COACHING: DESIGNING THE NEGATIVE STRATEGY

Designing the negative strategy is one of the most important aspects of preparation. It is important to focus your energies on coherent and logical positions. There are two kinds of negative strategies: specific and generic. Specific strategies are for Cases that you know about. Generic strategies are for times when you have no specific strategy. This may happen when the affirmative runs a brand-new Case.

When you brainstorm, ask some questions about the affirmative. What are the basic assumptions of the affirmative Case? The answers will form the basis of your on-case attack. Who would be hurt by adoption of the plan? The answer to this question will help form the bases of your disadvantages. Are there any basic questions of philosophy their plan violates? This will help you decide on critiques. Finally, is there some better way to solve the problem? This helps with designing counterplans.

The negative strategy should avoid repetitive parts. For the Case arguments the negative should choose a set of responses that are not redundant. Also avoid choosing disadvantages or critiques that have similar links or impacts.

The negative strategy should avoid inconsistent or contradictory parts. The negative almost never benefits from contradictory arguments as you can only win the debate on one or the other. Plus, contradictions set up the possibility of the affirmative being able to get out of both.

Design the negative strategy so you can kick out of parts of it later in the debate. It is very difficult for the 2NR to cover all aspects of the 1AR. Both speeches are the same length, but the 1AR does not have to wrap up the debate as the 2NR does. Ideally the negative team would extend certain arguments in the negative block that they will not need to cover in the 2NR. Even a small concession might make a huge difference.

For example, a negative team could extend a topicality argument in the 2NC which the 1AR might spend 1-minute answering. The negative could then concede this topicality argument, gaining an extra minute for the 2NR for covering all remaining arguments of the 1AR. Gaining an extra minute in a 5-minute speech is a huge strategic advantage.

Finally, **design strategies that would appeal to a wide variety of judges**. Some judges are conservative on debate theory and some are liberal. Some judges have broad views of the topic some have narrow views. It is risky to devise a strategy at home that only would appeal to a narrow range of judges.

Generic Strategies

Generic negative strategies are necessary sometimes. It is impossible for the negative to always have specific attacks against every affirmative case and plan.

Generic attacks should follow the above guidelines as much as possible. Avoid repetitiveness, contradictions and build in some flexibility. In addition, always try to tie the specific affirmative plan to the generic evidence as best possible. Even if the negative has no specific evidence matching up to the affirmative case or plan, they can often successfully argue that the affirmative plan is the same as other plans with the common link.

COACHING TOPICALITY

Debates are governed by a resolution, referred to as the topic. Policy resolutions, like the one you have, are written broadly to allow for many examples. The affirmative must be able to prove that their Plan is actually an example of the resolution. This is referred to as having a "topical" Plan – it falls under the topic, so it is topical. But words, including the words in the topic, are subject to some interpretation, so this issue is not always clear-cut.

The burden on the affirmative to have a topical Plan has a debate jargon name that you will not find in most dictionaries: Topicality.

Topicality arguments play an important role in debates because they are an all-or-nothing issue. It is generally accepted that if the affirmative fails to prove that their Plan is Topical, they will lose. Many debates are decided for the negative on the issue of Topicality alone.

When the negative wants to advance a Topicality argument they must provide their own interpretation of the resolution, with definitions of words in the topic. They would then argue that their interpretation is the best one, for several possible reasons, based on standards for interpretations (discussed below). Then they would argue that the affirmative Plan "violates" their interpretation by falling outside of it. They also attack the affirmative's interpretation of the topic. If the negative wins that the affirmative plan is not topical, they generally win the debate.

Notice that the focus of Topicality is the affirmative Plan not the Case. The advantages claimed by the affirmative are not subject to topicality scrutiny no matter how distant from the topic they seem. If the affirmative Plan is judged to be topical, they have met their entire topicality burden.

To defend against this, the affirmative generally provides their own interpretation of the resolution – one that clearly includes their Plan. The affirmative also usually attacks the specific negative interpretation as being too restrictive or unusual. Usually the judge decides between the two interpretations.

Topicality Standards

Here are some ways to evaluate interpretations of the resolution – called "standards." Both teams use standards either separately or in combination depending on what their interpretation is like in the specific debate.

Standards: Is the interpretation too limited or too unlimited? Is the interpretation consistent with common dictionary definitions? Is the interpretation consistent with the way experts in the policy area use the terms? Is the interpretation grammatically correct? Is the interpretation predictable for both teams, or is it very unusual? Finally, does the interpretation lead us toward or away from the core issues we would expect to debate under the resolution?

