certain individual whom they're quoting. For example, "The great political philosopher Justin Timberlake once said x." This was funny when these two authors were in high school years ago. It has become overdone and trite. Please, for your own sake, refrain from using this technique!

Humor for the sake of humor is meaningless. Humor is a method by which you can instruct and persuade your audience. In other words, make your humor have a point. For example, at press time, the debate over immigration reform was a hot news item. If you were to introduce a speech in which you argued against current legislative proposals regarding immigration reform, you could begin with this humorous but powerful cartoon: "A recent political cartoon shows a Native-American in traditional garb and holding a copy of the House Immigration Reform Act. Looking vindicated, the subject points to the reader and says, 'Well, it looks like you'll all finally be deported!'"

In the last example, you'll note that not only did you explain a humorous cartoon, you also made a clear, efficient point (namely, that all Americans are immigrants). Also note that the entire attention grabber took between ten and fifteen seconds. It's short, it's powerful, and it's to the point—exactly what you should strive to do.

We venture that in context of making your audience laugh, more important that what you say is how you say it. With humor, deliberate pauses are absolutely vital. In the example just discussed, we suggest a brief pause after the first sentence and a longer pause after the second. Make sure you recite the punch line clearly or the point of the cartoon has vanished.

Because extemp is viewed as an intimidating, rarely funny event, many judges will be unsure whether they should laugh or even smile at jokes. How do you make them comfortable doing so? Do it yourself! After you tell your joke, pause…and then smile. Give the joke a second or two to sink in and then smile at its humor. Think of your smile as the light-up "applause" signs on television show sets. Give the audience permission to smile by smiling yourself. Not only does this enhance the effectiveness of your humor, it makes you look more comfortable and personable. Remember, judges tend to give higher ranks to those people they like…and judges prefer genuine people to artificial speakers.

Another effective technique of humor is to be gently sarcastic. A well-placed rolling of the eyes or shaking of the head can be valuable. Let's say you're delivering a speech about the environment. You might start your speech with something like this: "When asked about global warming, an unnamed scientist with ties to an oil manufacturer said that animal flatulence is more polluting than the burning of fossil fuels." With this example, say the entire sentence fairly nonchalantly and factually. Pause. Give a small smile and roll your eyes as if you cannot believe that anyone would really think this. Move on to the rest of the introduction.

At this point, we hesitate to do much more to "teach" humor. We all know what humor is and how to be funny. This is a skill that can best be developed on one's own and not by reading a textbook on extemp. So get out there…read cartoons, seek out funny quotations, and always think… "would this be helpful in an extemp round?"

How to use a quotation to introduce a speech

Using quotations is an effective and easy way to introduce a speech. Unfortunately, some experienced extempers condescendingly believe that because quotations are a relatively simple method of attention grabbing, the practice is limited to novices. This is empirically false. Countless tournaments, including highly competitive ones such as St. Marks and Harvard as well as NFL Nationals, have been won by extempers using quotations to introduce their speeches. Both authors routinely used quotations and encourage the strategy.

When you consider the use of a quotation, you should do so because of either of two criteria. First, a good quotation is one that is eloquent, comedic, or powerful. In other words, the quotation should say something in a unique and meaningful way. For example, the quotation, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" is a powerful, concise phrase in context of national service and volunteerism. With this first criterion, it doesn't matter who said the quotation…what matters is what the quotation itself says. Second, a good (but not necessarily great) quotation is one said by an individual with a great deal of credibility. These quotations carry weight because of common respect for the quoted or his or her accomplishments. For example, "The 2004 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr. Wangari Maathai said, 'trees are the basis for good government.'" While her quotation itself is potentially useful, the fact that an internationally recognized individual said it makes it a worthwhile quotation.

With the first criterion, the basic test is—"does this quotation say something in a better manner than I could?" If so, it is likely a good quotation.

With the second criterion, the basic test is—"is the quoted well-respected by most people?" If so, it is likely a good quotation. Please note that an individual with small name recognition can still be an excellent source. Academics, scholars, diplomats, scientists, and philosophers—even lesser known ones— can make great sources. In cases where the audience might not immediately recognize a name, a very brief biography can help. For example, "Dr. Tori Haring-Smith, President of Washington and Jefferson College, once remarked x."

In general, a quotation shouldn't exceed a single sentence. Similarly, the quotation itself shouldn't take longer than five or so seconds to recite. When you recite the quotation, slightly slow down to make sure your audience knows you're quoting someone else.

<u>How to use a story/analogy/cartoon to introduce a speech</u>

A story, analogy, or cartoon can be a very effective manner by which to introduce a speech but it is usually more difficult than using a quotation.

The primary challenge of using one of these methods is the distillation of the "point" of the tale in a suitably short amount of time (no more than approximately twenty to twenty-five seconds). Summarizing a story or analogy or cartoon is a difficult process even disregarding time constraints. Before you attempt to use one of these methods, practice summarizing efficiently!

It's important to both sufficiently set-up the story and doing so succinctly. For example, in a speech on the civil unrest in Nepal, the following attention grabber and link would work: "The movie 'V for Vendetta' tells the story of a futuristic London controlled by a repressive government. V, the masked hero, seeks to convince his fellow citizens that the

people, and not the current totalitarian regime, should control power. Today, a small group of rebels in Nepal are seeking to wrest control power from a cruel monarch…"

Notice how this example briefly describes the basic plot of the movie and explains the moral of the tale before linking into the topic at hand. Now you try it… let's say your topic is, "Should Turkey be admitted into the European Union?" Select a movie you've seen lately and create an attention grabber and a link!

Here's another example, this time using a cartoon. The topic is, "Should Tony Blair shuffle his government?" "A recent political cartoon shows British Prime Minister Tony Blair moving lounge chairs back and forth on the deck of the Titanic. Indeed, given current poll numbers, many people seem to believe that Blair must make more than cosmetic changes if he is to maintain parliamentary power in the United Kingdom."

Your turn... find a political cartoon you could use to introduce the topic, "Who should the Democrats nominate for President in 2008?"

Final thoughts

Introductions are vital and can be challenging until you get into the swing of them. Practice often and carefully and you can expect your introduction-writing abilities to improve quickly and noticeably.

Most important, be yourself in your introductions. Let your true personality shine through and you're doing yourself—and your judge!—a great favor.

CHAPTER #2
CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

First impressions, goes the cliché, always last. In extemp, however, this is only a half-truth. Though the conclusion is less than one minute of seven, it is the last impact you as a speaker leave on the judge. Precious time, in other words. Unfortunately, too many extempers do not take it seriously, instead vaguely guessing that they can breeze their way through the final seconds of the speech riding the strength and analysis of the last six minutes. This is a dangerous assumption. If your extemp style is going to fully develop, you must focus some of your attention on these brief—but essential—final moments of your speeches.

Purpose of the Conclusion

A conclusion offers closure for the speech, wrapping everything up in a nice, neat bundle. At the end of the conclusion, a judge should feel contented that they have heard the whole story on the question, received an answer, and it was the right answer. The conclusion simply repeats what has been said and reaffirms the competency of the speech.

An old axiom of public speaking says that speech giving is easy. Simply, "Tell them what you are going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them." Obviously, the introduction fulfills the category calling for "telling them what you are going to tell them." The body of the speech is where you actually do the telling. And the conclusion, logically, is the space where you "tell them what you told them."

Framing the speech in the above manner is effective given basic human tendencies. Humans tend to remember what they hear first, and also last. If you have ever been given a list of terms to memorize or a list of groceries to buy, we tend to remember the first couple items on the list as well as the last few items. In the same way, the judge will remember the first thing you say, and the last. In this case, the introduction will make a first impression, and the conclusion will leave a lasting one.

What you say in between, of course, is important too! The above theory is not to discount the entire body of the speech. Certainly any good judge is listening to the entire speech. But the parts of the speech that will seem most clear in the judge's mind are the beginning and the end.

The purpose of the conclusion, therefore, is to refocus the speech on the question. The entire body of the speech answers the question, but the conclusion returns to the wording of the question to reaffirm that it has been answered properly. Reviewing the two or

three main points is a way for the speaker to show that the question was answered thoroughly. And finally, an effective stylistic technique is to tie the conclusion back into the introduction, thus providing a nice neat frame for the entire speech.

Because the basic purpose of the conclusion is to summarize the speech, extempers often think of it as a simple task. In reality, it is not easy. Many extempers make the mistake of not practicing their conclusions because they believe that anyone can summarize. Consequently, they stumble through that last minute. As a general rule, realize that a bad conclusion will hurt your ranking even if the rest of your speech was stellar. Therefore, plan ahead of time what you are going to say in your conclusion—and practice before tournaments, so that your unique style comes through in a convincing, effective, communicative manner to the judge.

The Fundamentals

The structure for a conclusion is, in many ways, the reverse of the introduction. There are, of course, a variety of styles when it comes to setting up a conclusion. The one we suggest is consistent with the Victory Briefs philosophy in that it is precise, fresh and hard-hitting—but not simplistic. Understand that this is one effective way, but not necessarily the only way, of structuring a conclusion.

Since the conclusion is meant to wrap up the speech, it is important to reuse the same type of language that you used in the introduction. The structure should look like the following:

1. Restating the question
2. Review
3. Answer
4. Revisiting the introductory story

Notice that the only real element missing from the conclusion is the statement of significance (see chapter on introductions). There is no need to restate the importance of the question (although this is certainly an option to play with as you get better with the basic style and structure). Hopefully, your entire speech has been dedicated to providing a rationale for the question; a basis for its importance.

Here is a sample, based on a speech given about Northern Ireland:

> *Today, we have asked the question, 'Will Northern Ireland finally find peace this year?" By first, realizing that the IRA refuses to disarm, second, examining the non-cooperation of the British Government, and third, understanding that the strife goes far deeper than any political solution, the answer is, unfortunately, no—peace is unlikely this year. Just as Aseop illustrated so long ago—and John F. Kennedy reiterated only a few decades past—"the mere absence of war is not peace."*

Notice that the above conclusion is succinct. A conclusion is not a time to rehash every argument that you have made in your speech. Many extempers fall into the trap of rearguing each point individually. During your conclusion, you want to swiftly and smartly end your speech. Reuse the same phraseology of the tag lines that you have used in your preview and your main topic areas. The repetition of these points will let the judge know that you have consistently defended the same positions throughout your speech.

When the question is restated, it is essential that it be done accurately so as to avoid any confusion in the mind of the judge. Restating the answer is also essential. Remember, your main goal is to persuade the judge. As such, it is important to reassert your answer as one of the last orders of business in your speech.

Basic Guidelines

With these fundamentals in mind, here are a few basic pointers to help focus your conclusion practice.

1. Reference your points as a whole. As we mentioned earlier, your essential objective is to summarize your speech, but stylistically, do not describe your speech point by point. That will disrupt the fluidity of your conclusion, and it will seem as if you are unable to look at the proverbial "big picture." For example, here are two conclusions for a question about the environment. Compare the differences:

> *"So when asked, 'How can the federal government clean up the environment?—remember that my first point was to unify the EPA, my second point was to increase penalties and my third point was to improve landfills."*
>
> or...
>
> *"So, when looking at the entire situation, we can indeed conclude that the dangers of pollution are very real. In order to alleviate the problem, the EPA must provide central direction, stricter enforcement of laws, and technologically improved methods of disposal. Only if all three of these goals are achieved can America make substantial gains toward preserving its environment..."*

Though the first conclusion is not really wrong in any glaring way, it lacks any sort of stylistic fluidity. By rehashing everything verbatim the extemper loses both flow and style. There is nothing unique, nothing spicy about what the speaker is saying—and, most importantly, nothing particularly catchy to grab the judge by the shoulder and remind him or her to pay attention these last few seconds. In the second conclusion, however, the speaker weaves the general summary and re-statement into something more

cohesive, something with more ebb and pull—and this provides a much more appealing (and effective) style of conclusion. In short, the second conclusion does a far superior job in tying the answer together.

