7 Key indispensible questions you must ask yourself while preparing for a debate round?

1. Have I defined all the key terms(eg .”lift patents for green technology”- what are patents? What is green tech?

2. What is the context or the problem or issue you are addressing ?
NB: *There is usually a reason for why the topic has been set.*

- All team members need to be on the same page for this.
- What might be happening in the world that is related to the motion?
- What particular aspect of the problem are you trying to address? You must recognise that you are unlikely to solve the whole problem, and you are not expected to save the whole world with your case.
- Yours is simply to show that the world is significantly better or less worse off, on your side.
- Debate is often about gradients rather than absolutes.

Describing a problem effectively

✔ Use compelling language:

When describing a problem, its worth using language that corresponds to your solution eg when justifying military intervention in Syria, it may be worth briefly describing the horrific atrocities occuring to better justify this extreme.

✔ Outline key trends:

If the problem continues to get worse, this may be a trend in need of correction e.g. in Syria the trend of increasing violence by the Syrian government and reprisal attacks by the rebels may call for immediate action.

✔ Outline tipping points:

A tipping point is a point of no return e.g. many argue that we are at a tipping point when it comes to resolving climate change: if we do not act now, it will be impossible to prevent the most harmful consequences of global warming, there tipping point adds urgency to the problem and makes it harder for the opposition to argue inaction.

3. What are the things you need to prove to win the debate? Eg whose lives need to be better off for you to win the debate?

4. What is our team defending in general i.e. your position or stance, something that acts as the foundation for your case?

- What do you support?
- What do you stand for?

5. Have we developed a policy or model that fits the problem identified?

6. What do you expect the other side to stand on and what are you trading off or what are you admitting inorder to do prior attacks?

- Be pre emptive .
- What do you expect other side to stand on and why is your principle stronger e.g. in defending hate speech, why is free exchange of ideas superior to the offence that might be felt by some groups or in military intervention, what are all other possible opinions and why have they been exhausted or why are they not viable?

7. Are all the arguments you have built logical and persuasive with unbreakable tough links

Specific keys to the OPPOSITION TEAM

- Do you understand government's policy? Any clarifications
- Accept the problem or recharacterise.
- You may propose a counter solution. You may need to outline a detailed alternative proposal.
- You can also argue that even if the there is a problem, the harms of the government model or solution are even worse than the status quo.
- If the governments case is very soft, point out the problem solution gap. You can accuse them of being morally inconsistent in their case and undermining the problem they bring by giving it a weak solution.

IN SUMMARY

- Why would we want to do such a thing?
- How would we do it?
- Will it work to solve the reason why we want to do it?
- What bad things might happen because of it?
- Is there another approach which might work better?

GOOD LUCK!