The wisdom of all of these is subject to argument. Even these standards are debatable within a debate. Are limited resolutions good for education because they focus debate on a few key issues, or are they bad for education because they stifle creative thinking? There is no debate rulebook to resolve this. It's up to the arguments each team can present in the round.

Quite often there will be "competing standards" in a round. For instance, the affirmative might have a dictionary definition to back up their interpretation, but the negative might be able to prove that's not the way experts in the field use those words. Who wins in that case? Again, it comes down to the arguments advanced about education and fairness in the round itself.

COACHING CASE DEBATE

Attacking Affirmative Harm Claims

One way to attack a harm claim is simply to provide evidence that it is declining and that the situation is getting better. Negative teams can also attack harm claims by proving that underlying circumstances have changed so that affirmative harm claims that may have been true in the past are no longer viable. The negative can boost their refutation of harm claims by citing scientific studies that empirically demonstrate how rare the affirmative harm is. The more qualified the negative source is the stronger the evidence is. One strategy for harm refutation is to attack the motivation of the affirmative authors. Perhaps they have a strong self-interest in making the problem seem greater than it is.

A powerful negative strategy is to argue that status quo programs are reducing the affirmative harm area. This simultaneously attacks both the harm and inherency (see next section) claim.

When the affirmative defends harms that are philosophical in nature the negative can argue that the affirmative criteria, or decision rule, is detrimental in the extreme. Another approach to philosophical harm areas is to defend the notion of pragmatism or realism as an overarching framework for our foreign policy. Finally, the negative could offer a counter-value, or an offsetting philosophical argument.

Attacking Inherency Claims

The affirmative must prove that the status quo will not solve their Harm claim. To attack their inherency, claim the negative must prove that an actor in the status quo is taking a step that will address the significance of the affirmative's Harm claim. If the negative proves that the problem is being solved in the status quo they greatly reduce the comparative advantage offered by the affirmative plan. Another approach is to identify empirical examples of how status quo programs are already working. The negative can also attack the affirmative inherency claim by arguing there is a trend toward solving the affirmative problem. One other excellent strategy is to argue that agents other than those used in the affirmative plan are solving the problem.

Attacking Solvency Claims

The negative attack on the affirmative Solvency is often one of the most powerful strategies. Many affirmative plans make intuitive sense, but in the real world cannot fulfill their promise. There are generally many intervening factors between the specific mechanism in the plan and the ultimate effect the plan has on the situation in the real world. The primary way that the negative can contest solvency is to provide empirical examples of policy failures that are similar to the affirmative proposal.

Another common solvency approach is for the negative to provide alternative causes for the problem to continue. Some solvency arguments present alternative causes of the harm claim that the affirmative plan does not address. The debate terminology for this type of argument is "alternative causality." For instance, if your car did not run because it was out of gasoline, and because it was missing spark plugs, a plan to purchase gasoline would not get your car running unless it also addressed the spark plugs. In this example the lack of spark plugs would be an alternative causality argument against a plan to buy gasoline. To develop alternative causality negative teams should collect proof of all the many causes of certain harm claims.

Solvency is typically a weak link in the affirmative comparative advantage analysis and should

be challenged vigorously by the negative. Most affirmative plans are very idealistic and often ignore the realities of how difficult it can be to solve certain problems.

COACHING DISADVANTAGES

When people make proposals to do something, often there are drawbacks to that proposal. To consider a course of action we generally weigh the benefits against the potential downsides. Policy debate is no different. In fact, arguments about the downsides of affirmative Plans are one of the most common parts of a debate.

These drawbacks are called "disadvantages" (DA) in debate jargon. DA's are arguments advanced by the negative team that represent the unique reasons why adopting the Plan would be a bad idea. If the negative team can prove the disadvantage to acting was greater than the advantage of acting the judge should not endorse the affirmative Plan and should vote negative.

Burdens of a Disadvantage

Disadvantages have parts to them. Just as an affirmative Case has to have Harm, Inherency and Solvency, and the affirmative Plan must be Topical, disadvantages have burdens they must meet before they become reasons to reject the affirmative. DA's must have a link, be unique to the affirmative plan, and have an impact that outweighs the affirmative advantage.