2. Brevity is the soul of extemp conclusions. Do not reiterate overly-specific details from the main points. Here are two conclusions. Again, compare:

> *"So when we ask ourselves the question—'What does the future hold for minorities?'—we can clearly see a bright and potentially successful future because of the increased representation of minorities by 20% in politics, led by the first black governor of Virginia and Barack Obama of Illinois; a 30% increase in the work force due to over 300 affirmative action programs, and a 50% increase in education stemming from the recent changes in standardized testing designed to curb cultural biases..."*
>
> or...
>
> *"So when we look at what is in store for minorities, we can see a bright future filled with potential. Due to shifts in legislation and social attitudes, we have seen gains in politics, the work force, and education. Moreover, current trends point to even further progress..."*

Though again, these are incomplete conclusions, they offer a stark contrast for us to analyze. In the first instance, too much energy and time is spent reworking the same information that should have been developed in the speech body itself. Even if it wasn't, the conclusion is no time to make up for mistakes. Better to summarize effectively, regardless of how well a job you did in the body of the extemp speech. In the second sample, however, the speaker does a much better job painting in broad strokes—covering topics with a more polished, resolving tone. This more sufficiently fulfills the purpose of the conclusion.

3. Tie back to the introduction. When concluding, you want to create the effect of rounding out your speech—making it complete. Do this by alluding to your opening and showing how your answer affirms the point you made in the introduction. For example, "Should the United States adopt a mandatory national service program?" Suppose that for this question, your answer was "yes," and in your introduction, you had used John F. Kennedy's quote—"Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." Here is a possible conclusion which refers back to the introduction:

> *"Faced with the question, 'Should the United States adopt a mandatory national service program?'—clearly the answer must be 'yes' because there is a need for civil servants in numerous social programs, and our moral community would be strengthened. Indeed it is important that our country listen to the wise words of John F. Kennedy and—'Ask not what*

your country can do for you but what you can do for your country.' The sooner we heed his advice—clichéd and overstated as it is—the sooner we will be able to help the less fortunate."

As important as anything, tying your conclusion back to the introduction of your speech is not actually as easy as it might seem. There are many ways to do it, most notably by simply restating the quote—as in the above case. This, however, and many other types of tie-ins lack the depth that you can achieve in some instances. Though better than providing no tie-in, simply re-stating an introductory quote is not incredibly creative. The more innovative you get—by making more subtle, creative references, for example—the more powerful the unifying effects of the conclusion will be. In short, try to tie-in always, but practice developing your particular way—your style—of reconnected and referencing the introduction.

4. Allocate time wisely. Like the rest of the speech, proper and careful time allocation is the key to making things work smoothly. For the conclusion, this is a rather simple task: leave one minute for concluding remarks. The difficulty, in fact, with managing this clear-cut rule comes from the tendency to mis-allocate time earlier in the speech—which has nothing to do with the conclusion, but still leaves only half a minute or forty-five seconds to end the speech. We cannot stress how essential it is to avoid this trap. The conclusion is important enough to warrant practicing time allocation in the rest of the speech in order to avoid ruining its final, and critical, minute of resolution.

Additionally, in the final minute of the speech, you should have left yourself enough time to take it at an easy, winding down pace. Slow your sentences down (but not annoyingly so) in order to leave a lasting mark with the judge. Furthermore, for you to wrap it up according to your own pace—slowing things down towards the very end, for instance—is a very solid way to demonstrate your control of the speech. It appears, if you can pull off your time allocation well-enough, that you have so honed your skills that you are able to time the ending precisely.

5. Memorize the last sentence of the speech. As with the first sentence of the introduction, always memorize the last line of your speech. Some extempers choose a clever use of song lyrics or a quick joke to end a speech. This type of effective one-liner can add credibility, style and impact to your seven minutes. Whatever it is you do, however, it is most crucial that your ending is delivered as a well-practiced, memorized line that leaves the judge with little doubt about your control of the subject matter and speech material.

Also, if you can guarantee yourself a smooth ending (and beginning)—which you can by memorizing the last line (and the first) in the speech— you will provide psychological anchors for yourself, almost like a pair of bookends. For your own sake, therefore, memorizing these lines provides a stable pillar of clarity: you will always be able, at least, to end on a good note—a carefully practiced line that seals the speech shut.

6. End with an engaging thought. For more experienced extempers, you will seem very polished if your last sentence is a moving quote, adage with a twist, simple—but elegant—comment, or anything else that will inspire your audience to think and/or take action (even after the speech is over). The longer your presence lingers in the minds of the judges and audience members, the more effective your communication has been. For example, to the above conclusion on national service, you might add these words as a finishing touch:

> *"...The sooner we heed his advice, the sooner we will be able to help the less fortunate. We are often told—to quote the cliché—to 'give until it hurts.' Or, to put it in more positive terms: 'give until it feels good.'"*

While a bit sappy, keep in mind that this technique is just 'extra frosting on the cake,' so do not focus on it until you feel comfortable with the other aspects of conclusion-development.

Key Stylistic Questions

At its core, the conclusion—like anything in extemp—is something you ought to tailor to your specific style as you become comfortable with the basics. Ultimately, the difference between your conclusion and the next successful extemper will likely hinge on little—stylistic, individualized—factors; in short, how unique and creative you are on something as seemingly mundane as the conclusion. That said, we can begin by exploring patterns that will eventually provide space and launch pad room for your own stylistic decisions to develop.

By pattern, we mean certain key parts of the conclusion that, in these cases, aren't necessarily essential to the basic conclusionary statement structure, but can spice the speech up dramatically. (The danger with each of these more enhanced approaches, of course, is that you speak both longer than one minute-one minute fifteen seconds in your conclusion, and also that you end up muddling your final words).

For starters, one can expand the concluding remarks by, for example, always ending with questions built into the conclusion itself. If, for instance, the speech is about peacemaking in central Africa, and you want to work on leaving the audience with questions, you can spruce up the final moments of the speech by asking about things unrelated to your speech—except indirectly, in that they are concerns for central Africa, or peacemaking generally. Perhaps you want to include questions about your narrow topic or concern with answering the question did not leave time for. Either way, an audience that is left mulling over questions you've given them to chew on will likely be an audience that remembers you better.

Another stylistic technique is to offer the perspective of the other side of the question. Often, judges appreciate when you at least acknowledge another perspective besides the one you argued for in your speech. If you can do this—and you are confident enough in

what you said—without distracting from your answer (which is crucial) and also with enough grace to easily transition back into the basic substructure of the conclusion, go for it. A word of caution: there are a lot of pitfalls in this strategy. You can get muddled in something you weren't talking about, for example. Or, you can completely distract the judge from the three excellent points (for the opposite position) that you made earlier. All that is required with this technique is for you to briefly mention—in no more than, say, two sentences—some alternative viewpoint. Again, this is something you will eventually tailor to your individual style, but do be careful.

While it is always a good idea to tie up loose ends in a speech, you may want to develop a style of conclusion that focuses on this in particular. Whereas leaving judges and audience members with more questions pushes the conclusion in the opposite direction, in this style you would make an extra effort to seal up the speech, leaving the judge with no unanswered (at least in an obvious sense) questions. Perhaps you pose questions in the conclusion—but then you answer them definitively. Another way to gel and tie-up everything is to use some sort of finishing touch, something that can be presented as a general answer, a general sealing of the extemp speech. A quotation is a good example—perhaps at the beginning (or maybe near the end, in your case) of the conclusion, you give a quote that seems to capture the feeling or answer that you've spent the last seven minutes arguing for.

Humor

Aside from stylistic patterns, another element to consider is humor. Certainly humor is a plus, though not unrestrictedly so. Some people, of course, are better humorists by nature. They understand and have a sense of timing, a sense of appropriateness and overall, a quick, witty mind. If you have this knack, perhaps you ought to think about using that skill to your advantage in the conclusion—and in the rest of the extemp speech.

Otherwise, however, humor is still an important aspect of your conclusion to work with. Stylistically, it is important to work at integrating a certain degree of lightness into whatever conclusion style or pattern you adopt as your own. It is, however, not a completely one-sided sword. Humor can offend if not considered for its appropriate-ness. Remember you are dealing with judges—usually—of all stripes and from all walks of life. Some people, much as it might seem outrageous to you, do not find "Saturday Night Live" or John Stewart at all funny. Additionally, if you speak on a topic that seems quite sad, difficult or otherwise grim, it is likely that humor is not really the best option. Here is where some sense of suitability comes into play—use your judgment. Don't shoot an otherwise good speech in the foot by misusing humor.

Poignancy

It is interesting to have a heading entitled "poignancy," because poignancy—even more than humor—is a very sensitive, emotionally-based element to discuss. Nonetheless, it is

fitting to talk about it when dissecting the conclusion because the conclusion is the note you leave the judge with—and therefore often, if there is one, the most poignant moment in the speech.

As such, you should remember a couple of things while developing your speeches and practicing your conclusions. First, poignancy is not something to be avoided like the plague. It has a place. Though some speakers shy away from it for fear that it may come across as "too sappy," this is not necessarily a good general position to maintain. Leading your audience to a poignant final moment can have a profound effect—both in terms of the speech itself and in terms of real communicative connection, which is, after all, the real purpose of extemp and all of forensics. At the same time, do not overuse poignancy. People—judges in particular—do not appreciate being lead to an overly dramatic emotional cliff without good warrant to be there. They will not appreciate it if you over dramatize something, developing a conclusion, for example, that tries to make John Snow's retirement into a tear-jerker. As with humor, find the appropriate balance and make this element work for you, not against you and your conclusions.

Practice

As with absolutely any aspect of extemp, the Victory Briefs philosophy is founded in practice, practice, practice. And, the same boring old adage applies to conclusions—the end result is a direct function of the amount of practice you put in. Extemp is both wonderful and daunting due to this fact. Conclusions are no exception.

Practicing your conclusions might seem an odd task, given that each conclusion is the end-piece of a given speech. You may be wondering if we are calling for a new speech every time you want to practice your conclusions. This is not the case—though new speeches, practice rounds and the like are all excellent ways of getting better in general. In the interest, however, of practicing conclusions specifically, here are a couple drills and some practical advice to consider:

Drill #1: Build a Conclusion

The important skill to work on in this drill is, surprisingly, not necessarily building the conclusion: it is time allocation. Because time allocation is the single most difficult task—sticking within the one minute time maximum that you allot yourself for a conclusion—practicing is essential. Otherwise, however, you can also develop the ability to make conclusions quickly, effectively and efficiently.

First, decide on a speech topic question. Then, pop out an answer. Don't worry about fleshing out the full speech—rather, simply go straight to the conclusion. Write out your three points somewhere and work as if you've already provided three (or two) points of analysis. Develop a conclusion using the structure discussed earlier. Then, deliver it

integrating all of the steps mentioned earlier in this chapter. And, if time allocation does not come out in the way it needs to, re-deliver it and practice more.

Drill #2: Quick Summaries

An important part of actually being able to deliver a conclusion is the ability to put together a streamlined (but not simplistic) summary of what you have said in answer to the question. Thus to improve this skill is to improve your conclusion-making abilities in general.

For this drill, take your two or three and consider them. Figure out several unique ways to summarize what you've said—from the question to its answer to the final tie-it-all-together statement. Hopefully, you can come up with a variety—and something different than the usual "First, I said...Second, I told you...and Third, I revealed..." Work on summaries, for example, that don't even use the words first, second or third—summaries that are innovative and creative, and therefore fresh. These are the types of summarization skills that will improve your conclusion-making and conclusion-delivering style.

Drill #3: Nonverbals

Though we have not spent any substantial time in this chapter on the subject (see the chapter on nonverbals), it is important to take time to practice your nonverbal communication as it pertains to conclusions. Generally, you don't want to use too many gestures during the speech—elegance, for instance, is stifled by too much movement and activity. Furthermore, the conclusion is not a time to move about the room—or to pace. Rather, it is a point in the speech when you ought to stand still in one place in the room, using your immobile presence to emphasize the conclusion itself.

Each of these types of nonverbal signals—gestures, movement, etc.—can be enhanced by practicing them. Try delivering conclusionary statements and focus your attention the nonverbal aspects. For example, if you are a person who gestures too much, work on reducing the number of gestures in your final remarks. If you are a person who paces around a lot, try practicing standing still.

Conclusion on Conclusions

In the end, developing your conclusion style comes about most assuredly as you give more speeches. You begin to see what works and what doesn't, what connects you to judges and what turns them off—unfortunately, there is likely to be at least some learning the hard way. By understanding the purpose of conclusions and then developing your basic skills, you provide yourself with a launch pad for a maturity in your conclusion style to fully blossom.

