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Advanced Extemp

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Preface

For several years, Victory Briefs has been pleased to offer *Advanced Extemp* as the benchmark for upper-level extemp instruction. While natural fluctuations in the event have altered the approach many take, we maintain that the same skills that made extempers successful when the original edition of this book was published—solid analysis and compelling delivery—are every bit as competitively important today. Indeed, much of the substance of this text is unchanged; why substantially alter a product that has been called “the very best preparation for varsity extemp?”

What has changed, to be sure, is the contemporary relevance of examples and case studies. The world in general and, accordingly, the world of extemp is a different place today than it was even three years ago. I have done my best to reflect those important variances in this edition.

This text would not be possible without the generous support of Victor Jih, the founder and Managing Director of Victory Briefs. His constant and admirable efforts to improve forensics pedagogy is inspiring. Additionally, for teaching me a great deal about extemp, I owe a fantastic debt of gratitude to Janet Willford (San Ramon Valley High School), Josette Surratt (Teurlings Catholic High School), and Rob Layne (Willamette University). I am where I am because of them.

Please contact me with any questions or suggestions.

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Introduction

I am writing this to let you know my thoughts behind the newest Victory Briefs extemp publication, *Advanced Extemp*, because I believe that there is a need in the forensic community as a whole to learn how to develop certain skills of extemporaneous speaking both for competition and for more competent speaking in your professional life. It is my hope that *Advanced Extemp* will help those who are good speakers to develop into great speakers.

I was, and in many ways still am, a college extemper. Prior to coaching high school students and teaching extemp at institutes, I competed at Saint Joseph's University for four years in several events and had the most success in extemp and impromptu. In 1999, I was National Champion in Extemporaneous Speaking at both the American Forensic Association National Tournament as well as the National Forensic Association National Tournament. I say this not to brag (okay, maybe a little) but because I think it is important that you know my background.

It is from these wide range of experiences that I draw. Throughout this book, you will see many ideas, some of which you may already use, many of which you have never thought to try. By expanding your horizons and becoming creative, you will become a better speaker. Some ideas are difficult to understand without first practicing them, and this book is meant as an introduction to these ideas. By experimenting, you will see that extemporaneous speaking is an event in which you *evolve*. Do not expect a few changes to result in overnight success; plan on a long-term change in your philosophy and style (as long as it suits you) for future success.

In my personal experience, it took a year of learning before I could really achieve noticeable success. I made final rounds at local tournaments frequently, but nationals were an enigma. It was difficult to compete as a freshman with experienced speakers. I was not secure enough in my own presentation to really enjoy my speeches, and thus the judges did not find my presentation as convincing as it could have been. This book is a guide to help you develop, grow, mature and evolve as a speaker.

Finally, I think it is of the utmost importance to remind people how very individualized extemporaneous speaking is. Extemp is an event where there are more styles than any other competitive forensic event. For that reason, this book is not meant as a blueprint on how to be a certain type of extemper. Instead, it is a selection of suggestions and styles that you may pick and choose from in order to make yourself the best speaker you can be. If you heed no other advice from this work, please, do not take the "carbon copy" approach to extemp. On numerous occasions, I saw college and even high school extempers who thought that they could achieve success by simply copying the style of extempers that had won past championships. While there are certainly things that everyone can learn from watching successful extempers, only by developing your own style can you truly become an advanced extemper.

Good luck, enjoy, and I hope this book can be helpful!

Chris Kristofco

Chapter 1

The Advanced Fundamentals

Certainly people become involved in extemporaneous speaking for reasons as diverse as there are competitors. In the end, however, it is usually a love of the event, news, reading, and speaking on one's feet that ultimately sway one's interest toward extemp. When you began as an extemper, you, most likely, developed your own style and philosophy about the event. You may have wanted to brush up on speaking, or your current events skills. Either way, the "baggage" that you brought to that first tournament has affected your competitive extemporaneous speaking. For this reason, I believe it is invaluable to discuss some of the philosophies that influence one's competitive skills and also, a judge's rankings.

Base of Current Event Knowledge

First, it is important to explore some beliefs and expectations that judges and competitors bring with them to a tournament. First, it is expected that an extemper have an immense load of background information from which to develop elaborate answers to difficult questions. While this is true for some competitors, for many others this is an incorrect assumption. As an instructor at a major summer institute, it has been brought to my attention by many speakers that they are intimidated away from extemp because they do not "know enough" to even begin a competitive career in extemporaneous speaking.

This "extemporaneous myth" can be shattered if you simply talk to some of the best extempers in the country. While it does take a certain amount of current events savvy to do well in competitive extemporaneous speaking (and for help on this we recommend Victory Briefs' US or Foreign Extemp Topic Briefs...sorry I needed to get at least one plug in), it does not require a Tom Brokaw-esque knowledge of national and international news to be successful. It is more vital to be able to quickly process information and draw conclusions than it is to have an encyclopedic knowledge. Extemp is as much about critical thinking as it is about knowledge.

As an extemporaneous speaker, you will find that it is more important to develop the skills of analysis than it is to develop your memory. With a limited amount of time (seven minutes) and a limited amount of resources (the files that you bring with you to a tournament), an extemper must be an exceedingly resourceful creature. For this reason, there are strategies that can be used to overcome the fear of "not knowing enough."

Develop a topic of expertise.

One of the most useful starting points is to develop a topic of expertise. It has been said that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Well, now we will learn how a lot of knowledge can be a very dangerous thing...to your opponents. Earlier we discussed that it is not essential for one to be an expert on *every* current event. However, if one specializes on a certain topic, it can help in ways that seem unimaginable now. In order to become an expert, pick a topic that

interests you (in extemp, that is). A domestic extemper might choose to become an expert on Social Security, while a foreign extemper might choose Russia as his or her area of expertise.

As an extemper, I fell onto this strategy largely by accident. For some reason, I was compelled by the events going on in Russia from 1991 to the present time. As a result, when I finally began my career as an extemper in 1997, I was most interested in questions about Russia and their implications on the world political scene. There were certain results of this fascination with Russia. The first thing that changed was our team's Russia file folder (don't worry, we'll discuss filing later). The file folder expanded, and expanded, and expanded to the point where we had six green hanging file folders and about twenty-five subfolders to cover specific topics in Russia!

While it is important to have an expanded file folder on some topics, it is more important that you use the opportunity presented. By reading the articles that you file away (and I mean actually *reading* them), you will obviously pick up knowledge simply from what you read. Eventually, you will come to disagree with some of the greatest minds in international analysis. Congratulations, you have developed your own opinion on world affairs. These opinions are the very cornerstone of extemporaneous speaking.

Becoming a one-issue expert is easy to do. Begin by choosing the issue as described above. Tournament after tournament, choose questions on the issue when they arise so that you familiarize yourself with the topic area and its nuances. This will lead to a real enjoyment of research.

Specialize but do not neglect other topic areas.

A special note must be stressed at this point. Just because you have begun to focus on one topic does not mean that you should neglect other topic areas. The research that you do on your specialty should be *in addition* to any cutting that you normally do for a weekend tournament. This can be done in one of several ways. The internet has become a real resource for extemporaneous speakers. As a result, an internet search can be a real boon to already solid files on a topic (we will cover the reliability of internet sources later). Specialty magazines and publications can be purchased at a newsstand or bookstore. Additionally, by simply examining the headlines and titles of lead stories in publications, you can find stories that will cover, in depth, issues that you find of interest. Eventually, you will want to attempt and develop theories on the issues. As an example, if you were specializing in Russia, you may theorize on who will win a future power struggle in the Duma, or who will become the next president.

Your specialty will prove useful in *other* topic areas.

So, by becoming an expert on one issue, what have you achieved? Well, now you know a lot more about that specific issue. Beyond the obvious, however, you will develop skills to help you in *other areas* of extemporaneous speaking. For instance, by understanding the relationship between the Duma and the President in Russia you may develop a better understanding of other nations in the region, or even an insight into the relationships of other

governments half the world away. Moreover, as we will discuss later, nothing in extemp is isolated. Almost every question is effected by an infinite number of variables. You will be shocked how many times your "expert" knowledge can be used when answering other questions.

The Importance of Delivery

While we will discuss delivery on a more in-depth basis later in the book, one myth must be dispelled now. Many people believe that a good extemper has amazing knowledge of a topic and delivers it in a dry, informative matter.

While it is important to speak informatively, an extemper, at heart, is really a salesman.

You must sell to the judge your thoughts on a very important matter. In seven minutes you are asked to solve the problems of the world. Imagine being a judge in your own round. You must sit and listen to six high school students speak to you on issues about which you have probably already developed opinions.

Because of the daunting task for any high school extemper, it is important to give yourself any edge possible. For this reason, developing an effective speaking style is vital to convincing the judge to change his opinion, and listen to yours. A solid, personable delivery can be the cornerstone to a good speech. And, as will be discussed, confidence is ninety percent of good delivery.

The bottom line is that one cannot afford to fall into the trap that says that extempers need not worry about their presentation. Nothing flashy is required, but making a lasting impression on a judge requires one to concentrate both on analysis and delivery when speaking. An extemper must create a picture in a judge's and audience's mind that conveys his or her message with credibility. This message must be relayed in a limited amount of time. Sometimes, a speaker with an effective delivery may be able to convince a judge of his or her opinion without having the best knowledge or evidence in a round.

Evidence and Source Citations

This is a sticky issue for some extempers. How many sources should I use? How should I use my sources? Don't all extempers make up some of their sources? These questions should all be addressed separately.

When it comes to the number of sources, there is no hard and fast rule, but as I have mentioned, you are trying to develop into an exceptional extemper, so obviously there are some guidelines that should be followed.

Your average, run-of-the-mill extemper will often use 3-5 sources in the course of a seven-minute speech. This will become our *minimum* guideline. In a collegiate tournament, the most sources I ever saw used in a speech was 22. This, we will consider absurdly excessive.

Sources should be used carefully. The extemper who uses too few will appear less than credible. The extemper who uses too many will look as though they have fabricated them. Finding a happy medium between these two is difficult and part of the evolution process of developing your own style.

Using your sources is as important as choosing how many sources to use (and, in fact, is truly more important). Sources, as was conveyed earlier, are meant to add credibility to a speaker. Sources should be used to guide your speech and to enhance your analysis. While the sources should add to the speech, they should not mask your examination of the question. **In other words, while the sources add to the speech, the speech is really about you.** Each individual should put themselves into the speech. A judge can read the New York Times on his or her own, so why should you simply recite it to him or her?

Finally, there is another issue that must be discussed at some length. Many jokes fly at forensic tournaments that the extempers make up their sources. After all, no one could possibly know that much stuff, and remember that many sources. I think it is vital to say some things about extemp and cheating. While it may seem miraculous that some people can retain that many facts and analysis in only thirty minutes, it is possible. By cheating, you really take away from the event and from your own education.

Forensics is, first and foremost, an educational event. As such, learning is the goal and cheating defeats that goal. Yes, there are extempers who misuse sources and who fabricate some of their sources. They, however, will not develop into the kind of extemper that you want to be. Extemporaneous speaking is one of the most valuable skills that you can have when you enter the job market. It helps you think on your feet, and it assists your confidence in ways you could never imagine. However, if you rely on cheating your way through the event, it will catch up with you in the end.

Also, believe it or not, cheaters will be caught. Though they may never be brought up for disqualification, there are many other ways of being caught. A judge knows, in many cases, when you are making up a source. Even if a judge can't tell, eventually competitors will know. It starts with rumors in the prep room and it ends with a lack of respect from the rest of the forensic community. Be an ethical speaker and don't let this happen. Everyone flubs a date every once in a while, but this is no excuse to deliberately doctor sources for your benefit.

Extemp as a Team Event

One thing that has been lost by many extempers is the team nature of the event. Hopefully, a forensic team from the same school works together to help each other with moral support and peer coaching. These strategies, however, can be used to enhance your

extemporaneous speaking skills. Unfortunately it is true that many are on teams where there are only one or two extempers. While this will not hamper your development as a speaker, competitors with at least four or five extempers on a team will find that they can excel with a little help from their friends.

Initially, you will find that filing and cutting for extemp is much easier when the task is divided between several extempers. Many contend that individual files are more beneficial to each extemper on a team. I, however, disagree with this point of view.

A group file helps by allowing the members of a team to have diverse resources to draw from while speaking.

Exotic files are always impressive to judges (especially the so-called "mommy judges") and can actually help you to get a more varied look into an issue. With several people on a team cutting extemp articles, not only can you have the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* in your file, but you can also focus on publications like the *Journal of Commerce* that are more specialized in their approach to a topic. Having several extempers cutting at the same time allows you to have one or two competitors focus on internet searches or publications that would normally be forgotten.

Many fear that if you have several people working on the same file, no one will know the file very well. Admittedly, if each extemper has his or her own file, they will know the contents of their file intimately.

Simple communication between teammates can help to achieve the file knowledge that would be achieved through individual files.

Several times while competing I found an article that I thought was especially useful on several subjects. By simply telling the other extempers on the team about the article, and, yes, inviting them to read it, they were able to know the types of articles that I had been filing. In the same way, when they found articles that would be useful, they would let me know. A team file requires cooperation, communication and leadership from the older members of the team.

Aside from the benefits of a team file, there are several other ways that extemp must be a team event. When I was competing, there was another extemper on the team who was an amazing speaker. We actually were in several national out-rounds together. We both worked hard to develop our speaking skills and become better speakers. In many ways we were similar, except in the way that we answered questions. Invariably, we would answer the same extemp question in exactly the opposite way. If I said "yes," he said "no." This difference of opinion helped us to see different perspectives on the same issues. In this way, I believe we grew as extempers. In the same way, by listening to your teammates' approach to a question, you can learn to develop a more mature understanding of foreign or domestic issues.

Conclusion

These are some of the issues that we will cover in this work. The most important thing to remember is that there is no way to prepare for every variable in extemp.

Unlike other events like interp or oratory, extemp is constantly changing and you must be willing to change with it.

As I mentioned in the introduction, successful extemp is all about developing your own style. As you read the book, continue to keep this in mind. While you cannot account for every variable, you can prepare to be successful by being confident, and unafraid to try new things.

Chapter 2 Introductions

It has been said that you only get one chance to make a first impression. In extemporaneous speaking, a speaker only gets one chance to make a first impression, and another chance to leave a lasting impression. The introduction is a vital element in any speech. With an introduction, you invite your audience into your subject matter. To handle the issues of introductions effectively, the chapter will be broken down into the following sections:

- Purpose
- Structure
- Practical Advice

Anyone who has ever given a speech knows that there must be some introductory material. You cannot effectively begin a speech midstream.

The introduction in an extemp speech is crucial because it allows the speaker to express him or herself, or to convey material in a way that might not be possible in the body of speech.

Most simply put, the introduction is an attention getter. In reality, however, it is so much more.

Purpose

The purpose of an extemp introduction is threefold: attention getting, significance, and topic introduction. All three of these elements must be present for an introduction to be successful.

Attention-Getting

If you have ever seen the evening news (and as an advanced extemper, of course you have!), you have seen the little “teases” that lead into the body of the news. Usually they give you a hint of what’s to come. The extemp intro acts in much the same way. It gives us a notion of what will be contained in the speech, yet it does not spill so much information that the speech becomes redundant. The audience (especially the judge) expects to be “wowed” by the advanced extemper, and you will deliver.

In order to gain an audience’s attention, it is always effective to tell the audience something they have never before heard. For this reason, it is my opinion that nothing is out of bounds for an introduction (this rule has exceptions, tasteless jokes or vulgar content are certainly out of bounds for any speech). Many speakers limit themselves to *historical references*

for their introductions. This is exceedingly unfair to yourself, and, unless you are a skilled craftsperson of language, will be very boring as well. I have seen national champion speakers use everything from South Park to Voltaire as their introduction subjects. Now, naturally, the South Park intro is slightly less intellectually stimulating, yet can be used effectively, and will certainly get the attention of the audience.

To gain the audience's interest, a speaker should attempt to tell a story with the introduction (before you start your next speech with, *A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away...*keep reading). Your intro can include:

- little known stories about a certain country or leader
- anecdotes from history
- movie references
- song references
- anything else that you can draw upon to better your speech

In the same breath, it is essential to tell you one thing that the advanced extemper should not use – personal introductions.

Personal introductions do NOT display your knowledge or credibility.

We've all heard the freshman extemper:

When I was growing up, we had a Canadian nanny who disliked Quebec. She said that the independence movement in Quebec was gaining momentum...

Besides the obvious absurdity of this introduction, it does nothing to promote your credibility as a speaker. A personal introduction may make the point that your speech is trying to stress, but it is not unique, and not necessarily true. Anyone can make up the most incredible story to use in a personal intro. Whether or not the story is true is only known to the speaker. Furthermore, the goal of an intro is to grab the attention of the listener. A great way to do this is to speak about something to which your judge may be able to relate. A personal intro precludes this from happening.

Significance

Second on our list of the functions of an intro is significance. An introduction must point out to the judge that the topic you are speaking on is important, and has a bearing on their lives and the lives of others.

The step between the initial intro story and the question is called the statement of significance. This part of your speech will explain why the question is essential.

Remember, you pick three questions every time you draw. A judge knows that you have chosen one question out of the three. Now it is your turn to explain why this question should take precedence over all others.

The statement of significance usually leads directly into the question. If we are considering the following question: “Will Africa become the new economic frontier,” a statement of significance might follow this model:

Considering that we have moved into a new era of a world economy where the entire planet depends on the economic success of many of its members, it is essential that we ask the question, “Will Africa become the new economic frontier?”

Notice that the speaker has given a global twist on a regionalized question. It is evident from the statement of significance that everyone has a stake in the answer to the question. After all, if the African economy can succeed, then the world economy can succeed also. Notice that, in the above example, the speaker has condensed the statement of significance into a simple statement that leads into the question. Considering that it is often difficult to transition from the intro into asking the question, the statement of significance (or SoS) provides flow for your speech also. Later in the chapter, an entire intro with SoS will be provided as an example and a type of blueprint for speakers that are just learning to effectively use the SoS. **In the SoS, every foreign question becomes a domestic question.** By this, I mean to say that you relate almost every question to the United States, telling the judge why he or she should listen.

Topic Introduction/Stating the Question

The final element in the intro is the introduction of your topic (i.e., stating the question). This is the simplest portion of the introduction but the one that can cause big problems for the speaker. In high school competitive extemporaneous speaking (as you well know), the question must be memorized. For this reason, long, burdensome, wordy questions should be avoided if there is a sensible option other than your selected question. Memorize the question word for word and present it as it is written, not as you think it should have been written, and this part of the intro should provide no complications.

Along with the introduction of the topic, it is necessary to answer the question (as noted in the next chapter) and offer a preview of your answer. Your preview involves listing the three (or two) main points in your speech.

Structure

The structure of the introduction is simple and logical. It follows these steps:

1. Introductory story, anecdote, or example
2. Tie-in to the question
3. Statement of Significance
4. Presentation of the Question
5. Preview

This is a fairly simple structure and should be used for a vast majority of your speeches. Occasionally, the style of the speech, or the topic, may make it difficult to follow the entire structure, but this should happen less than five times per one hundred speeches.

If you imagine the introduction as an inverted triangle, it becomes clearer as to why the structure is the way it is. The speech starts out as a broad reference to a story or some other piece of information about a topic. This topic is whittled down as the tie-in to the question is offered. (This tie-in usually comes in the form of relating the story to the topic to be discussed. Therefore, if the intro story is directly related to the question, there may be no need for this portion of the intro.) The Statement of Significance directly tells us why the question is important. The topic is further specified by the question, which limits the scope of discussion. Finally, the three main points make the specific arguments that the speaker wishes to argue on a topic. Thus, the intro can be visualized in this manner:

Introductory story or anecdote

Tie-in to the question

Statement of Sig.

Question

Preview

The inverted triangle model for introductions can help you to manage your time and prioritize information in the beginning of the speech.

Why should the introduction be formed in this manner? The answer is simple. The speech will flow and will be more balanced when based on this model. As you will see later in the chapter on structure, the inverted triangle model will be used throughout your speech.

