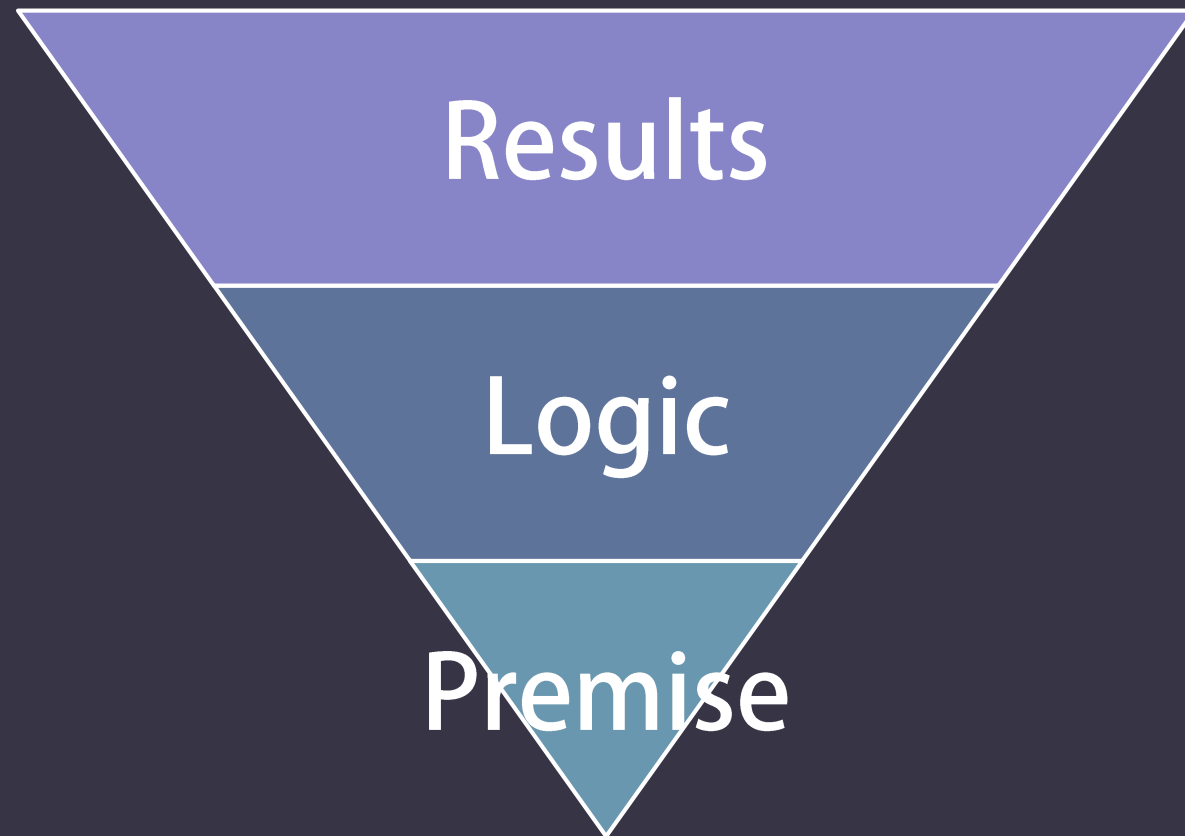# REBUTTAL LECTURE

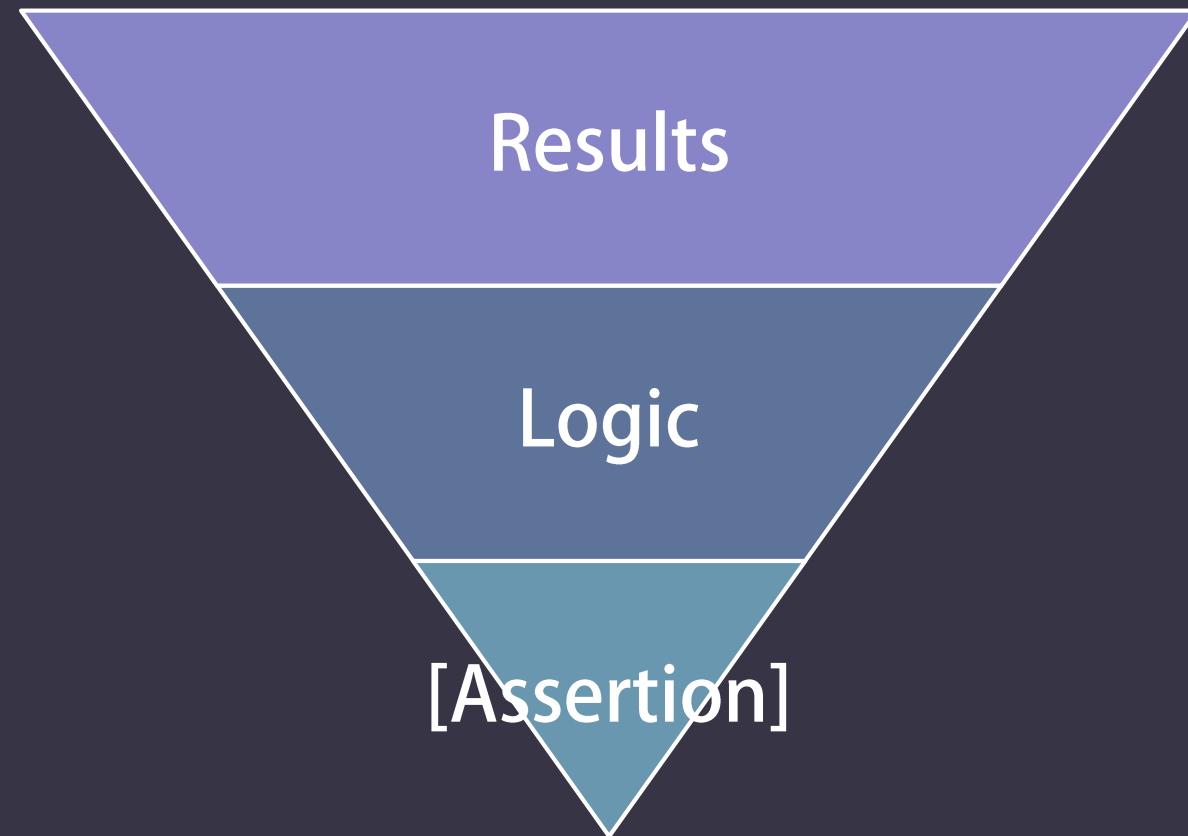Rebuttal Steps and Rebuttal Execution

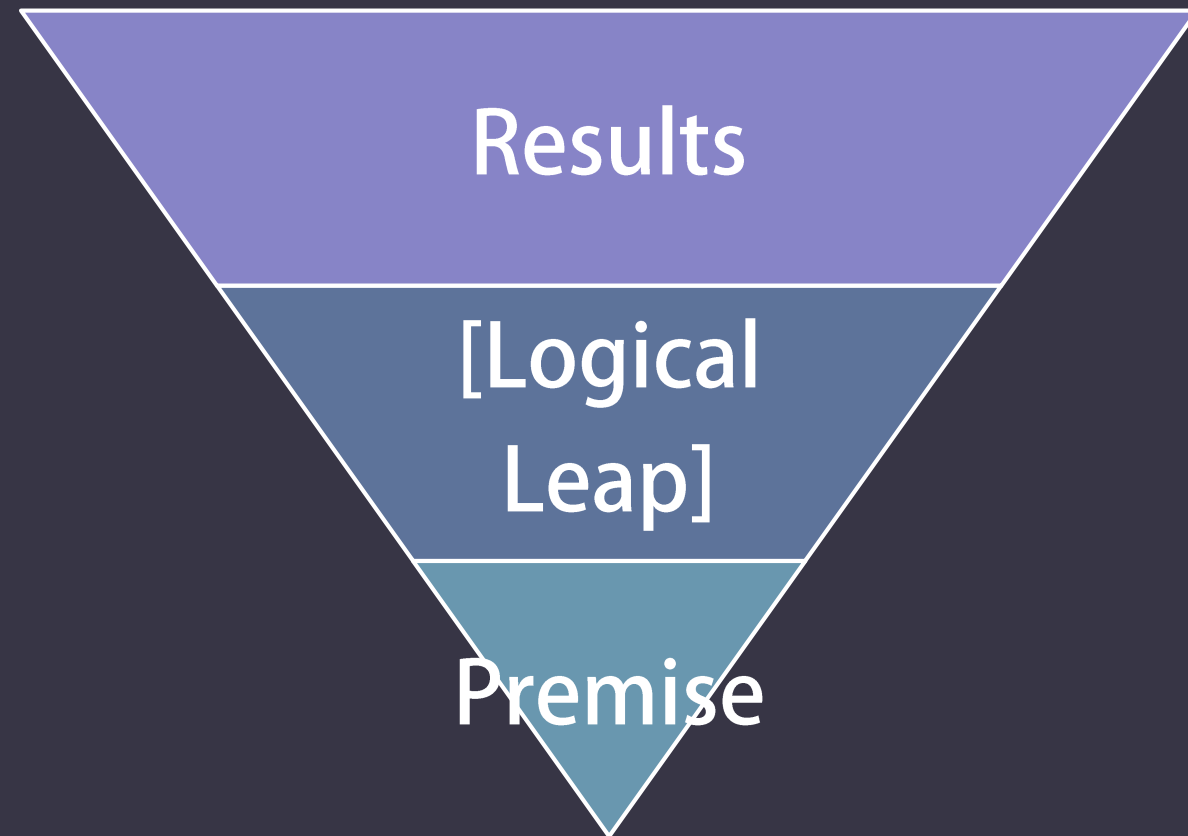# Dealing with the Completeness of Arguments