CHAPTER #3
TRANSITIONS

Introduction

And that leads me to my next important point of analysis: transitions. Stilted, formulaic, disconnected—any of these words could describe the sentence I just used to begin this chapter. Such a lead-in, however, sounds equally detached when used by an extemper in a speech. Long underrated, the transition has finally made its way into modern extemp—but mostly as another opportunity for the speaker to toss in a couple of isolated jokes before moving on to something completely unrelated. In doing so, the extemper loses the chance to both solidify and unify the speech, as well as demonstrate a cohesive style that applies to this seemingly minor detail, this icing meant to make an already effective speech more so.

The Importance of a Good Transition

The transition, whether in writing or speaking, conversation or common storytelling, is an essential part of communication. Leading the listener (or reader) from one idea to the next is a delicate balance. You do not necessarily want give everything away, yet you also want to avoid leaving the person you are trying to communicate with lost on some random island of an idea with no connection to where you've next taken the speech.

Most important, therefore, for a functional transition is whether or not it unifies the speech into a more cohesive whole. In other words, a transition should serve to develop the speech more precisely into what you—the speaker—want it to be. From typical to thematic, from the basic to the mini-paragraph—we will discuss all of these types of transitions and more as we seek to understand how you can elevate the quality of your speech by utilizing transitions more effectively.

Like all forensics events—and most every skilled activity in life generally—the better one gets at the game, the more that improvements come in smaller and smaller, but more finely polished, doses. At some level, such as competition at any number of national extemp tournaments, the field of competitors will be roughly equal in skill level. In these cases it will only be the ability to distinguish yourself with carefully crafted, intentionally enhanced details—such as effective transitions—that will set you apart.

So where, exactly, do these transitions belong in your speech?

The answer is more or less logical: transitions need to be used at any seam in the speech; in other words, in any place where the flow of the speech breaks due to the change from, for example, point to point. This means it is appropriate to develop solid transitions

between your introduction and first point, first point and second point, second point and third point and finally, between the third point and the conclusion.

Transitions, however, are not limited to these obvious instances. Though much of this chapter will focus on the places (previously listed) that most definitely need a transitional statement, remember that internal transitioning occurs all the time in any speech—even in the simple words you use in moving from one quote back to your analysis within say, point one. The intention here is the same: to use a few words to smear the concepts together into a unified, cohesive whole. By learning how to develop and utilize effective transitions in the larger, more glaring places where they are necessary, you will begin to internalize the principles and skills behind transitions in general. Then, carrying over the skill to these more subtle cases—for example inside a given point—will be much easier. It is important, however, to know from the outset that transitions do not just occur between points.

Before we begin to look at the fundamentals of developing a good transition, let's consider what a speech would look like either without real transitions or with (as is all too typical) clichéd transitional statements.

In the first instance, the lack of a transition leads to a jerky, broken up speech that sounds disjointed and is only a loosely-related set of ideas. This is obviously not going to be very convincing, because it is inherently difficult to meet the cardinal rule of extemp—always answer the question—when your points do not seem to link or flow together. Early in extemp, this is a typical issue for the novice to deal with. Throughout the speech, (s)he will give off the vibe that (s)he is, while speaking, constantly reaching out, grabbing at the ideas of his or her speech, snatching them back and trying to hold them together—and barely, if at all, succeeding. Transitions go a long way toward preventing this haphazard feel to a speech.

On the other hand, a problem for the advanced extemper is falling into the rut of using transitions flippantly—without intentionality or thought—as some sort of joke, or stylistic cliché. This is to be avoided with equal fervor. Few things consistently bother judges more than the fact that, as they go from room to room, they hear the same transitions—or even the same style (for example, quotes between points)—in every other speech they judge. Not only does this irritate judges (not a good thing at all), but it does very little to set an otherwise effective extemper apart. If anything, it lumps such a speaker right into the middle of the pack along with everyone else who is speaking. Again, solid transitions go a long way toward eliminating this worn-out clichéd feeling that veteran extempers sometimes develop into a habit.

The Fundamentals

Basic structure is essential in every part of extemp and transitions are no exception. What? Structure in something as fleeting and, in terms of time taken, insubstantial as a transition? The reality is that structure is usually just a reflection of intentionality of a

well-conceived thought. For a transition this means several relatively simple, but important parts.

First, open the transition with brief, initial words. For instance, an extemper might be transitioning from introduction to his or her first point, and to begin the transition, might say (as he moves to emphasize the point), "I am reminded of XYZ." This introduces the transitional thought itself.

Second, the speaker develops the transition—with the utmost brevity, of course. Here, an extemper, continuing our previous example, would say, "XYZ is surprising because of this, this, and this." Usually, this development part is the catch, the hook that makes the transition interesting, gives it some sort of flare and, as transitions are in part supposed to do, grabs the judges attention. Take care to adequately develop the transition, since this portion is the meat between the slices of bread—it is what really gives it its flavor.

And third, the extemper must connect the transition to wherever s/he is transitioning to. In other words, if the transition was developed effectively it has already caught the judge's attention and now, if connected well, it will take that attention and direct it to the next point in the speech. This is the unifying power of a solid transition.

In summary, the three important parts of the structure to remember are: (1) the lead-in (similar to an introduction), (2) the development of the transitional statement, and (3) the connection to wherever the speech is going next. This, of course, breaks down something that is only a few brief sentences long. Nonetheless, adhering (or at least internalizing) some structural knowledge will greatly improve your transitions throughout the speech.

1. Lead-in (Transitional opener)

2. Development of statement

3. Connection to wherever the speech is going next

There are, however, a few more pointers to remember.

First, do not let your transitions become "over the top." Remember, they are not the focus of what is going on in the speech. If you expect to float by on funny or catchy transitions—essentially, a series of canned jokes—you will find this a difficult strategy to sustain the better the competition. Transitions are something akin to a picture frame: they provide nice décor, and if effective, lead the eye to the picture. They never, however, ought to be so gaudy or bright as to distract from whatever they are framing. The same applies to good transitions. Deliver elegant and noticeable, but not distracting transitions.

It is equally important to remember a second bit of wisdom—keep your transitions short and precise. This is not an opportunity to stick in some new point in the speech that

you've forgotten, up to this point, to include. It is not a chance to wile away your time recalling the details of some oversized joke. Again, this is the importance of structure: it keeps you honest and accountable to a limited, efficient, and therefore effective style for transitions. We urge you to make this short, precise style your *modus operandi* for transitioning throughout extemp speeches.

Finally, learn how to weave your transitions into the larger speech. Transitioning, as we have emphasized, is first and foremost about weaving. Learning to connect thoughts in an extemp speech is generally essential, but even more so when it comes to transition statements since they are the connectors themselves. We have all heard speeches where the speaker has a number of good and interesting things to say, but afterwards, we look at our notes and wonder what relevance certain things had. This is not to say those things did not have any relevance to the speech; rather, it means that the speaker did not do a good job explaining what bearing those items had on the rest of the speech. This is certainly an important skill, and it will require practice.

Practice by seeing if you can deduce in your head—whenever you read the news, whenever you watch television, or really anytime—how things are logically or otherwise connected. Can you draw parallels between Cuba and jokes about the President of the United States? If so, perhaps it provides some potential material for a transition. Can you connect Canada with the words of Mark Twain? Can you see a link between trade under N.A.F.T.A. and economic development in Latin America? If so, again, you might be able to use these tidbits of information in transitions—and, if not, at least you can learn how to connect things, which is the first step toward weaving excellent transitions.

Developing Your Style

In order to come to a style of transitioning in which you are consistently comfortable, we offer several types of transitions, moving from most basic to more complex, and then describe ways in which you can uniquely synthesize and tailor them to match your own needs. Finally, we address the issue of movement in terms of you, your speech style and your transitional statements.

A Basic Transition

The most basic approach to a transition is one we touched on earlier. "In my next point of analysis, we find the situation in XYZ to be more than President No-Name can handle." This is, of course, simple and precise but rather uninspired—and particularly clichéd. It does however, offer a window into the basic structure of the transition. It has a basic lead-in ("In my next point..."), an almost nonexistent development ("...we find the situation in XYZ...") and a rather uninspiring connector-function ("...more than President No-Name can handle,") which seems to also be the tagline for the point in the speech. Breaking it down like this, however, is valuable as we begin to understand what is or is not going on in a given transition.

In this case, the main problem with using this approach is that every extemper can use this form. Furthermore, it does nothing other than the absolute minimum. This does not set you apart as an extemper. You want to use a transition that elevates your speech, that calls attention to what you are saying in a unique way. This basic mode of transitioning just does not do this effectively. And, not only does it do little more than the basic transition, it does so in a way that does very little—if anything—for developing an overall, unified feel to the speech. Again, this is to be avoided, but remember: every novice extemper starts at this transition and moves upwards. This undressed, basic type of transitional statement can form a foundation as we think about the next types of transitions.

The Famous Quotation Method

This next type, the quotation method, has become quite popular recently in the extemp world. In this case, a speaker will say, "John F. Kennedy once said, 'The mere absence of war is not peace.' This holds true today when we look to the situation in Israel/Palestine. And in the first point of analysis, we find XYZ."

Though more developed, this style still has its flaws—and room for improvement to at least avoid the overused way in which extempers are throwing out quotes in between every point in their speeches these days.

Again, breaking down the style itself is helpful. This type has a definite intro ("John F. Kennedy once said...") and a much more developed middle ("The mere absence of war is not peace," in other words, the quotation itself), as well as a pretty decent connection phrase ("This holds true today when we look to the situation in XYZ..."). The improvement this mode makes over the basic form of transition is that in this instance, the speaker has developed the transition's innards quite a bit more. There is much more meat on this sandwich, and that is an important development. Additionally, if the topic is really about violence—as is likely the case in a speech regarding Israel/Palestine—then a quotation relating to peace and war is somewhat relevant, if not a little tired out.

So, how can this style be improved?

First and absolutely foremost, don't overuse it. Don't pepper your speech with so many quotations that the judge mistakes you for a walking toastmaster's handbook. Like any good speech device, overuse is a way to quickly turn it into your enemy.

Additionally, use language that tightens up the connection between wherever you are transitioning from to whatever you are heading towards. In short, make it seem less generic and more specific to the instance you are employing it in, so that the judge doesn't perceive it be some sort of canned transition. It will help, of course, if it isn't actually a canned transition, but even it is, pay attention to your language such that you are at least mindful of making it fit a given instance.

For example, with the J.F.K. quotation, one could easily say, "If John F. Kennedy were considering this question today [we are referring here to your extemp question], he might say, 'the mere absence of war is not peace.'" In this way, the speaker more directly places Kennedy in the context of that particular speech. This is highly effective at helping the audience get some sort of connection to your transitional quote, rather than viewing it as some randomly placed quotation you decided to force into your speech for kicks.

Finally, be sure the quotation does have some specific link—rather than just being, for instance, vaguely funny. Sure, these abstract, funny quotations work from time to time—and if you find a really good one that fits a few types of speeches well, use it with caution—but as a general rule, it is best to use quotations that relate to some idea, topic or other subject matter in the point(s) you are referring to. It will save you a lot of time trying to make it fit—an effort which, though successful from time to time, will very often come across to the judge: they will perceive your forced, canned approach and mark you down for it.

The Well-Developed Weave

This type of transition is the most difficult for which to provide an example precisely because of its nature: it is the most context specific, localized transition you can use. Say, for instance, the introduction in a speech on economics in Asia is centered on a joke about flying. In the first transition, then, you might say, "The modern miracle of flight, however, is not limited to the inventions first produced by the Wright Brothers. Around the globe from the hills of North Carolina, the economic machine known as the 'Asian Tiger' is sputtering for lack of international investment."

Let's break this down. First, you find a lead-in that connects both the introduction and the transition to themselves: "The modern miracle of flight, however, is not limited to..." Second, there is an adequately fleshed out middle section: "...the inventions first produced by the Wright Brothers. Around the globe from the hills of North Carolina..." And finally, there is a strong connection from this little tidbit about modern airplanes and North Carolina with the first point: "...the economic machine known as the Asian Tiger is sputtering for lack of international investment."