The speech must begin with your standard *attention-getting* device. As I discussed before, almost anything is game in choosing an intro, as long as you can make it work. You then need to bridge the gap between your intro and the “real” topic of your speech. For instance, if you are using those lovably crude children of South Park as your (tasteful) introduction, it may be difficult for the judge to see what that has to do with arms control. Maybe the link is brilliant, but that link must be specifically made. In this instance, you might finish your South Park intro and then say something like,

...Stan, Kyle, Cartman and Kenny go on to 'Blame Canada.' In much the same way, the people of Quebec have blamed Canada for many of their problems...

From South Park to French Canada in one simple step! This link is a simple bridge between your intro and your topic.

At this point in your structure you must now move on to the *Statement of Significance*. As described before, this can be a simple and easy transition into the question. In the case of the Quebec, an SoS could be created thusly,

Because a divided Canada would cause instability and economic problems on the North American continent, it is essential that we ask the question...

Which brings us directly to the question, and is followed by the preview. This simple structure will work for about ninety-five percent of your speeches and will make the trauma of creating an effective intro a thing of the past.

Practical Advice

Though there are certainly many pieces of practical advice contained in this chapter to this point, this section is dedicated to several other practical issues. For many extempers, introductions are a source of frustration and uncertainty. There are several pieces of advice that can be given.

First and foremost every introduction should be used sparingly and only once if humanly possible.

Every now and again we will come across an intro that is so good and that fits certain questions so perfectly that we must use it twice (okay, sometimes we might even use it a third time). My hard and fast rule for intros is to **write the intro for the question, do not adapt the question to the intro**. Many of us have difficulty thinking of different intros, but you will never shake that habit unless you try. If you have ever heard an extemper who consistently reuses introductions (or “cans” them), you also know that the other competitors sometimes lose considerable respect for that speaker. Moreover, many times you may have the same judge several times throughout the year. While you might be able to remember that canned intro, you will not always remember all of the judges that you have had. If a judge hears a canned intro, suddenly all of your information becomes suspect. How does the judge know if you are canning your entire speech or not?

Besides the issue of being caught over using an intro, you will also have an issue with topic specificity. Your intro should be individually tailored to the question that you have been asked. If you employ an old introduction that has been used before, you are likely to try and fit the intro to a question that was not meant for it. Yes, with some simple adaptation, most intros can be made to fit many questions, but you do not get that individual tailored feel from your introduction.

By this time you are saying, “Great Chris, now what do I do? You’ve taken all of my introduction strategies!” Fear not, intrepid extemper, there is a solution. Broaden your intro base. While I was competing I learned quickly that just about every story or anecdote can become an introduction, you just need to know where to look.

Finding Intro Material

Cable TV. If you have cable, you have three or four sources of twenty-four hour extemp intros. The Discovery Channel, History Channel, the Learning Channel and others provide an endless supply of material. The History Channel, in particular, offers countless tales of military blunders, mysterious happenings, and humorous historical situations. If a story strikes you as intro material, jot down a few notes. These resources will open up new opportunities to find introductions with little effort (and you might actually enjoy it).

Web Sites. Beyond cable channels, there are other resources in your home and library that will assist you. Web sites that cater to strange news stories, history, or little known facts can provide intros that are interesting to the listener and effective in introducing a question. More importantly, web pages can be printed and actually filed for later use.

Others. While the previous recommendations have been fairly traditional, there are other sources for introductions that are even more obvious. **Movies, song lyrics, and even television sitcoms** can be effective when used in a well-crafted manner. For instance, song lyrics could be used for the question, Will Northern Ireland finally find peace this year?

For the last two decades, rockers U2 have been singing about peace, justice and struggles in Ireland. Lead singer Bono has been an advocate for a united Ireland and yet the strife continues. From ‘Sunday, Bloody Sunday’ to the ‘Good Friday Accords,’ the Irish People have had to endure violence and political uprisings. But now that peace seems to be on the near horizon, it could be possible that the Irish people will no longer have to live ‘Under a Blood Red Sky.’ Considering the turmoil in Northern Ireland and the thousands of deaths that have resulted, it is important to ask the question, ‘Will Northern Ireland finally find peace this year?’ Unfortunately, the answer is no, they have not ‘Finally Found What They’re Looking For.’

In the above example, the speaker has crafted a small bit of history about the band, U2, combined with bits of song lyrics and titles. This example shows how an introduction can be crafted around an otherwise non-intellectual topic. A special note must be made here.

Unless the audience or judge has some knowledge of the band, most of your clever intro will be lost on them.

This type of introduction must be very audience sensitive. While you do not have to do a Peter, Paul and Mary introduction, you should avoid obscure intros as well (“As the band Type O Negative once said...”) because you may lose your judge.

The above example is just one way that pop culture can be used to craft an introduction. Note, however, that it has been done in a way that is very topic-specific, succinct, and well thought out. Just mentioning U2 is not enough. Unless a pop culture introduction is formed with some type of care, it can become trite and silly.

How to Deliver a Perfect Introduction (Sort of)

“You never get a second chance to make a first impression.” Never is this more true than in extemporaneous speaking. Your introduction is important because it makes an effective first impression. It is my sincere belief that a championship speech cannot be given without a solid (bordering on excellent) introduction. A good intro gets you as a speaker started off on the right foot. You are now in “effective speaking mode.” Therefore, your first goal as an advanced extemper should be fantastic intros.

But even the most amazing introduction can be lousy when it finally comes out of your brain after thirty minutes of prepping. One tip that can save you frustration, and fluency errors, is also a very simple suggestion.

Memorize the first complete sentence of your introduction word-for word.

This should be a well honed, written out, formal sentence. This may take a few extra seconds in the prep room, but it will save you countless anxious moments while speaking. You will find that, after memorizing the first line of your introduction, you will continue into the rest of the speech more relaxed, more fluent, and more persuasively.

Conclusion

Extemporaneous speeches will rarely be perfect and without flubs or errors. Even national finalists have issues with missed words or syntax problems in sentences. These problems are the very nature of an event that requires you to deliver a memorized, sourced speech after only preparing for thirty minutes. Therefore, your goal as a speaker is not to be perfect, but to be so competent that the judge forgets the errors before you are even finished speaking.

The introduction is the first time that you will be able to make an impression on a judge. This first impression, if topical, clever, and succinct, will leave a judge with the impression that you are an effective speaker. Those flubs will not matter. Your analysis will flow more easily and your speech will have a polish to it that it has not had before.

Beyond first impressions, your introduction is a confidence booster when it is well delivered. Whether the intro is about *A Tale of Two Cities* or *Ally McBeal*, both can be crafted in a manner that will “wow” both you and the judge.

Finally, your intro is a chance to relate to the judge a topic that is extremely weighty, and possibly far removed from all of us. It brings your speech down to a real level. With a good intro, your judge will be enticed to listen to the rest of what you have to say. As an advanced extemper, you may find yourself in break-rounds with other extremely competent speakers. In this case, judges have to rank people who are very close in talent from one to six. At this point, it becomes very difficult to differentiate one speaker from another. An exceptional intro may be enough to put you over the top. This is a skill that, once mastered, will benefit you in every speech you give.

Chapter 3

Conclusions

Yes, I know, we have now stepped out of order in the process of delivering an extemp speech. While it may seem like our chronological order has been lost, there is a logical reason to discuss conclusions directly after introductions. Conclusions are directly related to introductions, and in many ways, are dictated by the introduction itself. Because of the closely related nature of the two, we will address conclusions in much the same manner that we approached introductions.

- Purpose
- Structure
- Practical Advice

Purpose

A conclusion has much the same purpose as an introduction. It 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 fits under the category of “telling them what you are going to tell them.” The body of the speech is where you “tell them.” The conclusion, quite logically, is where you “tell them what you told them.”

Framing the speech in the above manner plays to basic human tendencies. Humans tend to remember what they hear first, and 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 of items on the list as well as the last couple of items. In the same way, the judge will likely 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.

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, then, 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 three main points (or two) is a way for the speaker to show that the question was answered thoroughly. And finally, the conclusion returns to the intro story to provide a nice neat frame for the entire speech.

Structure

The structure for a conclusion, in many ways, is the reverse of the introduction structure. At this point, I must say that there are different styles used in structuring the conclusion. I am going to offer the structure that I regularly used, and that I teach to my students today. Understand that this is one effective way, but not necessarily the only effective 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 introduction story

Notice that the only real element missing from the conclusion is the statement of significance. There is no need to restate the importance of the question. Your entire speech has been dedicated to proving how important the question was to answer.

Because most of these elements are either self-evident or explained in the chapter on introductions, it is now appropriate to offer an example conclusion based on an example used in the previous chapter. In the previous example we were considering the question, “Will Northern Ireland finally find peace this year?” A sample conclusion might look something like this:

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, we have been able to see that the answer is ‘no.’ Unfortunately for Bono, U2 and all of Ireland there will be no choruses of ‘Gloria’ any time in the near future.

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. Re-use the same 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.

Practical Advice

As with the introduction, polish is key in a good conclusion. Because of this fact, I offer another rule for advanced extemporaneous speaking:

Always memorize the last sentence of your speech as well.

After following my advice of memorizing the first and last sentence of your speech, you will have a well-polished frame around a hopefully excellent speech.

In the speech above, the extemper has chosen a clever use of song lyrics to end the speech. This type of effective one-liner can add credibility, style and impact to your seven minutes. Many extempers will push for a joke or a clever line at the end of their speech.

It is better, however, to deliver a well-practiced, serious line than force a joke or play on words that might not work to its desired effect.

It is also essential to always return to the initial anecdote, story or other piece of information that you used in your introduction. But do NOT retell the entire story. A quick mention can be much more effective (as in the example) then forcing the judge to listen to something that he or she has already heard.

A good conclusion can end your speech in the same way that a good introduction can begin the speech. Just as starting off by making a good impression is important, ending by leaving a good impression is also essential. It is nearly impossible to construct a good conclusion without an effective introduction. These two elements of the speech work hand-in-hand and should complement each other. These are really the only parts of your speech where you get to craft language in your own style. Master, introductions, conclusions and word choice, and you will be half way to your goal of successful extemping.

Chapter 4

Answering Questions

As an extemper, the first, and most difficult task is to answer the question. As an advanced extemper, your goal should be to answer the question definitively and with crisp confidence. In order to do so, it is important to examine several aspects of answering the question. For this reason, the chapter is broken up into the following sections:

- Types of questions
- Choosing your answer

Types of Questions

When approaching questions, it is clear that there are several different formats that certain writers choose. We will discuss three very common types of questions, and variations on these types of questions, as well as odd questions that you might encounter as an advanced extemper.

Generally questions will be of three forms: “*will,*” “*should,*” or “*how.*”

“Will”

"Will" questions generally ask you if an event will occur. For instance:

Will Hillary Clinton become the next President of the United States?

A question like this asks a very straightforward question. Quite literally, you are asked to predict the future. Will Hillary Clinton win the next presidential election? That's it – it's that simple. All you have to do is pull out your political crystal ball, wave a magic wand, and come up with your answer. Though this is the simplest *form* of extemp question, it can be very challenging to answer.

The most difficult part of this question is that it forces you to take a side. There is no way to get around the answer. Your answer must be "yes" or "no." You are now confronted with alienating at least part of the political spectrum. If you say "yes" then Al Gore supporters will not like you. If you say "no" then G. W. supporters will be mad. Well, extemper, fear no longer, because there is a solution. That solution is to answer a question definitively, forcefully and with logic.

Many extempers fear taking a stance because of the implications (i.e., you may be alienating part of your audience). However, in the long run, you will learn that to become a successful extemper, being definitive is a skill that you must learn quickly.

The first hard and fast rule of answering an extemp question of the "will" variety
is **always choose a side, yes or no.**

If the question asks a specific question about future events, your job as an extemper is to answer the question. Therefore, the only way you can do so properly is to say yes or no.

The problem that you encounter with your average extemper is that they are unable to decide which way they want to answer the question. The result is a wishy-washy, Charlie Brown answer. For example, an extemper might be tempted to say,

We will see that Hillary Clinton will become the President of the United States, unless her opponent is able to gain more support in larger states.

This answer is deficient because it never answers the question at all. It tells me as a judge that Hillary might win the election, but it's up to me to decide. You want to tell the judge who will be the president and why. By the end of a speech, a judge should have forgotten his preconceptions and adopted your opinion as Gospel truth.

After examining the theory behind the "will" question, it is important to put that theory into practice. Imagining that you have drawn the question, "Will Hillary Clinton become the next president of the United States?" There is a standard form that can be used for answering the question.

...It is important to ask the question, "Will Hillary Clinton become the next president of the United States?" The answer is yes for three reasons. First, Clinton will have a war chest considerably larger than her opponents. Second, she is able to appeal to a large voter-base. Third, Clinton's moderate brand of liberalism is able to secure large electoral states.

The above speaker has answered the question in a way that leaves no question as to what he or she believes. We know, after listening to a fifteen-second clip of the speech, that the speaker believes Clinton will win. Moreover, it is apparent that there are three distinct reasons that he will win which have been enumerated. In this short section of the speech the extemper has exhibited his or her opinion and supported it, without any fears that this opinion will be rejected.

The "will" question demands a definitive answer in a concise format. With that knowledge, one can avoid skirting the issue or leaving doubt in the judge's mind. Remember that the most important part about answering the "will" question is **erasing all doubt**. This is the only question where you really get the chance to answer and explain immediately. Use this opportunity wisely.

“Should”

The "should" question relies on many of the same principles as the “will” question. The main difference here is that you are asked not to *predict* a course of action, but to *evaluate* that course of action. The should question usually takes this format:

Should the United States pursue an Anti-Ballistic Missile defense system to protect itself and allies?

The question here asks not whether the US will pursue a course of action, but, instead, whether that course of action is advisable. In the "will" question, you are basically predicting the future. In the "should" question you need to evaluate the advisability of the proposal. You may say, "*Yes, X should happen,*" even if you know that it will never happen. In this case you have to prove to the judge that it is in the best interest of a person or other entity to act in a particular manner.

Notice that in forming your answer, you must consider whether the particular person or other entity that is the subject of the question brings a unique set of motivations.

Imagine a scenario where the interest of China, for example, differs from the interest of others. When faced with this possibility (or likelihood), make sure you identify any unique interests that the subject may have and explain that your answer is based on those unique set of interests. Indeed your answer might be different if given from the perspective of another country.

More generally, it is important to point out the standard by which you are judging the situation. Basing your answer strictly on the national interest of one country may be a bit narrow, while justifying a course of action based solely on morality may be perceived as overly idealistic. Finding a comfortable middle ground will demonstrate a comprehensive analysis of several elements and be more impressive.

“How”

The "how" question is generally asked in the following format:

How will Vladimir Putin affect the Russian quest for democracy?

The "how" question presents an interesting dilemma for the extemper. You are forced to give an answer that is not as concise as others. You need to explain what will happen in the future instead of declaring whether or not a future event will occur.

Your goal in the "how" question is to predict future events in a broad manner, then explain them.

In other words, you must tell the judge what will happen and then quickly explain the reasoning behind your choice of answers.

The first thing that you will notice is that your choice of answers has infinitely expanded from the "will" questions. Instead of yes or no, you pick what will happen. While this seems more difficult to answer, it is really an opportunity for the advanced extemper to show off his or her abilities. You now have the ability to act as an artist, painting the canvas with your answer. You can choose the style of painting and how vivid a picture you will create. In theory, you must be able to decide on world affairs from a much broader perspective. There is no answer provided in the question.

In order to effectively answer this type of question, a different type of preparation is required. You must quickly draw your conclusions based on your knowledge of the question, or based on the research that you can quickly do in your files. An approach to this question can probably be better explained by taking a backward look at the forming of analysis.

With the "will" question, you formed your answer, yes or no, and then found supporting information. In the "how" question, you will instead need to research possible scenarios and then create a broad answer to fit your conclusions. Remember, as was discussed earlier, an in-depth knowledge of every country or issue is not necessary to be a successful extemper. The ability to analyze is far more valuable.

For example, through research, you may find that there are several things that Putin brought to Russia that will be lost now that he is gone. Or, on the same vein, you may find that Putin caused several problems in Russia that will be alleviated since he has departed. Three prospective scenarios would be:

- a. Stability will be lost.
- b. Hard-liners will gain power.
- c. Corruption will take over.

These conclusions can be reached rather easily with a strong file and careful consideration of the events in Russia. After making these conclusions, however, it is still vital to create a *blanket* answer to give the judge something to sink his or her teeth into. **You need to broadly summarize your three answers into one definite response to the question.**

...When we ask the question, "How will Vladimir Putin affect the Russian quest for democracy," the answer is that democracy will be considerably stifled in Russia. We can see that this answer is true for three main reasons. First, the stability that Putin brought to the country will be lost. Second, hard-liners in the Duma will take this opportunity to make a power play. Third, corruption will take over in the government.

In the above answer, we see the backward approach taken. Already having the knowledge of the three conclusions that the speaker wishes to utilize, the speaker then had to construct a blanket answer to cover these conclusions. A backward approach simply means that the extemper formed the explanation for the answer before the concise answer itself.

Extempers often fall into a trap of coming up with three disparate answers that do not follow the same theme and thus lead to a speech that lacks focus and is not as succinct as possible.

If, after forming your three conclusions, you find it difficult or impossible to form a blanket answer, you have likely answered poorly.

This rule of thumb will work for most questions. In the above example, it is clear that the three areas of analysis follow the same theme. They all explain how the departure of Boris Yeltsin will create complications for democracy in Russia. While they are distinct areas of analysis, they all share a similar focus.

With the "how" question, there are some times when the question will be obscure and it will be difficult to have much preliminary knowledge. **In this case, avoid the trap of the "how" question.** This trap is that it may seem like an easy way out simply to list three areas of analysis even if they have different fundamental ideas. This will seem awkward to the judge and will leave an unbalanced answer. For instance:

First, we will see that Vladimir Putin will lead to decreased corruption in the highest levels of government. Second, he will destabilize the country because the one and only leader is gone. Third, he will encourage the United States to fund Russian democracy better.

The above answer presents two obvious problems. First, they lack a thread of continuity that would allow the judge to follow a logical progression through the answer. Second, they simply do not allow a blanket answer to be made concisely or definitively. The only possible answer seems to be "*there will be many different effects from the resignation.*" This answer, however, does not provide a clear thesis that the judge can remember when looking back over the flow to judge your speech.

“Will,” “should,” and “how” are the main types of questions that you will encounter. Master these, and you're well prepared ...except the occasional out-round question that can make or break you. We will now examine a few miscellaneous types of questions that can be exceedingly difficult if you are not aware of them.

Triadic-Relationship Question

The triadic-relationship question is one used particularly in late out-rounds at nationals and other large invitational tournaments. The triadic-relationship question takes this form:

Considering recent U.S./China relations, should Taiwan be included in a new theater missile defense system?

This question is referred to as the triadic-relationship question because it involves a three-way cause and effect relationship between different entities. Though these entities are usually different countries, occasionally they may be feuding political candidates or different departments of government. The above question was actually asked in the 1999 American Forensic Association national final round and I was lucky enough to draw it. Mastering this type of question involves avoiding some major pitfalls.

First, recognize that the question requires one answer, not three.

Many will feel the temptation to answer the question in regards to China, the U.S. and Taiwan, separately. Three point extempers will especially fall into this trap by making China one point in their speech, with the U.S. and Taiwan comprising the other two areas of analysis.

But the question is asking you to evaluate how the relationship between China and the U.S. will be affected by the addition of a missile defense system in Taiwan. This question is essentially a "will" question considerably dressed up (though the triadic-relationship question can be asked in the "how" format). As a result, we must pick through the difficult wording and give a concise yes or no answer. This answer will then be separated into distinct areas of analysis. One way of answering the question is:

...When we ask the question, "Considering recent U.S./China relations, should Taiwan be included in a new theater missile defense system," we will see that the answer is no. In order to see why the answer is no, we will first see that the technology will not work. Second, including Taiwan will increase worldwide dependence on the U.S. as a defense partner. Third, including Taiwan will cause a new cold war to begin between the U.S. and China.

The above answer does not simply separate the areas of analysis between the three entities that are to be considered. Instead, the approach is to answer the question completely in each area of analysis (this will be discussed further in the chapter on Unified Analysis). Moreover, the answer integrates all three of the entities in each of the areas of analysis. Though it might not be clear from the tag lines, each area of analysis allows the speaker to address all three of the countries asked about in the question.

