

Advanced POI Strategy

Ever wonder why when you debate certain teams they do things like standing up the second protected time ends? Or they both stand up at the same time and make you choose who you want to answer? Or they seem to have a million POIs but wait until you're right in the middle of your best argument to ask them? Or worse, they ask you a POI with 10 seconds left in unprotected time?

These are all strategies that good teams use to throw you off your game. Try not to get trapped by them. Here are a few hints, as well as the reasons for the strategies.



1) **Standing up the second protected time ends.**

These teams are doing a couple of different things. First of all, they are showing the judges that they are prepared and they know the topic inside out. Secondly, they're proving how much better they know the topic since in one minute they have been able to find problems with your case and are already poking holes in it.

2) **Both standing up at the same time.**

By doing this, the team is showing the judge that there is a HUGE problem in your case, one so big that both of them have very important questions to ask on it. Making you choose is another strategy in and of itself. If you choose the weaker partner, you are showing that you are afraid of strong partner...but if you choose the strong partner you run the risk of getting struck by a really hard question.

3) **Asking a POI during your best argument.**

This is purely for strategy. Good teams know that they can get you off your game by asking you questions during your best argument. They are interrupting your flow and trying to make you lose your train of thought. Even if you don't answer their POI, they've still made you slow down and have slowed or stopped your momentum.

4) **Asking a POI with 10 seconds before protected time starts.**

If you take their POI they have done two things. First of all, they have the possibility of asking a 20 second POI and wasting your time...or they can ask a short POI that will take you 30 or more seconds to answer. Either way, they're wasting your precious time to wrap up your case for the judges.



POIs are not just about being heard or asking a question. They are an important strategy in National style debate. Be aware of when you and others are using these strategies. Avoiding these traps successfully is all about knowing when to accept or refuse the POIs. How well a debater handles themselves in the rough and tumble of offering and accepting POI's is key in this style of debate