Not only is this well-developed, but the development is somewhat interesting, at least in that it is unique, non-clichéd and unlikely to appear in very many extemp speeches. Furthermore, the language of the transition is cohesive—references to flight are complemented by words like "machine" and "sputtering," each of which adds to the "airplane feel" of the metaphor at work in this transition. By catching the judge's attention, the transition brings the listener from introduction to first point rather smoothly—and in a unique fashion likely to set the speaker apart.

Synthesis

The reality, of course, is that while the woven, context-specific transition just analyzed is the most effective, it can be also overused. The best approach for any level of extemper is to work on integrating all three styles of transition into one extemper-specific style that you use throughout a tournament or even longer. Perhaps one quotation transition, one basically elegant type and the others the woven method would be an effective approach for you. The point, simply, is that if you take all three and weave them together you have succeeded. You as the speaker have created a unified product, and the transitions—funny, basic, quotation-based, synthesized—greatly contribute to that feel.

A Word On Movement

As you develop your transition style, the priority clearly ought to be the words coming out of your mouth. However, nonverbal communication is an indispensable part of your speech, and thus a brief look at how one behaves nonverbally while communicating is equally important.

Though there are different ways of moving about when transitioning, we propose a rather simple, straightforward but, overall, effective pattern for the extemper to integrate into the transitioning process. We will focus primarily on walking, pacing, and direction of said movement, though certainly gestures, facial expressions and other nonverbal signals are important, they will be more extensively covered in the nonverbal communication section of this style guide.

Body movement while speaking is symbolic—that is, gestures often represent, in a sense, your desire to emphasize something, and sometimes the more pictorial the gesture, the more visual the symbol and the better the emphasis. The same applies with body movement. If one wants to convey a transition—in other words, a change—in the speech, moving to emphasize that fact helps clarify visually (and this, in turn, the judge internalizes at some subconscious level) what is happening in the speech.

In short, limit your in-speech movement to the seams—transitions—between points (and between introductions,conclusions, and the rest of the body of the speech). When you move, therefore, from introduction to first point, try to do so by taking three direct steps to whichever direction you choose. Lead the your feet with a solid gesture, fingers together (not splayed out) and all with your body open; in other words, if you are going right, lead with your right foot, not your left, since a left footed step would close off your torso to the judge. Remember—nonverbal signals are subtle but powerful—you do not want, in any accidental way, to signal that you want to shut off communication with the audience. (For the same reason, in theater, for instance, it is a cardinal rule to never turn your back on the audience, or deliver your lines facing sideways or opposite the crowd).

To review: just as you begin the opening words of the transition phrase, pause, then step boldly in a given direction (alternate by going the opposite direction next point—but

never move backwards as in away from the judge). Lead with your hand as if being lead by a rope attached to your wrist, and keep the body open. Your steps should be deliberate, not a fast gait, but not a turtle's crawl either. Don't march, skip or anything else: just casually walk—and remember to keep good posture. You should be beginning the point you've transitioned to within moments of stopping your walking movement. As you settle in to the new spot on your feet, the audience—and you, the speaker—should be settling in to a new point.

Practice, Practice, Practice

As with everything in extemp, practice is the overriding factor towards success. Simply put, those who practice, win. In the world of transitions, developing your particular style depends heavily on how much thought and subsequent practice you put into fleshing it out and turning it into a habit. Be mindful and intentional about your transitions. Work on breaking down transitions and finding out whether they have solid structure. Ask questions of your transitional statements. Here are few to apply as you look over old, worn-out transitions and as you seek new ones:

- Does the transition begin smoothly?
- Does it develop into something worthwhile, some interesting tidbit of information, something the judge can hook into?
- Will the judge come away from your transition scratching his or her head asking how it is relevant or connected?
- If yes, why? How does it connect in your mind? How can you bring that important element out more prominently?
- Does the transition wrap up quickly, or is it spending valuable analysis time?
- Do you vary your style? Do you use only quotes, only jokes, only basic transitions or anything else too much?
- If you are succeeding at these larger transitions, look to your internal, more subtle ones: do they hold up to the above questions?

Transitions are, inherently, a finishing-touch detail when it comes to extemp. They are, in many ways, a small aspect of the speech—but as mentioned previously, as your style and analysis meet better and better competition, you will very much need these little things to enhance what you are saying and catch the judges attention in a round filled with otherwise equally excellent speakers. And, if you are a novice, this is perhaps an area that you can begin fine-tuning your speech-making. Maybe you are ready to pick an

underdeveloped part of your speech and make it your Summer project. If so, transitions are one area to begin considering—if not now, at some point in your extemping future.

Drills

In the interest of practice, we offer a few drills for you to try out to better your transitioning style and help you hone your skills before tournaments.

Drill #1: Transitional Absence

In order to understand the power and effectiveness of transitions, give a practice speech without any transitional statement. At the seams of the speech, simply move to the next point. Take note of the jerky, unfinished feel of the speech. When you are done, sit down and review the speech. Figure out what kinds of transitions work. Integrate them, re-deliver the speech, and take note of the difference.

Drill #2: The Collector

Spend an afternoon collecting and developing potential transitions. These are not to be "canned" and used for any vaguely applicable situation. Rather, make a list of extemp questions and work out transitional statements—everything from applicable quotes to jokes to your own concoctions. Then give a speech or two using the transitions you've collected. Certainly, keep them in a file so that you can use them at a later date. But don't look for vague, clichéd items that can be used in just about any speech—look for the specific. When, in a tournament or in practice, a topic comes up in which these highly specified transitions work for, you will be delighted and rewarded by the payoff this digging drill provides.

Drill #3: Intro or Transition?

Perhaps you have a collection of introductions. Whether you use them or not—and hopefully we aren't referring to a "canned" collection of introductions—this exercise is helpful. Take one introduction—say, for instance, it is an anecdote about traveling across a desert. Then, generate a list of potential phrases and words that might paint a desert-like picture throughout your speech. List jokes that involve a desert, quotes that relate and even words like "dry," "dusty," "cracked," or "parched." Then build four or five transitions that could go along with this particular introduction. And, perhaps you will find that your introduction doesn't have much meat and ought to be scrapped—or maybe, it ought to be turned into a transition itself. Either way, the idea is not to develop a hoard of reusable material, but rather to go through the work of crafting, producing and applying effective transitions.

Drill #4: Mirror Mover

Practice your movement in front of a mirror. In other words, deliver a speech that only consists of the transitional seams in your talk. Forget the analysis or the content: just employ your movement in front of mirror and watch yourself carefully. Look at how fast you move, your posture, whether you close off your body, and whether or not your gesture is leading—in other words, out and away from your body. Analyze how effectively you think you will be communicating with a judge. Make the necessary changes by tinkering around with this nonverbal aspect of transitioning.

Conclusion

Underrated and therefore given little to no attention in most extemp instruction settings, the transition, for those of us who have developed the Victory Briefs extemp philosophy, is an essential way to set a speaker apart from the crowd. Transitions are the icing on an otherwise solid cake. Leaving them out will not sink your speech, but it won't get you to the winner's circle any faster if you ignore them. And, with strong basic extemp skills, crafting your own unique transitional style will go a long way toward enhancing your speeches, thereby taking you to the next level of extemp.

CHAPTER #4
SPEECH STRUCTURE

Introduction

(Special thanks to Chris Kristofco and Chad Ho)

Stylistically, the heart of your speech is how you, the speaker, chose to structure it. Few aspects of the event are as defining and therefore, as critical. Fortunately, this also means you can make the speech fit your particular emphases, and subsequently your specific style. Extemporaneous speaking requires a meticulous examination of what are usually fairly complex issues. Great care and precision must be afforded your style of structuring a speech. The better you organize your thoughts—and, subsequently, the more flare you add to an already successful structure—the more effective your speeches will be at communicating with your judge. While the theory presented in this chapter is rooted in the broader Victory Briefs extemp philosophy, it is important to remember that your own abilities and preferences must be taken into account—that, after all, is what it means to develop a given style.

Background

There are two primary styles for structuring an extemp speech. Whether you use two-point analysis or three-point analysis matters little. What does matter is that your speech is properly and effectively organized.

An extemp speech is, after all, rooted in organization. How else can one expect to develop and memorize a seven-minute expository analysis without tightly organized clusters, if for nothing else than to give your mind some framework to wrap around? Thus, developing the habits of good speechmaking is directly related to getting into the habit of structuring your speeches well.

Of all the things judges comment on, in fact, the most common is whether or not the speaker had good organization. This makes sense. Obviously, if the speaker is hard to follow, difficult to map out in quick shorthand notes, then the judge will lose interest and quit listening. This is the antithesis of what you want. On the other hand, if you put together a good style—and get into the habit of maintaining it—you will see eyes light up, judges smiling and nodding along with you, eager and interested in what you are saying.

The Fundamentals of Three-Point Speech Structure

Here is the basic structure of the three-point speech:

I. Introduction

II. Point #1

A. Sub-point A

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

B. Sub-point B

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

C. Summarize, tie-back to answer and transition to next point

III. Point #2

A. Sub-point A

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

B. Sub-point B

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

C. Summarize, tie-back to answer and transition to next point

IV. Point #3

A. Sub-point A

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

B. Sub-point B

1. Analysis
2. Source citation

C. Summarize, tie-back to answer and transition to next point

V. Conclusion

Simple, eh? First, it must be noted that this outline is nothing more than a rough skeleton from which you can work—it is not exhaustive. There are many nuances of a good speech that you will have to develop on your own as you refine your structural preferences and style. But, for our purposes, this is sufficient—and as detailed as we can get. If you use this outline as a basic building block for developing something of your own, then you'll be well on your way to extemporaneous speaking championships.

The outline above is the classic "3-2 structure." This means that there are three major points of analysis with two points of development in each area. It is fairly typical of the type of structure used by three-point speakers, but it is certainly not the only option. You could also use a "3-3 structure" (though you may run into time constraints) or a "3-1 structure" (though you may run into issues of oversimplification). The speech outlined previously, however, strikes a cautious, yet effective balance—and it allows for 6-9 sources (and, of course, more if you want to double or triple up in multiple "source citation" places). The primary benefit to the three-point analysis is that it is well balanced and easy to learn. If you can simply come up with three fairly equal points, you can create a speech that is easy to listen to for a judge.

Watching many practical speakers, you will notice that they often employ the three-point structure when speaking on the issues of the day. This is because the three-point speech separates your ideas into three easy-to-digest points. Having distinct sub-points under each main topic area is also important. Though this will be explained more clearly in the section on internal structure, a few things should be said now. Internal structure (structure within points) prevents confusion within points and wishy-washiness as well.

Notice that in the above example there are built in places where source citations can be used. This is not to say that you should use only this amount of cites in a given speech. The only suggestion on citations and structure is that the cites be balanced throughout your speech. It is acceptable to have more citations in one point than another, as long as this difference isn't extremely noticeable.

A speech with four citations in Point #1 and only one in Point #2 will be obviously imbalanced. A judge will begin to wonder why you could not source the second point more thoroughly. More will be said on sourcing later. For now, attempt a balanced approach.

In the three-point speech, there will be a point or two that are stronger than the other(s). While this imbalance might seem a detriment to the speaker, there is a way to deal with such discrepancies. An experienced extemper will simply bury the weak point in the middle of the speech. While every extemper should strive to produce main areas of analysis that are equally strong, it is not always possible. In the section on introductions, we discussed that most people remember what they hear first and last. Using this principle to your advantage, you can simply place the weaker point in the middle of the speech. Working off of that principle, we should place the strongest point third. The reason for this decision is that you want to leave the judge with the best point still rattling around in his or her head.

The Fundamentals of Two-Point Speech Structure

The most important thing to note about the mystical two-point structure is that, fundamentally, it is very similar to a three-point structure. Both require that each main point be an independent argument. Both require the usage of sub-points. Both require that the sub-points support the main point. In other words, the basic structure is almost identical. Not so scary, huh?

By now, you should know that a three-point speech actually contains more than just three points. Similarly, a two-point speech actually contains more than two points. Usually, each main point of a two-point speech contains two or three sub-points. Sometimes, rarely, four sub-points are appropriate. Most basically, with two main points, each of your main points will tend to be broader than in the three main point structure.

Choosing a Structure

Whatever style you choose to develop into your own, you ought to make an informed decision—and besides, there are times when a given question calls out for a particular type of speech structure. Comfort, of course, may dictate which one you choose—but do not let it dominate your choice. If the only reason you haven't tried the alternative styles is your own fear, this is reason to stop and evaluate that decision. Versatility may set you apart from others.

