Argumentation

This is a living document – anyone can improve it.

Making arguments

Impact, harms and likelihood

Thinking about this formula can be very helpful when forming arguments.

impact = harms \times likelihood

It is common for people to focus on the harms of their arguments and disregard the likelihood that the harms will happen.

Stakeholder analysis

One way of generating arguments that it often very helpful is to think of all the stakeholders who are affected by the motion and how it effects them. When deciding which stakeholders are most important to the debate you might want to think about some of these questions. * How many people are affected by the motion? * To what extent are these people affected by the motion? * Are these a particularly vulnerable group of people who are deserving of our protection?

THEN -> ACTION -> NOW

- Then: what is the status quo (what does the world look like before your side of the house implements its idea)
- Action: what are you going to do?
- Now: what does the world look like after you implement your side of the house?

Comparative

To win a debate you must show that you are better than the other side of the house, not just that your side of the house is good. It can really help to talk in relative terms instead of absolute terms, e.g. "Side government helps this vulnerable group" vs "Side Government helps this vulnerable group in ways that Side Opposition cannot and this is the best way to help these people."