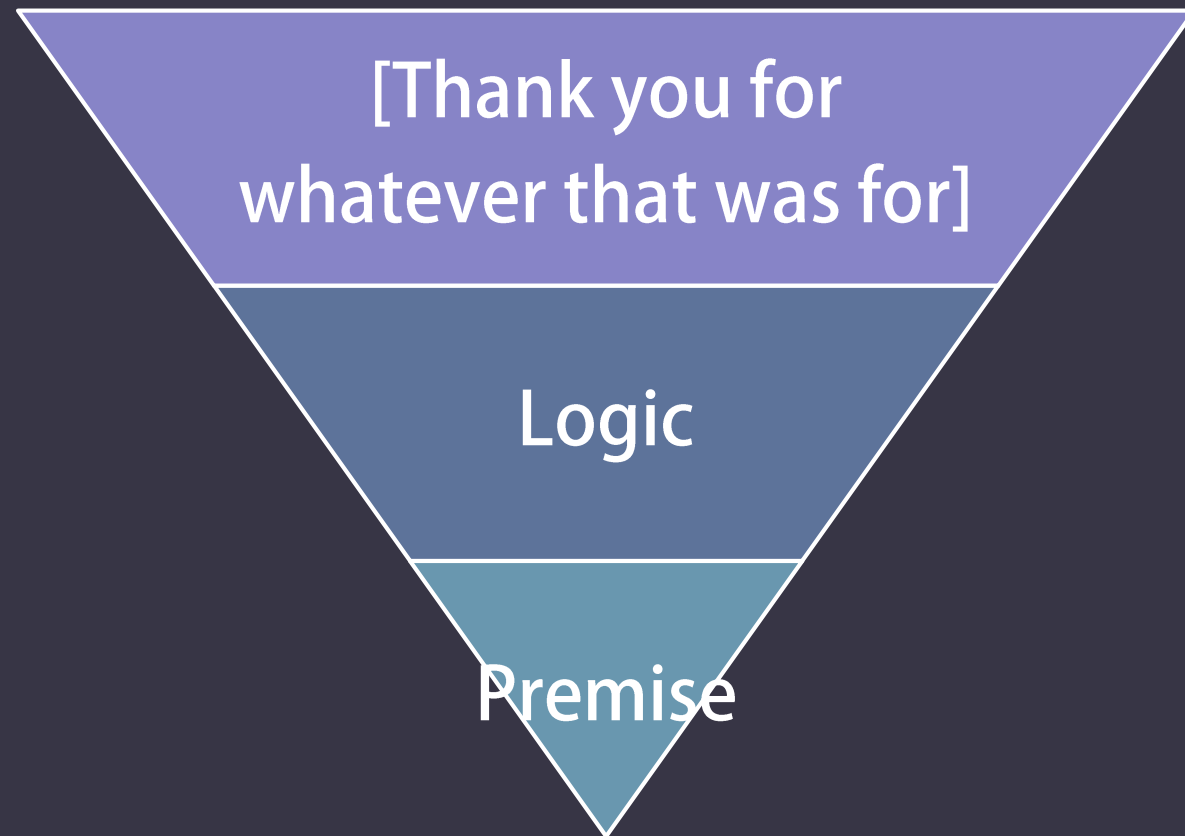
Elemental Parts of an Argument (From a Rebuttal Perspective)

Elemental Parts of an Argument (From a Rebuttal Perspective)

Elemental Parts of an Argument (From a Rebuttal Perspective)

Results

[Logical Leap]

Premise

Elemental Parts of an Argument (From a Rebuttal Perspective)

[Thank you for whatever that was for]