- In the first area of analysis, the speaker will discuss that the technology (especially with the recent technological thefts from the U.S.) will not be enough to achieve an effective system to protect Taiwan. At the same time, the action will provoke China far too much.

- In the second area of analysis, it will be discussed that Taiwan will become too dependent on the United States because of this new defense alliance. Consequently, other U.S. allies, especially those in the Asian theater, will demand the same type of protection. This again, will act as provocation to the Chinese and create difficult relations in that region.
- Finally, in the third area it will be discussed that Taiwan will be seen as a new "Cuban missile crisis" in Asia. By this, it is meant that the act of placing a theater missile defense system in Asia will be seen as an offensive move by the U.S. toward China and will cause an arms build up like the one seen during the first cold war.

To correctly answer the triadic-relationship question, the speaker must first determine if it is a "will" or "how" question, next form a thesis, and then establish three points of analysis.

This type of question is really a more complicated version of simpler questions. Success requires simplification and definitive answers.

Role-Playing Question

Another type of rare question that could cause difficulty for the advanced extemper is the "role-playing question." While fairly rare, it is an interesting question type and a good practice question as it forces the extemper to really think about issues in a different way. The role-playing question takes this form:

If you were Condi Rice, how would you encourage the Middle Eastern peace process?

Questions like this are interesting because they require the speaker to explain not only what would be the *ideal* action (i.e., what should happen) but also the speaker is expected to take into account the **position and motivation of a specific individual**. In the case of the question above, the speaker is expected to guess how the Middle East peace process can best be encouraged through the eyes of Condi Rice, the U.S. Secretary of State.

You may never encounter this specific style of question, but that does not mean it's not worth practicing. Many different variants on the "how" and "will" questions differ only because they ask you to consider a variable of motivation. For instance, a question that asks you, "*How will Kim Jong Il react to new United Nations regulations regarding arms inspections,*" is really asking what Kim Jong Il's motivations will be.

During the 1998 American Forensic Association College Nationals, an entire round of role-playing questions were asked. One particular question asked, "*If you were the parent of a schoolchild, how would you react to the recent rash of school violence?*" This question does not ask about the rash of violence, or even how the violence will affect society. Instead, it asks how a parent of a school-aged child would react to the shootings. This new type of question confounded hundreds of the best college extempers in the nation.

The role-playing question can also be called a "narrative question" because it requires that the speaker weave a story, complete with a plot line, instead of just relaying facts and projecting outcomes. This starts in the introduction. In the case of the school shootings, an effective introduction might begin with a recitation of some simple statistics (i.e., the number of incidents of school violence). After the traditional attention-getter, the question calls for a more **personal tone**. Usually, I would recommend against any personalization of an extemp question. In this case, however, the question calls for it. An example might better explain how to attack the narrative question.

Statistics show that schools are becoming safer. The New York Times of May 15, 1999 explains that, though high profile shootings have drawn media coverage from around the globe, schools are the safest place kids can be. Regardless of statistics, when confronted with the actual violence and turmoil in some schools, education becomes a frightening prospect. Watching classmates shot or fearing children with weapons in their lockers can keep children from feeling safe while having to learn reading, writing and arithmetic. Since Columbine and Jonesboro and countless other stories of school violence, it is understandable that many school children and their parents might fear the prospect of returning to the classroom. Because of the perception that schools are unsafe, it is important to ask the question, "If you were the parent of a schoolchild, how would you react to the recent rash of school violence?" To answer this question effectively, we must realize that even hundreds of statistics will not allay the fears of a parent concerned about their child. For this reason, we will answer...

As you can see, the introduction is much longer than usual. It tells a bit of a story but justifies how you will answer the question. The key to the answer is to remember the perspective that you must take. You are not answering the question from the perspective of a policymaker, but from the perspective of a parent.

You might transition into the first point of your answer by saying:

As a parent, my confidence might be shaken also. In order that my student received the best education possible, free of fear and intimidation, it would be important to reassure him or her that the school environment is safe.

Notice in this example how it can be effective to weave your introduction through your transition points. Of course, the "story line" that we've been focusing on must be supported with reasoning and explanation.

Narrative questions may require you to inject personal, more emotional overtures into your speech, but that does not permit you to forgo substantive analysis altogether.

Indeed role-playing and narrative type questions will challenge your development as a speaker, but seize the opportunity to distinguish yourself as a great extemper from a good one.

Choosing Your Answer

This section may seem a little strange to those of you who have competed in extemporaneous speaking in the past. Obviously I cannot explain how to answer every question in every circumstance, but there are some words of advice that I believe are helpful to any extemper trying to improve his or her skills.

An extemper, at heart, is a *persuasive* speaker. This simple statement should be a guiding principal when selecting an answer to a particular question.

The first rule of answering the question is to choose the answer that is the most persuasive.

This rule could easily be misinterpreted. It might seem as though the *easiest* answer is also the most persuasive. This, however, is NOT always true. The easiest answer is sometimes "too easy," minimizing your ability to impress the judges. If you are asked, "Who is the most powerful man in Washington, DC," the easy answer would be to simply name the current president and then explain why he wields the most power. While this is easy, it is not awfully persuasive or impressive. The answer, "Allan Greenspan" or "William Rehnquist" might be more difficult, but it increases your opportunity to persuade the judge of your opinion.

This approach may seem to some to be counterintuitive, and in many ways it is. It would seem that the easiest way to convince someone would be to tell them what they already know. This however, does not allow you to change the mind of your audience. For this reason, the second rule is:

It is always more challenging to change someone's mind than to repeat what he or she already believes.

As an advanced extemper, you want to challenge yourself for a couple of reasons. **The first reason is that you will separate yourself from other mediocre extempers who might be solid in their performance but will not have the "extras" that you have.** As an advanced extemper you want to place yourself above the crowd. One way to do this is to take risks that other extempers refuse to take. Risk taking is one of the most important aspects of becoming a more well-rounded speaker. Certainly, especially in the beginning, some of these risks will backfire. You will fail to convince a judge or two, or you may be considered too non-traditional for the occasional judge, but these risks are worth taking. Only through risk-taking can you develop your own style that others will attempt to master. The greatest compliment you can receive in public speaking of any kind is for others to attempt to mimic your performance.

The second reason that an advanced extemper should challenge themselves is because you will also challenge the judge. By going against their preconceived notions, you will force judges to think about your speech. At the end of six speeches, the best way to convince the judge to give you the "one" is to make that judge think about your speech. Leaving an impression is your goal and a key to success.

At the same time, the third rule is:

Always answer logically.

Even though you want to go against the grain and challenge yourself, it is still essential to follow rules of reason. There is nothing easier for a judge to pick out than a logical flaw in your speech. No matter how crisp your intro, how effective your structure, and how smooth your transitions – if your speech contradicts itself, you will not be able to persuade a judge.

The above rule may seem simple but you would be surprised to see how many good extempers ignore reason in their answer because they believe they have the other elements in place. Without an answer that makes sense, you will not succeed in improving your speech skills. To aid in answering logically, it is important to answer thoroughly. For that, you will want to pay special attention to the next section.

Awkwardly Worded Questions

Even with practice, knowledge, and expertise, there will be the occasional question that was written at 3:00 a.m. by a tournament official that was tired and frustrated. It may have the best subject material but have a grammatical error or simply words that do not seem right for the question. Some examples:

Should the US support Taiwan's increasing demands for diplomatic?
Can England keep the Eurodollar viable in the world economy?
Does recent hacking problems prove that E-commerce is dangerous?

All of the above questions have difficulties of their own. Before approaching each one individually, it is important to discuss, as a rule, how to handle questions that are worded poorly. If there is a decent alternative to the question that you like, then choose the other question instead. If, as is the case sometimes, there is no better alternative to the poorly worded question, then it might be necessary to answer the question as is. **The first point to make is that you should always recite the question to the judge as it is written on the original slip of paper.** Remember that the judge sees the slip of paper with your question written on it. If you adjust the wording of the question on your own without first reading the question as it was written, the judge might think you are trying to pull a fast one on him.

Also, it is essential to realize that your interpretation of the question may not be the same as the interpretation that the judge has. For instance, the first question asks, “*Should the US support Taiwan's increasing demands for diplomatic?*” Diplomatic what? As the question was written, we are not sure what Taiwan is seeking. It may be diplomatic recognition, diplomatic relationships, diplomatic immunity (okay, probably not the last one, but you never know). In any event, it is clear that the interpretation of the question is left open to you and the judge. Therefore, in a question where a word has been left out, it is essential to recite the question as it was written first. Next, it is essential to interpret and justify your interpretation of the question. Let the judge know why you have chosen the word “recognition.”

The second example above features a question with a misnamed item. The “Eurodollar” was an early name that was considered for the new unified European currency. The name was dropped because no one wanted the world to think that Europe was creating a new currency that was modeled after the US. So this question has simply used the old name. This may happen in many cases such as with a country’s name or a ruler of a country. In this case, simply renaming the item in question (after reading the question the way it was written) is acceptable. Just make it clear to the judge that an error has been made and that you are correcting an obvious error.

The last example is also the most innocuous. A simple grammar error actually provides an opportunity for the advanced extemper. Joking about a grammatical error is acceptable, and can break the ice in your speech, making you feel more confident and making you seem more clever. This type of question, while it may seem awkward upon first reading, really requires no interpretation or concern. In almost every case, if the question is the best of the bunch that you pull, feel free to answer it.

Finally, while not truly awkwardly worded, there are many questions that you will find vague. If you were asked the question, “*Economically speaking, how will recent political turmoil affect the budget,*” you would have a difficult time finding out what the question really means. Try and choose only questions that are specific in their scope. The above question has the potential to cause the speaker to go off track. Remember that a seven-minute speech is not very long at all. In fact, it is essential that you stay on the point and remain succinct so that your analysis does not suffer.

Chapter 5

Unified Analysis

Unified analysis is a style of answering a question that is very effective. It is used by top high school and collegiate extempers to get the most out of their seven minutes of speaking time. In order to understand why Unified Analysis (or UA) is best, we will explore other ways of answering the question to see why UA is superior.

Historical Approach

Many extempers, especially beginners, use a historical approach to answering all questions. If the question were, “*How can Social Security be fixed,*” it would be very easy to analyze it with a historical approach. The main form of the historical approach is as follows:

1. Past History
2. Present Situation
3. Future Probabilities

Obviously the historical approach focuses on a past/present/future analysis. Thus the question above would be answered by examining:

1. History of the Social Security System
2. Present Condition of Social Security
3. What can be done in the future to save Social Security

While this seems like an effective approach to the question, let us see why it falls short. The first point of the speech would explain what has happened to Social Security in the past. While there is often a brief history reference needed to give the judge proper background, it is not necessary to dedicate a full third of your speech to this purpose. After all, you are not answering the question in any way with this third of your speech; all you are doing is telling us what has happened in the past. You need, as the question dictates, to explore what can be done (in the future) to keep Social Security solvent.

The second point of your speech has the same problems. It centers on the present situation and ignores the future, which is supposed to be the focus of your entire speech. You only have seven minutes to work with yet this style allows the speaker only about a minute and a half to solve the problem of Social Security, a problem that has been brewing for over half a century.

In short, the historical analysis is problematic because it does not allow you to answer the question as fully as possible.

Buffet Style Approach

Another option is the buffet style answer. In this approach, a speaker offers three possible answers and then points out which is the correct one. While it may seem like a clever approach and can be somewhat effective in getting across your point, there are problems with this style as well. The buffet style answer to Social Security would be as follows:

1. Keep the system as it is
2. Government controlled investments
3. Personal retirement accounts

Now, obviously one of these options would be selected as the correct, best answer (probably option three). This option does allow the speaker to express other answers and explain why they are inferior to the answer chosen, but it remains a weak way to answering this question. In this case, two thirds of the speech is spent giving the wrong answer. In some cases, the judge may perceive that you are wasting his or her time. Again, only about a minute and a half is dedicated to giving the correct answer, minimizing your opportunity to persuade the judge. Moreover, the judge may be convinced, by your own speech, that one of the other options offered is a better solution to the problem.

Unified Analysis/Solution Step Analysis

There are variations on the types of styles employed by extempers, but many follow the models discussed above. It is important that we choose a model and a style that allows the answer to be explained for all seven precious minutes of your speech. The style that I will explore is referred to as Unified Analysis (UA) or Solution Step Analysis.

UA focuses on answering the question as thoroughly as is possible. The main tenet is that you must present a clear answer to the question, and then use your three (or two) areas of analysis to defend that answer. For instance, "*How can Social Security be fixed?*" A UA answer would say:

Social Security can be fixed by instituting private retirement accounts.

- 1) These accounts will allow investor freedom.
- 2) They will take the burden off of the existing system.
- 3) They will be more profitable.

For your speech, the language would be dressed up slightly for each of these points, but for our purposes they are sufficient. In the UA question there is a clear answer given and then explained. That single answer is that private retirement accounts are the best solution to the problem at hand. The subsequent three points each defend that thesis. More importantly, they each defend the thesis **independently**. The benefits of independent defenses of the thesis are clear.

- First, it is more persuasive to have several reasons to defend your answer to the judge.

- Second, the independence of these points gives a wide variety of reasons that the judge can buy what you are selling.
- Third, even if one of your points is weaker than the others, or if that point does not convince the judge, you have two more distinct reasons why he or she should still believe you.

The UA answer protects you from wishy-washy, uncommitted answers. At the same time, it presents definitive, persuasive reasons that the judge should think you are the best thing since sliced bread.

The *theory* of the UA answer is quite simple. Putting it into *practice* requires some refinement and careful considerations. Let us examine the components to the UA answer and how they should be effectively assembled into a great speech. There are several components that need to be examined:

- The Answer
- The Three Points
- Introduction

We will consider each of these independently.

The Answer

The subject of answering the question has already been covered in this chapter, however, it is important to address it again for the purposes of answering the question using UA. When choosing the answer for a UA style analysis, it is important that you create a “blanket answer” to the question asked. Obviously, in the case of the “will” question, a simple yes or no will suffice for the answer. In many questions, including “how” questions, you will be required to answer in a general way that you will then defend through your three main points. Sometimes this answer can be fairly specific, and other times will require the blanket response.

The above example of a social security question requires a fairly specific response. The speaker in the outline explained that there was one way to fix the system, and that fix was personal retirement accounts.

It is key to state that answer as succinctly as possible with little or no explanation. In the UA answer, the explanation comes in the form of your three (or two) main points.

Thus the opening of the question, when delivered, would sound something like the following:

...it is important to ask the question, ‘How can Social Security be fixed?’ The answer is by converting the system to one that utilizes personal retirement accounts. In order to

see why this is the correct method to fix the system we will examine first that these accounts allow for investor freedom. Second, the burden will be taken off of the federal government to provide a retirement subsidy. And third, this new fix will be more profitable for investors.

The above selection shows how the UA Speaker would answer the question. The answer is made in a succinct manner. There can be no debating what the speaker believes is the solution to the problem at hand. The question asks how the system can be fixed and the speaker responds with personal retirement accounts. The goal here is to erase all doubt in the judge's mind. If the judge flows your speech, his or her outline should look just like yours.

In some cases, however, the answer will not be so specific, and will be more vague when faced with a question like, "*How will Quebec's movement toward independence affect America's relations with Canada?*" The first thing to consider is that this question is an exceedingly difficult one. This example, however, will work to explain any instance in which a blanket answer is called for. It is clear that there is no specific answer that can be given to this question. For this reason, a broader thesis must be constructed. Let's imagine that the speaker has determined that the following three points will be used in the speech:

- 1) It will cause diplomatic strains.
- 2) It will cause economic strains.
- 3) It will force a recognition of the movement in Quebec.

These answers can all be placed under the blanket answer of "destabilization." That is to say, the answer is, "Relations between America and Canada will be destabilized." Notice that, in the first Social Security question, the answer was a specific one that was further explained or proved through the three points of analysis. In the Quebec question, however, it is not possible to give a specific answer (not if you want to have anything to talk about later in the speech, that is). In this case, a blanket answer is given. The purpose behind this type of answer is to give the judge something to hang onto until you explain your answer. The judge knows your opinion is that the independence movement in Quebec will have an ill effect on the relationship between the US and Canada. However, the complexity of the question requires the speaker to really give three distinct answers.

These three distinct answers (diplomatic strains, economic strains, and recognition of the Quebec movement) are necessary to explain the entire answer. The blanket answer serves to tie these three together. They all share the common theme of destabilization.

Now that we have a proper understanding of how to formulate an answer to the UA question (both specific and blanket) we must look at forming the three main points.

The Three Points

Forming the three points can be just as important to the question as forming the actual answer. There are a few keys to properly formulating the three points. **It is essential that these points be succinct.** In Lincoln Douglas Debate, your arguments, or contentions, are formed into

small theses or “tag-lines.” In extemporaneous speaking, your main points (be it two or three) must be in the same tag-line format. Since your goal in extemp is always to be as clear as possible, these points must also be clear and understandable.

Your three points are the reasons that your answer is correct. Taking another sample question, we can see how to formulate the succinct, but useful tag lines necessary to effectively utilize UA. Consider, “*Will campaign finance reform be achieved in the next session of congress?*” Now let us imagine that we will be answering “yes.” Our three main reasons are:

1. soft money
2. incumbent advantage
3. first amendment

Now, without a more precise explanation, these three reasons are virtually useless as tag lines. We need to refine them to fit Unified Analysis. The UA speaker may formulate better tag lines this way:

1. Elected officials are unwilling to give up soft money.
2. Reform would end the incumbent advantage.
3. The first amendment prohibits reform.

It should be noted that, in our examples, not all answers will agree with your opinion or even your research, and are intended as reasonable illustrations only. In the above example, we can see that the extemper, using UA, has formed the three points into succinct but informative tag lines that independently answer the question.

The key to creating the tag line is to make sure that it is short (in most cases five to six words), but remains informative/complete, and makes an argument. In many ways, your points in an extemp speech are contentions, just like in debate.

Introduction

The introduction in a UA speech is essential to creating a picture in the mind of the judge. In a speech that utilizes Unified Analysis, the introduction acts to frame the speech in a neat little package. Understanding this, the speaker should not make the introduction so obtrusive that it harms the quality of the speech.

While the introduction is a place to use humor if needed, or certainly to catch the attention of the judge, it is not a place to spend minutes upon minutes with an elaborate setup for the question.

The intro, like the three main points, should be brief, succinct, and topical. Ideally, you want to be speaking on your first point of analysis before you have reached the one minute and thirty second mark of your speech.

Time allocation is vital in a UA speech because the speaker has so much to say (and as we have discussed, a very limited time to speak). For this reason, the speaker must construct an intro that lends to your answer. The intro should not answer the question, but it should assist you in conveying your answer.

Conclusion

Unified Analysis is an effective way of answering questions that focuses on independent reasons for an answer. Every main point in a UA speech is like an independent answer to the question. The reason for the independent nature of your answers is to create a more persuasive argument for your audience. While communications studies have shown that UA is more effective than other ways of speaking, it is clear that the real proof is in listening to a polished advanced extemper who has mastered UA. The reason for using UA is that it best uses your limited time as a speaker. Your goal should be to speak on the topic for the full seven minutes of your speech. While you may stray to other topics (or simply avoid answering the question) with other styles, you will almost force yourself to answer the question fully when using UA.

Chapter 6

Speech Structure

Extemporaneous speaking requires a meticulous examination of a complex issue and, as such, should be prepared with great care and precision. Structuring your speech in a proper manner will organize your thoughts, help with time allocation, and make it easier for your judge to follow the information you are delivering. It is important to remember that the information in this chapter is based on my own speaking style. While the theory presented should work for every speaker, the specific practical advice may need to be modified to your own abilities and preferences. In this chapter we will cover two facets of structure – overall speech structure and internal structure (structure within points).

Overall Speech Structure

There are two predominant styles in structuring extemp speeches.

Whether you use two-point analysis or three-point analysis matters little. What does matter is that your speech is properly structured.