Disadvantages must link to the affirmative plan. This means that the negative team must be able to prove that the drawback results from adoption of the specific affirmative Plan. Links can come from the actions of the Plan or the advantages of the Case. Some DA's are based on several "internal links" – like a chain reaction. The affirmative can deny the link to a DA either by proving their Plan will not result in that outcome, or by questioning one of the internal links.

Disadvantages must also be "unique" to the affirmative plan. This burden means that the drawback occurs ONLY when the Plan is passed, that it won't occur in the present system. For example, suppose someone suggests that you go to dinner at Wendy's and someone responded by saying, "don't go there, the fries are greasy" (a DA). That person would have to prove that if you didn't go to Wendy's you would be able to find some food that wasn't as greasy. If a DA is not uniquely caused by the affirmative plan it is not a reason to reject it. In our example, suppose the alternative to Wendy's was McDonalds, you could say that McDonald's had greasy food too so going to Wendy's would not have a unique disadvantage of greasy food.

Disadvantages must have a large impact – one that is bigger than the advantage that the affirmative wins in the debate. The negative has to prove that the bad consequence of adopting the Plan would outweigh the benefits otherwise it isn't a reason to reject the Plan. An example might be that the affirmative plan could hurt the economy, which would push us into a recession. The impact of the recession might be greater than the affirmative Case, especially if the negative is also making some inroads in beating the Case. Disadvantages with bigger bottom line impacts are better for the negative to run. Affirmatives could debate against the impact by saying it wouldn't be so bad.

Turns

Often, one of the most powerful arguments an affirmative can make against a disadvantage is to say that their Plan actually has a positive effect in the area of the DA. That means the argument really becomes a net advantage, not a drawback, to adopting the plan. For example, suppose the person proposing we go to Wendy's said that Wendy's offered more grease-free options, like salads and baked potatoes, than any other fast food chain. In our example about the recession, the affirmative might have an argument that their Plan was actually good for the economy. Both of these would be example of "Turns" to the disadvantage. As you can see, turns are very important arguments and both teams should focus on them.

COACHING COUNTERPLANS

Many times, in life we are not confronted with a simple choice between a proposal and the current path. Instead we are faced with one proposal weighed against a second proposal. For example, if your refrigerator breaks down, you may look at the option of buying a new refrigerator compared to the "status quo" of the broken appliance. But more likely you'll compare one new refrigerator vs. another new one. In debate, when the negative defends an alternative policy and not the status quo, it is said that they are defending a "counterplan" (CP).

How to Run a Counterplan

Counterplans are policies that are defended by the negative team. It should be presented in the 1NC. It should be written out and be as detailed as an affirmative Plan.

The CP must be a reason to reject the Plan. To explain this, let's go back to our example. Suppose your idea is to buy a GE refrigerator (the Plan). If someone else in your family said instead "let's turn the lights on in the living room," you would likely reject that suggestion as being irrelevant. Obviously, it would be possible to buy the GE fridge and also turn the lights on in the living room. There is no need to choose, so you'd still accept the initial idea.

To test whether or not the CP is a reason to reject the affirmative Plan you ask two questions. First, is it impossible to do both the Plan and the CP at the same time? If the answer is yes, then we are forced to choose. The second question: Is it the case that we *should not* do both the Plan and the CP at the same time? If the answer is yes, then it is illogical to do both together. In either of these cases the negative also has to prove that the CP is better than the Plan. This test is used to establish whether the CP meets its test of "competition."

The most common strategy for the negative running a counterplan is to say there is some other way to solve the Harm area without triggering a DA that links to the Plan. For example, if the affirmative Plan was U.S. HIV/AIDS assistance to Africa, the negative could CP with European Union HIV/AIDS assistance to Africa. They would combine the CP with a DA to U.S. action, say a tradeoff in the USAID budget. So, the negative would be saying the CP is a reason to reject the affirmative Plan because it solves the HIV/AIDS harm without triggering the USAID DA.

Answering a Counterplan

At first, debaters have a hard time answering counterplans until they get used to it. Most teams are used to comparing the Plan to the status quo, not to a CP. Experienced teams eventually learn how to design their affirmatives with the common counterplans in mind.

Here are some ideas: Find reasons that the CP does not solve the affirmative Harm area as well as the Plan (called a "solvency deficit"). Ask to read the CP and look for wording mistakes in the text. Present new affirmative advantages, ones that the CP does not solve very well. Challenge the CP if it does not have any specific solvency evidence. Come up with arguments for why it would be better to "do both" the Plan plus the CP.