There are also regional concerns when choosing a speaking style. For instance, on the east coast, three-point is dominant. In the mid-west, two-point is sometimes more popular. This is not a hard and fast rule, as there are areas in each region where the trend does not hold true. Also, do not become a slave to regional trends as you formulate your own style. If you are successful, competent, and stylistically unique—but effective—you can afford to break the trends and follow your own structural preferences.

Internal Structure

Perhaps more elusive than the overall structure, however, is the internal structure and all of its accompanying stylistic concerns. There is, indeed, much, much more to an effectively structured speech than just a few points, an introduction and a conclusion.

Every main area of analysis should have a structure of its own. Structuring within your points may be the added difference that sets you apart from the good extempers in a given competition.

Like the inverse triangle that you set up for your introductions, your internal speech structure is dependent on this style as well. Basically, the inverse triangle holds that we should move from the broad to the specific. In practice, this means a very careful structuring of your speech in the prep room. If you happen to be reading this only days

before a tournament, now is not the time to test out this brand new theory. You may find that your time allocation, sourcing and flow are off the first dozen or so times you attempt to use this type of internal structure. Once practiced, however, it can become second-nature. And then, you will see a marked improvement, a stylistic tightness perhaps unknown before.

Here is a more detailed sketch of on Sub-Point (we've just lifted Sub-Point A, for instance, from the previous speech-wide, overall outline):

I. Tag Line

A. Broad analysis (this usually consists of background, history or other important information for setting the stage of the analysis)

1. Thesis-like statement
2. Citation to back up the statement

B. Specific situational analysis, or presentation of a problem/conflict

1. Analysis linking specific point to question
2. Citation to back up statement

C. Summary (using a source here is optional; only use something that functions appropriately, that is, something that summarizes)

1. Tie back in to your answer and to the question
2. Transition to the next point

Let's start with the tag line. It ought to be the broadest statement you can reasonably make about the point you are arguing. For instance, if asked about the possibility of Congress implementing campaign finance reform, you might answer, "No—election year politics too greatly cloud the issue." A tag line for one of your main points might therefore be, "Soft money is too attractive to candidates." This tag line is a statement that gets across your point without giving details about your argument.

Proceeding through your area of analysis, you will see that the next step is to create some other broad piece of analysis. In the above example, you may then proceed:

> "We all have heard that incumbents have an enormous advantage in the political arena. Upon examining the issue of campaign finance reform, we will come to understand that not only do incumbents feed the system of soft money, but opposition candidates do too. Consequently, neither are likely—during this election year—to support measures which limit their access to funding."

The broad analysis now gives way to more specific analysis to prove the point. This bit of postulation may be followed by a statistic that, for example, tells listeners that 75 percent of candidates—opposition and incumbent alike—relied heavily on soft money contributions (note: this is a made-up statistic, though it would not be surprising if it were accurate).

Another possibility is to *start* with a citation to create a thesis. Here is an example, relating to environmental protection:

> "The New Stork Rhymes commented on April 5, 2006 that, from 1970 to 1995, over fifty environmental laws have been repealed by increasingly conservative United States presidents and congresses. By all recent indications, the administration of George W. Bush is no exception to this trend—and thus environmentally protective legislation is unlikely to be developed in the near future."

While the statement above does not necessarily say exactly what the speaker eventually turns into a thesis-like statement (that being the idea that George W. Bush is unlikely to buck the trend for conservative presidents), the point does setup a solid, driving point from which to dive into the rest of the analysis. The bottom line, again, is to begin with the broad and move to the specific analysis. In this case, for example, the speaker would subsequently give more details about why, precisely, Bush will be unlikely to break with his Republican predecessors on this issue.

Part two of any well-structured point, of course, is the "specific situational analysis." Here, the speaker's job is to set up the conflict, the problem, or the nitty-gritty analysis behind the broad statement. This, in short, is the heart of the point. In this part of the point, the extemper ought to tie in the tag-line analysis with the situation itself. Returning to the campaign finance example, a speaker would want to link the theory that both incumbents and opposition candidates are too in love with soft money to make reforms. If one could find testimony, for instance, of congresspersons on both sides of the partisan aisle who have demonstrated such love, this would specifically support the argument—and such evidence would belong here, in this part of the point.

The importance of this middle section cannot be underestimated. Essentially, it provides the center of the stylistic and substantive synthesis of what you are trying to say. Do not skip over or ignore this part of the point. Without its proper development you will have two pieces of bread and no meat…not even any lettuce.

And finally, as a speaker, it is your job to return to the question. Remember that your first goal is to effectively answer the question. Unless you address the issues presented by the question, you are not succeeding as a speaker. Your goal with this summary, therefore, is to take the specific—situational, for instance—information detailed earlier in the point and make it broad again by reconnecting it to your answer. Here is where your final, masterful skills of synthesis reach their culmination and completion. It is a skill

that must be developed. Your goal here is not to speak for a minute in the recap, but instead you want to tie everything together quickly and move on.

Speaking in abstracts about structure within points is important, but looking at an actual, well-structured point can be clearer to understand. As an example, let us expand on the environmental protection question touched on before. With pretend sources, let us suppose the question presented was, "Will the Bush administration push for any environmental legislation before the end of this second term?" The speaker answers—logically—that no, Bush will not make any such push. One of the points given, we'll suppose, is the idea that he does not want to buck the party line, or the long, persistent Republican trend to chip away at such legislation.

> "The New Stork Rhymes commented on April 5, 2006 that, from 1970 to 1995, over fifty environmental laws have been repealed by increasingly conservative United States presidents and Congresses. By all recent indications, the administration of George W. Bush is no exception to this trend—and thus environmentally protective legislation is unlikely in the future. In fact, according to News-weak, January 14, 2006, most Republican presidents since Nixon have steadily chipped away at existing environmental legislation. News-weak speculates that the reasons for such a party-line push have been linked to the historic tradition in the Republican party to look out for big business. Companies like Ford Motor Company, for instance, have pressured the government not to enact legislation subsidizing new fuel types or cars made to run on such fuels. According to U.S. Blues and Hurl Report, October 2005, Ford spent fifty six billion in lobbying over the last ten years to secure Republican (and even some Democratic) votes against environmentally conscious legislation—like the development of fuel-efficient cars. Likewise, President Bush—as the Christian Appliance Monitor notes in its December 31, 2005 edition—has shown little interest in anything but cutting back laws like the Environmental Protection Act. As he begins to think about his long-term legacy, it grows increasingly unlikely that the President will do anything but maintain this trend, keeping in line with the party and its historic support for big business interests. In the end then, new legislation is highly improbable."

In the above example, we can clearly see how the speaker moves from the broad to the more specific. The argument begins by giving us a statistic which develops into a thesis about this general trend. That thesis is vague and appropriately open. Further on into the point, the extemper develops some examples, some meat, in terms of how this trend has manifested itself in at least one specific case—Ford Motor Company. Finally, the speaker crafts a connection to the President and then links that back to the original query. While this step-by-step method is not always so clear-cut (and one could obviously argue that this particular example is dangerously biased in a 'liberal' direction), it is an effective illustration of what the Victory Briefs extemp style dictates for internal speech structure.

Notice most importantly, of course, that the speaker returned to the question about what the President will do. Many times, extempers get so caught up in their own analysis that they forget to make the simple step of relating their words back to the question. What was once topical, in-depth analysis becomes a tangential talk only vaguely related to the speaker's question. This, obviously, is to be avoided.

Transitions

Notice that in every single outline above, there has been mention of "transitions." In the chapter in this book devoted to transitions, these are explored with more depth. These elusive elements of extemporaneous speaking are essential to a well-crafted speech. Though the aforementioned chapter discusses this issue in more detail, suffice it to say that the best way to transition is to be brief and move on to your next point with a bit of style. Internally, these transitions ought to add to your speech structure in every way they can.

Time Allocation

Allocating time is tricky as you develop the style you seek. For some time, as previously mentioned, your time allocation may, in fact, be way off. Give it adequate practice, however, and you will learn to use the seven minutes effectively. Remember—an entire point should take somewhere around one and a half minutes. That leaves you about thirty-seconds to give each sub-point. Certainly, this will vary both from speech to speech and from sub-point to sub-point, depending on the amount of information you have as well as how much you have to explain any given connection or bit of information. Careful practice is the only way to properly mix whatever style you make yours with the time constraints of extemporaneous speaking.

Practice

And practice, as the end of nearly every chapter in this book will tell you, is really the only way to improve. Experiment. Test the waters on a given style. Synthesize what is available into the structure you want to develop. Here are a couple of drills to help you in the process:

Drill #1: Mock Structure

In this instance, take a given topic and simply outline it. If you want to do this in a group, that is fine too—though remember, developing your own distinct style is up to you. Take a question and then map it out. Write out taglines, sub-points, sources, and a few scrawls for what the transitions might be. Of course, don't write out anything close to a full speech. Focus on generating the skeleton upon which you will hang your

actually verbalized speech. This drill will help you see what you like and don't like and what aspects are most difficult. As you develop a structural style, this drill might prove crucial.

Drill #2: Point-by-Point Delivery

And when you've practiced mapping this all out, try giving one or two of the points as if part of an actual speech. In other words, do not give the whole speech—this defeats the focused nature of this drill. Rather, deliver a point—gestures, nonverbals, sources and all. Then critique it yourself or have it critiqued and re-deliver it—or take another point of analysis and do that. This drill can go a long way to helping you practice the specific, internal structure and style of your extemp speech points.

Conclusion

Constructing a clear roadmap for the listener is something that goes well beyond the delivery and development of solid introductions. It extends into the very organizational patterns and foundations of the speech in question. If you are to improve as an extemper, you must be willing to enhance, focus and refine your structural style. Whatever type you ultimately choose, spend the time to nail it down. Your judges will notice. And if you master this component of the event, it will make all the other parts that much easier.

CHAPTER #5
NONVERBAL STRATEGIES

Introduction

When we first crafted the idea of a textbook on the stylistic aspects of extemp, one of the key issues we wished to address was the nonverbal communication element of extemporaneous speaking. Nonverbal signals are not only critical to your overall style and success in this event, but they are, at least in text and teaching literature, vastly under-covered, with very little space allocated them in most instances. Part of our unified extemp philosophy at Victory Briefs, however, is to cover this crucial aspect of the activity. This chapter is formatted in a simple—and hopefully easily comprehendible—manner. We will examine six sets of skills and, accompanying each skill-set overview, our discussion will turn to drills and practice methods you can employ.

The Importance of Noverbal Communication

That said, we need to first establish the value of these skills—though this ought to speak for itself (and your experience in the event should confirm the value of understanding nonverbal communication). Scholars estimate that as much as eighty percent of communication occurs nonverbally. While some of this relates to communication we don't really have control over—communication that is exchanged almost subconsciously, for example—there are sizable portions we can influence: including everything from facial expression to speaking posture. More importantly, the point is that any communicative activity—such as extemp—relies, in order to succeed, on much more than the words coming out of one's mouth.

In short, if you signal with body language to the judge that you are not that interested in what you are doing, or that you do not quite believe everything you are saying, it will come across. Then, no matter how good your speech is technically, the judge will likely—consciously or not—do very little to help you out in the round. Nonverbal communication, therefore, is essential to your success—and a prime opportunity for you to develop a unique communication style.

Skills and Drills

We begin our skills and drills discussion with the basics and move toward more advanced skills—the kind that require more and more fine tuning.

Poise, Posture and Presence

From the moment you step into the room, you are performing. Frankly, this performance mode ought to extend as far as the instant you step out of the prep room (or the whole tournament, for that matter) since you never really know when you are passing a potential judge in the hallway. We will focus, however, on your poise, posture and presence during the round—starting with your entry.

Immediately, you ought to assess the room. Find out where the judges are seated, and who is simply an observer. Throughout it all, however, maintain an upright posture and a commanding presence. This may seem obvious, but it is never ceases to amaze us how often extempers enter a room slouching, and then continue leaning against the walls, looking around half-dazed and generally leaving more than a little to be desired of their poise and presence in the room.