Three-Point Analysis

In my extemporaneous speaking career, I always (with the exception of one speech) used three-point analysis. This was not necessarily because it is the superior way to deliver a speech. Instead, it was because I was more comfortable with three-point structure. This is the basic structure of a three-point speech:

- I. Introduction
 - A. Attention getting story, anecdote, or information
 - B. Statement of significance
 - C. Transition to question
 - D. Introduction of question
 - E. Preview
 - F. Transition to first point

- II. Point #1
 - A. Sub-Point A
 1. Analysis
 2. Source Citation

- B. Sub-Point B
 - 1. Analysis
 - 2. Source Citation
 - C. Transition to second point
- III. Point #2
- A. Sub-Point A
 - 1. Analysis
 - 2. Source Citation
 - B. Sub-Point B
 - 1. Analysis
 - 2. Source Citation
 - C. Transition to third point
- IV. Point #3
- A. Sub-Point A
 - 1. Analysis
 - 2. Source Citation
 - B. Sub-Point B
 - 1. Analysis
 - 2. Source Citation
 - C. Transition to conclusion
- V. Conclusion
- A. Review
 - B. Restating Question
 - C. Reintroduction of Intro story

There it is, that simple. Follow this simple structure and you should be on your way to extemp championships. Okay, maybe it's not THAT simple. The first thing that must be said is that this outline is NOT exhaustive. There are many nuances of a speech that you will develop on your own. This outline is as advanced as basic structure can be. If you use this outline as a

basic building block for developing your *own* style, then you'll be on your way to extemp championships.

The outline above is in the “3-2 structure.” All this means is that there are three major areas of analysis with two sub-points under each area. It is fairly typical of the type of structure used by three-point speakers, but it is not the only option. You could just as easily use “3-3 structure” (though you may run into certain time constraints) or “3-1” (though you may be overly simplifying things). During my collegiate career, I usually used a 3-3 structure in order to maximize *sourcing*. The speech above allows room for six to seven sources. If you feel that the above outline is not thorough enough, simply add another sub-point to each main topic area.

The biggest benefit of using 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.

If you watch any great orator, and many practical speakers (like a senator or congressman) they will often employ a three-point structure when speaking on certain issues. The reason for this choice is that three-point structure 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 cites 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 unbalanced. 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 frequently 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 on their mind.

Two-Point Analysis

Two-point analysis can effectively answer a question when mastered by a speaker. It also has the same elements of balance that the 3-point speech has. While I never mastered this form of speaking, I saw it used effectively several times. In one national final that I was lucky enough to participate in, there were three two-pointers, and three three-pointers. Obviously, both means of analysis are capable of success.

I. Introduction

- A. Attention getting story, anecdote, or information
- B. Statement of significance
- C. Transition to question
- D. Introduction of question
- E. Preview
- F. Transition to first point

II. Main Topic Area #1

A. Point #1

1. Sub-Point A

- a. Analysis
- b. Source citation

2. Sub-Point B

- a. Analysis
- b. Source citation

3. Transition to Point #2 of Main Topic Area #1

B. Point #2

1. Sub-Point A

- a. Analysis
- b. Source citation

2. Sub-Point B

- a. Analysis

- b. Source citation
 - 3. Transition to Main Topic Area #2
- III. Main Topic Area #2
 - A. Point #1
 - 1. Sub-Point A
 - a. Analysis
 - b. Source citation
 - 2. Sub-Point B
 - a. Analysis
 - b. Source citation
 - 3. Transition to Point #2 of Main Topic Area #2
 - B. Point #2
 - 1. Sub-Point A
 - a. Analysis
 - b. Source citation
 - 2. Sub-Point B
 - a. Analysis
 - b. Source citation
 - 3. Transition to Conclusion
- IV. Conclusion
 - A. Review
 - B. Reintroduction of Question
 - C. Return to Intro story

This outline, at first glance, might seem more complicated and very different from the three-point speech. On closer inspection, however, we will notice that the structure is very similar. There are still main areas of analysis, transitions, and sub-points. There are, however, obvious differences.

The first notable attribute of the properly executed two-point speech is that it is really, in many ways, a four-point speech. Each point has two distinct points under it.

I have seen many extempers use two point speeches improperly. If you are to deliver a two-point speech without two distinctive points under each, you are not going to be able to examine the question in depth. Many beginning speakers who use two-point analysis never grow out of this limited form of structure.

Next, notice the transitions within the points. In fact, it is necessary to have a sort of transitional phrase or step within your point in two-point analysis. Your main areas of analysis are, in fact, more like large topic headings to work from. The two points under each main area are closer to the arguments that we talked about in the section on unified analysis.

Choosing a Structure

Many times the choice between two-point and three-point will be based on the speaker's preference. There are, on occasion, questions that seem made for one type of question or another. I believe (and many may disagree) that comfort is the most important thing when choosing a structure.

If you are much more comfortable with one style over another, then you should use that style to optimize your abilities in competition. With that said, it is also important to practice that other structure style so that you will be prepared, if the situation presents itself, to leave your comfort zone and use the other structure. 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 analysis is dominant. In the mid-west, two-point is 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 trend. If you are successful and competent enough, you can break the trend and follow your own structural preferences.

Internal Structure (Structure within Points)

While the above section may have contained information that you already knew, the next section may introduce a concept that has been, to this point, elusive. Many extempers believe that structure in a speech refers to having two or three points plus an intro and a conclusion. There is much more to structuring a speech.

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 around there.

We discussed the *inverse triangle theory* in the intro section. The inverse triangle theory is perfect for your areas of analysis as well. Basically, to recap the theory, 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 days before nationals, now is not the time to try out this new theory, unless you have ample practice time beforehand. 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 it is practiced, however, it can become like second nature, and your speaking will improve.

Let us now examine the outline of a well-structured point:

I. Tag Line

A. Broad analysis (this can sometimes be background information)

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

B. Specific situational analysis

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

C. Recap

The tag line was described in detail in the section on Unified Analysis. It is the most broad statement you could possibly make about the point that you are arguing. For instance, if asked about the possibility of campaign finance reform being implemented, you might answer, *no*. A tag line for one of your main points would be, "*Soft money is too attractive to incumbents.*" 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. However, upon examining the issue of campaign finance reform, we will understand more clearly that the advantage stems not from publicity or name-recognition, but from the money that flows in from all sources.

You can see how the broad analysis will now lead into more specific analysis to prove your point. This bit of postulation may be followed by a statistic that tells listeners that 90% of incumbents are re-elected (note: this statistic is an estimate based on statistics that are out there, you will have to do your own research for a speech).

Another possibility is to *start* with a citation to create a thesis. In a recent practice with a student, she opened a point on gun control with a cite. It was done in a particularly brilliant manner that follows the inverted triangle theory.

The Boston Globe of April 2, 2000 reports that, from 1890 to 1994, over seventy-four million handguns have been purchased in the United States. With all of these handguns in circulation, the call for safer guns has become a loud cry. Maryland's recent handgun legislation has shown the trend in the United States is to move toward gun locks and other safety devices.

The point that the young lady was making was that the Second Amendment was not dying, but being protected by the Smith and Wesson decision to manufacture weapons with gunlocks. While the statement above does not seem particularly specific to that argument, she was able to make it so with her later analysis. Thus, whether you begin with a thesis or use a source citation to create a thesis, the bottom line is to begin with a broad argument and move to a specific one.

The second part of any area of analysis is the "specific situational analysis." This is where you tie in the broad analysis (the theory analysis) to the more specific (the situational analysis). Returning to the campaign finance example, a speaker would want to link the theory that incumbents oppose reform to an actual situation. If one could find a congressperson, for example, who has spoken out on the issue, or a statistic that specifically supports your argument, you're in business.

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 "recap" is to take the information that you just gave, synthesize it, and related it back to the question. 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. Let us now look at a sample point from that gun control speech mentioned above. The question that was posed to the speaker was, "*Will the recent Smith and Wesson settlement mean death to the second amendment?*" The speaker is answering *no* and her first area of analysis was that the *settlement would assist citizens in retaining their right to bare arms.* (To those who are unfamiliar, Smith and Wesson, America's largest handgun manufacturer, agreed to sell guns only with trigger locks and other safety devices.) Notice the inverse triangle theory put into practice.

Smith and Wesson's decision to place trigger locks on weapons will not jeopardize the right of citizens to keep and bare arms. In fact, the second amendment will now thrive. The Boston Globe of April 2, 2000 reports that between 1889 and 1994, over seventy

million handguns were purchased in the United States. With all of these weapons in circulation, the call for safer guns has become a loud cry. Many would conclude that the second amendment would be in dire straits because more regulations are being placed on it, but, in fact, it will survive because of the leadership of the country's largest gun maker. The New York Times explains on March 29, 2000 that the states' attorneys general are preparing to fight in court to receive monetary compensation for the handgun deaths that have occurred in their states. While it seems as though handgun makers may go the way of big tobacco, paying billions and jeopardizing their product, this will not be the case. The Smith and Wesson settlement precludes this gun maker from being sued by the federal government. Instead of placing itself in the line of fire, Smith and Wesson has fought, through this compromise, to keep its company and product safe. Not only will Smith and Wesson survive attacks from the federal level, but it will thrive in liberal states as well. The Wall Street Journal of April 4, 2000 reports that Maryland has passed some of the most radical gun safety laws ever. Maryland's new law requires guns to have internal trigger locks if purchased in the state of Maryland after January 2003. This seeming assault on gun companies will not affect most of the gun makers if they choose to follow the example of Smith and Wesson. In fact, Smith and Wesson has secured for the other gun manufacturers, assurances that they will be protected if they move toward safer weapons. In the end, on both a national and a state level, weapons will become safer, not more scarce.

In the above example, we can see clearly how the speaker moves from the broad to the more specific. The argument begins by giving us a very vague statistic that opens the door for her analysis. By establishing a context in which to operate, the speaker makes her point easier to follow. She has crafted a point that begins with broad theory, applies it to the national level, and then takes it to an individual state level. While this *step-by-step national to state analysis* is not always possible, it is one effective way of using the inverted triangle theory.

Notice also that the speaker, at the end of the point, returns to the question. This is vital to your internal structure as well as the success of your argument.

Many times, extempers get so caught up in their own analysis that they forget to relate back to the question.

What was once a topical, in-depth speech becomes a tangential talk on the vague topic that the question was related to. Re-answering the question at the end of every main point forces the speaker to keep him or herself on topic.

Transition

You will notice that in every single outline above, there has been mention of "transitions." These elusive elements of extemporaneous speaking are essential to a well-crafted speech. **Many institutes now are teaching speakers to use somewhat disparate quotes to tie their main points together. There is one problem with this technique: Many times it is artificial and unrelated to the specific question.**

The best way to transition is to be brief and move on to your next point with a bit of style. You will hear many speaker utter things like, "Now, let's move on to our second area of analysis..." This is NOT a transition. You need to dress it up a bit. In the example point offered, there would be a much more stylish way to advance into your next point.

Gun manufacturers have taken the first step to insure that the second amendment will be protected. Another group has also done its best to secure the right to bare arms. As long as the NRA remains influential, the second amendment is safe.

This transition does everything that you want a speaker to do. First, it briefly recaps the previous point, and then segues gently into the next point, leaving the tag line intact. If there is a common thread that can be found for the points that you are transitioning between, you will find your job much easier. In the above example the speaker points out that gun makers are helping themselves, and others are helping the gun industry. The link is as simple as that. Sometimes you may have to stretch a bit to establish that link, but it can be done.

Conclusion

If you can form a clear roadmap for your listener, your speech will flow much more smoothly. Again, remember that making your speech *clear* is priority number one. Making it *entertaining* is a secondary priority but one that starts with proper and careful structuring. While it is not a glamorous part of extemping, it is an important one. Master this component and extemp will be an easier event.

Chapter 7

Filing and Cutting

For extempers, files can be those annoying things you are forced to carry to every tournament, or your savior when you get a question on a topic you've never heard of before. Either way, they are essential elements in any extemporaneous speaker's arsenal. Many extempers have misconceptions about filing and cutting. As a speaker I relied on my files for several speeches (including a final round at nationals on a topic that I was fully unfamiliar with). Files can save you in a crunch, help you in a bind, and illuminate a topic that otherwise would be confusing to yourself or a judge.

This chapter has two purposes. First, we will look at filing *systems* and organizational tips for filing. Second, we will examine the art of *cutting* articles for extemp.

Filing

Filing for extemp is something of personal taste. Over time, you will find what works and what does not work for you and your team. In your quest to develop a filing system for your team, keep these suggestions in mind with the understanding that they are not the definitive answer for how to file, just a suggestion to make it easier. The systems and techniques discussed here have evolved over time from several different teams, many different speakers, and the input of dozens of people.

Systems for Filing

As there are undoubtedly both NCFL and NFL extempers reading this book, it is important to cover both types of filing. On an NFL team, assuming that there are both domestic and foreign extempers on the team, it would be wise to separate the files into different boxes.

The first step toward filing is to pick the topics that you will cover. An example index is included at the end of this chapter that is fairly exhaustive in its approach to topics. Many teams tend to file everything *alphabetically*. Under that theory, we would file each country individually, starting with Andorra and ending with Zambia. This is the way most extempers file. **Remembering that the thirty minutes of prep time is not much time at all, there must be a more efficient way.**

The first division that should be made is between foreign and domestic.

They should be kept in separate boxes, almost as if they were separate file systems altogether.

Instead of filing simply by country name or headings like "Social Security," there should be larger group headings. Separating the foreign folders by continent, and using headings like "world organizations," "international economy," and "international environment," your files will be much more accessible.

The question might be asked, *Why not just use alphabetical order, this seems more confusing?* While the system might seem more confusing, it is, in fact, more convenient for the advanced extemper. **When there are complex questions asked, or when a simple question requires a complex answer, you will have related file folders close at hand.** How many questions really can be answered using one file folder? Very few. For this reason, it is to your great advantage to have related folders in close proximity to each other in the file boxes.

Your files should be arranged using large *hanging* file folders with *manila* folders for the sub-headings. The hanging folders will have headings like "Europe" or "Asia," while the manila folders will have subheadings including country names. So, under the heading "Europe," you would find a manila folder "England." You will also need more specific subheadings like "Economy" and even "Royal Family." These subheadings should be alphabetical within their main file folders (If this seems confusing, take a look at the sample index to get a better idea of what I am talking about.)

While your main headings in your file folders will remain largely unchanged throughout your years of competition (it is unlikely that a new continent will spring up), your sub-folders must change almost constantly.

Sure there will be some folders that never change (Spain is not going anywhere), some folders will have to be changed from month to month, and new folders will have to be added with great frequency. Using an example from 1999 might be most effective in illustrating this. While the Elian Gonzalez story was front-page news for several months, it is not likely to be a story in the coming years. As a result, under the heading Cuba, Elian Gonzalez would be a file folder that will outlive its usefulness and should be removed when no longer necessary.

Many extempers treat their file folders like a static entity. This would mean filing the Elian Gonzalez story under the heading "Cuba" and leaving it at that. There are obvious drawbacks to this strategy. First, you must wade through tens, possibly hundreds of articles to find a few stories on the Cuban embargo. By creating subheadings frequently when necessary, you will significantly reduce the time necessary to find appropriate articles once you are given a question. Second, having separate subheadings lets you know when you are low on certain topics. After all, you might have many articles on England's economy, but you could be lacking articles on the Royal Family. Separate headings let you know where you stand.

Creating the same type of file system for an NCFL extemper is no different. You may choose to follow the NFL method and have separate boxes for foreign and domestic, or you may combine them into one file system. Either way, follow the above guides (with the help of the sample index) and you will be able to assemble a proper file.

Organizational Tips for Filing

After you have decided on a style for filing, you need to do everything in your power to keep the files organized. This means everything from numbering your file folders, to labeling them properly.

The first step toward filing effectively and having your articles readily at hand is to number all of your files from the beginning of the file box to the end.

The advantage of numbering is that, when filing, instead of placing a slug on the top of the article like "England, Tony Blair," one can simply write the number of the file folder in which it belongs. Second, when cleaning up at the end of a tournament, you can find where the wayward articles belong in a snap. Simply locate the number on the article, and then place the article back in the like numbered folder. Trust me when I tell you that it can save hours in labor when you are tired, ready to go home, and don't feel like dealing with extemp anymore.

Numbering the file folders may seem limiting. After all, I just told you that you should add folders when necessary. Numbering the folders would seem to make this difficult. If, however, you must add a folder, there is a simple way to solve the problem. If a new topic should appear between numbers 115 and 116, simply number it 115a and you've solved your dilemma.

Aside from numbering the file folders, I believe that being as neat as possible is a virtue.

Consider typing up the labels for your file boxes.

This provides two advantages. First, the neat appearance of the files will encourage other team members to handle the files respectfully. Second, and more practically, you will have a record of every file folder already entered into your computer so that composing an index will be easy.

"Cutting" Articles

Cutting articles, literally clipping them from newspapers or downloading them, is not an exact science. Over the next few pages I will cover three main topic areas:

- cutting as a team
- what to cut
- where to find your articles.

Cutting as a Team

As I discussed early on in this work, extemporaneous speaking is and should be a team event. There is no way that a single extemper can achieve the cutting volume of an entire team

working together. Working together will create a pulled source of knowledge, combine your areas of expertise, and create a team atmosphere that will help everyone grow as a speaker. There are, however, inevitable difficulties that you should deal with *before* the forensics season even begins.

Assigning different members of the team different topics is an idea that will pay hefty dividends. This can be done in one of two ways. First, if you cut the old fashioned way (using a set number of newspapers and magazines) each team member should be assigned specific publications to cut and file. Second, if most of your filing is done via the internet, it may be possible to assign specific topic areas for team members to cut. Regardless of how you decide to cut, it is recommended that **at least one team member be assigned to internet cuts.** The reason for this is simple. It might not be within your team's budget to subscribe to the Los Angeles Times if you are on the East Coast. It is possible, however, to log on, download, and obtain sources that would otherwise be forgotten.

Once you have given assignments for cutting, it is essential to **set deadlines** for those cuttings. One suggestion is to have members of the extemp team sign a contract pledging to follow their assignments. Even when I was competing collegiately, there were certain times when assignments were not done on time, not done well, or not done at all. Our general rule was, one mistake can be forgiven. After that, sanctions were necessary. Keeping an extemper from competing at the next tournament for a second violation of the rules should be considered. Obviously, this is not a decision that you can make unilaterally, it is a decision that needs the agreement of your coach. In most cases, it should not be difficult to encourage people to have their cuts done on time and filed properly. As the veteran member of the team, it is your responsibility to ensure that the files are being maintained properly.

With the boring preliminaries out of the way, we can now discuss the expectations you should have for the files.

While it is generally acceptable for high school extempers to use articles as old as one calendar year, your goal should be to keep the files much more current. It is my belief that your files should be kept three months current.

Obviously, some file folders will need background that goes back even further than that (you may prefer to have a "Background" folder under some major topic headings). Keeping the files current means that you will have the most cutting-edge and appropriate analysis at your fingertips. To achieve this goal, the team needs to be actively cutting constantly. Moreover, everyone must be diligent so that no one file topic goes neglected.

To keep the files this current, you will have to make room for new articles by getting rid of older articles. This process, referred to as "*purging*" the files.

Purging should be done three times a year. It should be done once at the beginning of the season, once after the holiday break, and once before nationals.

Every time the files are purged it should be done as a team. This way, the team can decide on which articles should stay in the folders. Purging is essential because it keeps file folders from becoming burdensomely full.

What to Cut

There are obviously a countless number of items that you want to cut for your files to be full and useful for every question that you draw. However, there are certain types of articles that are helpful on every subject.

Statistics, facts and figures are always helpful when trying to convince a judge that your position is correct. Most extempers believe that every article should have some statistical value to them. Likewise, they often highlight these statistics when putting the article in the file folders.

Editorial articles and commentary written by the editors of a newspaper, magazine, or journal can also be especially useful. While this information may seem biased, it is the very subjectivity of the content that will lend to its usefulness. Most articles (including those that are heavy on statistics) *report* the news. Editorials and commentaries *question* the news. Instead of just reporting on how many Branch Davidians were killed in the Waco disaster, an editorial would have questioned the wisdom of invading with armed federal agents. The value of this type of article becomes apparent.

The analysis of the editorial writer is often useful in an extemp speech.