Argue that the best policy would be to combine the Plan with part of the CP – this is referred to as a "permutation." For example, you may suggest going out on a date to a movie. Your object of interest suggests instead going to dinner. You initially say, well why not "do both" and go to dinner and a movie? The response by your date is that there isn't enough time to do both. So, then you come up with the "permutation" of going to the movie then going out to get dessert (the best part of dinner, after all!). If the "perm" ends up being the wisest course of action, there is no reason to reject the initial idea of going to a movie, which is part of the permutation.

COACHING CRITIQUES

Some arguments that we use in everyday life do not fall into the categories of disadvantages or counterplans but are still reasons to reject a course of action. These arguments often involve philosophical reasons to reject certain actions or the way we talk about those actions.

Imagine a situation where you and your friends are looking for a place to eat and one of your friends suggests Denny's. Someone else points out that Denny's has been involved in certain acts that might be considered racist – and therefore that you should look for somewhere else to eat. That objection to eating at Denny's isn't really a disadvantage – after all, it's not like you and your friends eating at Denny's is going to keep them in business and shunning them won't cost them much. It's a statement of morality or principle on your part

Explanation of Critiques

A critique (sometimes written in the German 'kritik and abbreviated as a K) is a philosophical argument linked to a policy or language. Usually negative teams use critiques to attack the affirmative's fundamental assumptions or language. Often, he affirmative makes these assumptions by choice and sometimes they do it because it's their job to defend the resolution. Critiques are usually complicated arguments, and many people are not familiar with the kinds of ideas associated with critiques.

A "representation" critique is the most common type. It is based on the way that a team represents their arguments – such as their language choice. In some ways a representation critique is similar to making a decision based on appearance or characteristics. In our above example, you might choose not to eat at Denny's because of the way they treated other customers, not the taste of their food or their prices.

Examples of Critiques

Some examples from debate rounds include critiques of gendered language such as "mankind" or "Congressman". Another would be a critique of the concept of "Sub-Saharan Africa."

Critiques have components that are in some ways similar to other types of arguments. They typically have "link" arguments, where the negative connects the specific actions of the affirmative to their critique claims. There are also "impact" arguments where the negative identifies the implications of the critique. Finally, some critiques offer "alternative" ways of viewing the world, or alternative representations. These often function very similarly to counterplans. Alternatives can be explicit or implied.

Implications

Generally, critiques have a couple of implications. One is that they undermine some part of the affirmative Case such as the Harm or Solvency. Second, they might implicate consequences similar to that of a disadvantage. In other words, a critique might justify voting against a team altogether in order to reject their assumptions.

Affirmative Strategies

Affirmatives can attack critiques at a number of levels. They can argue their affirmative outweighs the critique. They can deny the link to their representation. They can try to formulate a permutation similar to against a counterplan. They can attack the "Solvency" of the critique alternative or argue drawbacks to the alternative. They might be able to find some inconsistencies within the negative arguments.

COACHING THE SPEECH: FIRST NEGATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

The First Negative Constructive speech (1NC) lays the foundation for the negative strategy in the debate. In this speech the negative starts every major argument that is part of their strategy. The main job of the 1NC is to present all of the negative attacks against the affirmative Case. They should also present "shells" of all of their Off-Case arguments (topicality, disadvantages, counterplans, critiques). The 1NC should build a solid negative policy to defend, whether that be a defense of the status quo or a counterplan.

Preparation

You can **prepare for the 1NC days before the actual debate**. Pre-tournament and pre-round work can get the 1NC all set to go. Choosing the best Case and Off-Case arguments ahead of time leads to making the right selections. Against common case Harm areas the 1NC responses can be completely written out. The negative should write "front-lines" of arguments whenever possible.

Selection

The 1NC should **avoid repetitive arguments**. Repeating arguments make it too easy for the affirmative team to answer. This is true both for Case and Off-Case arguments. Make sure your disadvantages do not have similar link or impact arguments. Do not present duplicative Case arguments. The 1NC should attack as many aspects of the affirmative Case as possible.

Presentation

The 1NC should **read their Off-Case arguments first** and then proceed to their Case attacks. Off-Case "shell" arguments have to be read in a complete form, with each logical component being included. Try to divide your speech roughly equally between the time you spend on the Case and Off-Case.

