

DEBATE LANGUAGE: Professional Speaking Skills

CLARIFICATION & INFORMATION REQUESTS

- Do you mean...?
- What do you mean?
- What does that mean?
- Could you clarify...?
- Could you repeat that?
- Could you explain that (in more detail)?
- What's the difference between X and Y?

OPINION & PARTICIPATION REQUESTS

- What do you think about...?
- I'd like to know Q's opinion about...
- Let's hear what Q has to say about this.
- Let's consult other group members before proceeding.

DISAGREEMENT

- I'm afraid I don't agree because...
- I'm sorry, but I have to disagree because...
- I see your point, but...
- No, I don't think that's true because...
- I completely/totally disagree.
- I take your point, but...

AGREEMENT

- I agree with Q's point because...
- That's a good point.
- I think Q has the right idea.
- I'd like to add something to that.
- I completely/totally agree.
- I fully support that stance.

INTERRUPTING

- Excuse me,...
- I'm sorry,...
- Before you go on,...
- I'd like to add something.
- I'd like to comment on that.
- Can I say something?
- May I interrupt for a moment?
- I have a question about that, if I may.

SUPPORTING & EMPHASIZING A POINT

- By that, I mean...
- What I mean is...
- An example of this is...
- To be more specific,...
- I want to stress/highlight...
- I'd like to emphasize...
- The crucial/essential/fundamental point is...

REPHRASING

- In other words,...
- That is to say,...
- To put it another way,...
- The point I'm making is...
- What I'm suggesting is...
- What I meant to say...
- Let me put it another way.

CONNECTING IDEAS & SUMMARIZING

- Q said that..., and I'd like to add...
- Returning to the previous topic,...
- In light of what was said earlier,...
- In other words, you're saying...
- If I understand you correctly, you're saying...

EXPRESSING CERTAINTY

- It seems to me...
- I imagine...
- As far as I know,...
- I think/believe...
- I'm pretty sure/certain...
- I'd like to say/point out...
- I'm positive/sure/certain/convicted that...

STAYING ON TOPIC

- I think we're getting off topic.
- Could we go back to...?
- Perhaps we should return to the topic at hand.

FOLLOWING UP A QUESTION

- That's not really what I was asking. My question is about...
- Perhaps I didn't make my question clear. In fact what I asked was...
- I think you've answered a slightly different question. What I would like to know is...
- I understand that but what I actually had in mind was...
- Sorry, I'm still not clear about...

REFERRING TO RESEARCH

- The work of Q shows/indicates/reveals that...
- Q argues/points out/makes clear that...
- In a study of X, Q found that...
- Q has drawn attention to the fact that...
- According to Q,...
- In an article by Q,...