Though you will often independently develop brilliant lines of analyses, it is also true that sometimes you need assistance for forming a point. Borrowing analysis in this manner (as long as you do not become addicted to it for every speech) can help you become a better speaker and can help your speeches mature. If you wish to use these types of articles, it becomes essential to learn what analysis is useful and what can be discarded.

Human-interest articles can also provide a treasure trove of information, analysis, and simply interesting information for use in your speech. These articles often cover the "story behind the story." Instead of covering the devastation of a flood and reporting on the numbers left homeless or dead, a human-interest story may cover the plight of one family who lost it all. Or perhaps it will cover one young man who lost his entire family and must start over.

The stories offered in these types of articles often provide the tidbits of information that your speech needs, an extra bit of style or flash that your opponent might not have.

The **expert-written article** adds a touch to your speech that many will find exceedingly persuasive. An article on immigration written by Janet Reno, or an item written about the Irish Peace Process by Gerry Adams will **add credibility that your words alone might not have**. These types of articles can often be found in journals and magazines (and occasionally in newspapers). An article written by an expert in a field will give insight that you may never have

had. After all, this person has spent his or her life devoted to an issue of great importance while you are still a high school student with limited experience in world affairs.

Naturally, you still want to cut many normal news articles on every subject imaginable. These articles give you the full story and help you to formulate your own analysis on the issues. As a beginning extemper, you may have passed by editorial articles because they were seemingly biased, but the types of articles listed above will simply help you to form a more complete analysis of the question.

Where to Find Cuts

Now that you know what to cut, knowing where to find it is essential. Obviously, the first step is to get your hands on normal **national newspapers**. The next chapter examines the types of sources that you might use and specifically examines the newspapers, magazines, and journals that are worthy of an extemp speech. Nothing will substitute for the practice of getting some newsprint on your hands, cutting and pasting newspapers. Newspapers like the New York Times have all of the articles listed above, as well as news articles that will give you the full story. But newspapers are boring, and you already knew that they were important to extemp. So, beyond the normal, where should the advanced extemper look for sources and articles?

The **internet** obviously provides opportunities that extempers of old never had. There are countless sources of information (after all, it is the information super highway). Not all of these sources, however, are *reliable*. When trying to decide on what to use in your speech or where to cut your articles from, it is essential that you examine the reliability. The *Drudge Report*, for instance, might seem a great source for information and extemp cuts. On further examination, one might argue that the Report is actually a fairly right wing publication with information that has not always been verified and many times is exaggerated. Moreover, hearing a reference to the *Drudge Report* will set off warning bells in the head of any judge who is moderate to liberal. While sources like the *Drudge Report* can be helpful in finding out what type of news is out there, they should be avoided when actually delivering your speech.

One specific problem presented by internet information is that there are so many sources and so little time in which to view them that it often becomes frustrating for an extemper to navigate the net and sort through the trash for the "good stuff." One obvious solution to this problem would be to use internet **search engines**. These are helpful in many cases, with a few exceptions. Using a search engine like *Yahoo* to find information can be of great value, as long as you pay attention to where that information is coming from. If you use the search term "news" on Yahoo, you will likely be presented with options including Yahoo News. These internal news services are often provided by wire services. They can be helpful, but usually are incomplete in their telling of the story. **Wire services** often report on stories as they happen. They do their best to be accurate, but mistakes are made, and retractions are issued. These retractions are sometimes not clear to those viewing the news. Moreover, citing something like *Yahoo News* is going to lack the credibility that a major established news service will have.

Having said the above, it is more desirable to cite an actual wire service than a search engine. Wire services may not be completely reliable, but they can at least get a fairly accurate account of the story.

And, if you pay attention to the most updated form of a story, you will likely find information that is close to one hundred percent accurate. After all, most major newspapers get much of their information from the wire services themselves.

Though we've begun to explore it, we still have not overcome the issue of how to wade through the tons of information to find the most reliable, compelling and useful information. **To this end, Victory Briefs has established a web site that compiles many (though not all) of the reliable and useful news sites on the net. The site can be found at www.victorybriefs.net/ext-links.html.** This web site is based on a site that I formed for use by myself and teammates when competing for St. Joseph's University. Conceivably, one could use the links on this site alone to cut extemp. However, there are other resources on the internet that are even more useful.

Lexis-Nexis is a company that reprints articles from just about every imaginable news publication. They are searchable and make extemp cutting easy and quick. While it may eat up your printer cartridge to print all of the articles that you need, when it comes to time and money saved on subscriptions, it may be well worth it. Unfortunately, Lexis-Nexis is not readily available to just anyone, and its subscription fee may be out of reach for most, but the company has recently launched an education friendly site known as **Academic Universe**. Academic Universe is subscribed to my many universities and even some high schools. Calling local universities to find the availability of this service is worth your time. Moreover, if your high school has the budget available, it may be worth its time as well. Lexis-Nexis is useful for research papers as well as extemp, so it may appeal to administrators on more than one level.

While it is difficult to direct you exactly where to find information, it is clear that the internet has opened new doors to extempers. Using that information wisely is essential for an effective speech.

Remember that the reliability of information will always be in question. You too must question this information and dispel the worries that a judge might have. Wherever you find your sources, make sure they are reliable, unbiased, and useful for your purposes.

Sample File Index
(Combined US and Foreign)

Africa

1. Africa
2. Africa - Economy
3. Algeria
4. Angola
5. Burundi
6. Congo
7. Ethiopia
8. Ghana
9. Kenya
10. Libya
11. Nigeria
12. Sierra Leone
13. Rwanda
14. Somalia
15. South Africa
16. Sudan
17. Uganda
18. Zambia

Agriculture

19. Agriculture

Aid Programs

20. Aid Programs
21. Corporate Welfare
22. Foreign Aid
23. Housing
24. Medicare
25. Medicaid
26. Social Security
27. Welfare

Arts

28. Arts
29. National Endowment for the Arts

Asia

30. APEC/ASEAN
31. Asia - Economy
32. Asia - Environment
33. Asia - General
34. Burma
35. Cambodia
- 35a. China - General
36. China - Economy
37. China - Human Rights
38. China - Leaders
39. China - Politics
40. China - Provinces
41. China/US Relations
42. India
43. India - Economy
- 43a. India - Foreign Rel.
44. Hong Kong
- 44a. Hong Kong - Econ.
- 44b. Hong Kong - Pol.
45. Indonesia
46. Indonesia - Economy
- 46a. Japan - General
47. Japan - Banks
48. Japan - Economy
49. Japan - Markets
50. Japan - Politics
51. Japan - Reform
52. Japan/US Relations
53. Japan - Yen
54. Korean Talks
55. Malaysia
56. Nepal
57. North Korea
- 57a. North Korea - Pol.
- 57b. North Korea - Econ.
- 57c. North Korea/US Rel.
58. Philippines
59. Singapore
60. South Korea
61. South Korea - Economy

- 61a. South Korea - Pol.
- 61b. South Korea/US Rel.
- 62. Sri Lanka
- 63. Taiwan
- 64. Thailand
- 65. Tibet
- 66. Vietnam
- 67. Vietnam/US Relations

Australia

- 68. Australia

Cabinet

- 69. Cabinet
- 70. Albright
- 71. Commerce
- 72. Reno
- 73. Treasury

Central America

- 74. Central America
- 75. Cuba
- 75a. Cuba - Economy
- 75b. Cuba - Castro
- 75c. Cuba/US Relations
- 76. Ecuador
- 77. Haiti
- 78. Honduras
- 79. Nicaragua

Communication

- 80. Communication
- 80a. Computers
- 81. Internet
- 82. Media
- 83. Microsoft
- 84. Television
- 85. Telecom
- 85a. Y2K Problem

Defense

- 86. Chemical Weapons
- 87. Contracts
- 88. Crashes
- 89. Defense
- 90. Missile Defense
- 91. Nuclear Arms
- 92. Sexual Harassment

Democrats

- 93. Democrats
- 94. DNC
- 95. Gephart
- 96. 2000
- 96a. Gore 2000
- 96b. Bradley 2000
- 96c. Hillary – Senate

Domestic Economy

- 97. Banking
- 98. Computers
- 99. Corporate America
- 100. Consumer Price Index
- 101. Crashes
- 102. Currency
- 103. Deregulation
- 104. Domestic Economy
- 105. FED
- 106. Funds
- 107. Growth
- 108. High Tech Stocks
- 109. Hollywood
- 110. Indicators
- 111. Inflation
- 112. Interest Rates
- 113. Jobs
- 114. Mergers
- 115. Privatization
- 116. Savings/Retirement
- 117. Securities
- 118. Small Business
- 119. Taxes
- 120. Trade

- 121. Trade Deficit
- 122. Wages
- 123. Wall Street

Drugs

- 124. Drugs
- 125. Drug Education

Eastern Europe

- 126. Albania
- 126a. Kosovo
- 126b. Kosovo/US Involv.
- 126c. Kosovo/Refugees
- 126d. Kosovo/Ground Trps.
- 127. Bosnia
- 128. Bulgaria
- 129. Croatia
- 130. Czech Republic
- 131. Eastern Europe
- 132. Former Yugoslavia
- 133. Hungary
- 134. Poland
- 135. Romania
- 136. Serbia
- 136a. Milosevic
- 137. Slovakia
- 138. Slovenia

Education

- 139. Education
- 140. Higher Education
- 141. Education Reform

Energy/Environment

- 142. Air
- 143. El Nino
- 144. Environment
- 145. Energy
- 146. Oil
- 147. Utilities

Europe

- 148. Austria
- 149. Tony Blair
- 150. Jacques Chirac
- 151. Cyprus
- 152. Belgium
- 153. Denmark
- 154. Europe
- 155. European Union
- 156. Euro
- 157. France
- 157a. France - Politics
- 158. France - Economy
- 159. Germany
- 160. Germany - Economy
- 161. Germany - Schroeder
- 161a. Germany - Politics
- 162. Great Britain
- 162a. Great Britain - Pol.
- 163. Great Britain - Labour
- 164. Great Britain - Tories
- 165. Greece
- 166. Ireland
- 167. Irish Peace Process
- 167a. Sinn Fein/IRA
- 168. Italy
- 169. Netherlands
- 170. Royalty
- 171. Spain
- 172. Scandinavia
- 173. Switzerland

Executive Branch

- 174. Campaign Reform
- 175. Campaign Scandal
- 176. Bush
- 177. Bush - Economy
- 178. Bush- Iraq
- 179. Executive Branch
- 180. Cheney
- 181. Hillary Clinton
- 182. Clinton information

Government Agencies

- 183. CIA
- 184. FBI
- 185. FDA
- 186. Government Agencies
- 187. HUD
- 188. IRS
- 189. NASA
- 190. Post Office

Health and Science

- 191. AIDS
- 192. Cancer
- 193. Health and Science
- 194. Immigration

International Economy

- 195. Banking
- 196. Currency
- 197. Euro Dollar
- 198. Globalization
- 199. IMF/WorldBank
- 200. International Economy
- 201. NAFTA
- 202. OPEC
- 203. Privatization
- 204. Trade
- 205. WTO

International Organization

- 206. International Organizations
- 207. NATO
- 208. NATO - Russia
- 209. UN
- 210. WHO

Judicial Branch

- 211. Hot Cases
- 212. Judicial Branch
- 213. Supreme Court

Labor

- 214. Child Labor
- 215. Labor
- 216. Labor Unions

Land Mines

- 217. Land Mines

Legislative Branch

- 218. Balanced Budget
- 219. Budget
- 220. Campaign Reform
- 221. Campaign Scandal
- 222. Foreign Aid
- 223. Gun Control
- 224. Hot Legislation
- 225. Legislative Branch
- 226. Line Item Veto
- 227. Taxes
- 228. Term Limits
- 229. Trade Issues
- 230. Wages

Middle East

- 231. Afghanistan
- 232. Algeria
- 233. Egypt
- 234. Hamas
- 234a. Israel - General
- 235. Israel - Economy
- 235a. Israel - Netanyahu
- 236. Israel - Politics
- 237. Islamic Fundamentalism
- 238. Iran
- 239. Iraq
- 240. Iraq - Hussein
- 241. Iraq - Military
- 242. Iraq - Economy
- 243. Iraq/US Relations
- 244. Jordan
- 245. Kuwait
- 246. Lebanon

- 247. Libya
- 248. Middle East
- 249. Pakistan
- 250. Palestine
- 251. Peace Process
- 252. Saudi Arabia
- 253. Syria
- 254. Terrorism
- 255. Turkey

North America

- 256. Canada
- 256a. Canada - Economy
- 256b. Canada - Quebec
- 257. Caribbean
- 258. Mexico
- 259. Mexico - Politics
- 260. Mexico - Economy
- 261. Mexico/US Relations
- 262. North America
- 263. Puerto Rico
- 264. Puerto Rico – Statehood

Regional Issues

- 265. California
- 266. DC
- 267. Natural Disasters
- 268. Regional Issues

Republicans

- 269. Campaign Reform
- 270. Dennis Hastert
- 271. Trent Lott
- 272. Republicans
- 273. 2000
- 273a. George W. Bush
- 273b. Liddy Dole
- 273c. Steve Forbes
- 273d. Lamar Alexander
- 273e. Bauer/Buchanan

Russia

- 274. Cabinet
- 275. Chechnya
- 276. Defense/Military
- 277. Economics
- 278. Former Soviet Republics
- 278a. Ukraine
- 278b. Belarus
- 279. Future Leaders
- 280. Alexander Lebed
- 281. Reform
- 282. Politics
- 283. US Relations
- 284. Putin

Social Issues

- 285. Abortion
- 286. Affirmative Action
- 287. Crime
- 288. Cults
- 289. Death Penalty
- 290. Gender Issues
- 291. Health Care
- 292. Homelessness
- 293. Homosexuality
- 294. Militias
- 295. Privacy
- 296. Racism
- 297. Religious Right
- 297a. Religion - General
- 297b. Religion - Pope
- 298. Right to Die
- 299. Sex Crimes
- 300. Social Issues
- 301. Terrorism
- 302. Tobacco
- 303. Unemployment

South America

- 304. Argentina
- 305. Bolivia
- 306. Brazil
- 306a. Brazil - Economy

- 306b. Brazil - Politics
- 307. Chile
- 308. Colombia
- 309. Guatemala
- 310. Peru
- 311. South America
- 312. South America - Economy
- 313. Venezuela

Sports

- 314. Sports
- 315. Sports - College
- 315a. International Olympic Committee

Transportation

- 316. Airlines
- 317. Airlines - Crashes
- 318. Airlines - Strikes
- 319. Big 3 Automakers
- 320. Transportation
- 321. Trains

Third World

- 322. Third World

Third Parties

- 323. Third Parties

Chapter 8

An Examination of Sources

This chapter has an ambitious aim. It will be my attempt to examine the most widely used extemp sources (and some sources you may not have thought to use) for their reliability, specialties, and areas of expertise. While there is no possible way of covering the entire gamut of newspapers, magazines and journals, the best effort will be made to cover as many sources as possible. **Lest you fear that you will not find these sources on the internet or your newsstand travails, most of them can be found on the Victory Briefs web site.**

When an advanced extemper is looking to cut sources, it should be done from several different perspectives. First of all, you are looking for sound information as well as analysis. However, you also are looking to wow the judge. Using sources that clearly demonstrate a specialty in the field or an expertise not found elsewhere can be impressive. I often would cut strange sources for my file. Citing something like *Serbia Now* online can be very influential in a close round when it comes to separating the “one” from the “two.”

Newspapers

Christian Science Monitor - Don't let the name fool you. This daily newspaper out of Boston, Massachusetts, is one of the most objective in the world. The Monitor covers domestic and foreign issues with a well-rounded, accurate approach that is refreshing when compared to other dailies. Especially valuable to the extemper is the emphasis given to spotting trends in world politics as well as business, industry and culture. **An advanced extemper should seriously consider subscribing or cutting this newspaper from the web on a daily basis.**

Investor's Business Daily - This daily newspaper (as the name hints) focuses on economic news. For analysis of the stock market, there are few publications that compete. The IBD puts things in fairly plain English. Moreover, it covers the news of the day with an economic spin.

Los Angeles Times - This daily newspaper is one of the most respected national papers in the United States. It covers domestic and foreign issues reliably. There may be a slightly liberal influence in the Los Angeles Times, but it is accepted as a reliable source that can be used on almost every issue.

New York Times - This mainstay of the American journalistic community is one of the most rewarded and respected sources for national and international news. While the likes of Rush Limbaugh may believe the Times is too liberally biased, it is accepted as the benchmark of American newspapers. Some editions around the country feature regional news in addition to the full coverage of national and international issues. The short news

summaries on the inside front cover of the newspaper make it easily navigable. **A fantastic web site makes the paper the perfect addition to any extemp file.**

Washington Post - This Washington "insider" is another respected national paper that covers politics and national news with accuracy and insight. Moreover, the Post covers international news with the same zeal and effectiveness. The Post's thorough coverage of international affairs (they have sixteen foreign bureaus) makes this paper a worthwhile subscription for the team that has both foreign and domestic extempers. The Post's investigative journalism looks into government policies and actions on The Hill. It tends to have a liberal slant

Washington Times - This conservative counterweight to the Washington Post is more questionable in its reliability. Some believe that this paper is somewhat biased in its presentation of many issues but there is, to be sure, a lot of value to be found between its pages.

Wall Street Journal - This New York based newspaper is the **definitive publication dealing with the stock market and economic issues.** While the paper may be dry and technical at points, it is also extremely useful for the domestic or foreign extemper who wishes to grasp difficult economic issues. Experts in the field write many of the articles in the Wall Street Journal. Their analysis is usually dead on (well, at least as dead on as stock predicting and economic prognostication can be.)

Toronto Star - A good source for international news and Canadian domestic news. The Star has won numerous National Newspaper Awards for excellent coverage of top stories both domestically and internationally.

Financial Post of Canada - This source may not be well known, but it does cover North American economic issues extensively and accurately. Canadian economic news is covered extensively (yes, there is a Canadian economy) and the American economy is examined as well.

Montreal Gazette - This Canadian Daily is useful for international news as well as domestic news. Also, this source can be used for insight into the Quebec Separatist movement. Using sources specifically for one issue can be an interesting way to expand your knowledge on those issues.

Calgary Herald - This newspaper is largely focused on Calgary news and sometimes is less than useful. There is some coverage of international news and can occasionally provide a useful article or two.

Middle East Times - This newspaper is updated frequently on the net. It is based in Egypt and gives a distinctly Arabic take on the Middle East peace process. Though there is a bit of a bias, it does not distort the information enough to make it useless.

Financial Times - This London based newspaper is the **definitive international economic daily**. It covers European economic issues accurately. Also, the FT covers US economics and stocks around the world. The FT covers business mergers, acquisitions and earnings. While extempers may have to wade through some very specific UK business news to find the world economic news they are looking for, it is a worthwhile search. This is a "must cut" source for your files. It can be found at most large newsstands or on the net.

Manchester Guardian - This English Daily is a decent source for news information. Considering that the FT covers many of the same issues in a much more in depth manner, you may skip the Guardian. Also, some of the articles in the Guardian have a distinctively tabloid feel to them.

Le Monde Diplomatique - What a cool source to cite in a speech! More importantly, this French newspaper's English edition offers a look at European issues, and international issues as well. While the web site does not carry the full edition, it does offer a smattering of articles that can be useful.

International Herald Tribune - This Paris based daily is owned by the same company that owns the Washington Post and the New York Times. As such, its reputation is beyond reproach. Many of the articles from the Post and the Times end up in the IHT as well. There are also other articles that offer a distinctive look at international and US issues. On top of all of this, the web site is fantastically useful.

South China Morning Post - Don't let the name fool you. This paper is not the tool of the Communist government of China. Actually, this Hong Kong based paper is a fairly objective Asian news source that covers issues on the Pacific Rim in an in depth manner. The South China Morning Post web site is useful and easy to navigate.

Hong Kong Standard - Covers specific Asian news that might not be found in other publications.

The Statesman - This newspaper based in India is the most widely read English paper in India. The Calcutta based Statesman covers the India/Pakistan issues.

The Irish Times - This Dublin based paper covers international issues brilliantly. Its coverage of the peace process in Northern Ireland in particular cannot be beat. Check out the archives to find important documents in the history of the peace process. Bureaus around the world cover international affairs objectively and in-depth.