Specific Links

Many Off-Case arguments are "generic," meaning they apply to many different affirmative Plans. This is a powerful weapon for the negative as it helps them be more familiar with their negative strategies. On the other hand, judges may not like it when they think the negative is running the same arguments every round, regardless of whether they really apply to that specific affirmative Plan. In order to make your generic arguments seem relevant, **include a specific link argument in the 1NC shell**. That means you should write out a sentence or two that explains the connection between your argument and the specific affirmative.

Delivery Style

The 1NC should be **delivered quickly but clearly**. The appropriate speed will be governed, as in most cases, by the experience level of the judge. Clarity is as important for the 1NC as it is for the 1AC as it is the first impression the judge will have of your arguments and set the stage for later references back.

Analytical Case Arguments

Some debaters think they can't make an argument unless they have evidence. This is not true. Analytical arguments (arguments without evidence) can be very powerful. It is often very easy to poke holes in the affirmative Case by **making logical arguments**. These types of points should be added to your Case attack, mixed in with evidence-based arguments. Focus your strategy and attacks on the largest, most threatening parts of the affirmative Case.

COACHING THE SPEECH: SECOND NEGATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE

The Second Negative Constructive speech (2NC) is one of the most important negative speeches in the debate. The 2NC typically extends two or three of the Off-Case argument shells that were presented in the 1NC. These arguments are typically the key parts of the negative strategy, and the likely place where the negative team will end up trying to win the debate in the end.

Preparing

Much of the preparation for the 2NC can be done at home before the tournament. You pretty much know, either through brainstorming or through experience of actual debates, what the 2AC is going to say against your Off-Case shells. You can **prepare frontlines, with analytic and evidenced answers**, to read against the 2AC.

Before you stand up to give your 2NC it is really important that you **know and understand everything the 2AC said** to your arguments. If you need to ask for clarification in cross-examination, you should do that. If you have the time to read through the evidence, they read you should try to do that. Asking to borrow the 2AC blocks after the read them is the surest way to make sure you don't miss anything.

Tactics

You start by making a **short "regional" overview** at the top of the flow for that argument. The regional overview should contain a short explanation of all pieces of your argument. Make the link as specific as possible to the affirmative Plan or Case. For example, when you extend a disadvantage your regional overview should include a sentence on the link, uniqueness and impact. The regional overview is a way of summarizing the argument for the judge and helps pull it all together.

After the regional overview the 2NC should **cover all of the 2AC arguments**, usually one-by-one, without skipping over any. On some arguments you'll need to read evidence, in some cases you won't need to. In part that depends on whether the 2AC used evidence or not.

Rebuild the key parts of the Off-Case arguments by reading more evidence if necessary. This is often referred to as having a "wall" of extensions, i.e. the "link wall" or the "uniqueness wall." But don't forget to use and extend the 1NC shell evidence, as that is usually the best evidence you have. Refer to it by author and explain the warrants in the evidence. Stress the specific link arguments.

Finally, **weigh or assess the impact** of winning the Off-Case argument. If it is a DA, explain how it outweighs the affirmative; if it is a K, explain how it undercuts the Solvency or turns the Case; if it is a CP, point out how it solves the case while avoiding the DAs. Reading additional impact evidence is usually a solid strategy.

Strategy

The 2NC should **choose one Off-Case argument to be the primary strategy**, but generally they should not make this choice obvious. If you tip your hand to the affirmative too early in the debate, they will know to focus on it. The 2NC should extend two or three arguments so they can disguise their intentions and to maintain flexibility. What looks like a sure thing before the 2NC may seem iffy or a second choice by the time the 2NR rolls around.

COACHING THE SPEECH: FIRST NEGATIVE REBUTTAL

The First Negative Rebuttal speech (1NR) is the second part of the Negative Block – where they give back-to-back speeches in the middle part of the debate. The 1NR is a very important part of the overall negative strategy and should not be underestimated. A powerful 1NR puts great pressure on the affirmative team, particularly the First Affirmative Rebuttal.

Case Extension

The 1NR should **focus on extending the most powerful attacks** on the affirmative Case. Using the 5-step extension technique (page 5), the 1NR should base their speech on the 1NC arguments, while answering what the 2AC had to say on those points. The agenda of this part of the 1NR should be the 1NC. The 1NR should signpost back to the 1NC structure.

Explain the 1NC arguments fully, including **developing the warrants in the original evidence**. The reasoning within the evidence, not just the old tag line, is the important part that needs to be expanded and impacted. The full use of the 1NC warrants is the strategy that makes the 1NR an A+.