Certainly, we are not advocating you act arrogant or do anything to try and attract attention to yourself. Rather, hold yourself with confidence. Little as this seems, it matters to judges—especially the lay kind—who watch your every move, even out of the corner of your eye. And besides, if you are exuding confidence the judge will feel it.

This continues when the speech begins. Throughout your speech, stand firmly planted with your feet a little more than shoulder-width apart. Maintain straight posture. Never cross your legs and always, always, always monitor yourself to avoid little ticks like swaying. All of these things are not only distracting but they betray a nervousness that is easily picked up on by judges—and, like everything nonverbal, internalized into their opinions of your speech.

Finally, maintain all of these elements—elements that present your speech and you yourself as a commanding, confident, calm person—even as you walk out the door. Whatever your particular style may be for ending a speech (a thank you, a nod, two steps back), end gracefully. Then, quietly exit or take your seat—again, not forgetting that you are still performing at least until you walk out of the room. Granted, it should not be like this—ideally the event would focus only on what is said inside those seven-minutes. This is not, however, the way it really works. Pay attention to your poise, posture and presence in the room. Integrate an understanding of this into your particular style of beginning, delivering and ending a speech in order to improve this aspect of nonverbal communication.

Practicing Poise, Posture, and Presence

A single, surefire way to improve this aspect of your extemp style is to get a hold of a video camera. Set it up or have someone film you; regardless, get yourself on tape so that you can watch how you do when it comes to the three P's. You are your own best critic and you will quickly pick up on things like slouching, swaying and crossing your

legs. Watch the tape in fast forward so that repetitive posture and poise issues become exaggerated and therefore clearer.

Gestures, Gestures, Gestures

Anyone who has ever seen one knows what a speech filled with poor gestures looks like. It can be one of the least appealing things to watch in the entire activity. Distracting, jerky, misplaced gestures can derail an otherwise effective speech.

For starters, gestures ought to be used sparingly. Eliminate gesture-use that comes about simply as a nervous movement meant to help relieve your anxiety during the speech. These types of gestures fall into the same category as other types of annoying movement like tapping one's feet or twirling one's hair. If your gestures appear nervous, they will do anything but improve your nonverbal communication and style.

When you do use gestures, develop a habit of utilizing them in places where you want to add emphasis or, in other words, visually attract attention to what you are saying. There are several styles of gesturing you can draw from. Without a visual aid, it is difficult to demonstrate them, but we will try: First, there is the standard cupped hand facing skyward. This can be turned over for another standard, the downward, closed hand. Then, you can also draw from two-handed versions of both—as well as sweeping gestures, leading gestures and other miscellaneous ones meant to essentially present something in mid-air that connects with whatever you are saying.

Fundamentally, it is up to you to pick which style works best. Eventually your style will become a habit and thinking about gesturing will rarely occur in your speeches. At first, however, expect your new style to feel awkward and too carefully placed. This will pass—especially if you practice in a mirror.

Keep your gestures short and sharp, and in most cases, within the space starting at your waist and ending at your shoulders (bottom to top) and no more than half-an-arms length away from your body on either side. This is the "gesture box." Obviously, some gestures require greater mobility—if, for instance, you want to use a "grand" gesture signifying the might of, say, an army. Generally, however, gestures ought to stay controlled and contained. Furthermore, imagine there is a string attached at your wrist and connected around your neck. When you move your hand, emphasize what your hand is doing with a slight nod from your head, as if it were pulled by that imaginary string. This ought not to be overdone. The idea, rather, is to have an overall sense of cohesiveness and full-body involvement. This will add a flow to your gestures, and eliminate whatever jerkiness you might have experienced in the past.

A final word must be offered on movement and gesturing. Too often, speakers botch gestures as they move from point to point. At Victory Briefs, we teach that you ought to lead with one hand (the hand on the side of the body that corresponds to the direction you are going, i.e. if you are moving right, lead with a right-hand gesture). This leading

gesture ought to extend pretty far from your torso (outside the gesture box, breaking the rule we just discussed), as if your arm were being pulled along to the next point. Additionally, the reason this gesture comes on the particular side of your body relating to the direction your are going is because you never want to close off the body to the audience—and this includes your footwork as well. A conservative one-handed face-up gesture leading the way is a good place to start developing proper movement-gesture technique in your speeches.

Practicing Gestures

Again, the most effective way to improve your gesturing is to videotape a practice speech and watch what unfolds. It will be quickly apparent to you what gestures you overuse, underuse or use in annoying ways.

There are, however, other ways to drill yourself and improve this aspect of your extemp style. Practice by delivering, for instance, only a small section of a speech. Think about what gestures go where, say, in the first point of a particular speech. At first, this very intentional process will feel awkward and canned. The hope, however, is that you will begin to integrate this thought process so that—like hitting a baseball—it becomes something you do by feel and reaction, rather than thinking "Okay, first I do..." Finally, you can squeeze in a little extra practice by gesturing in the mirror every morning. And even if you don't say anything, you can analyze how the gestures look. Are your fingers scrunched together too tightly? Are they perhaps splayed out as if they had webbing between them? Find out what style of gesture you prefer—and what is visually successful in your eyes—by watching yourself in the mirror.

Facial Expressions

Stylistically, extempers adopt different tones that they then utilize in their speeches. Each speaker tends, over the course of his or her career, to hone in on a specific "voice" that comes through consistently in every speech. Usually, reaching this point means the speaker has attained a level of confidence that benefits him or her throughout the speech. One smaller but important aspect of getting to this point stylistically is getting control over your face during a speech, and thereby maximizing its communicative potential.

Facial deadness—the utter lack of change in a speaker's face throughout the speech—is both dry and annoying. Most importantly, it wastes a potentially valuable resource. Because the best way to improve is through mirrors and video cameras, we will not expound further into other drills. Just start delivering speeches in some venue that allows you to see your face (i.e. via videotape, mirror, etc.). Does your face barely change? Do you ever raise your eyebrows, smile or frown, tilt your head to one side or the other, or alter the shape of your mouth? Does it look like your face is engaged in the speech? If something in your speech is, for instance, surprising, does your face reflect it? If

something is sad, could an audience tell just by looking at your face? These are questions to consider in the mirror and with a videotaped performance.

Pace

To further refine your nonverbal style, we next bring your attention to the issue of pacing. Many speakers suffer from a debilitating inability to speak in a style that is easy to hear and stay attentive to. There are three general problems: speaking too fast, speaking too slowly, and speaking in a monotonous, rhythmic style that lulls everyone in the room to sleep.

All three types of ill-paced speaking are related. Mostly, they reflect habit or nervousness or both. Ideally your pacing should be anything but rhythmic—it should jump and dive with the subject matter. Like your facial expressions, if you are telling someone about something sad, your voice should reflect that—by, for instance, slowing down for emphasis. Or, if you are speaking on something exciting, you want to speed up your talking, thereby nonverbally communicating the intensity and excitement through just the pace of your voice. Easy enough to talk about this academically, right? But how does one actually make these improvements?

Practicing to Improve Pacing

No matter what your problem is—too fast, too slow, too monotone—the most effective way to both break this habit and figure out what types of pacing work for you is to take sections of written material and read them aloud as if they were speeches. If you talk too slowly, use the drill to force yourself to speed up—and practice is the only way to improve this if the problem is just habit-based. Likewise, if you talk too rhythmically, interpret the piece of written material: make it a challenge to yourself to turn a dry article from, say, the Economist into something exciting and emotionally charged. Try to make this happen just by speeding up and slowing down—and perhaps throwing a little voice inflection in here and there. If, however, it's just your nerves that make you talk fast or slow or monotone, the difficult but most effective way to improve is simply to practice, practice, practice. Give lots of speeches and make a conscious effort to improve this aspect of your speaking. The only surefire way to combat issues of nervousness is, frankly, to give more speeches. Combine this with the aforementioned reading-interpretative drill and you should see steady improvement.

Tone and Volume

Also known as inflection, improving your tone and volume control goes hand in hand with pacing. Perhaps the most refined of nonverbal stylistic concerns, tone and volume are the final brushstrokes in painting the picture you want with your extemp speeches. Again, it is useful—and highly effective—in terms of emphasis: inflecting up—in other

words, ending the sentence on a higher note than you began—can add a certain emotional flavor to a sentence, as can inflecting down. Hand in hand with pacing—inflecting up, say, as well as speeding up or vice versa—it can be an effective tool at spicing up your style, keeping audience attention and combating the monotone extempers are so stereotypically caught using regularly.

Practicing to Improve Inflection

Inflection takes practice to learn. One drill to consider as you give practice speeches is for you to try out an interpretative event—a prose reading, a poetry reading, perhaps even a humorous or dramatic interpretive event. Even if you never perform the piece, doing this will do more for your nonverbal skills—particularly your control of tone and volume—than almost anything else. Acting and interpretation are rooted in this type of communication, so it makes sense to learn what you can from this branch of forensics by trying your hand at these events.

Dress Code

For better or worse, how we dress greatly affects how we are perceived both in the "real world" and in extemp rounds. In context of extemp, your goal should be to appear appropriately professional. The focus of this chapter is on how to "look" the part; what you wear can either help or hurt you greatly.

We wish to emphasize that appropriately professional clothing need not be expensive. Many stores (including Target and other discounters) offer quality dress clothes for a very reasonable price. If cost is a primary consideration, secondhand clothing stores (including Goodwill and Value Village) offer a wide variety of incredibly inexpensive clothing. A mens suit, for example, might cost $15. With tailoring, a full outfit is unlikely to cost more than $35. Even upper-end stores (Nordstrom, for example) offer regular sales on high-quality merchandise. Even if cost is no issue at all, we don't see the point in investing in very expensive clothing. A $1,000 suit doesn't last any longer or look any better than a $300 suit if treated with care.

Let's start with guys. As dogmatic as it sounds, you must always wear a tie in competition. At a minimum, you should wear a well-fitting pair of dress slacks (khaki or grey) and a blazer. If you wish to wear a blazer instead of a suit, navy blue is your best bet. While in some regions a blazer is sufficient, in general, you are much better off wearing a suit. Suits, of course, come in a variety of styles.

The most immediate style differentiator is color. If you plan to invest in just one suit, we suggest a dark suit, ideally in navy blue, dark grey, or black. If you're able to invest in two suits, we'd suggest a navy blue and a dark grey/black. Suits also come in a wide variety of earth tones (browns, greens, tans, taupes, etc). As a general rule, the darker the

suit, the more formal it is. If you want to purchase a third suit, an earth tone suit is appropriate.

As you know, some suits have stripes and others don't. In decreasing order of obviousness, there are basically three types of stripes—chalk stripes, pinstripes, and shadow stripes. Chalk stripes look stereotypically mobster and we recommend staying away from these VERY obvious stripes. Pinstripes and shadow stripes are entirely appropriate for some guys, but we recommend that guys who are very young looking avoid them (wearing them can be too big of a contrast). Similarly, guys with domineering personalities and demeanors should stick with solid patters because stripes add force to one's presence. Other suits come with a distinct check pattern. These tend to be less formal and have a reputation to be for older men.

While most suits are "2 piece" (with a jacket and slacks), some suits are "3 piece" because they add a vest. 3 piece suits are very formal but are not necessarily appropriate. If you have a smaller build (say, under 5'6 and thin), a 3 piece suit can look disproportionately "big" and we advice against wearing them. Similarly, if you are particularly large in terms of either height or weight, a 3 piece suit can accentuate your size. 3 piece suits can be nice in that the vest needn't be worn with the suit. In other words, you get two suits out of one (a 2 piece and a 3 piece). Remember that if you choose to wear a vest, never button the bottom button of the vest. Of course, the bottom button of a suit jacket (both in 2 piece and 3 piece suits) should never be buttoned!

Let's talk about dress shirts for men. Good dress shirts, like good suits, don't have to be expensive, but it is worth investing in shirts that fit well both in terms of sleeve length and neck size. When you see a dress shirt on the rack, you'll notice that two numbers are listed: the first number is neck size and the second number is sleeve length (both in inches). For example, one of the authors wears a "16x34" which means he has a neck size of 16" and a sleeve length of 34." Frequently, the second number will be a range (i.e. 32-33; 34-35; etc.) On shirts with a range of sleeve length, there will be two buttons on the cuff. If you are the smaller of the sleeve lengths, button at the tighter button and if you're the larger of the sleeve lengths, button at the looser button. Makes sense, huh?