Jerusalem Post – This English language daily covers breaking news in Israel and throughout the Middle East. With in-depth coverage and insight into the confusing world of Israeli politics, the Jerusalem Post can be a wonderful resource for foreign extempers. During Israeli elections, the paper reads like a Complete Idiot's Guide to Israeli Politics. With the complex nature of the Israeli multi-party, coalition-building government, this

paper should be on your “**must cut**” list before big tournaments or during any time the Middle East jumps to the forefront of world issues. Their internet site is most helpful.

Journal of Commerce – This daily international newspaper covers specifically the trade and transportation industries. While many of the articles will be far more specific than necessary, major issues will be covered thoroughly with accurate, interesting analysis. This newspaper should be **cut at least occasionally to supplement your international trade files.**

Magazines and Journals

Congressional Quarterly – Published out of Washington, DC, CQ is an insider’s source on the workings of congress. Beltway insiders receive updates daily via email. CQ weekly, however, is a recap of these weekly updates and places issues in concise, accurate articles that are easy to understand and provide excellent facts and figures. This resource is **worth the occasional investment by a domestic extemper.**

National Review – Founded by William F. Buckley, this conservative magazine is considered too far right wing by many judges to be sourced. In some cases, however, this source may be valuable, if not to cite in a speech, instead to simply find ideas for analysis.

Asiaweek – This weekly is published by Time and gives editorial and news coverage to events in Asia and the Pacific Rim. Unfortunately, though it sounds cool to say *...according to Asiaweek...* in a speech, the analysis offered in this publication is much like its parent magazine, **somewhat lacking in substance.**

Business Week – This weekly publication is not limited to specific business news, but instead covers every issue related to and affecting business. This means that Business Week offers unique insight on how important issues will influence the economy and affect business in the United States as well as abroad. Business Week offers several editorials in every issue that explore and analyze a wide variety of issues. **This magazine should find its way into your file box as often as possible.**

Campaigns and Elections – This magazine is unique in that it does not usually cover the news of specific campaigns or elections. Instead, this publication (which is bimonthly) covers the trends in campaigning and elections. C&E can be an interesting addition to the files on occasion, especially during important elections virtually anywhere around the world.

The New Republic – This fairly liberally biased political magazine offers insight into political and social issues making headlines around the world. The New Republic features cover stories that make waves and unearth important issues. **Many may view the New Republic as being biased, so be forewarned when citing it in a speech.**

The Weekly Standard – This weekly conservative journal is highly opinionated, and in some cases, biased on issues. **Many will have a real aversion to an extemper citing this in a speech and you may wish to steer clear unless the analysis is top-notch and unable to be located anywhere else in the file box.** Do not go out of your way to file this one.

Jane's – I list this as Jane's but it should be known that there are actually several publications being considered here. Jane's publishes Jane's Defense Weekly, as well as about a half dozen other specialty magazines that deal with aviation issues and military happenings. The analysis offered (especially in Jane's Defense Weekly) is fantastic and invaluable. This may be a tough publication but it can be found (in limited scope) on line as well as part of Academic Universe.

Time – **One of the Big Three (including Newsweek and US News and World Report) that I recommend the extemper avoid if possible.** Sure, Time covers the main issues and is an enjoyable read, but the analysis is less than groundbreaking and borders on fluffy. Time is an old standby for the beginning and moderate extemper. To move further in the ranks, attempt to find more complex analysis from a more reputable source.

US News & World Report – Also known in the extemp community as Useless News and World Distort, this magazine should also be avoided if possible. While its coverage slightly exceeds the breadth of Time's, its depth is similar. Neat graphics and tables make it an easy read, but **anecdotal reporting makes it a fairly useless tool for the extemper.**

Newsweek – Also known as News Weak in the extemp community, this publication should be avoided because, as in the case of Time and US News, it simply **does not go into the depth of analysis necessary for a successful advanced extemp speech.** Invest your (or your school's) hard earned money on something more substantial.

Foreign Affairs – This true journal of Foreign issues covers the gamut of the United States' foreign policy goals and interests. It covers trends in world politics in lengthy articles written by some of the most influential political scientists and international affairs experts in the world. Many expert articles can be found between its covers (Henry Kissinger is a regular contributor) and it is an invaluable resource. **Many of its articles remain relevant for years after their publication** and can influence world events by themselves.

Political Science Quarterly – Journal articles are key for the advanced extemper. They take an in depth approach that could not possibly be matched in the shorter magazine pieces usually cited by the average extemper. Political Science Quarterly looks at political issues and trends with analysis from experts in the field. This journal deserves to be at least an **occasional addition** to your files.

Economist – **The veritable Bible of foreign and domestic extemp** (besides this book, of course). The Economist is a weekly, British based magazine with foreign and

European editions as well. Despite the name, the magazine covers politics, world affairs, cultural issues as well as economics. The Economist is filled cover to cover with essential information, analysis, and British wit that make the reading enjoyable and highly educational. Virtually every article in the Economist covers an issue that eventually could be an extemp question at a major tournament. Moreover, many Tournament Directors look to the Economist during the week of the tournament for assistance in writing their extemp questions. Subscribe to this magazine if it is the only magazine you order.

Internet Sources

Rulers - (www.geocities.com/Athens/1058/rulers.html) This is a really great source for trivia and extemp. It is a list of rulers from just about every country and territory that you could possibly imagine. More importantly, it lists past leaders also. Not only are the leaders of countries listed, but leaders of world organizations are listed as well. It is an alphabetical listing that goes as far back as 1800 in most cases! You can print out each country and file it in the appropriate file folder for easy access and reference.

FindLaw - (www.findlaw.com) This is a Yahoo! type search engine for legal matters. In fact, it is laid out in much the same way as Yahoo! It features categories much like the popular search engine which include Legal Subject Index, Laws, cases and codes, US Federal resources, Foreign and international, News and reference. This can be a helpful resource when there is an important case in the news that needs research. These resources will go beyond the fluffy coverage that you will get in normal periodicals.

Law and Politics: Internet Guide - (www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Lobby/5011/) This is yet another legal research resource. It can be used in much the same way as FindLaw and includes categories like Legal resources, Foreign and international law, Legal research and Foreign and international law journals. Most importantly, there is a category for treaties. This resource can be used for legal issues and especially **international legal research**.

Consumer Price Index Homepage - (<http://stats.bls.gov/cpihome.htm>) The Consumer Price Index is an invaluable economic indicator that can sway Wall Street. This resource will give you press releases, the updated index as well as related news stories. Domestic extempers should check this site occasionally for their economic file.

Public Opinion Polls on the Internet- (www.library.miami.edu/netguides/socopin.html) This is a wonderful source which links to virtually every opinion poll you can imagine. The various sites themselves also update regularly (most daily with new polls). **Opinion polls can be a great asset for citing in a speech.** Different categories on the site include Electronic journals, Databases, National polls, and polling organizations. Use this early and often to fill your files. An opinion poll on almost any important domestic issue can be found. Some foreign issues are covered as well.

Scholarly Journals Distributed via the World Wide Web -

(<http://info.uh.edu/wj/webjour.html>) This can be a useful source if you are willing to spend some time. An index on this site includes an alphabetical listing of English language journals that appear on the web without requiring registration or subscription fees. At least its free. Some of the journals may feature articles on current events issues and thus this cite is worth a perusal.

New England Journal of Medicine Online - (www.nejm.org/content/index.asp) This site features the famed New England Journal of Medicine... or at least part of it. A few journal articles are printed every month online. Many of these articles are far too technical to be of any use. However, when a major study is released, it might be worth printing it and putting it in the files.

Books and Other Publications

A Quick and Dirty Guide to War – This book, written by James F. Dunnigan is an excellent source for extempers. Dunnigan is a military expert and analyst who frequently appears on news shows to give his analysis of armed conflict. Dunnigan has reduced the history of armed conflict from around the world into a large volume broken down into easy to digest chapters that are equally easy to reference on short notice (such as prepping for a speech). A Quick and Dirty Guide also traces the history of armed conflicts back to their inception. This, however, is not limited in scope to the history of military actions. Dunnigan also takes care to situations and predict future outbreaks. Is he successful? Dunnigan predicted the Kosovo debacle years before anyone knew the word “Kosovo.” This work is an excellent primer in everything from the Northern Ireland conflict to the Middle East. This book should be considered **required reading by foreign extempers**.

Weird History 101 – Written by John Richard Stephens. This book presents numerous vignettes divided into several sections including Official Documents, Alternative Views, and Ignorance and Intelligence. All of the selections are bits of history or historical documents that are interesting, unique and all could be used for **introduction material**. While the book is not exactly material that will help you understand the nature of political conflict, it will give you several new ideas for introductions. Also, it makes for very interesting reading.

The People's Almanac Presents the Twentieth Century: History with the Boring Parts Left Out - Written by David Wallichinsky. This book is another in the series of People's Almanacs. These books present everything from the population of Luxembourg to a list of world records and weird stories. In the old Almanacs there was always a lot of introduction material. This new publication is much the same. However, this time you will get 921 pages of interesting stories, historical facts, and tons of information for use in speeches and introductions. Besides being valuable for extemp, it's just plain good reading.

The Almanac of American Politics 2005 - Written by Michael Barone and Grant Ujifusa. This is yet another Almanac (always great sources) but this one focuses on US domestic politics. Not only will you find a **profile on every member of congress and governor**, but you will also find their voting records, affiliations, awards and criticisms. There are also several grading systems listed to show a certain politician's political leanings, level of fiscal responsibility and social consciousness. A new Almanac is published every year, but it is worth the forty-five dollars.

Chapter 9

Sourcing

Anyone who has ever competed in extemp knows that sources are in some way needed before a speech can really be considered a true extemp speech. Despite this knowledge, many extempers, some very experienced, do not know why or how to use sources effectively and creatively. Because you want to improve your speech, you must learn how to improve your sourcing.

The Necessity of Sources

Okay, so why do you need sources at all?

There are several reasons that sources are necessary for an effective speech, the first of which is credibility.

Throughout this book I have stressed the importance of a credible speech. After all, how can extempers speak effectively if the judge doesn't believe a word that they are saying? Each speaker must strive to come across as an accomplished analyst who just happens to be a high school student. For this reason, integrating sources into your speech is essential. Furthermore, if you profess to tell your judge specifics about a topic (such as the number of US troops in the Persian Gulf or the total amount of the national debt) you need to credit the source of that topic, like you would in any research paper. Moreover, some judges want to see how much effort you have put into researching a topic, and sourcing is a way to prove your diligence.

A typical question that I am asked by students starting the event is, “*How many sources do I need in an extemp speech?*” The answer to this one is complex. Beginning extempers may have used anywhere from 3-5 sources. These were used when convenient and when they applied directly to the question asked. In other words, if they were obvious, the beginning extemper would use the source.

But, as advanced extempers it becomes clear that more is expected.

I prefer my students to use 6-9 sources in a speech.

While this may seem like a ton, once you moderate your speaking style and learn how to correctly use sources, it will become simple. In my collegiate competition, I saw speakers in national final rounds use anywhere from 6-19 sources. Nineteen was excessive. Using this many sources means that *your own* analysis is lost and all we are hearing in your speech is a seven-minute *literature review*. Finding moderation between too few and too many sources for your style is something that will take time, but in the end, 6-9 is an amount that most extempers can handle.

Purpose of Sources

Sources are meant to:

- add credibility
- clear up confusion
- provide empirical data for the judge

The purpose is NOT to provide all of your analysis. Your goal is to integrate the ideas of the experts into *your own* analysis.

One complaint that judges will often levy on even advanced extempers is that they are simply feeding the judge a list of other theories from experts. By reading bits and pieces of analysis from the experts, you should attempt to synthesize these theories into your own, not to substitute them for your own analysis. Seem simple? Well, it's not.

While you will often find theories and analysis that you can lift directly from an article and place in your speech (giving the proper citation of course), your goal must be to put some of your own analysis, personality, and punditry in to the answer that you give. For this reason, sources should *support* your answer, not *be* your answer.

For instance, if you are answering a question regarding NATO expansion and its affect on Russia, you may develop several theories on your own. NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was formed as a defensive alliance during the cold war to protect allied countries from attack by the Soviet Union. The agreement formed under NATO says that an act of war against any one of the member nations is equal to an act of war against all of the member nations. In response, nations allied with the USSR formed the Warsaw pact, an alliance in direct opposition to NATO.

Poland, The Czech Republic and Hungary have all recently gained membership in NATO. Taking the example of Poland, we see a nation that was once under the complete control of the Soviet Union, now turning against mother Russia. Poland and other nations were once a buffer zone between the West and the USSR. Now that buffer zone has disappeared. Not only is the buffer zone gone, but it has allied itself with the old enemy. Certainly the US and Russia are no longer enemies in the sense that they were during the Cold War, but there is certainly still some tension.

So you have developed your theory that NATO expansion is a threat in the eyes of Russia. Sourcing this analysis is not that difficult once we learn how to do it. You would want to search for articles in your files that pertain to Russian ties with Poland, the state of former Warsaw Pact nations, or other alliances that Russia has formed. All of these sources would supplement the information that you already had come up with in your own analysis.

They key is that, whenever possible, you should allow your own theories to influence your research. Try not to let your research dictate exclusively your theories.

With the above paragraph it may seem that you need to be an expert in every field. After all, if you have to theorize before you even look at your sources, then you are going to need a lot of background information. Remember in the first chapter of this book I told you that an extemper does not need to have the background knowledge of Peter Jennings to be successful. This still holds true. While you do need to have some background knowledge, there will be questions that you know little about. In these cases, it is important to use ideas from other areas of knowledge. Don't know much about English Parliament? Use your knowledge of the Israeli Parliament and parliamentary governments in general to form a basic theory. Then, fill in that theory with the specifics of your sources. Again, extemp returns to the importance of moving from broad to specific.

Practical Advice for Sourcing

The first piece of advice that I can give you is to avoid using the same source more than twice in the same speech.

The New York Times will often have several articles on a topic that could be used for the same speech. In this case, think of an extemp speech as a term paper. A teacher certainly expects different, **varied sources** to show that several other authors share your opinion. In an extemp speech, the same expectation holds true. Varied sources help your credibility and make the speech more interesting. Sometimes two pieces of evidence from the same source will be **so compelling** that they both need to be in the speech. In this case it is acceptable. But in general, more than two sources from the same newspaper or magazine make the speech seem very one-sided and make it look as though you have not done much work to find varied sources.

When you choose which source to use, it can also be helpful to use a source that is native to the area on which you are speaking. For instance, on a speech about the Irish peace process, the Irish Times is certainly an authority that can be helpful. For this reason, it is recommended that you find at least one article on every major subject that is from a **native newspaper**. Sometimes this task will be difficult (after all there are not too many Kenyan newspapers that are readily accessible to the extemper) but it is a goal that will spice up your speech and help you gain that edge that you are looking for.

Wording and Structuring Source Citation

Most extempers have developed their own way of reciting sources in the speech. The suggestions that I offer are uniform to just about every level of extemp.

Let the audience know where the name of the source, the date, and the information in a succinct manner, and then proceed to analyze that information in your own words.

According to the New York Times of May 6, 2000, the Irish Republican Army's refusal to disarm may be the end for the Peace Process. Currently The IRA maintains a stockpile of weapons that threaten to undermine the transition to peaceful self-rule in this area of the world. Until the IRA can be convinced to give up its weapons, or is forced to do so, it is clear that the peace process will continue along a track of instability. Obviously, no group of people can feel that peace is being achieved when there is such potential for future violence if the IRA feels it necessary.

In the above example, the article from the New York Times is used to explain that the IRA refuses to disarm. Following this piece of information, the speaker then explains the implications of this refusal to disarm. **It is essential that the speaker add his or her own analysis to the already sourced material.** This conclusion may have been *hinted* at by the New York Times, but the speaker makes it *explicit* that the lack of disarmament creates an air of instability that threatens the peace process in general.

Since you will use several sources throughout the speech, vary the wording to make it appear fresh and non-repetitive every time you cite a source. The following are a few of the most basic ways that you can do this. Developing your own ways to cite sources is certainly acceptable and encouraged.

- The May 6, 2000, New York Times explains...
- An article in the May 6, 2000, New York Times concluded...
- In the words of the May 6, 2000, New York Times...

The above selections barely scratch the surface, but they show you how a few simple changes can vary your pattern a bit.

Try to avoid grammatical errors as you cite your sources.

It is easy to fall into the trap of saying, "*According to the New York Times of May 6, 2000, it says that the IRA refuses to disarm.*" This is a redundant statement. By saying "*According to*" there is no reason to tell us "*it says.*" Paying close attention to your grammatical structure will take you far toward making your speech sound more professional and polished.

By explaining the purpose and wording of sources, in many ways, we have already discussed the proper structure for sourcing. Your source should back up what you have said and set up your analysis. Sources should be evenly balanced between your points. Sometimes your first area of analysis will have one more source than your second area. This is acceptable unless your second area has only one source.

Do your best in every case to find at least 2 sources for each area of analysis.

As I explained, I teach my students to use between 6-9 sources in each speech. This balances out to between 2-3 sources per point.

Expand your Sourcing

One thing that I teach advanced extempers is to use sources in ways that others might not. While it is done on a limited basis by extempers in high school, **using a source in the introduction can be an intelligent way to help transition to your question and answer.** In college, one source in the introduction (to act almost as part of the SoS) is very common. There is no reason that high school extempers cannot use this technique as well.

If your speech was on the question, “*Will venture capitalists strike gold on the Internet,*” you could use a source to set up your SoS and question. After the normal introduction, your speech might proceed something like this:

The Journal of Commerce of February 14, 2000, indicates that venture capitalists are spending 3.4 million dollars a day to launch new corporations and ideas online. Because this large investment represents a considerable portion of the United States economy it is essential that we ask the question, “Will venture capitalists strike gold on the internet?”

The above example shows how an extemper can effectively use a source in the introduction to show the importance of a question and to lead into the statement of significance. When choosing to use a cite in the introduction, you are taking a minor risk. Some judges may not like this new addition to your speech. However, if done well, sources in your introduction should only act to help your speech.

Ethics in Sourcing

As was discussed before, many of us have heard of that extemper who “cans” everything or who “cooks” his or her sources. They may succeed locally, or even nationally. The temptation to copy this unethical style is also a temptation that should be avoided. Not every extemper uses sources improperly. More importantly, just as you know about those extempers who fabricate evidence, people will know if you do it as well.

The students are not the only ones who know about unethical behavior in extemp. The NFL and NCFL are both taking notice of extempers who are unethically using their sources. It would not surprise me to see both organizations checking sources of final round competitors in the somewhat near future. Granted, everyone makes a legitimate mistake on sources occasionally. No one can be perfect in their memorization in every speech. But if you find that those mistakes become the rule and not the exception for yourself, then it is time to practice memorization or reduce the number of sources you use. Besides, being truthful will help you develop skills that will help you far beyond extemping. Writing papers in college, interviewing and work after graduation will be much easier if you develop the research skills that extemp can teach. These skills can only be learned if you are fair to yourself and your fellow competitors.

Chapter 10

Delivery

Delivery is an element of extemp that is almost intangible. I can tell you when I hear a well-delivered speech. You know what good delivery sounds like. When it comes to teaching delivery on paper, however, we have a difficult task at hand. Ultimately, to improve one's delivery, one must practice. This does not mean to practice once a week. Instead, it is necessary to practice constantly. For some, delivery comes easier than for others. Regardless, everyone who wants to ascend to that next level must master at least a few basics of delivery.

Voice

The most noticeable element of delivery is the voice. Some people simply have a nice speaking voice, others sound like fingernails on a chalkboard. Chances are, you fall somewhere in the middle. If you have that excellent radio-quality talk show host voice, then congratulations, you are half way there. But besides having a nice voice, there are several other elements to vocal delivery that are necessary for success.

Confidence

Many of us are nervous to stand in front of a room and deliver any type of speech, much less a final round audience, while delivering a speech on trade relations with Zimbabwe.

Though nerves will occasionally be a factor, the first lesson to learn is that confidence is everything.

While I have been explaining for pages and pages the importance of knowledge, analysis, and credibility, confidence is essential even when all else fails. I have told countless extempers that confidence is eighty percent of success in extemp. If you fail to deliver a speech with confidence, you might as well pack up your files and head home.