The 1NR should **be somewhat selective**, if necessary, among the various arguments begun in the 1NC, as some of those initial points may not be worth it. Some arguments have “round winning” potential, others are kind of trivial. You likely won’t have time to go for all of the 1NC points, especially if you are expanding them as you are supposed to. So, you’ll need to be selective and realistic.

The goal in extending Case arguments is to **rebuild them** to the point where they are really powerful and do-or-die for the affirmative team. It is not very strategic to extend negative arguments so weakly that they barely register. The 1NR should explain the impact of these arguments as fully as they can.

One way for the 1NR to make their extensions more powerful is to **read additional evidence**. It might even be a good idea to save some of your best-Case evidence for reading in the 1NR where it is much more difficult for the affirmative to answer.

The 1NR should **clash directly with the most threatening affirmative Case arguments**. This ideally should be done in a word-for-word manner to make clear to the judge that you are not ducking the big Case debate. If the 2AC highlights certain evidence or arguments to the judge, you need to go after them with a direct response.

Off-Case Extension

Sometimes the 1NR is assigned to extend an Off-Case argument, such as topicality or a disadvantage. It is possible for the 1NR to do both the Case (or part of the Case) and extend an Off-Case argument. It all depends on where the biggest need is. While it may be possible to do this, you don’t want to spread the 1NR too thin, making all the arguments they cover really easy for the affirmative to answer.

In the Off-Case extension the 1NR should follow the advice given above (page 23) for the 2NC in going for these arguments. Start with a short “regional” overview. Cover the 2AC in a thorough, line-by-line, manner. Read more evidence on the key points. Emphasize the specific link. Weigh or assess the implications of winning that argument.

COACHING THE SPEECH: SECOND NEGATIVE REBUTTAL

The second negative rebuttal (2NR) is the most difficult speech in a debate. It requires substantial coverage and explanation skills. The 2NR must tie together the entire negative strategy, extending each part in detail and creating a favorable impression. They must also cover the many arguments of the 1AR. The 2NR has to balance all these factors, and then throw in being responsible for the strategic decision-making for the team.

Strategies

The most important strategic goal for the 2NR is to, in fact, **have a strategy.** While this sounds obvious, many 2NR's simply go through the motions of trying to win every argument. Instead, the 2NR must assess how the strategy is working up to that point and make a decision about the right mix of the Case or Off-Case arguments and choosing among the Off-Case arguments.

The 2NR should **adapt to the weaknesses and strengths of the 1AR**. No two 1AR's are alike. Some might make serious coverage mistakes in unexpected places. When the 1AR makes a serious coverage or time allocation mistake the 2NR must maintain enough flexibility to adjust and capitalize. There are no degree-of-difficulty points in debate. If the other team presents an unforeseen opportunity, take it.

The 2NR must attempt to **anticipate the 2AR strategic choices**. The more experience you have, the more easily this will come. The more times you debate a certain team the more you can expect what they will go for in the last rebuttal. The 2NR should focus on that strategy and extend enough arguments against it to neutralize it. While the 2NR may want to make some reference to your opponent's upcoming speech, it is generally more effective to internalize the chess game and just shape your 2NR to pre-empt their strategy.

The 2NR must **evaluate all your impacts** in the debate, whether it that means choosing which disadvantage to extend, or emphasizing case advantage turns. You may have to decide between a counterplan strategy vs. kicking the counterplan. You may have to decide between a critique and a counterplan.

Techniques

Repetition is fatal for the 2NR. The goal of the 2NR should be to make **five minutes of totally separate arguments**. If you sense that you are repeating the same argument in several places in the debate you should correct that by diversifying your positions. Do not over-rely on one argument, one assessment, or one insight.

The 2NR should **begin with an overview** briefly explaining how they will win the debate. This overview should not last more than 30 seconds. It should compare the arguments each side will win and say this comes down favorably for the negative. Be realistic about the arguments the affirmative may win. It's a waste of time to just get up there and say you are winning everything.

The 2NR **chooses which Off-Case arguments to go for**. They have to (very quickly) kick out of the ones they don't want, and then thoroughly extend the ones they do want. On those, they must answer everything the 1AR said on that flow. It is crucial not to miss anything.

The 2NR also needs to **extend the key Case answers**. They will probably have to focus on a few of them, though, given the time constraints. They should choose the ones where the

affirmative is the weakest and the negative have the best warrants.