We assume that you have a fairly intuitive sense of what color/pattern combinations of suits, shirts, and ties look good. A general rule to consider when matching the three is that simplicity is key. Don't try to be too adventuresome in your combinations. While you want to look professional, you don't want your outfit to detract from what you're saying.

A simple pair of black dress shoes can work with any suit. It doesn't matter if your shoes are lace up or slip-on. Just keep them shined and you're set.

Let's now talk about dress for women. Maybe the two of us are being sexist, but we assume that the average high school female is more comfortable with dressing expectations than is the average high school male. If you think we're being horribly

essentialist, please email us so that we may apologize personalize! Additionally, being male, we know less about female fashion than we do about male fashion.

Let's start with the question of pantsuits vs. skirt suits. We think that women should be able to wear whatever they are comfortable wearing, be that a pair of pants or a skirt. We also believe that most judges would refuse to penalize a woman for her choice so long as it's in the realm of appropriate. Unfortunately, we have heard from many women that there are some old-fashioned men who dislike women in pants. So ladies, know this—while the two of us would never hold wearing pants against you, some men might. It is, accordingly, generally safer to wear a skirted suit.

About skirts…as a general rule, skirts should be conservatively cut. We will say no more about this subject because our reasoning is—or at least should be—apparent.

Jewelry, like clothing in general, can either work really well or really hurt. Not surprisingly, the more subtle, the better. Blatant, elaborate jewelry is generally a bad idea. A subtle pair of earrings along with a subdued necklace and bracelet is just fine. Don't let your jewelry distract either you or your judge! Remember that some people think that overly bold jewelry excessively emphasizes your femininity thus potentially hurting credibility. Yes, it's ridiculous that some people honestly believe that femininity and credibility are mutually exclusive. However, you're not going to change these individuals' minds and they very well might judge you. Out of self-interest, accessorize discreetly!

Makeup—everything we said above about the benefits of subtlety applies here as well.

Shoes should be both functional and professional. We cringe when we see women in four inch heels because we know she's in pain. Here again, subtle professionalism is best. You know what to do.

Ladies, in sum—it's an unfortunately double standard that many judges expect women to look more pulled together than men. So long as you're professional in your outfit choices and credible in your analysis (like men should as well), we believe that you can go a long way in eventually creating dressing equity.

CHAPTER #6
JUDGE ADAPTATION

Extemp, like all forensics events, is a communicative event in that it exists for the purpose of conveying information. Different people have different methods of communicating with others and have different preferences regarding how others should communicate with them. That is, there is no such thing as "one size fits all" communication. Likewise, there is no such thing as "one size fits all" extemp.

Different competitors have different styles and approaches. Judges and coaches should be grateful for this diversity; after all, without some fairly wide degree of heterogeneity, extemp would be boring to the point of lethargy and nearly impossible to judge. Though we are firmly in favor of a range of stylistic approaches, we are not so relativistic that we reject notions of superiority or inferiority of particular style. In other words, we still believe that some styles are better than others.

We are not alone. Insofar as each judge brings to the extemp round his or her own expectations and preferences, you, the extemper, are wise to be sensitive to judge biases.

This chapter considers three primary facets: 1.) The nature of judge bias and what forms it takes, 2.) The process of making educated guesses about those biases in context of competition, and 3.) The manner in which you can account for those biases.

We wish to make explicitly clear that we are cognizant and respectful of the pitfalls of this entire undertaking. By no means do we believe that you can read and profile a judge to a thorough or even adequate degree. Humans in general and extemp judges in particular might follow general patterns but are not in any way ruled by patterns. We do believe, however, that a thoughtful sensitivity to these general patterns can be helpful both in terms of respect for your judges and competitive success. As such, we present these observations with the strong caveat that they are not rules and they are not psychological evaluations. They are nothing more than our personal observations based on hundreds of all types of judges. If you believe that you might be uncomfortable with our reporting of these observations, please skip to the next chapter.

We also wish to note that we do not advocate substantially altering your style or analytical approach based on these observations. The objective of this chapter is to convey the benefit of respecting diversity of judges and perspectives. It is not to tell you how to "cheat the system" or succeed by "playing your judges."

What is judge bias and what forms does it take?

Most people have opinions on most things. Some people enjoy peanut butter and banana sandwiches and others don't. Some people support legalized abortion and others don't.

Some people think that the Backstreet Boys offer sophisticated and classy music…actually, nobody does.

The point is a simple one. People involved with extemp—as competitors, coaches, and judges—tend to be intelligent, educated individuals who are more politically and socially informed than the average person. They also, from our experience, tend to be more opinionated.

Judge bias takes two primary forms—bias based on substance and bias based on form. In its most essential definition, substance-based bias is concerned with WHAT one says and form-based bias is concerned with HOW one says something.

Substance-based bias tends to be more concrete. One supports the war in Iraq OR one opposes the war in Iraq. One voted for Ralph Nader OR one did not vote for Ralph Nader. In technical argumentative terms, the binary between substance-based biases is strong.

On the other hand, form-based bias tends to be vaguer. One might prefer seven citations in an extemp speech but is content to hear six or eight. One might prefer to listen to moderately slow delivery but isn't likely to freak out if presented with an extemper who speaks a bit faster than normal. In other words, the binary between form-based biases is weak.

Not surprisingly, substance-based biases tend to be stronger than form-based biases. A judge who listens to an extemper argue against the judge's opinion on, say, capital punishment is more likely to have a gut reaction than a judge who listens to an extemper speak at 10 words per minute faster than the judge might ordinarily prefer.

Accordingly, judges are likely more comfortable identifying substance-based biases than those based on form. It is much easier to say, "I have x opinion about subject y" when subject "y" is a common, substantive issue than when "y" is a stylistic element. For example, what seems to be a more commonly identifiable belief: "I have an opinion on the subject of same-sex marriage" or "I have an opinion on the appropriate number of times one should say 'however' in an extemp speech"? We believe that the former is clearly more readily identifiable to the possessor of the bias.

<u>How does one predict judge bias in context of competition?</u>

The short answer is not easily and with little certainty.

To begin, we'd like to discuss substantive bias. Remember, substance bias is based on what you say and not how you say it.

When most extempers try to generalize about substantive bias, they immediately focus on the political (and, more specifically, partisan) beliefs of their judges. These individuals

might make assumptions like, "My judge is a man so he is probably a Republican" or "My judge is a woman so she is probably a Democrat." The assumptions then move to the associated implications. For example, "My judge is a man so he is probably a Republican. Therefore, I should speak in favor of the war in Iraq" or "My judge is a woman so she is probably a Democrat. Therefore, I should speak in favor of same-sex marriage."

While we are somewhat uncomfortable with these broad generalizations, we do not necessarily reject them out of hand. Let's be honest…there are some attributes about people (age, gender, race, dress, etc) that might give others the ability to attempt to "profile" them. These profiles might very well be accurate. They also very well might be wrong. So, do they have a purpose? We believe they can…but we strongly, strongly discourage you from immediately linking a particular characteristic to a particular implication (i.e., male → Republican; woman → Democrat).

We've warned you against focusing on a single attribute (such as gender). Instead, we encourage you to seek to "read" your judge as broadly as possible. Granted, in context of competition, you generally have, at most, only a few minutes and more typically, only a few seconds! As such, you need to observe the obvious characteristics.

Let's play with some numbers here (neither of your authors are that skilled with math, so these are pretty easy numbers!). All numbers come from CNN's analysis of the 2004 presidential election (http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/pages/results/). Let's say your judge is male. In 2004, 55% of men voted for Bush and 44% voted for Kerry. It's pretty tough with much confidence to therefore assume your judge is Republican. Sure, statistically, he is more likely to be Republican, but it's fairly close. On the other hand, let's say your judge is female. In 2004, 48% of women voted for Bush and 51% voted for Kerry. Statistically, your judge is slightly more likely to be Democrat, but even more than with males, it's really too close to predict.

But you can do more than just identify gender. Let's now say that your judge is a Caucasian male. 62% of this demographic voted for Bush and 37% voted for Kerry. Thus, by nearly a 2-1 margin, this judge is likely a Republican. Let's now say that your judge is a non-Caucasian female. 24% of this demographic voted Bush while 75% voted Kerry. By a 3-1 margin, this judge is likely to be a Democrat. Just for the sake of comparison, Caucasian women supported Bush 55% to 44% (identical to all males). Again, you COULD make an assumption, but it'd be somewhat speculative. Non-Caucasian males supported Kerry 67% to 30%. Thus, a non-Caucasian judge is significantly more likely to be a Democrat than a Republican.

(Both gender and especially race are sensitive subjects and we are sensitive to this fact. Again, we ask the reader to consider this analysis in its context. We are not presenting these numbers in a normative or leading manner; rather, we're presenting objective fact to be used at the discretion of coaches, parents, and students.)

Age can also play a somewhat, though reduced, role in estimating political affiliation. As a matter of gross generalization, those under the age of 30 are more likely to be Democratic voters and those over the age of 30 are more likely to be Republican voters. Those under 30 are equivalently more likely to be Democrats than those over 30 are to be Republicans. In other words, it's safer to assume that a college student is a Democrat than a 50 year old is a Republican.

Religion, though almost impossible to immediately determine, is also a statistically significantly voting predictor. Protestant voters are 50% more likely to vote Republican, Catholic voters are very slightly more likely to vote Republican (by about 5%, thus not predictive), and Jewish voters are nearly three times more likely to vote Democrat. Non-religious voters are more than twice as likely to vote Democrat.

Married individuals are approximately 15% more likely to have voted for Bush than for Kerry. Self-identified gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals were more than three times as likely to vote for Kerry as for Bush.

Of course, geography is a useful tool. If you are extemping in Alameda County, California, remember than Kerry won by a margin of 3-1. If you're in Hayes County, Nebraska, note than Bush won by a margin of 8-1. Communities tend to have political reputations because of general sentiment among the population of that community.

Again, while these general statistics can be somewhat helpful in making educated guesses, they can only produce guesses. In short, and as we discuss in the next section, don't assume to the point where you make major or controversial decisions.

So far, we've been discussing substantive bias. Let's now discuss form-based bias. In some senses, predictions about form preference are easier to make (though my no means conclusively so).

In general, college students (who frequently judge), are more tolerant of a quicker delivery style. They also tend to expect more citations than other judges. Parent judges (who also frequently judge) generally prefer a more conversational rate of delivery and don't necessarily expect as many citations. Younger judges are also more likely to accept different structural approaches than the norm (i.e. two-point speeches). These judges are similarly likely to catch more modern references to music, film, and entertainment in general. Especially if these younger judges look experienced (perhaps they are former competitors), they'll usually appreciate more controversial arguments and citations. For example, if you're going to advocate eliminating, say, life tenure for federal judges (a fairly bold notion), you are probably safer doing so in front of a college student than a middle age person.

Up to this point, we've been talking about ways to, with varying degrees of certainty (though none completely so), predict how your judge might view political issues (substance) and delivery issues (form). The best way, in our view, to develop expectation about your judges is your own careful collection of information.

Here's what we mean... many (if not most) tournaments post the name of the judge along on the postings before each round. Frequently, either you or one of your friends have been judged by that person in the past. This is especially true at the elite level of competition. Just like in the debate world, a relatively small group of people do a disproportionate amount of extemp judging. So, what do you do with this fact? Quite simply, keep ALL of your ballots and remember them. We suggest literally putting together a casual matrix of relevant data.

For example, if you were once judge by Joseph Judge who remarked that you should "use more sources," write that down. Compare notes with teammates and friends. Oftentimes, they will also have been judged by Joseph Judge and he's likely to have provided similar comments. Thus, you have a pretty good idea that Joseph Judge likes a lot of citations in extemp speeches. Note that this technique works far, far better for identification of form-based biases than for substance-based biases. Rarely will Judy Judge write, "I disagree with your position on x."

How do I account for these biases?

Let's talk first about substantive biases. In general, there is less to worry about with these biases and as such, less to do about them.

Most judges, because they recognize their substantive biases, try to squelch or at least temporarily forget about those biases. We honestly believe that most judges take their task very seriously and seek to be as fair as possible. It is commonly understand that substantive biases can stand in the way of impartial adjudication of an extemp round. If, for example, your judge knows that she strongly supports the No Child Left Behind Act, and if speak against NCLB, we'd bet that your judge isn't going to penalize you for the difference of opinion.