In collegiate competition there were fewer restrictions on what could and could not be brought into the prep room. CD players, for instance, were permitted (with headphones of course). I would use a CD player and my favorite music (usually Pearl Jam) to get myself into a type of zone. You hear sports commentators discussing that a certain player is "in the zone" meaning that they are playing as if nothing else mattered. Believe it or not, extempers can find themselves in a zone of their own. By focusing before your speech, you will eliminate any nerves that might come through in your voice and affect your presentation. Obviously, CD players are not permitted in extemp prep rooms at a large majority of tournaments but the theory still applies. **Focus yourself before a speech and convince yourself that you have what it takes to deliver a quality speech on the given topic.** Extemp can be an intimidating event if you don't first prepare yourself to succeed.

Once you have entered the room to actually deliver your speech, there is another mantra that can assist you in your delivery. “**Own the Room.**” This, literally, means that you are about to give a speech which will be so captivating that no one can possibly ignore what you have to say.

In terms of presentation this means standing confidently, making eye contact with the audience, and then beginning your speech with a room-filling voice that cannot be ignored.

Do NOT yell at your audience. Instead, speak from the diaphragm in a way that allows your voice to be heard, yet not be strained (the interpers will know what I am talking about). Owing the room is an attitude that means, no matter what you say it will be heard and liked. Sometimes the judge still won't be convinced, but you have no chance for success if you aren't convinced yourself.

Slow Down

A trap that many extempers fall into is speed. Often you have so much information to deliver that you feel you must speed in order to get through all of it. While the information may be worthwhile, speaking too quickly will backfire. When you speed up your delivery, there becomes a point when your mouth is moving so fast that your brain cannot possibly keep up. In order to remedy the problem you will start using safety, throw away phrases to allow your brain to catch up. Phrases like, “*We understand*” and “*So we can see that*” are both the product of a rapid delivery.

If you slow yourself down, you will be able to fit **more** information into your speech instead of those fluff phrases.

Slowing down will also help your **word choice**. Many speakers have wonderful analysis but their delivery lacks the eloquence that an advanced speaker should have. Instead of prepping a speech with several fifty-cent words built in to make you sound more impressive, slow down your delivery and your word choice will improve. Instead of saying, “Nuclear arms are being produced too fast” maybe you will find it in your vocabulary to utter, “The increase of nuclear arms proliferation is a danger to many.”

Slowing down your speaking style is a difficult proposition, but it can be done. In my work with extempers at summer institutes I have found a way to slow their speaking within a few short practices. Though it may violate the Geneva Convention, I believe it is effective. Have someone knowledgeable on delivery listen to your speech, water gun at their side. If you speak too quickly, they will be permitted to squirt you. If you continue to speak too quickly, they will be permitted to keep squirting you. If this still doesn't do the trick, they can feel free to turn the garden hose on you. This very basic type of behavior punishment practice was helpful. We usually do not think of our delivery as extempers. Staring down the barrel of a Super Soaker helps us keep in mind that we need to be slow and succinct.

The “Slick” Factor

While some have the problem of rapid delivery, there are others who are so slick in the way that they speak that game show host could be a career choice in their near future. If you are a slickster, it is time to reform.

While a polished style is never bad, there is such a thing as being too polished. Besides seeming canned in many instances, you may also seem cocky.

You want the audience to like you, not be intimidated by you. As a result, the ego and slickness need to be toned down a bit while speaking. During my years of competition I was frequently called to task for sounding too “extempy.” I was so stylized that the audience (in this case my coach) found it difficult to relate to me or to enjoy the speech.

So, now we are looking for a speaker that is confident but not cocky. You must be heard but not overpowering. You want an even, but not boring, pace. All of these elements require practice. The best form of practice is to have a coach critique everything you do, from content to delivery. Sometimes, you may not have the time nor the inclination to practice delivery with a coach. In this case, invite another member of the team to criticize your delivery. Ask that person to focus solely on the delivery aspects of the speech and to ignore content. While you should do your best to deliver a well prepared speech, you really want to work on the way that speech is presented. Finally, after following these pieces of advice, videotape yourself. You will certainly be your own toughest critic. Many times, upon seeing ourselves on camera, we can immediately eliminate small idiosyncrasies that were distracting in our delivery. The videotape can be a very embarrassing reminder that no one is a perfect speaker.

Gesturing

Extemp is an event where learning to gesture can be difficult. The reason for the difficulty is that, unlike other events, gestures are not rehearsed. It is necessary to learn how to gesture effectively on the spot. When is a gesture necessary, and when is it redundant? These can often also be learned through the videotape method.

You want to gesture conservatively at all times. For this reason, gestures should be definitive, controlled, and assertive.

Making those gestures definitive and controlled can be achieved in the same lesson. If you have ever heard of the famed “**gesture box**” you know that there appropriate ways to gesture and inappropriate ways as well. The gesture box is a limitation that you place on yourself. All gestures will either occur in that box, or they will not occur at all. That gestures box starts about two inches above the belt. It extends upwards to about three to four inches below your shoulder (where the letters on a baseball jersey would be). The box is framed on either side by the sides of your body. Now you have created a small area in which you will gesture.

By gesturing in this box, you prevent confusion between an intentional gesture and a distracting movement. Many speakers offer half-gestures that do nothing more than distract attention away from the speaker and toward his or her hands instead. By following the rules of the gesture box, you ensure that the judge will watch you and the gestures will work with the speech instead of drawing attention away from it.

On the other side of the coin, many extempers gesture far too dramatically and wildly. The gesture box will help them control their hands and gestures and bring attention back to the speech and away from the grandiose movements.

Beyond controlling gestures and making them definitive, it is also essential that they become **assertive** as well. In this case, we will rely on communications studies performed by very bored graduate students with nothing better to do. Communication studies have shown that men tend to have more success in extemp (before you begin to write protest letters, keep reading). The theories behind this are numerous. One holds that men have been stylized to speak and gesture in a way that is more “masculine” (or at least recognized that way by society). Because many of us have been socialized along those same lines, we automatically associate these artificial “masculine” attributes as being more credible and analytical. So what’s a speaker to do? There are two options. Either lead a crusade to change the minds of people around the world about how speaking should be done credibly, or simply learn what people expect and do it.

Men and women alike should know the types of gestures that work. Gesturing in an upward motion sends a message of uncertainty. It looks as though the speaker is looking for acceptance from the audience. These gestures often include the palm up and the hand moving in an upward motion.

Downward gestures (palm down, hand in downward motion) send the message of confidence and credibility.

The speaker appears to have a handle on the situation and is not looking for acceptance but demanding it through his or her delivery. Is it silly that these stereotypes exist? Yes. However, one must learn quickly to deal with reality, and reality seems to be that the “masculine style” is successful and accepted.

Once we have learned how to gesture, it is essential to know **when to gesture** as well. The beginning extemper has the tendency to gesticulate almost never, or on every word. We obviously want a moderation of the two. It is necessary to gesture occasionally so that the judge knows your alive, but not so frequently that it becomes distracting. Moderating your gestures is a goal easy to talk about but difficult to achieve.

Gesturing in extemp is more formalized than normal conversation and thus should be used when it has a purpose.

As you practice gesturing, you will become more familiar with the types of gestures that are appropriate and necessary.

Movement

The final piece of the puzzle when it comes to delivery is walking and movement. Walking should be as controlled as possible and yet look natural. Walking should not be done haphazardly or just when the moment strikes.

Walking is a sign to the audience that there is a transition approaching or occurring in your speech. Because of this, walking should be undertaken only when transitioning between main points.

I have seen some two-point extempers who take a step or two between sub-points in their speech. This is also acceptable as it signifies a transition in the speech.

When walking, it is important to keep your body facing the audience. This might seem awkward at first, and you may feel as though you are going to trip. But you never want to have your back or side profile completely toward the audience.

Dressing for Tournaments

I place this section under the heading of delivery because it is a part of your overall presentation and, whether or not we like it, we are judged on appearances as well. Extempers should strive for a **professional** appearance at all times. This professional appearance should be as **conservative** as possible. Extempers are not meant to make a fashion statement at tournaments. You want the judge to notice the speech, not the clothes.

Many will say that dresses or pants are out of the question for female speakers. I will tell you that it matters not, as long as the outfit is conservative and tasteful. Many will tell you that male speakers must wear a suit. While this would be nice, not everyone can afford a suit. A dark blazer and khakis are fine. The bottom line is that conservative dress is appropriate but there is no prescription as to what that dress must be. Ask yourself if you would wear the outfit to a job interview. If the answer is yes, then you are dressed appropriately.

Conclusion

Delivery may be an intangible element of extemporaneous speaking, but it remains essential to master the event. Before my last nationals in college, I wanted my delivery to be perfect. To this end I practiced twenty-five speeches in the week leading up to nationals, and my delivery was much improved. Intensive practice can shake the jitters and renew your confidence.

One last thing that I will say on the issue of delivery is also the last thing that many speakers say in the course of their speech. Please, do not end your speech by thanking the judge. It might seem a courtesy that you are extending to the judge, but in the end it is unnecessary. As the speech moderator at St. Joseph's University used to say to us, "After your speech, the judge should be thanking you." This does not mean that you should be cold and distant, but you can be pleasant without the hammy "thank you." Give your speech, do it with a smile and style, and then leave the room. You will appear more professional, and that is our aim after all, isn't it?

Chapter 11

Cross Examination

In NFL competition, and in some large regional tournaments as well, speakers in final rounds are given the pleasure of cross-examining one another on their speech topics. While this prospect may seem daunting to the novice extemper, advanced extempers should see cross-examination as a chance to show off their skills and abilities. For those who are unfamiliar, cross-examination involves one speaker questioning another about that speaker's speech. In most tournaments, the sixth speaker will question the first speaker, and then return to begin prepping his or her own speech. The first speaker will then question the second speaker, the second will question the third and so on.

Despite the name (cross-examination) the questioning period is not quite as adversarial as one would think. While some of the questions are difficult, and require background knowledge that not everyone has, the questions should not be meant to stump the speaker with little know trivia. While you want to prove that you have knowledge and are able to analyze the other speaker's topic, finding that small piece of information that no one else could possibly know and exploiting the speaker's lack of knowledge is not your goal.

You should, in most cases, present the speaker with additional information and challenge them to draw conclusions based on the information presented.

Cross-examination, quite obviously, is divided into two main components; questioning and answering.

The Question

Many speakers begin their cross examination with praise for the other speaker. I have heard, "*Thank you John for that wonderfully informative speech on the Argentine economy and congratulations for making the final round.*" There are several reasons why this is not exactly necessary or advised. First, it is transparent. Most of us in the audience understand that you want to beat the snot out of your opponent unless they happen to be a teammate. While the speech may have been brilliant, and the analysis wonderful, the judges do not need to hear that from you. Second, you have now wasted a large amount of your exceedingly limited time with congratulatory words for your opponent. A nice gesture, but it does not serve your needs.

Therefore, I recommend jumping right into the question itself. I have already mentioned that this is not a trivia contest, but an opportunity for you to challenge the speaker to expand on his analysis based on the information you add into the equation. Do not approach it in a "Well, you said X but I know for a fact that Y, so what do you have to say about that?" This would be classified as a mean-spirited and highly unprofessional question.

Your goal should be to provide a coherent question that forces the speaker to extend his or her analysis. This is a fair way of testing their knowledge and extemp skills.

(NOTE TO READER- this question, to be sure, is a bit old...but it is still well-structured and relevant to the issues at hand.)

The questioning should begin with a bit of a review. You should highlight the portions of the speech that you wish to question so that the audience and the speaker both know where you are coming from when you make your query. If the speaker in question was asked the question, “*Considering anti-Clinton sentiment in the US, can Al Gore win the next presidential election,*” you might direct your question in this manner:

John, in your speech you mentioned that Gore cannot win because of his close ties to the administration. Basically, I believe your point was that Gore has ridden on the coattails of Clinton for so long that he will now feel the dissatisfaction of the American people toward Bill Clinton and thus will not be elected. During the scandal, it was clear that Clinton’s moral character was in question. As you explained, though Americans like Clinton’s policies, in many cases they cannot stand the man behind the policies. Considering that Al Gore has been vocal against certain Clinton actions and policies, do you believe that Gore will be able to distance himself from the anti-Clinton sentiment in the next few months before election?

The above question begins with recap of the relevant portion of the speech that will now be questioned. The question does not attack the analysis of the speaker but brings to light some other factors that should be considered by the speaker. The question asks the speaker to consider that Al Gore has separated himself in the media from Clinton. Moreover, new Gore policies (such as immigration) have differed from the administrations stance. Now it is up to the speaker to determine whether this public relations move by Al Gore will be successful.

A properly asked CX question will also show your knowledge on the subject.

In the above example, the questioner exhibits that he or she knows a bit about vice-presidential politics. He or she has shown awareness that Gore has made attempts to distance himself from the administration that is viewed unfavorable by many.

Finally, on the issue of questioning, it is vital that you use the time allotted by the tournament. Use all of the time you have in your questioning period. Remember our various discussions on the difficulties of time limitations. A seven-minute speech is, in fact, quite short. A one minute questioning period is also short. Use the entire time available to show that your knowledge on the topic is deep and diverse (even if it isn’t). If you ask a twenty second question and they give a two minute answer, they have exhibited their proficiency with the subject material while your knowledge has show to be lacking.

Think of your question as a mini-substantive speech which happens to be in the form of a question. In fact, you should include evidence on the topic and sources whenever possible.

In a recent final round at Emory University's Barkley Forum, one particular extemper gave a particularly short and shallow question. While the speech that this same speaker had delivered was brilliant, the question left the audience (and ultimately the judges) questioning the competency of the speaker. Extend the question, and go as deeply into the issues as you can. This way, you show your abilities while not giving your opponent the ability to grandstand against you.

The Answer

Answering the question is like delivering a second mini-extemp. You will be forced to quickly collect yourself and respond to the question asked. It is this point in the speech where your knowledge will truly be challenged. Surely a judge will not expect you to know everything about a certain subject (especially a very obscure subject) but you will be expected to have enough knowledge to deal with reasonable questions.

Answering the question involves quick analysis and even quicker organization.

Attempt to figure out what the speaker is asking, and answer in a way that is **consistent with the answer that you gave in the main body of the speech.**

While it is frightening that someone has the ability to question your newly delivered speech, it should be some consolation that you have the last word. No matter what they ask you, you can clarify your position and speech. In many ways, answering a question is a lot easier than asking one effectively.

Your answer should be as structured as possible. I prefer, because of time limitations, to attempt to break up the answer into two distinct areas of analysis (without calling them areas of analysis). By breaking up your answer into bite sized pieces you assist the judges who have hear (or will hear) six speeches and six cross-examinations that can be quite tedious.

In answer to the above question, the following answer might be appropriate:

You're correct, Jason, Al Gore has made every attempt to distance himself from Bill Clinton in the public eye. While, on some levels he has been successful, there are two areas where he has fallen short and thus will not win the presidency. Gore lacks the charisma of Clinton, and his policies are inextricably linked to the President. While Al Gore's trademark stiffness and boring demeanor have gone largely unnoticed in his post as vice-president, the presidential campaign has revealed that he does not have the flare for playing the public that his boss Bill Clinton has. While Clinton's character may be questionable, his ability as a successful politician will never be questioned. For Gore to

be successful in separating himself from Clinton, he would also need to be charismatic so that he could stand on his own. Because Gore is unable to do this, he will not win the presidency. Also, Gore has not initiated any policies of his own. If Gore wishes to distinguish himself from the president, he must have legislation behind him that shows he is a capable presidential candidate. Since Gore has been unable to produce any such legislative, he falls short in this aspect as well. Though Al Gore has done his best to combat the anti-Clinton sentiment in the US, his attempts to distance himself from William Jefferson Clinton will not assist him in his bid for the White House.

The above answer conveys the point that, though Gore has attempted to separate himself from Clinton, this effort will be largely ineffective because Clinton has certain abilities that Gore does not. Moreover, the lack of policy initiatives on Gore's behalf will make it more difficult for him to win the presidency.

The speaker has defended his point in a logical, well-structured manner. The same rules apply to answering the question as apply to asking the question. The speaker should make every attempt to use all of the time allotted. By doing so the speaker can clear up any confusion and effectively answer the question posed by the extemper asking the question.

Many speakers will fall into the mistake of simply repeating a large part of the speech that they have just finished delivering. **But the speaker should avoid simply rehashing the speech that he or she has just delivered.** Two minutes of repeated material may bore the audience and the judge, not to mention show your lack of knowledge.

Try to use the opportunity to find new, independent ways of defending the thesis presented in your speech, **and show how your answer is consistent with the answer you gave in your speech.**

If used correctly, CX can become an extension of the speech. The speaker has the opportunity to add supplemental information to the speech to clarify based on the question that has been asked. In fact, although not included in the example above, **sources should be used whenever possible.**

The final point may seem a simple one but it is possibly the most important that can be made about replying to a CX question.

Make sure you are answering the question that was posed.

Many times extempers will prepare an answer (consciously or subconsciously) to a generic question that they believe will be asked by their competitors. When they are asked the question in CX, they turn on the autopilot and answer the question that they **assumed** would be asked instead of the question that **was** asked. These speakers do not serve themselves well. First, a judge is likely to view this as canned material and punish you on the ballot for it. Second, imagine a wonderful question being asked and then an answer which skirts it. Many judges will be left with the same feeling that you get after watching a movie that does not have a

good resolution. The judges will feel a lack of closure that might result in them questioning the entire speech.

CX is often practiced by those who expect to be in final rounds. Otherwise, many speakers ignore this skill that can be a great boost to them in a close final round of NFL style extemp. During several practices, it is a good idea to try your hand at CX. After all, if confidence is everything, you should start expecting those final rounds before long.

Chapter 12

Prepping Your Speech

The prep room is where the magic happens. On the basis of 30 minutes every year, national champions are crowned and disappointments are experienced. The best extempers have the ability to consistently prep good speeches. There are a few things that you can do to foster an environment that facilitates the prep room experience.

Organizing Your Space

Okay, this seems a bit rudimentary, and it is. However, it is important to make sure that your area is clean, your files neat, and your supplies are up to date. The 30 minutes of prep should not be wasted finding the Togo file because it is under three weeks of old New York Times. So, step one is: Stop being so messy! Clean your files up after every speech and make sure that your area is as clutter free as possible. The filing system at the end of Chapter 7 makes cleaning simple. Just find the number on the article and place it in the properly numbered file folder. Clean up is part of extemp. Live with it, deal with it, do it.

Beyond cleaning up after speeches, there are several other ways to remain organized in the prep room. If you are like my team in college, you can never find a pen before your speech. Legal pads are also a hot commodity. I recommend keeping a file folder dedicated to legal pads. This way, you always know where they are and how to find them. Pens, scissors, glue sticks, highlighters, and anything else you need for cutting and prepping can be kept in a kindergarten style pencil case inside one of your file boxes. Just be sure to check that the contents of the box meet NFL or CFL rules, depending on the competition.

Find Your routine

You maximize your chances in the prep room by developing a routine. Just like a Major Leaguer has a routine before the game, an extemper, though not as well paid, also must develop a routine so that there is familiarity when it comes to speaking. This is a way to fall into a comfort zone even if you are at nationals for the first time and nervous.

I used almost the same routine for every speech, regardless of how difficult or weird the question. My routine bordered on the frighteningly superstitious. I always set up my legal paper the same way. I tended to use the same pen almost all the time, and I rarely strayed from the routine at all. The entire point of this exercise in familiarity is that I could almost convince myself, no matter the situation, that I had been there before and that I could handle the situation.

The way to develop a routine is to practice as if you were at a tournament.

This means no assistance from teammates, no talking, no distractions. You need to put yourself in a game situation if at all possible and be prepared for almost any situation that may arise (including errors in questions, missing file folders, etc.). You will soon learn what works for you and what does not. I tell students who practice for me to treat the speech as if it were in front of a judge at any normal tournament. All rules that apply at a tournament tab room also apply in the practice prep room as well. This helps the younger extempers get that game experience and reminds the more experienced speakers how they are to act at a tournament.