Logic

Premise

Rebutting complete arguments

Steps in Rebutting Complete Arguments

- LOGIC TEST – Based on what they argued, is it logical?
  - Look for the hidden conditions.
  - Normal formula: When this happens, then this happens.
  - <u>How to rebut?</u> Show how the policy does not fit the conditions adequately.
  - Easier to employ when there is a logical leap. *Note: This is very typical in high school debaters.*
- TRUTH TEST – Does this happen in reality?
  - Find counterexamples where the argument did not apply.
  - <u>How to rebut?</u> Show new conditions that exist because of reality.
  - Easier to employ when YOU ACTUALLY KNOW STUFF. *Note: This makes you sound smarter.*
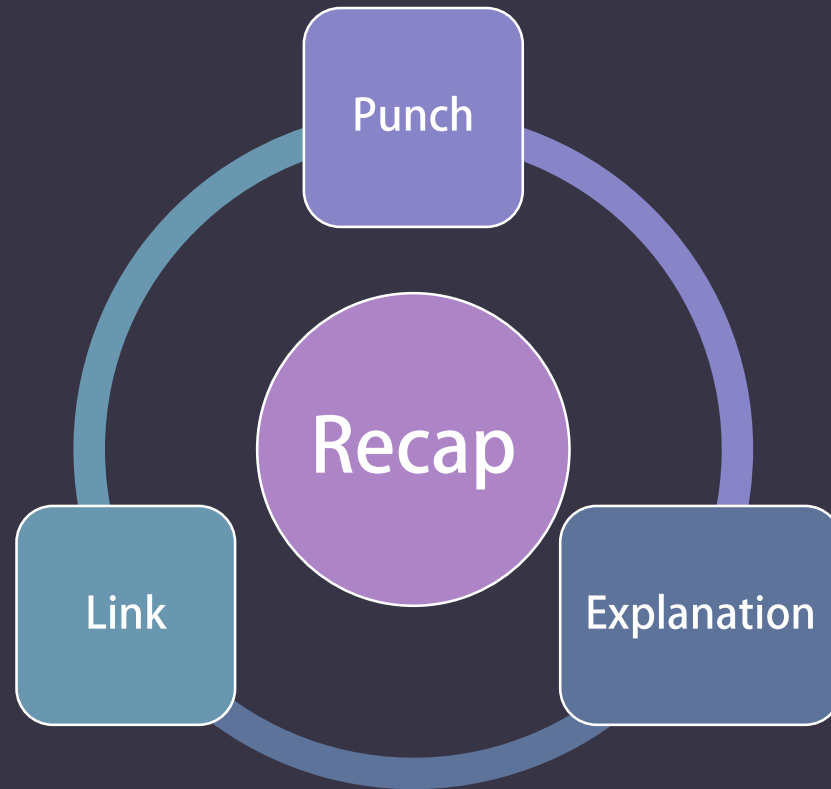
Steps in Rebutting Complete Arguments

- EVEN IF – show why even if the argument is true, it does not necessarily prove why the motion must stand or fall.
  - Technically this is new material that works as rebuttal as well.
  - Arsenal of rebuttals:
    - Provide alternatives – i.e. if benefit, provide another way to achieve benefit or if harm, provide a way to prevent the harm from happening
    - Comparative – i.e. if both of you are proving that you will get a benefit/stop a harm, compare which model gets to the benefit/harm faster/better/more effectively, etc.
    - ALWAYS EXPLAIN HOW AND WHY THIS HAPPENS.

Rebuttal Execution

Rebuttal Execution Steps

Getting the rebuttal across

- Recap the argument effectively. – Make a handle for it (Basically, what the previous speaker said...)
  - Do not be fooled by their handle. Try to find the conclusion. THAT is the handle.
  - Make sure your recap is short but crisp – adequate enough to identify for your adjudicator which argument you are rebutting.
- Multilayering the rebuttal
  - Make a checklist of the tests to fully test the argument.
  - Start each layer by labelling the rebuttal you are about to make. THIS IS THE PUNCH. (The argument is illogical... Untrue... An assertion... stupid...)
  - Explain each portion. Do not forget the how and why portions.
  - If you have multilayers, make sure to signpost how many layers of rebuttal you have.
  - Conclude the rebuttal. Now that you have destroyed it, what does it mean for the debate? (This means that the benefit is untrue and furthermore is not mutually exclusive.

Tips for using these rebuttal techniques

- Practice makes perfect. – Applying all of the test may seem very mechanical in the beginning but continuous practice makes the application of these tests instinctive. (i.e. your brain automatically identifies which part of the test the argument fails)

- Follow the Yin-Yang principle: Respect your opponents' argument enough that you will destroy it. – Listen well but listen not to be persuaded but to give your opponents enough credence and to understand the argument to its fullest extent.

- Do not be scared of good-sounding arguments. – All arguments are rebuttable.
  - If it cannot be rebutted, then it is a fact. In which case, it has not argumentative value. (e.g. The right of choice is important. – Rebuttal: Duh? It is obviously. But the question is, why to this extent and why is this the most important value in the debate?)
  - If it is too good to be true, there is definitely a hole that needs exploitation. Relax first and consider how the argument will envelop into reality. There is something bound to stop that from happening.
  - THIS PROBLEM IS OFTEN BROUGHT OUT OF A FEAR OF OPPONENTS WHICH IS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THE CASE BECAUSE YOUR OPPONENTS ARE THERE TO BE SLAIN BY YOU.