

NOTES

ref 2: asking and answering questions in cross-examination

the questioner

ask questions to clarify arguments

ask questions about the quality of your opponent's evidence

ask questions to get your opponents to admit their case has weaknesses

general rules for the questioner

do not make statements

don't masquerade your arguments as questions

be courteous

give your opponent a chance to answer questions

maintain control of the cross-examination

don't let the respondent question you when you're the questioner

the respondent

give clear, specific, concise answers

ask for clarification if the question is unclear

qualify your answers

retort questions that attack your arguments

general rules for the respondent

avoid being rude

don't give long treatises on your case

don't read new evidence

ref 3

crossfire reading

introduction

a note about mechanics

general considerations for crossfire

- limited time
- planning ahead
- face the judge

asking questions-foundational points

asking questions types of questions

explanation

evidentiary support

weaknesses in evidence

set-up questions

attack questions

focusing on certain thing after certain speeches

rebuttal

summary

types of questions not to ask

- this is my argument, how would you respond
- do you agree with my argument

behaviors not to engage in in crossfire

- don't be hostile/attack
- don't interrupt
- don't ask the same questions
- don't lock-in

answering

explanations

detail

the judge

arguments you didn't make

pivot

other tips:

- don't commit
- know when to look weak and when to look strong
- make arguments in your speeches
- limit answers
- always prioritize

conclusion

ref 4: what questions should i ask to win crossfire

first crossfire

at the time of the first crossfire, the only material you have to work with is your opponent's case.

help your partner give a great rebuttal

establish perceptual dominance

question type:

- ask specific questions about their evidence
- identify contradictions
- set traps

second crossfire

your number one goal in the second crossfire is to make your partner's summary easier by taking out the responses they put on your case

grand crossfire

craziest three minutes of the round

for good reason

What is the purpose of crossfire?

- **Expose Weaknesses.** Force your opponent to reveal flaws in their evidence or logic.
- **Clarify Claims.** Pin down exactly what they're saying so you can attack or contrast it later.
- **Set Traps / Contradictions.** Lure them into contradicting themselves or admitting gaps.
- **Build Momentum for Your Team.** Lay groundwork for your partner's rebuttal and summary speeches by framing the debate on terms favorable to your side.

What do you need to accomplish your goals in crossfire?

1. **Mastery of Both Cases.** Know your case and theirs inside-out, including evidence citations and potential counter-arguments.
2. **Planning & Prioritization.** Pre-plan key questions, anticipate likely answers, and rank which points matter most given the limited time.
3. **Control & Courteous Demeanor.** Ask crisp, direct questions; don't let the respondent filibuster or turn the tables on you.
4. **Perceptual Dominance.** Establish credibility and confidence early—your tone, body language, and pacing should convey command.
5. **Flexibility.** If they dodge or answer poorly, be ready to pivot or press the same point from a new angle.

Key Strategies

1. Establish Perceptual Dominance

- Project confidence and keep your questions clear and forceful. (ref 4)

2. Trap & Contradict

- Ask questions designed to force an opponent into inconsistent answers. (ref 4)

3. Prioritize Points

- Focus on your "best" arguments and the opponent's weakest evidence first. (ref 3)

4. Plan Ahead

- Anticipate likely answers and have follow-up questions ready. (ref 3)

What types of questions can we use?

- **Explanation Questions.** “What exactly do you mean by X?”
- **Evidentiary-Support Questions.** “Where does that statistic come from?” or “Who conducted that study?”
- **Weakness-Probing Questions.** “Isn’t it true that Y contradicts your claim?”
- **Set-Up Questions.** Innocuous questions that establish facts you’ll use later in an attack.
- **Attack Questions.** Directly confront contradictions or impossible assertions.

Uses of Different Question Types

Question Type	Tactical Use
Explanation	Clarify vague or sweeping claims so you can spotlight their limits.
Evidentiary-Support	Force them to cite authority—if they can’t, the claim loses credibility.
Weakness-Probing	Highlight internal inconsistencies or conflicts with outside facts.
Set-Up	Lay factual foundation for a later, more forceful attack question.
Attack	Deliver the knockout blow by directly pointing out contradictions or errors.

In practice, you’ll blend these question types fluidly: begin with a few explanation or support questions to pin down their position, then transition to weakness-probing or attack questions once you see openings, all while ensuring you don’t let the respondent seize control of the exchange.