Writing the Speech

Of course, at some point in the preparation process you need to actually write the extemp speech that you will deliver. Styles of writing speeches are about as varied as extempers, but there are some pieces of advice that can be offered. Earlier I talked about another extemper on my college team who was immensely talented and ended up in many national final rounds. If you were to compare our outlines, you would barely have recognized that we were competing in the same event. Our outlines had very different formats, and looked entirely different from each other. The important thing is that we both found styles of outlining that we were comfortable with. We both had to develop our own styles through trial and error.

First, although most of you are well aware of this fact, you need not write out the entire speech. It becomes essential that you are an efficient outline writer.

Outlines need to contain enough information that you can remember the speech, but not so much information that you waste your time writing.

You need to find the right balance for yourself. I am a very visual learner, and as a result, I wrote much more than your average extemper. By writing I was able to memorize much more easily than by reciting the same information. I personally found that the information most vital for me was source citations and content of the sources. I always had little difficulty remembering the analysis that went with the answers, but statistics and quotes were difficult for me.

A sample point in one of my extemp speeches might appear like this:

Would a Microsoft breakup hurt the technology economy?

- I. Tech Econ Constantly Changing
 - A. NYT 3/15/00 - Will take several years to implement breakup. Bill Gates says he will request time for company to be broken up so that Microsoft will not be shocked into losses.
 - B. FT 4/5/00 - Charles Smith, financial analyst, says economy will adjust over the next two years.
 - C. Int Herald Trib 5/6/00 - NASDAQ will have time to recover and tech stocks will not be affected in the long run

One thing you will notice is that abbreviations run rampant in my style of extemp prepping. NYT means New York Times, FT means Financial Times and so on. As long as the abbreviations are understandable to you, they are going to increase your efficiency. What I have shown you is just one point in a three point speech. As I said, I tend to write a lot. You may find that you can achieve the same results with half of the writing. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this at all. With practice, you will learn your strengths and weaknesses quickly and adapt your style of outlining to those strengths.

Regardless of how much you decide to write in your outline, make sure you think about **structure** when putting your outline together.

The most important rule about outlining your speech is to structure it well.

Don't rush through your outline at the expense of structure. A sloppy outline will frustrate you when it comes time to memorize the speech and ultimately hurt your clarity, delivery and presentation.

Practicing Your Speech

The most vital process in prepping might be practicing the actual speech.

There are many styles to practicing and rehearsing your speech. The style that I will portray here, as with all style suggestions, might not be the most effective for you as a speaker, but it is what worked for me through several years of competition.

The first bombshell that I will drop on the reader is that I would rarely, if ever, practice the entire speech verbatim. I would normally memorize my source citations first (complete with the analysis or statistic that goes along with them). I would then practice my introduction, conclusion, and transitions. I would not, however, practice the entire speech as a whole. This might seem odd, and certainly detrimental to smooth speaking, but I believe it was the best style for me.

I employed the above style for a few reasons. First and foremost, I believe in the “extemporaneous” of extemporaneous speaking. This does not mean that I purposely under-prepared myself. Instead, I wished that my speaking style would be more conversational, not rehearsed, and definitely genuine. By practicing the speech four or five times, as some extempers do, I believe that I would have made the speech very stale for myself. Of course, many times my approach led to difficulties with word choice because of the non-rehearsed nature of the speech. This was remedied through practice, practice, and more practice before tournaments. I became a more comfortable speaker and, I believe, a better speaker.

Also, over-preparing a speech can be sometimes backfire. If you have prepped a speech several times, you have likely selected distinct language that you wish to use to introduce

specific facts. Many times you may spend your time trying (and stumbling) to recall this specific language instead of using language (equally appropriate) that comes naturally. Exact wording is not necessary. Your brain is intelligent enough to choose decent wording if you have practiced enough before the tournament. My belief is that you should worry more about writing the speech than performing it. Performances will improve over time as you learn your comfort level and your strengths. Speech writing, however, is often a difficult and laborious process. If you do not take time to make your analysis tight and accurate, the speech will seem shallow to the judge.

Moreover, if you learn to speak without necessarily running through the entire speech several times, you will find yourself with an advantage when you have a difficult question. Many an extemper are done in by tough questions that they do not have time to both write and practice. If you have learned to practice the speech maybe once only, you will give yourself more time to research, write, and develop deeper analysis than would have been possible otherwise.

Having said all of this, it is important to adapt to your own personal strengths. Some people just have the natural ability to write a speech very quickly and then need several run-throughs to make sure that the delivery is successful. If you find this necessary, then, by all means, please use this strategy. **I am sharing what I know from experience, and sometimes this is not always what is best for others.** I would recommend, however, that you practice this method at least a few times. That way you will know what your preference is, and how to take advantage of it.

Wrap Up

As I said in the beginning, learning extemporaneous speaking is a difficult process that requires a lot of personal adaptation and learning. In order to become a better speaker, you must practice and develop your own likes, dislikes, styles and approach. I hope that this book has been a guide to get you on the right path toward success.

Very few high school or college students are willing to give up weekends all year long to compete in an intellectual activity. The dedication that it takes to be successful can be overwhelming for some. Remember that your accomplishments are not always measured by the trophies on the mantle, but instead, by the amount of enjoyment you get from giving that “perfect” speech. Have fun; allow yourself to enjoy your speeches.

With this said, please practice the suggestions in the book. Learn to give a full answer and to persuade a judge. Use the worksheets and sample index. Most of all, develop yourself into a more mature speaker. Extemporaneous speaking is the culmination of all that is difficult in forensics. You must have the analytical skills of a debater, the presentation skills of an orator, and the flexibility of an interpreter. And you have only 30 minutes in which to do all of these things. But rest assured that if you can master extemporaneous speaking, you will have important life skills (i.e., interviewing for a job will seem like child’s play). Good luck, thanks for reading, and keep practicing.

Sample Speech

So you have trudged through page after page of theory and some short examples. Now it is time to put it all together. I will offer you a sample speech to help you prepare for your upcoming extemporaneous successes. This speech comes from the final round of the college National Championships in 1998. I finished second in the round, and I believe that this is a useful example because it is a good speech but by no means perfect. As you read it, think about what you like and identify the things that you would change:

"Hootie and The Blowfish... Eddie Vedder... Hillary Clinton. What do these three have in common? Well, they've actually all won Grammy awards. Hootie for their album *Cracked Rear View*, Eddie Vedder for Pearl Jam's album *Ten*, and Hillary Clinton for her spoken word album *It Takes a Village*. On this record, Mrs. Clinton explains that it takes an entire community, or village, to raise a child. Just as Mrs. Clinton believes that a child can only mature if they are helped by the people around them, business people are beginning to realize that it may take a village, a global village, for the economy to survive. As nations become interdependent and economies become intertwined, it becomes essential to ask the question, *'What can the United States do to protect itself in an era of worldwide economic interdependence?'*

In order to survive, the United States economy must mature to handle the strains of a global economic system. In order to mature the US must, first, embrace new markets. Second, the United States must protect its intellectual property. And, finally, the US must diversify its economy.

Hootie once said, 'I only wanna be with you'. Well, if the United States economy only wants to be with itself, it will suffer in a global marketplace. The United States must be able to embrace emerging markets, ensuring that economic frontiers are not lost to competition. The Financial Times of March 15, 1998 explains that in the post-Soviet era, new capitalist markets are available that were never an option for US investors. While these markets may be poor in capital, they are often rich in national resources. The Investors Business Daily of March 18, 1998 reveals that former Soviet nations, and countries in Africa present an untapped resource for American goods and services. Clearly American companies stand to gain from making their presence felt in these regions. The New York Times of March 23, 1998 explains that American companies are, fortunately, already making headway in some new markets. American auto-makers are working in countries like Lithuania to convert older planes engines and machinery in nuclear power plants to newer, updated models. Besides the obvious benefits of business deals in these new markets, American companies are laying the foundation for future business alliances and ensuring that American companies have a foothold in the former Eastern Bloc. Doing the same in African countries, where economies are even less developed, may help the United States embrace the new global marketplace.

Eddie Vedder once said, 'Alive... yeah, yeah yeah, I'm still alive.' If the US economy wishes to stay 'alive' it needs to protect itself against outside interests which threaten business security. The South China Morning Post of March 18, 1998 indicates that a Chinese National was recently arrested in the United States for spying. This Chinese citizen was not accused of

stealing military, nuclear or intelligence secrets. Instead, he was accused of theft of intellectual property. Businesses are currently coming under fire from foreign nations attempting to steal technology and business secrets. In an era of economic interdependence, it becomes clear that the United States must protect itself from further attacks. The Baltimore Sun of March 15, 1998 reveals that the internet is a window to espionage and technology theft for many foreign nations and businesses. The internet may allow a hacker to break into business networks and steal technology and secrets with very little risk of being caught. Businessweek of March 22, 1998 indicates that the US can protect itself by developing better encryption software. Moreover, by training national law enforcement in technology and technology issues, the American economy can be protected without being under siege. Unfortunately, in an era of economic interdependence, it becomes more evident that countries must protect their economies from external attacks.

Hillary Rodham Clinton once told us that, in order for a child to mature, he or she must be taught by a diverse number of sources. It takes a village for a child to be well rounded. In order for the United States economy to mature, it is clear that diversity is necessary also. The United States economy must diversify and protect itself from being so reliant on technology stocks. The Atlanta Journal and Constitution of March 13, 1998, indicates that technology stocks are worrisome to many economists. Allan Greenspan, for instance, has expressed the view that technology stocks may grow the economy too quickly, resulting in heightened inflation. Moreover, tech stocks are so volatile, that a dip in the market could result in a dip in the economy as a whole. The Washington Post of March 21, 1998 points out that reliance on tech stocks means that the United States has moved away from manufacturing. Losing major manufacturing jobs could result in the economy becoming too top-heavy. Lower paying blue-collar jobs with security and benefits are important for an economy to keep itself afloat. The New York Times of March 11, 1998 suggests that the American economy needs to diversify, making sure that the rural areas of the country are as successful as the urban centers. Obviously, there is no need or desire to return to the Jeffersonian days of the yeoman farmer, but it is necessary to return to a diversification of technology, agrarian success and manufacturing. This way, if another Asian flu strikes, the US may remain solvent because of its own self reliance. Ironically, in an era of worldwide economic interdependence, the United States must diversify and increase its ability to be self-reliant if it becomes necessary.

Today we have learned what Hootie and the Blowfish, Eddie Vedder, and Hillary Clinton have in common... and we have also seen how the US economy can succeed. By entering new markets, protecting its own interests, and diversifying the economy, the United States can ensure that interdependence becomes an opportunity and not a dangerous situation. While Hillary Clinton told us what we need to help a child mature, it is clear that when we ask the question, 'What can the United States do to protect itself in an era of worldwide economic interdependence,' it is clear that, similarly, the US must mature."

Sample Worksheets

This section contains several worksheets to assist you in preparing for competition. The worksheets are *mental exercise* and *memory devices* to give you the leg up on competition. Follow the directions on each worksheet (you may want to photocopy each first). Note: these worksheets should not be kept in your file because your own written responses could be construed as prepared speeches.

Introductions

Step 1. List ten of your favorite things. These may include stories, songs, movies, historical leaders, or events. Anything is fair game, become creative.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2. Find a theme in each of those items listed above. If you chose a song, find the meaning of the song. If you chose a leader, pick a story from their lives that exhibits a certain theme. Again, creativity is to be rewarded here.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Step 3. Try to relate all of the above themes to a specific extemp question or issue.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

If you have done the above with effort and care, you should have ten new introductions ready to use. The purpose here is not, however, to create canned introductions. The purpose is to create a wide base of introductory material that you can use on many different questions. Also, this little exercise should have taught you that indeed everything can be used as an introduction.

Obviously, some of the above introductions will be better than others, but these are a start toward learning how to create introductions with the materials you have floating around in your head.

Important Government Positions

The purpose of the following worksheet is to familiarize yourself with some of the more important and basic members of the US federal government (all three branches). Some of these you should know right from the start; others will require research. But you should be familiar with all going into any tournament.

Executive (we'll start with an easy one):

President: _____ **Party: R/D**

Vice-President: _____ **Party: R/D**

Secretary of State: _____

Secretary of Defense: _____

Secretary of the Treasury: _____

Secretary of Education: _____

Attorney General: _____

Chair of the Federal Reserve: _____

Judicial (C or L = conservative of liberal):

Chief Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Assoc. Justice: _____ **Appointed by:** _____ **C/L**

Legislative:

Speaker of the House: _____ **D/R** **State:** _____

Senate Majority Leader: _____ **D/R** **State:** _____

Majority Whip: _____ **D/R** **State:** _____

Minority Whip: _____ **D/R** **State:** _____

Minority Leader: _____ **D/R** **State:** _____

NOTES (to be used for any other high profile leaders worth mentioning):

Major World Powers

This list is by no means exhaustive. It is designed to give you a start on what you should know or be able to find out quickly about a particular country. This is why Almanacs are so great.

Israel

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Russia

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

England

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Japan

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

France

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Mexico

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Canada

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Brazil

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

South Africa

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Egypt

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Indonesia

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

China

Leader: _____ **Party:** _____

Ruling Party: _____ **Ideology:** _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Taiwan

Leader: _____

Party: _____

Ruling Party: _____

Ideology: _____

Name of Legislative Body: _____

Sample Questions (Domestic)

1. What can be done to make air travel safer?
2. What will be the most important issue for the Democrats in the 2008 campaign?
3. Have fundraisers become more important than the primaries?
4. Has Condi Rice adequately responded to attacks on his character?
5. Is the Reform Party a credible alternative to the traditional parties?
6. Is Jesse Jackson's re-emergence the beginning of a political comeback campaign?
7. What can be done to curb school violence?
8. Has the reform party lost its credibility?
9. Did Microsoft commit a "fatal error" in not settling with the Justice Department?
10. What effect will the increase in the minimum wage have on the economy?
11. Is the national debt a problem?
12. Does Alan Greenspan have too much influence over the U.S. economy?
13. Is inflation the number one threat to the US economy?
14. Has Alberto Gonzalez been an effective Attorney General?
15. Have recent revelations of the Waco investigation destroyed the FBI's credibility?
16. Are computers becoming the most effective way to do banking?
17. Will E-trading make the brokerage house obsolete?
18. Should ATM usage fees be made illegal?
19. What will be the effects of the deregulation of the banking industry?
20. Should HMO's be prohibited from over ruling doctor's medical recommendations?
21. Is Microsoft a monopoly?
22. Should Microsoft be broken up?
23. Will the trend in large corporate mergers benefit the economy?
24. What should be done to help the ailing Space Program?
25. Do IPOs need additional regulation?
26. Will the Patients' Bill of Rights be successful?
27. Is affirmative action still a relevant political issue?
28. Will Microsoft survive the Justice Department's anti-trust suit?
29. Should funding for the U.S. military be increased?
30. How will history judge John Ashcroft?
31. How will history judge Bill Clinton's presidency?
32. Has Bill Frist been tainted by his association with George Bush?
33. Was John Kerry's campaign tainted by his selection of campaign advisers?
34. Does Hillary Clinton have the "right stuff" to be president?
35. Have primaries become irrelevant to the presidential nomination process?
36. Has welfare reform worked?
37. Will Congress be able to solve the problems of Social Security?
38. Should Congress privatize Social Security?

39. How can Social Security be saved?
40. Can gun violence be curbed?
41. Will Congress pass significant gun control legislation in the near future?
42. Will Congress achieve significant campaign finance reform in the next term?
43. How can Congress reform the election contribution process?
44. Should Congress pursue further campaign finance reform?
45. Can the economy continue its long term growth?
46. Is the FED acting too aggressively to combat inflation?
47. Should the FED continue to raise interest rates to halt inflation?
48. Can the public education system be reformed?
49. Can school vouchers answer the problems of the education system?
50. Are school vouchers a feasible solution for American public schools?
51. Should states with public school problems use a voucher system?
52. Should a nationwide standardized test be instituted to judge school achievement?
53. Will states begin to repeal the death penalty now that it has come under fire?
54. Should the death penalty be repealed?
55. Can the Democrats regain control of Congress?
56. Has the welfare problem been solved?
57. Should the government continue to make a balanced budget a priority?
58. How should the budget surplus be handled?
59. Will *Roe v. Wade* be overturned in the near future?
60. Will new major corporate mergers be healthy for the economy?
61. Will the government be able to make any major progress in the war on drugs?
62. Should the US follow the suggestion of several politicians and decriminalize narcotics?
63. Should the Confederate flag be eliminated from all government property?
64. Should major sports leagues take action to eliminate crime in their ranks?
65. Will the stock market be able to remain stable?

Sample Questions (Foreign)

1. Will the US be able to ally itself with Russian President Putin?
2. Should the US pursue an anti-ballistic missile defense system?
3. Will the Euro be able to survive as a strong currency in the world market?
4. Will the Japanese economy be able to become dominant once again?
5. Will China's acceptance as a world trade partner relieve human rights tensions in that country?
6. Will Quebec secede from Canada?
7. What effect would Quebec's secession have on Canada?
8. Does Russia have the ability to become a superpower again?
9. Can the Brazilian economy prosper in a weak South American marketplace?
10. Will the Israeli concessions in the Middle East Peace Process result in greater stability in that region?
11. Is this the year that we will see lasting peace in Northern Ireland?
12. Is North Korea a serious threat to world peace?
13. What can result in a stabilization of Pakistan?
14. Can moderates bring Iran back into the international community?
15. Is there a lasting peace on the Irish horizon?
16. What can be done to achieve stable peace within the Middle East?
17. Will Fox maintain power in the upcoming Mexican presidential election?
18. What impact has the fall of the Berlin Wall had on Germany?
19. Has anything been achieved by the South African Truth & Reconciliation Commission?
20. Will East Timor be able to find a lasting peace?
21. What role should the UN have in maintaining peace on East Timor?
22. Has the U.N begun to live up to its potential with regard to international conflicts?
23. Was the UN right to intervene in East Timor?
24. Should Russia's Chechnya "situation" be viewed as an internal issue by the international community?
25. Will genetically altered food be accepted into the United States?
26. What has been accomplished by Russia's intervention in Chechnya?
27. Has Asia recovered from its economic flu?
28. Has organized crime taken over Russia?
30. Will the threat of nuclear war end soon?
31. Should China have been admitted into the World Trade Organization?
32. Will Swiss Banks ever make amends for Switzerland's activities during the Second World War?

33. Has unification benefited Germany?
34. Has the Euro helped the European economy?
35. Was the Panama Canal turnover successful?
35. What impact will China have on the Panama Canal?
37. Is Taiwan ready for the upcoming changes it is going to go through?
38. Should Third World debt be forgiven?
39. Has the influence of Islamic fundamentalism waned?
40. Will China become a super power in the next century?
41. Has the likelihood of another Indo/Pakistani war decreased?
42. Are the Israelis being too harsh on Jewish West Bank settlers?
43. Was the U.S. wise to turn over the Panama Canal?
44. What does the U.S. need to do to encourage the Mid-East peace process?
45. Have peacekeeping efforts been detrimental to U.S. security interests?
46. Will the return of the Panama Canal endanger the security of the United States?
47. Should the US pay its debt to the United Nations?
48. Will the US ever pass the Test Ban Treaty?
49. Is the Test Ban Treaty the best way to control nuclear weapons?
50. Will the Panama Canal stay open to the world?
51. Is China becoming a threat to U.S. national security?
52. Should the US lift the embargo on Cuba?
53. Should the US alter its policy towards Cuba in the new millennium?
54. Should the United States continue to give aid to Colombia?
55. Should the US tighten restrictions on technology exports?
56. Should the US supply troops or aid to the United Nations?
57. Should the US re-examine its role in stopping drug trafficking from Colombia?
58. Are Castro's days numbered?
59. What, if anything, can the U.S. do to promote moderation in Iran?

Unique Questions

(these are oftentimes reflective on the past)

1. Has the world become safer since the fall of the Berlin Wall?
2. Who was the most influential American President of the 20th Century?
3. What was the most influential country of the 20th Century?
4. Who was the least successful American President of the 20th Century?
5. Who was the most successful political leader of the 20th Century?
6. Who was the greatest humanitarian of the 20th Century?
7. What was the most significant invention of the 20th Century?
8. Who or what will be the greatest threat to world peace in the 21st Century?
9. Who was the most influential business leader?