This is especially true if two conditions exist. First, a judge is unlikely to penalize you if your analysis is credible. Especially with potentially controversially topics, make darned sure that you use high quality sources and logically, intelligently argue for your position. Take care to ensure that your analysis is solid and convincing. Even if you don't get your judge to change her mind, she will respect and appreciate the fact that you took your analytical responsibilities seriously. Second, a judge is unlikely to penalize you if you are respectful to opposing viewpoints. Just because you are arguing for one position doesn't mean you need to dismiss or demonize conclusions contrary to your own. Remembering that smart, informed people probably disagree with you, we encourage you to both recognize potential shortcomings of your own view and the relative merits of other views. Make the judge feel as if you are taking your analysis seriously and make the judge feel as if you are respectful to other viewpoints. If you do so, substance-based bias is unlikely to harm you.

Naturally, form-based biases, because of their subconscious root, are more likely to affect a judge's ranking. We encourage you to be considerate of these biases but by no means

do we encourage you to be dishonest or disingenuous in an effort to confront them. That is to say that you shouldn't massively alter your approach based on your assumptions. Make a few cosmetic changes to be sure, but no more than that.

When postings are up, see if you recognize the name of your judge. Ask around and see what you can find out. If you've been doing a good job keeping up your matrix, it's rather likely you'll have an idea what to expect. For example, if your judge is Joseph Judge, you know to have plenty of citations in your speech. If you know that your judge wants a pensive, deliberate delivery style, you'll practice providing that. It's much easier and more productive to make changes EVEN BEFORE you draw your topic than when you walk into the room to give your speech.

But let's say that you've never heard of your judge before and have no mention of his or her preferences nor do your teammates. In that case, prepare for the middle ground. Don't plan to speak on the slow or the quick side; don't have few citations or many citations; make sure your references are commonly understandable. While preparing, however, spend a few minutes thinking how you could add or withdraw content as necessary; think about which citations you could add or remove if necessary; consider jokes that might be relevant and appropriate for one type of judge and not another.

When pacing around near your room practicing your speech, try to get a subtle glace at the judge and considering what we wrote earlier, decide if you want to make any minor modifications. If you're not able to see the judge until 15 seconds before you start your speech, we generally advice against making changes unless you can comfortable and quickly do so.

At its heart, the last few pages provide general principles and observations. Your own observations and familiarity with your community and its judges are far more relevant. Hopefully, you've learned how to hone your observations. So go do it and work on truly communicating with each and every judge. That is, after all, the purpose of communication.

CHAPTER #7
CROSS-EXAMINATION

In this chapter, we discuss cross-examination, an aspect of high-level extemp that many competitors find the most daunting. Undoubtedly, cross-ex is a very challenging part of extemp competition, but it is one that pays great dividends. We believe that if you work to become a skilled questioner and answerer, you will be magnitudes above most of your fellow competitors. Throughout this chapter, we use "questioner" to refer to the person asking the questions and "answerer" to refer to the person who has just given his or her extemp speech and is now being questioned.

What is cross-examination?

In essence, cross-ex is an opportunity for a questioner to challenge aspects of a competitor's speech and an opportunity for the answerer to defend his or her speech from the challenges presented by the questioner. While until fairly recently, extemp cross-ex involved a one minute question followed by a two minute answer, a new approach often called "open cross-ex" has become the national standard. In this approach, the questioner has three minutes to ask as many questions of the answerer as he or she can. Depending on the length of the questions and the answers, a skilled questioner can expect to ask anywhere from 5 to 12 questions in the three minute block. This certainly allows for more intensive questioning than under the old rules!

Cross-ex is usually found only in final rounds of national-level tournaments. Most local tournaments do not feature cross-ex at all. As of late, more tournaments have started requiring cross-ex in final rounds (something we think is a good thing).

After the first speaker in the round is finished with his or her extemp, (s)he is questioned by the last speaker in the round who has listened to the first speaker's speech. The first speaker then listens to the second speaker's speech and questions him or her. Assume that there are six people in the round.

Speaker #6 questions speaker #1.
Speaker #1 questions speaker #2.
Speaker #2 questions speaker #3.
Speaker #3 questions speaker #4.
Speaker #4 questions speaker #5.
Speaker #5 questions speaker #6.

Got it? With a seven minute speech and three minute cross-ex block, the extemp prep room will typically distribute topics every ten minutes.

What is the purpose of cross-ex?

Very simply and as with all aspects of extemp, the primary purpose of cross-ex is to make a positive impression on your judges. You should seek, both with your questions and your answers, to appear intelligent, informed, involved, and insightful.

Before we go any further, we think it's necessary to take a step back and examine what extemp, as an event, really is. Commonly, we in the community distinguish between individual events and debate events. Within debate, we include LD, policy, public forum, parli, and congress. Individual events, traditionally, include everything else.

We've long been someone uncomfortable in grouping extemp with individual events and not debate events because we think that extemp is more similar to the latter. With absolutely nothing but respect for the other individual events and those that compete in those events, it seems implausible to compare humorous interpretation and, for example, an argumentative speech on the Russian economy. An extemp speech is much the same as the first constructive speech in a debate round. As a result of your topic (the "resolution"), you construct and present an argumentative case seeking to prove your thesis. Usually, your only opponents are the devil's advocates working in the minds of your judges. With cross-ex, however, you have, as you would in an actual debate round, an opponent who is eager to find fault in your speech and call you out on it.

As a questioner, your goal is to subtly and respectfully cast doubt on the merits of the speech you just heard. This seems to be a mean-spirited approach to competition, but it is exactly what debaters do in every round. We emphasize that even if you're going for the speech's jugular, you should do so gently and professionally. You should plant in the minds of the judges sufficient doubt about the legitimacy of the speech's reasoning such that they simultaneously dismiss what they heard and reward you for finding flaws they might not have caught.

As a speaker, your goal is to confidently defend your speech against the challenges levied against it by the questioner. Even if you are the most brilliant and well-read extemper ever, fellow competitors will see things you don't see in your speech. Insofar as their motivation is to find negatives, you have to expect that your speech will be criticized for shortcomings you didn't notice. While this is a weighty burden, realize that judges tend to want you to succeed…they want your analysis to be logical and legitimate. In a criminal trial, the defense only needs to establish reasonable doubt to succeed. Similarly, when defending your speech, a good faith effort to justify a certain approach, even if imperfect, is enough for most judges to accept the argument.

What sort of strategies work for cross-ex?

We believe that there are six primary substantive strategies in developing an effective cross-examination: challenging evidence, challenging analysis, challenging impacts,

demonstrating contradiction, introduction counter-conclusions, and demonstrating lack of knowledge.

Challenging evidence- This is the least preferred strategy. We find this approach problematic not just because we think that raw (as in unapplied) evidence is unproductive, but also because without demonstrable substantiation (as in whipping out the article while on stage), it is likely to become a pointless "he said/she said" debate. When you do want to challenge evidence, only do it when you're very confident you're correct and when you believe that the weight of educated public opinion is on your side. In an unsubstantiated clash of evidence, you need to have your judges believe your evidence and, by extension, you.

When you challenge the answerer's evidence, it's easy to sound as if you're explicitly calling the answerer a liar. Be very careful to avoid doing so. Rather than making any accusation that the answerer is intentionally lying, assume that (s)he has made an honest error and misspoke. When you present contradictory evidence, first identify what the speaker said, then identify what you believe the evidence to be, and then briefly explain why your evidence is more plausible. For example, "In your second point, you reference the New York Times' recent endorsement of Bob Smith for dogcatcher. I was under the impression that the Times endorsed Smith's opponent, Betty Jones. Why would Smith win the endorsement when he supports euthanasia for all dogs under twenty pounds?" Usually, when you're right, the answerer will admit his or her error. If this happens, move on…you've already made your point. If the speaker maintains the validity of the evidence, move on as well…you can't prove you're right.

This strategy applies similarly when the speaker cites a periodical from a wrong date or a source with an obvious political bias. Be gentle, but make your point as with the above.

Challenging analysis- This is both an easier and a more productive strategy than challenging evidence. Remember that analysis is what links evidence and argumentative conclusions. Good analysis logically and methodically links the evidence to the conclusion of the argument. Bad analysis doesn't. The basic challenge you make with this strategy is, "Your reasoning doesn't flow and there are large gaps between the evidence and your conclusion. Fill them in." For example, let's say that the speaker presents the (accurate) evidence that Iran is developing a nuclear program. She then offers the claim (the argument's conclusion) that accordingly, the United States should invade Iran. Her analysis is limited to saying that nuclear weapons are dangerous. Obviously, her analysis is severely lacking… so call her out on it!

Challenging impacts- Fortunately, this is a very easy and very productive strategy. This technique applies when the speaker make an analytical claim that is laden with value judgment and normative bias (and frankly, most claims are). Make the speaker justify the conclusion. For example, say that the speaker is talking about a certain economic policy

and concludes that "this would result in a bursting of the housing bubble and thus devastate the economy!" You could respond with, "Given that in many urban areas, real estate is overvalued (and consequently many people cannot afford housing), why is it really a bad thing for housing prices to fall?" Another rhetorical method is to say, "Many people believe that x [where x is the opposite of the speaker's claim y]. Why are they wrong?"

Demonstrating contradiction- Nothing hurts a speaker more (on a substantive level) than to contradict him or herself. Demonstrating contradiction is an extremely easy technique. For example, "You said x and y, but these two are incompatible…which one is it?" Or, for example, "You claim that attacking Iran is a good idea because Iran is irrational and nuclear weapons are dangerous. You also claim that if Iran is attacked, it will retaliate against Israel which is obviously a bad thing. So what is it—a good idea or a bad idea?"

Introducing counter-conclusions- Essentially take the speaker's analysis even further than the speaker does to arrive at a conclusion that contradicts the normative bent of their conclusion. For example, the speaker argues that "Iran is a threat and invading it would make the world a safer place." You could then argue, "If the United States invades Iran, it would give Iran incentive to lash out and cause widespread regional instability thus hurting safety." So long as your conclusion flows from their analysis and common sense, you can clearly challenge the conclusions offered by the speaker.

Demonstrating lack of knowledge- With this approach, you ask fair but specific questions relevant to the topic. For example, the speaker might argue that congress should implement further federal tax cuts. If you know what Ben Bernanke thinks, it would be a fair and relevant question to ask, "What does the Chairman of the Federal Reserve think about this idea?" If the speaker actually knows what Dr. Bernanke thinks, kudos for the speaker. If the speaker doesn't know what he thinks and nonetheless makes some false assertion, call him or her out on it. If the speaker doesn't know what he thinks and admits that fact, move on…you just demonstrated that the speaker doesn't know as much as fairly expected.

These are helpful strategies on a substantive level for asking cross-examination questions. But what, on a stylistic level, do you do in cross-examination? Let's walk through the process.

After the speaker finishes his or her extemp, walk onto stage confidently with a poised smile. As you approach the speaker, extend your hand to shake hands. We think it's a nice touch to, softly, compliment the speech out of earshot of the audience. This is a classy, professional thing to do.

If there are microphones on stage, stand behind your microphone. If there are no microphones, stand approximately five feet from the speaker. Wait until the audience becomes quiet, and then begin speaking.

Start by publicly complimenting the speech. Address the speaker by name (but never look directly at him or her after you begin questioning him or her). We suggest that you should refrain from complimenting that person for making finals…it looks trite and self-serving. We suggest something like, for example, "John, you shared an intriguing analysis about a very important issue."

After the three minutes have elapsed, turn to the speaker, shake hands again, and walk off stage. Not so hard, eh?

CONCLUSION TO THE TEXT

Any good conclusion should restate the relevant issue and briefly review the answer. We'll do that here. The other five textbooks in the Victory Briefs extemp product line are primarily substantive and structural texts which address the question, "what should I say in my speech?" This text addresses the question, "how should I say things in my speech?"

Each chapter in this text focuses on a particular presentation element of extemp. We encourage you to read the entire text, get a general sense of our philosophy, and then work through each chapter carefully working through drills and practice. The most effective drills, in our opinion, are those that you develop with consultation from your coach.

We leave you with this—work hard to develop your own voice. This book will help the process but it is not the end of the process. We wish you the best of luck in that process.